

PART I

1 THE DOCTRINE OF GOD

The Threefold Manifestation (rūpa) of the Supreme Being

The theology of the PādS is influenced by the learned Vaiṣṇava Brahmanic orthodoxy which - as remarked by Oberhammer⁵⁵ - had an important impact on the religiosity of the Pāñcarātra. More specifically, in the theology of the PādS it is possible to recognize the influence of the teachings of Rāmānuja's teacher Yādavaprakāśa⁵⁶, a *vedāntin* who belonged to this orthodoxy. The starting-point of the elaboration of the doctrine of God is, in the PādS, a definition of *brahman*, which is described with an *Upaniṣad*-flavoured language. By expounding its concept of God in the light of the Brahmanic, *Upaniṣad*-derived idea of *brahman*, the PādS shows itself to be affected by the outlook of the Vedānta tradition, which strongly influenced the philosophical and theological views of the learned Vaiṣṇava Brahmanic orthodoxy⁵⁷.

Conceived as the Supreme Being, whose essential nature is consciousness and bliss, *brahman* is theistically understood, in the PādS, as the Supreme Person (*puruṣottama*); as such, *brahman* is both transcendent and immanent and its relation to the world is characterized - in accordance with the *bhedābhedavāda* advocated also by Yādavaprakāśa - by a difference-and-non-difference⁵⁸.

⁵⁵ See Oberhammer 2007: 53-54. In this essay the author gives and discusses a few examples of the influence of orthodox Vaiṣṇavism on the Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā*-s.

⁵⁶ I am indebted for the suggestion of this interpretative hypothesis to G. Oberhammer.

⁵⁷ See again Oberhammer 2007: 37.

⁵⁸ For a detailed discussion of the concept of *brahman* in the PādS, see below, pp. 62-80.

This Supreme Being, moved by His own will, unfolds in three forms (*rūpa*): at the divine level, He manifests Himself as Vāsudeva and, at the level of living beings, as *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*. *Rūpa*, which is a keyword in the theology of the PādS, designates an essential feature of the Supreme Being, by which feature the Supreme and transcendent Being displays His own immanence in forms which are coeternal with Him because they are nothing but His own aspects. Yet, with regard to the dynamics of their respective further developments, each of these three *rūpa*-s - i.e. Vāsudeva, *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* - has its own specific characteristics.

Vāsudeva is the *brahman* having a name and a form; as is explicitly stated, *brahman* “is called Vāsudeva” (*vāsudevāhvayam*, PādS, *jp*, 5, 32b) and Vāsudeva is “the first form” (*rūpam ādyam*, PādS, *jp*, 2, 11b) of *brahman*. The Supreme Being, on account of His being by His own nature conscious and volitive, is conceived as Supreme Person (*puruṣottama*); in His transcendent state this Supreme Person is formless - as suggested also by His representation as a Light⁵⁹ - and, yet, harbours the will to take a form. Hence, due to this will, the Supreme One manifests Himself as Lord Vāsudeva, who is endowed with the outward appearance of a heavenly bodily shape. Thus, when referred to Vāsudeva, the term *rūpa* designates the manifestation of *brahman* as the first and foremost divine being, the Supreme God.

Out of Vāsudeva come into being, by a process of divine emanation, the various divine figures (*mūrti*) which constitute the “pantheon” of the PādS. These *mūrti*-s represent as many self-differentiations of the Supreme Being, which concretizes Himself in manifold, particular divine beings. Actually it is the Supreme Being who, in His first form (*ādyarūpa*) of Vāsudeva, is the true origin of the progressive arising of the divine figures (*mūrtyutpatti*)⁶⁰.

While at the divine level the Supreme Being manifests Himself as Lord Vāsudeva, because of His will to bring forth the world and liv-

⁵⁹ See PādS, *jp*, 2, 6c-7, quoted and commented below, pp. 80-82.

⁶⁰ For a detailed discussion of the manifestation of the *ādyarūpa* Vāsudeva and of the successive *mūrtyutpatti* (described in PādS, *jp*, 2, 6c-40), see below, pp. 80-101.

ing beings, the Supreme One unfolds into *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*⁶¹. In His *prakṛti-rūpa*, the Supreme Being displays His own non spiritual (*acetana*) form, manifests Himself as the eternal primordial matter, which is the matrix of all things. *Prakṛti* is to be regarded as the way in which the Supreme Being appears as the phenomenal world.

On the other hand, in His *puruṣa-rūpa* the Supreme Being manifests Himself as the spiritual principle which gives rise to and concretizes itself in the plurality of individual souls. As Vāsudeva represents the first and the foremost divine being, so the *puruṣa* represents the original consciousness, the ultimate source of every individual soul. Thus, when referred to the *puruṣa*, the term *rūpa* designates the way in which the Supreme Being manifests Himself as the spiritual essence which is one and the same in every *jīva*, in the soul of every human being.

By means of this threefold structure and by the concept of *rūpa*, the PādS represents the inner dynamics of the godhead and attempts to explain how the One becomes many. *Brahman*, the Supreme Being, becomes the Highest God, by taking the form (*rūpa*) of Vāsudeva; He manifests Himself in the form (*rūpa*) of *prakṛti*, in order to bring forth the phenomenal world; He assumes the form (*rūpa*) of *puruṣa*, in order to endow living beings with consciousness. The basic structure of the three *rūpa*-s is further developed and enriched by the concept of *mūrti*. In fact the divine figures (*mūrti*) arising as particular concretizations of the Highest Vāsudeva can be likened, *mutatis mutandis*, to the multitude of the *jīva*-s coming into being as particular concretizations of the highest *puruṣa*, as well as to the *tattva*-s, i.e. the constitutive principles of the phenomenal world which evolve out of the primordial *prakṛti*.

This structure of three *rūpa*-s recalls the system of Yādavaprakāśa, with the proviso that it is only possible to speak of analogy of models of thought and not of identity of contents. The teachings of Yādavaprakāśa may be inferred only on the basis of the extant fragments attributed to him, the doxographies composed by later authors

⁶¹ For a detailed discussion of the creation theory of the PādS, see below, pp. 113ff.

and the arguments of his opponents⁶². A clear reference to the teaching which is relevant for the present discussion is found in the commentary *Śrutaprakāśikā* (ŚruP) by Sudarśanasūri (XIII-XIV century A. D.) on Rāmānuja's *Śrībhāṣya*: "The view of Yādavaprakāśa is that the three forms (*mūrti*) are [particular] concretizations (*aṁśa*) [and] the *brahman* is that of which [these] are concretizations."⁶³

This concept of the three *aṁśa*-s of *brahman* is better elucidated by the Viśiṣṭādvaita thinker Nārāyaṇārya (XII-XIII cent. A. D.), who, at the beginning of the V *adhikāra* of his *Nūtimālā* (NM), writes: "Moreover other [people] stated: the *brahman*, substance of being, self-luminous, fully endowed with the power of [becoming] everything, [is] fully endowed with [its] eternal manifestations (*vyūha*) named the enjoyer (*bhoktr*), what is to be enjoyed (*bhogyā*) [and] the ruling principle (*niyantr*). At [the time of] the reabsorption [of the world, everything,] from the ruling principle up to the evil beings, will be as if sleeping; at [the time of] the creation [of the world] that threefold *brahman* is appearing as [its] various manifestations (*vyūha*)."⁶⁴

Thus, for Yādavaprakāśa, the *brahman*, substance of Being (*saddravya*), endowed with the power of becoming everything (*sarvaśaktisamanvita*), at the time of *sṛṣṭi* takes a threefold form, unfolds into three particular concretizations (*aṁśa*), namely: the *bhoktr*, the enjoyer, i.e. the subject, the spiritual principle, the soul; the *bhogyā*,

⁶² For a detailed exposition and discussion of the teachings of Yādavaprakāśa, see Oberhammer 1997.

⁶³ *tisro mūrtayo'ṁśāḥ brahma aṁśīti yādavaprakāśapakṣaḥ* | . (ŚruP, I, 3, p. 104, 17). For a German translation see *Materialen* Nr. 3 in Oberhammer 1997: 108-109.

⁶⁴ NM, 5: *anye punar āhuh* [:] *saddravyaṁ svaprabhaṁ brahma sarvaśaktisamanvitam | bhoktrbhogyaniyantrākhyanītyavyūhasamanvitam || pralaye suptakalpāḥ syur niyantrā pāpavargiṇaḥ | sarge tat trividhaṁ brahma nānāvyūhavyavasthitam ||* . It is evident that by *anye* Nārāyaṇārya means Yādavaprakāśa, as is proved by Sudarśanasūri's statement quoted above. The fact that here Nārāyaṇārya uses the term *vyūha* instead of *aṁśa* is not relevant, because further on he writes: "And the enjoyer, what is to be enjoyed and the ruling principle exist as particular concretizations (*aṁśa*) of *brahman*..." *bhoktrbhogyaniyantāś ca vyavasthitāḥ brahmaṇo'ṁśaviśeṣāḥ*.

what is to be enjoyed, i.e. the object, matter along with its modifications; the *niyantr*, the ruling principle, i.e. *īśvara*, the Lord. It is clear that the Vāsudeva of the PādS corresponds to the *niyantr* of Yādavaprakāśa, the *puruṣa* to the *bhoktr* and the *prakṛti* to the *bhogyā*, so that the two models may be juxtaposed in the following way:

PādS	Yādavaprakāśa
BRAHMAN(RŪPIN)	BRAHMAN (AMŚIN)
3 RŪPA-S	3 AMŚA-S
PURUṢA PRAKṚTI VĀSUDEVA	BHOKTR BHOGYA NIYANTR (ĪŚVARA)

But the affinity between the thought of Yādavaprakāśa and the theology of the PādS goes beyond the agreement of the respective typological structures. For Yādavaprakāśa “... *brahman* [is] the substance of being, forming the nature of everything. And also with regard to its own activity, besides the fact of being by itself, [*brahman* is] self-luminous, since it is independent from [anything] other [than itself]. ... And the enjoyer, what is to be enjoyed and the ruling principle exist as particular concretizations of *brahman*; and therefore [they are] eternal.”⁶⁵ For the PādS too the *rūpa*-s, which replace the *aṃśa*-s of Yādavaprakāśa, are the expressions of the self-manifestation of the Supreme Being and, as such, they are eternal⁶⁶.

With regard to the specific features of each of the three *aṃśa*-s, and particularly with regard to the *bhoktr-aṃśa*, for Yādavaprakāśa “there [is] one *puruṣa* [which], endowed with the power of being an enjoyer [constitutes] the totality of the enjoyers. The individual souls are his manifestations, existing according to their respective bodies; and they [are] minute, infinite and eternal; and [they are] self-luminous on account of [their] being particular concretizations

⁶⁵ NM, 5: ... *sarvātmakam saddravyam brahma | svavyavahāre’pi svasattātirekeṇānyānapēkṣatvāt svayamprakāśaṁ ca | ... bhoktrbhogyaniyantāraś ca vyavasthitāḥ brahmaṇo’ṃśaviśeṣāḥ | ata eva ca nityāḥ |*.

⁶⁶ See below, p. 115.

of *brahman*; and in these [souls] some qualities of *brahman* become manifest, some [remain] concealed.”⁶⁷ As will be shown later on in the discussion on the doctrine of the soul, in the PādS too the unique *puruṣa* - *alias bhokṛ* - is the source and the totality of the *jīva*-s which, as embodied individual souls, are the particular concretizations of this highest spiritual principle, so that the latter, as a *jīva*, is narrowed on account of being confined into a body⁶⁸.

Regarding the *bhogyā-amśa*, for Yādavaprakāśa “the *prakṛti* ever-subject to transformation [is] the substance to be enjoyed (*bhogyā*), in which the qualities of *brahman* are mostly concealed; therefore she is said to be non spiritual.”⁶⁹ The idea advocated by the PādS that the Supreme Being, which is pure consciousness, takes the form (*rūpa*) of unconscious primordial matter, may be explained by Yādavaprakāśa’s statement that the *prakṛti* is insentient because in her the qualities of *brahman* are concealed.

Finally, Yādavaprakāśa’s definition of the *niyantr-amśa* may apply also to the PādS concept of the Supreme God: “The ruling principle is called the Lord. He has the quality of unsurpassed knowledge, bliss and sovereignty, has the power of accomplishing all and is self-luminous, on account of the fact of being a particular concretization (*amśa*) of *brahman*.”⁷⁰

In accordance with the *bhedābhedavāda* advocated by Yādavaprakāśa, the three *amśa*-s are distinct and non distinct from *brahman*. The relation of *brahman* to its *amśa*-s is compared with the relation of the ocean to foam, waves and bubbles, or with that of clay to pots, vases and so on. Actually, each of these two similes expresses one aspect of the polarity of the difference-and-non-difference (*bhedābheda*) between *brahman* and its particular concretizations. The ocean sim-

⁶⁷ NM, 5: *tatra bhokṛtṛvaśaktiyukto bhokṛtsamaṣṭipuruṣa ekaḥ | tasya vyūhāḥ pratiśarīram avasthitā jīvāḥ | te cānavo’nantā nityāḥ; brahmāmśatvena svaprakāśāś ca | teṣu ca brahmaguṇāḥ kecid āvirbhūtāḥ; kecit tirohitāḥ ||*.

⁶⁸ See below, pp. 129-131.

⁶⁹ NM, 5: *satatapariṇāmi prakṛtidravyaṃ bhogyam, tasmin brahmaguṇāḥ prāyeṇa tirohitāḥ | ata evācetanam ity ucyate |*.

⁷⁰ *Ibidem*: *niyantā nāmeśvaraḥ | sa niratiśayajñānānandaiśvryaguṇāḥ brahmāmśatvāt sarvaśaktiḥ svayamprakāśāś ca |*.

ile points to the identity (*abheda*) between *brahman* and its *aṃśa*-s: the waves curling and foaming out of the surface of the water cannot be substantially distinguished from the mass of water of the ocean; similarly, the Lord, the spiritual principle and primordial matter, being nothing but portions of *brahman*, share its substance, participate in its nature, so that they cannot be properly distinguished from the *brahman*. On the other hand, the clay simile stresses the difference (*bheda*) between *brahman* and its *aṃśa*-s: although the pots etc. are only modifications of the same matter, they are nevertheless endowed with individual and distinctive characteristics of shape, colour and so on, and have a reality and an identity of their own; similarly one should acknowledge the reality of the Lord, the spiritual principle and primordial matter, which, though they are only modifications of the *brahman*, yet they are entities of their own, endowed with ontological consistence⁷¹.

⁷¹ This teaching of Yādavaprākṣa is discussed by Rāmānuja. See the quotation from Rāmānuja contained in the commentary *Śrutaparakāśikā* by Sudarśanasūri on the *Śrībhāṣya*: “[There are people] who claim that the world is nothing else than *brahman*, [insofar as, according to their opinion,] the *brahman* is the cause [of the world] only as substance of pure being, [a substance] in which, [though] endowed with the power of [becoming] everything, the whole variety of modifications such as the fact of being enjoyer and so forth is absent. [They further claim that] at the time of the reabsorption [of the world], this [*brahman*], marked by the appeasement of every experience of pleasure and pain, [remains] steady, not unlike [that which is] devoid of spirit, albeit self-luminous as the *ātman* in deep sleep; [they claim that] at the time of the manifestation [of the world], as the clay substance in the shape of pots, vessels and so on, and as the ocean taking the form of foam, waves, bubbles and so on, this [*brahman*] is present in the state of three [particular] concretizations, by taking the form of enjoyer, what is to be enjoyed and ruling [principle]. Hence, [according to their opinion,] the fact of being enjoyer, what is to be enjoyed and ruling [principle], with the virtues and vices connected with it, is a mark of distinction, like the fact of being vessels, pots and jars, with the variety of effects relating to it; [and they claim that] it is possible [at the same time] that the enjoyer, what is to be enjoyed and the ruling [principle] pertain to one and the same reality, as pots, vessels, jars and so on pertain to one and the same [substance i.e.] clay. Hence [they claim that] indeed the substance of pure being (i.e. *brahman*) is present in every state.” *ye punaḥ – nirastanikhilabhoktr-tvādivikalpaviplavaṃ sarvaśaktiyuktaṃ sanmātradravyam eva kāraṇaṃ brahma*;

In the following discussion of the PādS doctrines of God and the soul, the suggested parallel with the ideas of Yādavaprakāśa will be substantiated by elucidating firstly, the relation of Vāsudeva to the Supreme *brahman* and secondly, the characteristics of the *puruṣa*- and *prakṛti-rūpa*-s with particular regard to the dynamics of their respective developments. Even as it stands, this interpretative hypothesis already allows discernment of the consistent structure underlying the theological teachings of the PādS, and enhances appreciation of the originality of the PādS contribution to the Pāñcarātra theology.

Brahman as God

The PādS gives its definition of *brahman* in a passage where Bhagavān, questioned by Brahmā about the nature of *brahman*, enumerates the characteristics of the Supreme Being; in doing so, He actually discloses Himself, illustrating His own manifold qualities. This self-revelation of the Lord provides a sort of theology *in nuce*, where the concept of God of the PādS is epitomized in its chief features. This passage (PādS, *jp*, 5, 28c-39), hereafter referred to as the *brahmalakṣaṇa* passage, is followed by explanations of this description of *brahman* (given in PādS, *jp*, 6, 1-29).

These two extracts of the PādS (*jp*, 5, 28c-39 and *jp*, 6, 1-29) relate directly to two portions of the AS⁷² and the JS⁷³, both of which deal

*tac ca pralāyavelāyāṃ śāntāśeṣasukhaduḥkhānubhāvaviśeṣaṃ svaprakāśaṃ api suṣuptātmapradāyavilakṣaṇaṃ avasthitam, sṛṣṭivelāyāṃ, mṛttikādravyaṃ iva ghaṭaśarāvādirūpaṃ, samudra iva ca phenataraṅgabudbudādirūpaḥ, bhokṛtṛbhogyaniyantrrūpeṇāṃśatrayāvastham avatiṣṭhate; ato bhokṛtṛbhogyaniyantrtvāni tatprayuktāś ca guṇadoṣāḥ śarāvātvaḥ ghaṭatvamaṇikatvavat tadgata-kāryabhedavac ca vyavatiṣṭhante; bhokṛtṛbhogyaniyantrṇāṃ sadātmanaiikatvaṃ ca ghaṭaśarāvamaṇikādīnāṃ mṛdātmanaiikatvavat upapadyate; ataḥ saṃmātradravyaṃ eva sarvāvasthāvasthitam iti – brahmaṇo'nanyaḥ jagadātiṣṭhante – ... |. (Śruṭ, II, p. 256, 13-20. For a German translation see *Materialen* Nr. 1 in Oberhammer 1997: 106-107).*

⁷² See AS, 2 and its Engl. transl. by Matsubara in Matsubara 1994: 171-177.

⁷³ See JS, 4, 60-123 and its German transl. by Rastelli in Rastelli 1999: 394-399.

with a description of *brahman*. A comparison of the PādS with the relevant passages of these two *saṃhitā*-s shows that, on the one hand, the PādS is clearly inspired, with regard to the main issues discussed, by the AS; while, on the other hand, the evidence of several parallels and textual correspondences with the JS proves that the text of the PādS is actually based on the text of the JS.

As for the AS, in its negative definition of *brahman*⁷⁴, which echoes the well known *neti neti* of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, the text of the AS is affected by the Upaniṣadic language which is also used by the author(s) of the PādS in their discussion on the nature of *brahman*. Moreover, some of the most important attributes and names mentioned and explained in the AS description of *brahman* are found also in the *brahmalakṣaṇa* passage of the PādS; for instance, in both texts the Supreme *brahman* is defined as infinite, eternal, beyond the range of speech and thought and is called *paramātmān*, Bhagavān, Vāsudeva⁷⁵.

Regarding the parallels between PādS and JS⁷⁶, the table⁷⁷ below shows how, in the discussion of the *brahmalakṣaṇa* passage contained in PādS, *jp*, 6, 1-29, the author(s) of the PādS have borrowed several similes from the JS, in order to explain the attributes ascribed to *brahman* in the *brahmalakṣaṇa* passage. The parallel verses indicated in the table, though not corresponding *verbatimim*, express the same, or very similar, ideas. Actually, the author(s) of the PādS do not discuss, develop or clarify the contents of the textual source to which they refer, they limit themselves to taking from the JS expressions or ideas which suit them in order to express their own views.

⁷⁴ See AS, 2, 47-52.

⁷⁵ See particularly AS, 2, 26c-37b.

⁷⁶ For a detailed comparison between the passages PādS, *jp*, 6, 1-29 and JS, 4, 72ff, see Rastelli 1999a: 60-69.

⁷⁷ The translation and comment of the verses of the PādS quoted in this table are found in the following pages, where the *brahmalakṣaṇa* passage, along with its explanations contained in PādS, *jp*, 6, 1-29, is discussed in detail.

verses from PādS, jp, 6, 1-29

sarvataḥ pāṇipādādi brahmaṇo
rūpaṃ īritam | arūpasyāpi tat sarvaṃ
kathayasva yathātatham || 6.1

carācaram idaṃ kṛtsnam ākṣiptaṃ
paramātmanā | yatas tat sarvapāṇitvaṃ
tasya lakṣaṇam ucyate || 6.2

deśakālavīṣeṣeṇa saṃyuktaṃ
parameṣṭhinā | yaugapadyena satataṃ
sarvataḥ*ṣpāt (em. ma prāk) prabhuḥ
smṛtaḥ || 6.3

tiryag ūrdhvaṃ adhaś coccair gatvā
bhāsayate jagat | ravir yathā tathā kṛtvā
viśvataścakṣur ucyate || 6.4

sarvaṃ puraḥsthiṭaṃ tasya vastujātaṃ
yatas tataḥ | viśvatomukhaṭā tasya
brahmaṇaḥ kamalāsana || 6.5

jñānendriyāṇi sarvāṇi śrayante śira
uttamam | tathā jñānāśrayatvena jñeyaḥ
sarvaśīrāḥ prabhuḥ || 6.6

vidūram avidūrasthaṃ tathā
vyavahitetare | śṛṇoti śabdasaṅghātaṃ
tenāsau sarvataḥśravāḥ || 6.7

bhinno vahnir ayaḥpiṇḍād abhinna iva
dṛśyate | tadvat vyaktād bahir bhūto
vyaktaṃ āvṛtya tiṣṭhati || 6.8

antarbahir abhivyāpya tiṣṭhaty eko
mahārṇave || 6.14cd nimagnasyeva
kumbhasya bahirantar apāṃ sthitiḥ |
6.15ab

vitatyā vāyur ākāśaṃ yathaikas tiṣṭhati
prabhuḥ | tathā carācaram viśvaṃ
vyāpya tiṣṭhaty ajaḥ svayam || 6.23

verses from JS, 4, 72ff

sarvataḥ pāṇipādādyair yad uktaṃ
lakṣaṇais tvaṣā | na caikam upapadyeta
ghaṭate tad yathādiśa || 4.72

tathā samastam ākṣiptaṃ yasmād vai
paramātmanā || 4.76cd tasmād vai
sarvapāṇitvaṃ sarvagasyānumīyate | 4.77ab

nāvacchinnaṃ hi deśeṇa na
kālenāntarikṣtam || 4.77cd atas
sarvagatatvād vai sarvataḥpāt prabhuḥ
smṛtaḥ | 4.78ab

ūrdhvaṃ tiryagadhoyātair yathoccair
bhāsayed raviḥ || 4.78cd tadvat
prakāśarūpatvāt sarvacakṣus tato hy ajaḥ
| 4.79ab

yathānantarasās sarve tasya santi
sadaiva hi | sarvatra śāntarūpasya atas
sarvamukhaḥ smṛtaḥ || 4.81

yathā sarveṣu gātreṣu pradhānaṃ gīyate
śīraḥ || 4.79cd
bhavē'smin prākṛtānām tu na tathā tasya
sattama | samatvāt pāvanatvāc ca siddhas
sarvaśīrāḥ prabhuḥ || 4.80

śabdarāśir yato viddhi sa eva
parameśvaraḥ | sarvataḥśrutimāṃś cāto
yathā dṛkśrāvākoragaḥ || 4.82

ayaḥpiṇḍe yathā vahnir bhinnaḥ tiṣṭhaty
abhinnavat | tadvat sarvaṃ idaṃ devo
vyāvṛtya paritiṣṭhati || 4.83

sarvādāntarगतasyaiva kumbhasya ca
yathodakam || 4.87cd tathā sarvasya
jagato bahirantar vyavasthiṭaḥ | 4.88ab

ākāśasya ca yo vāyus tad dvayor apy
abhedataḥ | tathā tasya vibhaktyaikyam
bhūtānām hi parasya ca || 4.92

Notwithstanding the similarities between the text of the PādS and those of the AS and JS, it is important to acknowledge that, in each of these three works, the discussion about the nature of *brahman* has a different meaning and a specific function, according to the theological views expressed by each *saṃhitā*. Thus, in order to understand the relevance of a definition of *brahman* for the elaboration of the doctrine of God in the PādS, what is important is to consider how the author(s) of the PādS, on the basis of the material provided by the other *saṃhitā*-s, have worked out their own ideas on this issue.

This is the *brahmalakṣaṇa* passage of the PādS: “[Brahmā:] Now, o Lord of the chiefs of the gods, please reveal to me what *brahman* is [28cd]. [Śrī Bhagavān:] *Brahman* is characterized by bliss, has the form of [undifferentiated] sound, [is] unchangeable, unaffected by defects and so on, [is] the actionless one, free from change, [29] indifferent to the pairs of opposites, unlimited, self-conscious, spotless, very subtle, independent, free, light to himself, having no beginning, [30] infinite, free from decay, tranquil, [that] whose end is unseen, not growing, permanent, one, perpetual bliss, consisting of consciousness, all-pervading, supreme, [31] free from growth and decline, called Vāsudeva, all-pervasive, prominent, the Lord of all beings, the Supreme Person (*puruṣottama*), [32] pure by its own nature, eternal, still, calm, immeasurable, beyond the qualities [of *prakṛti*], having qualities, granting all desires, [33] not to be worshipped by outcaste people, not rationally argued by those who are seeking deliverance, unimaginable, imaginable, wonderful, beyond the range of speech and thought, [34] having a body endowed with the six *guṇa*-s, all-powerful, resting on his own support, Lord of beings, the creator, abiding beyond the darkness, [35] the original source (*pradhāna*) different from *prakṛti*, the object of enjoyment free from an enjoyer, surpassing the cognition acquired through the means of knowledge; having eyes, heads and mouths everywhere, [36] having hands and feet everywhere, encompassing everything [yet] standing apart; abiding outwards and inwards, the pervading, the highest teaching of all *tantra*-s, [37] unborn, the syllable *om*, not manifest, consisting of the *mūla-mantra*, auspicious, having the

form of *māyā* and destroyer of *māyā*, eternally satisfied, the finest [38] and also the most gross, unequalled, gentle, bright, shapeless, shaped, strong, nothing but consciousness, peaceful. [39]⁷⁸.

In order to individuate the theological ideas conveyed by the text, it is necessary to rearrange the attributes ascribed to *brahman*, which are enumerated one after the other in an order that is not always logical; the most significant among them will then be classified so as to draw a coherent picture out of them. The discussion of the *brahmalakṣaṇa* passage that follows will touch on: a) the essential nature of the Supreme Being⁷⁹; b) the definition of *brahman* as God; c) the qualities pertaining to the Supreme Being; d) the relation of God to the world; e) the relationship between God and the souls and, particularly, the unknowability and accessibility of the Lord. Moreo-

⁷⁸ PādS, jp, 5, 28c-39: [*brahmā*] *idānīm devadeveśa brūhi me brahmalakṣaṇam* || 5.28cd [*śrībhagavān*] *ānandalakṣaṇam brahma nādarūpam avikriyam | kleśādibhir asaṃsprṣṭam niṣkriyam nirvikalpakam* || 5.29 *advandvam anavacchinnaṃ svasaṃvedyaṃ nirañjanam | susūkṣmaṃ svavaśaṃ svairaṃ svayaṃjyotir anādimat* || 5.30 *anantam akṣayaṃ śāntaṃ adrṣṭāntam avṛddhimat | dhruvam ekaṃ sadānandaṃ cidrūpaṃ sarvaṃ param* || 5.31 *gatāgatavinirmuktaṃ vāsudevāhvayaṃ *vibhum* (em. *vibhu*) | *prabhavaṃ sarvabhūtānām īśvaraṃ puruṣottamaṃ* || 5.32 *svabhāvanirmalaṃ nityaṃ nistarāṅgaṃ nirākulaṃ | nirmalyādaṃ *guṇātītaṃ* (em. *guṇātītaṃ*) *saguṇaṃ sarvakāmadam* || 5.33 *hīnavarṇair asaṃsevyāṃ mokṣamāñair atarkitaṃ | adhyeyaṃ dhyeyaṃ āścāryam avānmanasagocaram* || 5.34 *śāḍguṇyavigrahaṃ sarvaśakti svāśrayam āśritaṃ | bhūteṣaṃ bhūtakṛd bhūtaṃ tamaśaḥ parataḥ sthitaṃ* || 5.35 *pradhānaṃ prakṛter anyad bhogyaṃ bhoktrnirāṅkuśam | pramāṇapratyayātītaṃ sarvato 'kṣiṣiromukham* || 5.36 *sarvataḥ pāṇicaraṇaṃ sarvaṃ āvṛtya viṣṭhitaṃ | bahirantaḥsthitaṃ vyāpi sarvatantrāti-śāsanam* || 5.37 *ajam onkāraṃ avyaktaṃ mūlamantrātmakaṃ śivaṃ | māyārūpaṃ ca māyābhīn nityatrptaṃ aṇor aṇum* || 5.38 *mahato 'pi mahāsthūlam atulaṃ mṛdu dīptimat | amūrtaṃ mūrtaṃ ojasvi cidghanaṃ nirupadravam* || 5.39.

⁷⁹ Since all the attributes enumerated in this passage are explicitly ascribed to *brahman*, they are given in the neuter, even if they are to be implicitly ascribed to God; therefore, in referring to the subject of the passage, i.e. *brahman*/God, hereafter the “neutral” term “Supreme Being” will be used and, accordingly, the pronouns related to *brahman*/God will be in the neuter.

On the other hand, in the AS there is a progressive shifting from the neuter to the masculine and in the JS some of the attributes ascribed to *brahman* are given in the neuter and some in the masculine.

ver, it will be useful to supplement this passage with the explanations given in PādS, *jp*, 6, 1-29.

a) The essential nature of the Supreme Being. Some of the attributes mentioned in the *brahmalakṣaṇa* passage indicate that the Supreme Being, in Its true essence, is consciousness and bliss. Thus, the Supreme One is said to be “nothing but consciousness” (*cidghanā*), or “consisting of consciousness” (*cidrūpa*). As is explained in the text itself: “Being nothing but consciousness, [the Lord] illuminates Himself as well as another object, similarly a lamp illuminates itself as well as paintings and so on. [25]”⁸⁰. This simile highlights the effulgent nature of consciousness, which constitutes the essential nature of the Supreme One: this consciousness is self-illuminating, that is to say, it is self-aware - as expressed also by the attributes “light to itself” (*svayaṃjyoti*) and “conscious of itself” (*svasaṃvedya*) - and, at the same time, it illuminates other objects - as expressed by the attribute “bright” (*dīptimat*) - that is to say, it is conscious of other objects. This association between Supreme Consciousness and Light - which is due to their all-embracing power of enlightenment - is upheld also in the *incipit* of the account of the *mūrti*utpatti (the arising of the divine figures), where the Supreme Being in His transcendent state is metaphorically represented as a Light⁸¹.

To the nature of the Supreme Being pertains also Its being “characterized by bliss” (*āṇandalakṣaṇa*), or better, Its being Itself “perpetual bliss” (*sadānanda*)⁸². This essential feature - which is present in the well known Vedāntic definition of *brahman* as *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda* - is mentioned also in the definition of the supreme (*para*) form of the Lord, which is said to consist of “being, consciousness and bliss” (*saccidānanda*, PādS, *jp*, 6, 39c)⁸³.

⁸⁰ PādS, *jp*, 6, 25: *svaṃ paraṃ cāpi viśayaṃ prakāśayati cidghanāḥ | yathā pradīpaḥ svasyāpi paṭādeś ca prakāśakṛt ||* 6.25.

⁸¹ See PādS, *jp*, 2, 6c-7, quoted and commented below, pp. 80-81.

⁸² See also PādS, *jp*, 7, 33cd, where the Supreme *brahman* is said to be characterized by happiness (*paraṃ brahma prāpnoti sukhalakṣaṇam |* 7.33cd).

⁸³ Also in the JS the Supreme *brahman* is said to be characterized by *cit*, *ānanda*

b) *Brahman* as God. The idea that by *brahman* is denoted the supreme personal God is explicitly expressed by the attributes which identify *brahman* with “the Supreme Person” (*puruṣottama*), “the Lord of all beings” (*sarvabhūtānām īśvara*, or *bhūteśa*), he who is “called Vāsudeva” (*vāsudevāhvaya*). As one reads in Rāmānuja’s *Śrībhāṣya*: “By the word *brahman* is denoted the Supreme Person, who is by inherent nature free from all imperfections and possesses hosts of auspicious qualities, which are countless and of matchless excellence.”⁸⁴ As in Rāmānuja, so also in the PādS, it is the *brahman* endowed with every auspicious quality in the highest degree that is regarded as the *puruṣottama*.

c) The qualities of the Supreme Being. A series of attributes illustrates the qualities pertaining to the essential nature of the Supreme Being. First of all, It is beyond time and space, the dimensions encompassing the existence of the phenomenal world and of living beings. Thus, “having no beginning” (*anādimat*), being “unborn” (*aja*) and “free from decay” (*akṣaya*), It is “eternal” (*nitya*), “permanent” (*dhruva*). As a consequence of Its being eternal, since It is “not growing” (*avṛddhimat*), “free from growth and decline” (*gatāgatavinirmukta*), It is “unchangeable” (*avikriya*), “free from change” (*nirvikalpaka*). The eternity and immutability of the Supreme Being is linked with Its infinity, as well as with Its universal ubiquity and all-pervasiveness: It is “infinite” (*ananta*), “[that] whose end is unseen” (*adr̥ṣṭānta*), “unlimited” (*anavacchinna*), “immeasurable” (*nirmayāda*). Moreover, It is “all-pervading” (*sarvaga*, *vyāpin*) or “all-pervasive” (*vibhu*), “abiding outwards and inwards” (*bahirantahsthita*).

and light (see JS, 4, 2-3: *yat sarvavyāpakam devam paramam brahma śāśvatam | citsāmānyam jagaty asmin paramānandalakṣaṇam || 4.2 vāsudevādbhinnaṁ tu vahnyarkenduśataprabham | sa vāsudevo bhagavāms taddharmā parameśvaraḥ || 4.3*.) Moreover, the incipit of the *brahmatattva* passage of the JS, like that of the *brahmalakṣaṇa* passage of the PādS, is: *ānandalakṣaṇam brahma...4, 60a*.

⁸⁴ *Śrībhāṣya*, I, 1, 1: *brahmaśabdena svabhāvato nirastanikhiladoṣo’navadhikātiśayāsamkhyeyakalyāṇaguṇagaṇaḥ puruṣottamobhidhīyate* (See Rāmānuja 1914: 2). Engl. transl. by Carman in Carman 1974: 67.

According to the explanations given in *jp*, 6, 1-29, the qualities of eternity, infinity and all-pervasiveness are explicitly related to the Lord, thereby confirming that by *brahman* is meant the Supreme personal God. In fact, one reads: “the state of having no beginning and likewise of having no end is due to the fact that the Lord exists from eternity [12ab]”⁸⁵, “because of His being simultaneously connected with different places and times, the Lord has been previously declared, by the Supreme Being, as omnipresent and eternal [3]”⁸⁶ and “because of the connection of the Supreme *ātman* with the highest degree of greatness, the all-pervasiveness of Lord Viṣṇu is taught by the sages [11]”⁸⁷.

Furthermore, with regard to the quality of all-pervasiveness, it is stated: “as the wind which is diffused in the ether remains one and the same, similarly the eternal Lord, who has pervaded the whole world with its movable and immovable beings, continues to be Himself [23]”⁸⁸ and “the fire [which is] distinct from a piece of iron looks as if [it were] not distinct [from it], likewise, [though] being outside the manifested world, [the Lord] is present, covering the manifested world. [8]”⁸⁹. By means of the image of the wind blowing through the atmosphere and, even more clearly, by the well known simile of the fire within the melted metal, the text conveys the idea of immanence and yet transcendence of the Lord: the Lord imbues and permeates the whole world with His own substance but nevertheless

⁸⁵ PādS, *jp*, 6, 12ab: *anāditvam ajatvena tathaivānantatā vibhoḥ* | 6.12ab. *Ajatvena*, translated “due to the fact that [the Lord] exists from eternity“, literally means “due to the fact of being unborn, not engendered by anyone“.

⁸⁶ *Ibidem*, 3: *deśakālavīṣeṣeṇa saṃyuktam parameṣṭhinā* | *yaugapadyena satatam sarvataḥ *pāt* (em. *ma prāk*) *prabhuḥ smṛtaḥ* || 6.3. See also JS, 4, 77c-78b in the table above.

⁸⁷ *Ibidem*, 11: *parameṇa mahatvena saṃyogāt paramātmanaḥ* | *vyāpitvam ucyaṭe viṣṇor īśvarasya manīṣibhiḥ* || 6.11.

⁸⁸ *Ibidem*, 23: *vitatya vāyur ākāśam yathaikas tiṣṭhati prabhuḥ* | *tathā carācaram viśvam vyāpya tiṣṭhati ajah svayam* || 6.23. A similar image occurs also in JS, 4, 92 (see the table above).

⁸⁹ *Ibidem*, 8: *bhinno vahnir ayaḥpiṇḍād abhinna iva drśyate* | *tadvad vyaktād bahir bhūto vyaktam āvṛtya tiṣṭhati* || 6.8. This simile occurs also in JS, 4, 83 (see the table above).

remains separated from it. On the other hand, the immanence, the ultimate non-difference between God and the world, is stressed in a simile which is meant to illustrate the expression “abiding outwards and inwards” (*bahirantaḥsthita*), namely: “the One is present in the ocean [of worldly existence], embracing [it] outside and inside, as the water is inside and outside an immersed jar [14c-15b]”⁹⁰.

But the expression which conveys most vividly the idea of the immanence and yet transcendence of the Supreme Being is: “having eyes, heads and mouths everywhere, having hands and feet everywhere, encompassing everything [yet] standing apart” (*sarvato’kṣīsiromukham sarvataḥ pāṇicaraṇaṁ sarvam āvṛtya viṣṭhitam*). This locution is taken from a verse of the BhG⁹¹, which is itself taken *verbatim* from the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (3, 16). It is noteworthy that the PādS replaces the verb *tiṣṭhati*, which, from the root *sthā*, means “it stands, it is present, it abides”, with *viṣṭhita*, which, from the same root *sthā*, but with the prefix *vi* which is used to express distinction, means “standing apart”. Thereby the text stresses the transcendence of the Supreme Being: even if God, represented with bodily features, is “embracing”, so to speak, the world (*sarvam āvṛtya*), He remains, in Himself, separated from the world (*viṣṭhita*). The transcendence of the Supreme Being is clearly expressed also by another verse of the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*: “the *Puruṣa* has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet; having surrounded the earth from all sides, He stands ten fingers beyond it”⁹². This locution is considered to be so pregnant with meaning that the explanations of the *brahmalakṣaṇa* passage begin with a question concerning it; the locution is then illustrated by means of several similes⁹³.

⁹⁰ *Ibidem*, 14c-15b: *antarbahir abhivyāpya tiṣṭhaty eko mahārṇave || 6.14cd nimagnasyeva kumbhasya bahirantar apāṁ sthitiḥ | 6.15ab*. This simile occurs also in JS, 4, 87c-88b (see the table above).

⁹¹ See BhG, 13, 13: *sarvataḥ pāṇipādaṁ tat sarvato’kṣīsiromukham sarvataḥ śrutimal loka sarvam āvṛtya tiṣṭhati*.

⁹² ŚU, 3, 14: *sahasraśīrṣā puruṣaḥ sahasrākṣaḥ sahasrapāt sa bhūmiṁ viśvato vṛtvā aty atiṣṭhad daśāṅgulam*.

⁹³ See PādS, jp, 6, 1-2, 4-7: “[Brahmā:] The form of *brahman* which - though [*brahman* is itself] formless - has hands and feet everywhere and so on, has

Further, essential qualities pertaining to divine nature are purity and perfection. Thus, the Supreme Being is said to be “pure by its own nature” (*svabhāvanirmala*), “spotless” (*nirañjana*). To be perfect means not only to be “unaffected by defects and so on” (*kleśādibhir asaṃsprṛṣṭa*), i.e. devoid of any imperfections, but also to be positively endowed, to the highest degree, with every perfection; thus the Supreme Being is said to have “a body endowed with the six *guṇa*-s” (*ṣaḍguṇyavigraha*).

The latter locution (*ṣaḍguṇyavigraha*) needs some elucidation. The expression *ṣaḍguṇya* is used in relation to the Supreme *brahman* both in the AS and in the JS⁹⁴. In the PādS, as well as in the AS

been described; [now] explain [to me] everything about it, in conformity with truth. [1] [Śrī Bhagavān:] Since all this world with its movable and immovable beings is produced by the Supreme *ātman*, the latter is described as having hands everywhere. [2]... As the sun, reaching to all directions, illuminates the world, so [*brahman*] is called one who has eyes on all sides. [4] Since every object is present in front of it, *brahman* is [called] one whose mouth is turned everywhere, o you having the lotus as a seat. [5] All the organs of knowledge depend on the head, which is the chief [among them]; thus the Lord, being that on which knowledge depends, is to be known as all-heads. [6] Since he hears the multitude of sounds, whether distant or near, disturbed or not, he [is called] one who has ears everywhere. [7]” [*brahmā*] *sarvataḥ pāṇipādādi brahmaṇo rūpam īritam | arūpasya 'pi tat sarvaṃ kathayasva yathātatham* || 6.1 [Śrībhagavān] *carācaram idaṃ kṛtsnam ākṣiptaṃ paramātmānā | yatas tat sarvapāṇitvaṃ tasya lakṣaṇam ucyate* || 6.2 ... *tiryag ūrdhvam adhaś coccair gatvā bhāsayate jagat | ravir yathā tathā kṛtvā viśvataścakṣur ucyate* || 6.4 *sarvaṃ puraḥsthitam tasya vastujātaṃ yatas tataḥ | viśvatomukhatā tasya brahmaṇaḥ kamalāsana* || 6.5 *jñānendriyāṇi sarvāṇi śrayante śira uttamam | tathā jñānāśrayatvena jñeyāḥ sarvaśirāḥ prabhuḥ* || 6.6 *vidūram avidūrastham tathā vyavahitetare | śṛṇoti śabdasaṅghātaṃ tenāsau sarvataḥśravāḥ* || 6.7.

This expression is also found in the JS (see JS, 4, 63c-64b: *sarvatra karavāṅkpadam sarvato 'kṣīsiromukham* || 4.63cd *sarvataḥśrutimad viddhi sarvaṃ āvṛtya tiṣṭhati* | 4.64ab), where, as in the PādS, it is commented through a series of similes. As for the parallels between the two texts, verse 6.1 of the PādS is comparable with verse 4.72 of the JS, then 6.2 with 76c-77b, 6.4 with 78c-79b, 6.5 with 81, 6.6 with 79c-80, 6.7 with 82 (see the table above).

⁹⁴ See AS, 2, 15ab, 28ab, 53cd, 62ab: *ṣaḍguṇyaṃ kiṃ paraṃ brahma kiṃ prakāraṃ ca tad bhavet* | 2.15ab; *ṣaḍguṇyaguṇayogena bhagavān parikīrtitaḥ* | 2.28ab; *ṣaḍguṇyaṃ tat paraṃ brahma sarvakāraṇakāraṇam* || 2.53cd; *ṣaḍguṇyaṃ tat paraṃ brahma svaśaktiparibṛṇhitam* | 2.62ab.

and in the LT, the qualification of being endowed with the six divine qualities is specifically ascribed to the *vyūha* Vāsudeva, in which all the six *guṇa*-s - namely: *jñāna* (knowledge), *śakti* (power), *bala* (strength), *aiśvarya* (sovereignty), *vīrya* (valour or vigour) and *tejas* (splendour)⁹⁵ - are said to be fully manifest in the same degree and proportion⁹⁶. To designate both the Supreme *brahman* and the *vyūha*

See JS, 4, 101ab: *yuktaś cāntas sarvaśaktiḥ śāḍguṇyamahimānvitah* | 4.101ab.

See also PādS, *jp*, 6, 26: “Hari, devoid of colours such as white and so on, shines because He is endowed with the six *guṇa*-s beginning with knowledge, [*guṇa*-s which] do not belong to anyone else. [26]” *varṇaiḥ sitādibhir hīnas tadvad bhāsayate hariḥ* | *śadbhir guṇair anvitatvāt jñānādibhir ananyagaiḥ* || 6.26. Hari stands here for the Supreme God.

⁹⁵ The PādS does not explain what the six divine qualities consist of. Actually, the six *guṇa*-s have different meanings in the Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā*-s where this topic is discussed (for a detailed account of the definitions of the six *guṇa*-s given in several Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā*-s, namely in the AS, LT, PauśS and ViśS, see Rastelli 2006: 277-281). It is worth summarizing here the description of the six *guṇa*-s given in chapter 2 of the AS, both because the latter may be considered as a source from which the author(s) of the PādS took inspiration for their description of *brahman*, and because the definitions given there are especially clear and synthetic. So, according to the AS, *jñāna* (knowledge), which is regarded as the highest among the six *guṇa*-s, consists of both self-knowledge, self-enlightenment, and knowledge of all things; *śakti* is the power of becoming the material cause of the world; *aiśvarya* (sovereignty) denotes the complete freedom and independence of God as creator of the world; *bala* (strength) is the force of creating and sustaining the world without effort or fatigue; *vīrya* (valour or vigour) denotes the changelessness and firmness of God, in spite of His being the material cause of the world; *tejas* (splendour) implies God's self-sufficiency, i.e. His having no need of any cooperating agent. (See AS, 2, 56-62: *ajādaṃ svātmasaṃbodhi nityaṃ sarvāvagāhanam | jñānaṃ nāma guṇaṃ prāhuḥ prathamam guṇacintakāḥ* || 2.56 *svarūpaṃ brahmaṇas tac ca guṇaś ca parigīyate | jagatprakṛtibhāvo yaḥ sā śaktiḥ parikīrtitā* || 2.57 *kartṛtvaṃ nāma yat tasya svātantryaparibṛṇhitam | aiśvaryaṃ nāma tat proktaṃ guṇatattvārthacintakaiḥ* || 2.58 *śramahānis tu yā tasya satataṃ kurvato jagat | balaṃ nāma guṇas tasya kathito guṇacintakaiḥ* || 2.59 *tasyopādānabhāve 'pi vikāraviraho hi yaḥ | vīryaṃ nāma guṇaḥ so 'yam acyutatvāparāhvayam* || 2.60 *sahakāryanapekṣā yā tat tejaḥ samudāhṛtam | ete śaktyādayaḥ pañca guṇā jñānasya kīrtitāḥ* || 2.61 *jñānam eva paraṃ rūpaṃ brahmaṇaḥ paramātmanaḥ | śāḍguṇyaṃ tat paraṃ brahma svaśaktiparibṛṇhitam | bahu syām iti saṃkalpaṃ bhajate tat sudarśanam* || 2.62).

⁹⁶ As for the PādS, see *jp*, 2, 19, quoted and commented below, pp. 90-91.

Vāsudeva as *śāḍguṇya*, must then signify that the Supreme *brahman*, i.e. the Supreme God, manifesting Himself as *vyūha* Vāsudeva, possesses the six *guṇa*-s. Furthermore, the PādS specifies that the *brahman* has a “body” (*vigraha*) endowed with the six *guṇa*-s; the expression *śāḍguṇyavigraha*, which does not occur in the JS, might have been taken by the author(s) of the PādS from the AS, where it is used, in different contexts, in relation both to the Supreme God⁹⁷ and to the *vyūha*-s⁹⁸. Since the Supreme God has a heavenly bodily form, the definition of *brahman* as *śāḍguṇyavigraha* means that the Supreme God, i.e. the *para* Vāsudeva, by taking the bodily shape (*vigraha*)⁹⁹ of the *vyūha* Vāsudeva, possesses the six *guṇa*-s.

d) God and the world. Besides the attributes discussed above, illustrating the essential nature and the chief qualities of the Supreme Being, the *brahmalakṣaṇa* passage also highlights the relational as-

See AS, 5, 32c-34b: “The infinite Bhagavān, Viṣṇu, possessed of His *śakti*, the Supreme Person, filled with the still aggregate of the six qualities, [is] similar to a waveless sea; because of the simultaneous appearing of the six qualities, [which is] urged by Himself, this infinite Bhagavān [becomes] the eternal Vāsudeva. [32c-34b]” *ananto bhagavān viṣṇuḥ śaktimān puruṣottamaḥ || 5.32cd pūrṇastimitaśāḍguṇyo nistarāṅgārṇavopamaḥ | śaṇṇām yugapadunmeśād guṇānām svapracoditāt || 5.33 ananta eva bhagavān vāsudevaḥ sanātanaḥ || 5.34ab*. See LT, 4, 12-13: “My first form, [arising] out of [my] wish to create, [is] Vāsudeva, resembling a waveless sea, a sky without clouds. [12] When knowledge (*jñāna*), power (*śakti*), strength (*bala*), sovereignty (*aiśvarya*), vigour (*vīrya*) and splendour (*tejas*) come forth [as] wholly and equally [manifest], that is called Vāsudeva. [13]” *atarāṅgārṇavābhāsam *astāmbhodāmbaropamam* (em. E. I. *anambhodāmbaropamam*) | *rūpaṃ sisṛkṣamānāyā vāsudevo mamādimam || 4.12 jñānaśaktibalaiśvaryaivīryatejāṃsyasāśataḥ | unmiṣanti yadā tulyaṃ vāsudevas tadocyate || 4.13*.

⁹⁷ See AS, 33, 14c-15b: “Bhagavān, whose true nature is knowledge, has a body fully endowed with the six divine qualities. He is the sole creator, protector and destroyer of all beings.” *jñānasvarūpo bhagavān pūrṇaśāḍguṇyavigrahaḥ || 33.14cd sa eva sarvabhūtānām sraṣṭā pālayitāntakaḥ || 33.15ab*.

⁹⁸ See AS, 9, 32c: ... *śāḍguṇyavigrahair vyūhaiḥ* ...

⁹⁹ Although the term *vigraha* might evoke the ideas developed in the late Viśiṣṭādvaita, namely that the divine body is composed by the substance called *suddhasattva*, there is no trace of the influence of such a view in the PādS.

pect of *brahman*, outlining the main features of God's relation to the world and to individual souls.

God is "the creator" (*bhūtakṛt*) of the world, He is "all-powerful" (*sarvaśakti*), that is to say, while creating, He resorts to His almightiness, because He is both the efficient and the material cause of the world. The causal relation of God to the world is marked by the world's one-sided dependence on God; whereas God, for His part, is completely "free" (*svaira*) and "independent" (*svavaśa*). The utter self-dependence of the Lord is correlated with His freedom from any necessity, urge or purpose to act: His being "eternally satisfied" (*nityatrpta*) implies that all His activity, the creation of the world included, is an end in itself, is mere play (*kṛdā*). This is explicitly expressed in a dialogue between Brahmā and Bhagavān: "[Brahmā:] Who are you, o Puruṣottama, a being with a wonderful appearance. [Please] reveal yourself to me, who am eager to know [you]. [22] [Śrī Bhagavān:] Know that I am the creator of all the worlds, the ancient highest being, without beginning, middle and end, immovable, eternal, [23] the origin of the whole universe. ... [24a] [Brahmā:] ... For you there is nothing unknown which is to be known and there is nothing undone which is to be done. [25cd] In the three worlds one does not find anything which is to be obtained and which is not already obtained [by you]. [Now] tell [me] for which reason you are urged to create the universe and the living beings. [26] [Śrī Bhagavān:] There is no reason, I merely play, o Brahmā, by creating, destroying and maintaining all the worlds. [27]"¹⁰⁰.

The relationship between God and the world is illustrated by a simile: "as the sun, the ruler, has risen to emit and withdraw the rays of light, so Hari, the Lord, [has risen] to emit and withdraw

¹⁰⁰ PādS, jp, 3, 22-27: [brahmā] kas tvam atyadbhūtākāraḥ puruṣaḥ puruṣottama | mahyaṃ jijñāsamānāya ātmānaṃ darśayasva me || 3.22 [śrībhagavān] sraṣṭāraṃ sarvalokānāṃ purāṇaṃ puruṣaṃ param | anādimadhyanidhanaṃ viddhi mām acalaṃ dhruvaṃ || 3.23 kāraṇaṃ sarvalokasya ... | 3.24a [brahmā] ... ajñātaṃ nāsti te jñeyaṃ kartavyaṃ nāsti cākṛtaṃ || 3.25cd nānavāptam avāptavyaṃ triṣu lokeṣu vidyate | kasya hetor jagat sraṣṭuṃ janān prerayase vada || 3.26 [śrībhagavān] krīdāmi kevalaṃ sṛṣṭisaṃhārāpālanaṃ | lokānāṃ api sarveṣāṃ ahaṃ kenāpi hetunā || 3.27.

the whole world. [24]”¹⁰¹. By the image of the sun emitting its rays, the text conveys the idea that the causal relation of God to the universe is that of an emanation, a manifestation, where the effect, the universe, is already present in a potential state in the cause, God. This view, which is basically in accordance with the *satkāryavāda* (i.e. the Sāṃkhya theory of causation), is further expressed through a series of similes: “Bhagavān is described by the sages as the Supreme *ātman* containing the whole world, [likewise] clarified butter [is contained] in coagulated milk, sesame oil in sesame seed and sweetness in lumps of sugar and so on: [27] one does not see it, [but] by the capacity of apprehension one understands it as truly being there, formless, not separated from the substance. [28]”¹⁰². These metaphors mean that, as clarified butter and sesame oil are mere modifications of the substances out of which they are made, namely, respectively, coagulated milk and sesame seeds (the simile concerning lumps of sugar and sweetness is less well fitting), likewise, the universe is a modification of the *paramātman*, which constitutes its substratum. Moreover, even before taking shape and materializing as a modification of the *paramātman*, the universe exists already, formless, not manifest, within the *paramātman*. This relationship between God and the universe in terms of substratum and modification of the underlying substance is the same as that between the *brahman* and its *aṃśa*-s, as envisaged by Yādavaprakāśa.

As for the manner in which the world is manifested out of the *paramātman*, some attributes mentioned in the *brahmalakṣaṇa* passage become intelligible in the light of the creation theory of the PādS. Thus, in saying that the Supreme Being is “the original source different from *prakṛti*” (*pradhānaṃ prakṛter anyat*), the text means that the Supreme Being, the *paramātman*, is the first, efficient cause giving impulse to the evolution of the *prakṛti*, out of which the world

¹⁰¹ PādS, jp, 6, 24: *sraṣṭuṃ saṃhartuṃ īśāno rāśmīn abhyudito raviḥ | yathā tathā jagat sarvaṃ sraṣṭuṃ hartuṃ prabhur hariḥ* || 6.24.

¹⁰² *Ibidem*, 27-28: *bhagavān kathitaḥ sadbhiḥ paramātmā jaganmayaḥ | dadhni sarpiḥ tile tailaṃ mādhyamaṃ ca guḍādiṣu* || 6.27 *abhinnaṃ tatvato dravyād amūrtaṃ tatra ca sthitaṃ | upalambhanasāmartyād dṛśyate na tad īkṣyate* || 6.28.

of living beings is then brought forth; the *paramātmān* is said to be “different” (*anya*) from *prakṛti*, on account of the difference-and-non-difference which characterizes their relationship of *rūpin* and *rūpa*. The attributes of being “beyond the qualities” [of the *prakṛti*] (*guṇātīta*), of being “not manifest” (*avyakta*) and of “having qualities” (*saguṇa*) can be then understood from the point of view of the progressive unfolding of the Supreme Being in the world: in His aspect of *puruṣa*, the *paramātmān* is regarded as being “beyond the qualities” (*guṇātīta*), because the *puruṣa*, the spiritual principle, is free from the three *guṇa*-s which characterize the phenomenal world of the *prakṛti*; in His *prakṛti-rūpa*, when the *prakṛti* is still in her not manifest (*avyakta*), undeveloped state, the *paramātmān* Himself is regarded as the “not manifest” (*avyakta*); when the *prakṛti* is evolving as the phenomenal world marked by the three *guṇa*-s, then the *paramātmān* too can be regarded as “having qualities” (*saguṇa*). Even if this apparently contradictory feature of the *paramātmān* - namely His being devoid-of-yet-endowed-with the *guṇa*-s - may be understood from the perspective of the dynamics of the evolution of the world, nonetheless the text expresses, by means of a simile, the ultimate freedom of the Supreme Being from the *guṇa*-s of *prakṛti*: “Although He is not connected to the three *guṇa*-s, it is as if He were connected to them, as clear water lying on the lotus leaves. [13c-14b]”¹⁰³. Just as drops of water, because of the so-called lotus-effect, cannot penetrate the lotus leaves on which they lie, similarly the impression is given of God being connected with the *guṇa*-s of *prakṛti*, but He is not really affected by them.

e) Unknowability and accessibility of God. With regard to the relationship between God and individual souls, the aspect of this relation which is specifically touched upon in the *brahmalakṣaṇa* passage concerns the possibility of understanding, by human beings, the nature of God. In His being-in-Himself, He is regarded as unknowable through those means of knowledge which are at the

¹⁰³ PādS, jp, 6, 13c-14b: *tribhir guṇair abaddho 'pi baddhavat teṣu tiṣṭhati* || 6.13cd *yathā puṣkaraparṇeṣu svaccham ambhaḥ pratiṣṭhitam* | 6.14ab.

disposal of beings living in the phenomenal world: the Supreme Being is “surpassing the cognition acquired through the means of knowledge” (*pramāṇapratyayātīta*), “beyond the range of speech and thought” (*avāṇmanasagocara*), “not rationally argued by those who are seeking deliverance” (*mokṣamāṇair atarkita*). However, the ignorance which bewilders human beings on account of the power of the divine *māyā*, preventing them from grasping the true nature of God, may be removed with the help of divine grace, because the Lord “having the form of *māyā*” is also “the destroyer of *māyā*” (*māyārūpaṃ ca māyābhida*). Hence, it is thanks to the gracious disposition of the Lord - expressed in the text by such attributes as “gentle” (*mṛdu*) and “granting all desires” (*sarvakāmada*) - that He reveals Himself to human beings, so that what is “unimaginable” (*adhyeya*) becomes “imaginable” (*dhyeya*). Accordingly, in order to become accessible to human beings and to establish a relation with them, the “shapeless” (*amūrta*) becomes “shaped” (*mūrta*), that is to say, God takes forms in which He can be visualized in meditation (*dhyeya*) and worshipped by His devotees. Such attributes as “supreme” (*para*), “very subtle” (*susūkṣma*) and “the finest and also the most gross” (*aṇor aṇum mahato 'pi mahāsthūlam*) allude to the threefold form in which God reveals Himself and is accordingly meditated on and worshipped by the *yogin*-devotee, namely, His gross (*sthūla*), subtle (*sūkṣma*) and supreme (*para*) form¹⁰⁴.

Finally, the *brahmalakṣaṇa* passage includes mention of the *mantra*-form of God, which actually represents His most powerful manifestation, the embodiment of His true essence. Besides the statement that the Supreme Being is “the syllable *om*” (*oṃkāra*) - in accordance with the well known identification of the *brahman* with the *pranava* - there are expressions, such as “consisting of the *mūla-mantra*” (*mūlamantrātmaka*) and “having the form of [undifferentiated] sound” (*nādarūpa*), which allude to concrete and specific ways in which the devotee can approach God in His *mantra*-form, that is to say, to specific yogic-ritual-meditative practices. The *mūlamantra* is

¹⁰⁴ See *Ibidem*, 37-39, quoted and discussed below, pp. 274-277.

the chief *mantra* of a particular divine figure; the meditating devotee visualizes the *mūlamantra*, i.e. the deity in its *mantra*-form, progressively reducing the *mantra* into its increasingly subtle components: first in its phonic seed, the *bīja*, then in the phonic elements of the *bīja*, *bindu* and *nāda*, until the deity of the *mantra* is contemplated as “having the form of [undifferentiated] sound” (*nādarūpa*)¹⁰⁵.

* * *

Analysis of the *brahmalakṣaṇa* passage provides a picture in which the main features of the concept of God of the PādS are brought together: by *brahman* is meant the personal God, the *puruṣottama*, Vāsudeva, who, being in Himself bright consciousness and bliss, is eternal, infinite, all-pervading, transcendent yet immanent, pure and endowed with every perfection and divine quality; He is the efficient and material cause of the world, playful yet merciful, formless yet taking forms in order to become accessible to His devotees.

Compared with the parallel passages occurring in the JS and AS, this exhaustive description of the characteristics of *brahman* proves to have a particularly relevant function in the frame of the theological teachings of the PādS. In fact, such a discussion about the nature of *brahman*, marked as it is by an orthodox-Brahmanic outlook, is certainly consistent with the vision of *śrīṣṭi* of the PādS and, specifically, it is essential for the elaboration of the threefold structure by which the PādS represents the relation of the Supreme Being to His *rūpa*-s (Vāsudeva, *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*). The PādS conceives both the appearance of Vāsudeva together with the successive arising of the *mūrti*-s and the manifestation of the world as a dynamic process of self-differentiation and progressive concretization of the highest, transcendent Principle, *brahman*, the Supreme Being. In this vision of the self-unfolding of the the Supreme Being there is no trace, either of the typically tantric concept of the godhead's polarity in masculine and feminine, or of the personification of the *śakti* -

¹⁰⁵ An example of this kind of meditation is discussed below, pp. 294-297.

representing the powerful, active energy of the Lord - as a goddess. On the other hand, this concept is of great consequence in the JS and AS, as well as in other Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā*-s, which provide examples of different visions of the role of the *śakti*, or of the *śakti*-s, in the process of creation¹⁰⁶.

In the AS the concept of *śakti* is highly elaborated: the Supreme *brahman*, Bhagavān, possesses the *śakti* (*śaktimat*, AS, 3, 25a) and their relation to each other is compared to that of the moonlight to the moon (*Ibidem*, 5b), of the attribute (*dharma*) to its bearer (*dharmin*), of existence (*bhāva*) to the existing (*bhavat*) (*Ibidem*, 25d-26a), of the I-ness (*ahaṃtā*) to the I (*aham*) (*Ibidem*, 43b). The *śakti* is said to be Viṣṇu's vibration in the form of the world (*viṣṇoḥ prasphurattā jaganmayī*, *Ibidem*, 6b). She flashes up, with an infinitely small portion of herself, in her dual aspect of *kriyā-śakti* and *bhūti-śakti*: the *kriyā-śakti* is identical with the will (*saṃkalpa*) of Viṣṇu and is symbolized by His Sudarśana, the *bhūti-śakti* represents the material cause of the universe¹⁰⁷.

In the JS too the relationship between God and the *śakti* is complex: at the very beginning of pure creation the *śakti* abides within the Lord, different but not separate from Him; she represents His

¹⁰⁶ In the LT, the *śakti* plays a central role in setting in motion the process of creation. As Gupta observes, Lakṣmī, the *śakti* of the Lord, the divine consort "actually replaces God by performing all his divine functions... every manifestation of God is *śakti*'s manifestation, be it transcendental as in the case of the *vyūha*-s, *vibhāva*-s, incarnations, etc., or be it the material creation" (Gupta (ed.) 1972: XXV). But the case of the LT seems to be unique among the Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā*-s, at least as far as the better known among them are concerned.

A tantric outlook finds expression in the account of *sr̥ṣṭi* given in the ParS: God is not directly involved in creation, the process of evolution of the world can begin only when the five divine *śakti*-s, called *pañcopaniṣad*, divide themselves into the fifteen sources (*yonī*) of the three *guṇa*-s which constitute the *prakṛti*. (See ParS, 2, 28-106 and Czerniak-Drożdżowicz 2003: 110-111).

¹⁰⁷ See AS, 5, 6-9. The concept of *śakti* is expounded in detail in chapter 3 of the AS, which is entirely devoted to this topic, as well as in chapter 5, which deals with the pure creation (*śuddhasr̥ṣṭi*). See, for the Engl. transl. of these two chapters, Matsubara 1994: 183-188 and 203-208. See also Schrader 1916: 29-31 and 102-103.

power to act and the creation process can begin only when she is fully manifest. But, if on the one hand the deciding factor which allows the *śakti* to fulfill her creative function is the will, the desire (*saṃkalpa*) of God and His project of a world, on the other hand what gives rise to this divine *saṃkalpa* is indeed the *śakti*. Furthermore, when the task of creation is accomplished and God remains, in relation to the world, both transcendent and immanent, His all-pervasiveness within the world is made possible thanks to the presence of the *śakti* ¹⁰⁸.

Vice versa, in the PādS the will and power which enables the self-differentiation of the Supreme God into particular divine figures, as well as His self-unfolding in the world, is not the expression of the *śakti*, conceived as an independent principle. Therefore, compared to the situation of both AS and JS, the discussion of the nature of *brahman* turns out to be very important for the elaboration of the theological and cosmological views of the PādS.

Vāsudeva: rūpa of the Supreme Being

The account of creation (*sṛṣṭi*), corresponding to what in other Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā*-s is referred to as “pure creation” (*śuddhasṛṣṭi*), in the PādS relates the arising of the *mūrti*-s (*mūrtyutpatti*), that is to say, the self-differentiation of the Supreme God into particular, concrete, divine figures, in a process of divine emanation belonging to an ontological level which concerns the inner dynamics of the godhead and is set apart from the level of manifestation of the phenomenal world.

This is the *incipit* of the account of *sṛṣṭi*: “[There is] a Light which is without beginning, middle and end, without growth and decay, unshakeable, eternal, incomparable, eternally satisfied, pure, having every form [and yet] having no form, beyond the darkness, imperishable. [6c-7]”¹⁰⁹.

¹⁰⁸ For a discussion of this topic, see Rastelli 1999: 43-44.

¹⁰⁹ PādS, *jp*, 2, 6c-7: *ādimadhyāntarahitam avṛddhikṣayam acyutam || 2.6cd nityam*

Most of the attributes ascribed to this Light occur also in the description of *brahman* given in the *brahmalakṣaṇa* passage¹¹⁰, thereby meaning that this Light represents the Absolute, *brahman*, the Supreme Being. In the Supreme Being which, in Its transcendent state, is formless and yet harbours the potential to take every possible form (*sarvākāra nirākāra*), there springs up, despite Its being ever-satisfied, the seed of will and the power of causation, which provokes the appearance of Vāsudeva:

“From that eternal one was manifested, caused by its will, [8ab] a first, eternal, auspicious form, with two hands and one face, resembling pure crystal, radiant like the fire of a thousand suns and millions of moons, standing in the middle of a circle of rays, endowed with weapons, beginning with the discus; with the curl of hair and the *kaustubha*-jewel on His chest, splendid with the chaplet, adorned with the tiara, necklaces, bracelets, rings and so on, [and] wearing a yellow garment. This one is to be known as Vāsudeva and from Him, from His very essence, everything is to be brought into existence. [8c-11]”¹¹¹.

nirupamaṃ jyotir nityatr̥ptaṃ nirañjanam | sarvākāraṃ nirākāraṃ tamasaḥ param avyayam || 2.7.

¹¹⁰ A comparison with the *brahmalakṣaṇa* passage shows that: *ādīmadhyāntarahita*, “without beginning, middle and end” is comparable to *anādimat*, “having no beginning” (5, 30d) and *ananta*, “infinite” (5, 31a); *avṛddhikṣaya*, “without growth and decay” corresponds to *avṛddhimat*, “not growing” (5, 31b) and *akṣaya*, “free from decay” (5, 31a); *nitya*, “eternal” is found also in 5, 33a; *jyoti*, “light” recalls *svayaṃjyoti*, “light to himself” (5, 30d); *nityatr̥pta*, “eternally satisfied” is found also in 5, 38d; *nirañjana*, “pure” is found also in 5, 30b; *sarvākāra nirākāra*, “having every form [and yet] having no form” is analogous to *amūrta mūrta*, “shapeless, shaped” (5, 39c); *tamasaḥ para*, “beyond the darkness” is equivalent to *tamasaḥ parataḥ sthita*, “abiding beyond the darkness” (5, 35d).

¹¹¹ PādS, jp, 2, 8-11: *tatkāraṇavaśāt tasmād āvirāsīt sanātanāt | dvihastam ekavaktraṃ ca śuddhasphaṭikāsannibham || 2.8 sahasraravivahnīndulakṣakoṭisamaprabham | marīcicakramadhyasthaṃ cakrādyāyudhalāñchitam || 2.9 śrīvatsakaustubhoraskaṃ vanamālāvīrājitam | kirīṭahārakeyūralayaādivibhūṣitam || 2.10 pītāmbaradharaṃ saumyaṃ rūpam ādyaṃ sanātanam | sa vāsudevo vijñeyaḥ sṛjyaṃ sarvaṃ ca tanmukhāt || 2.11.*

In the expression “*kāraṇavaśāt...āvirāsīt*” (verse 8ab) the choice of the verb *āvir āsīt* (“was manifested”) to indicate the appearance of Vāsudeva is noteworthy, especially given that the successive arising of the various divine figures is instead repeatedly expressed by verbal forms derived from the roots *jan* (to be born) or *bhū* (to arise)¹¹². The use of this expression implies that, although the appearance of Vāsudeva is caused by the will (*kāraṇavaśāt*) of the Supreme Being, so that He is in some way dependent on It, nevertheless He does not derive from the Supreme Being in the sense of an evolution; He is not born out of the Supreme Being, does not arise from It. Vāsudeva is the realization of the will inherent in the Supreme Being, He is the objectification of this will appearing as the highest subject, the Supreme personal God.

The text qualifies Vāsudeva as eternal (*sanātana*), first (*ādya*) and auspicious (*saumya*) form (*rūpa*) of the Supreme Being, meaning that, insofar as He is a manifestation of the Supreme Being - Itself called *sanātana* - Vāsudeva is eternally connected with It; moreover, since He is the first and the foremost manifestation of the Supreme Being at the divine level, He represents the ur-form (*ādya rūpa*) of God and, as such, He personifies the *saumya* aspect of the godhead, that is to say, He is the true embodiment of all that is auspicious, benign, gentle and gracious.

This Vāsudeva who, in his majestic, glorious appearance, is vividly described as a dazzling figure, two-armed, endowed with divine weapons and ornaments, must be recognized as the Supreme personal God in His heavenly bodily shape. From Him arises all that has to be created, He is the origin of everything, the mover of the process of *śṛṣṭi*. Thus from Him a second Vāsudeva is born, holding the insignia of the divine functions of creation, maintenance, destruction and liberation:

“Then, from [this] Vāsudeva another one is born, [also] called Vāsudeva, characterized by one face, four arms and weapons, be-

¹¹² In the account of the *mūrtyutpatti* the root *jan* occurs in the verses 13a, 21c, 22b, 24d, 28b, 29b, 31a, 31d, 32b, 32c, 34a, 34d, 36c, 37d, 38d, 39d; *sam jan* in 24a; *pra jan* in 25d; *bhū* in 27a, 33a; *sam bhū* in 33d, 40d.

ginning with the discus: [13] bearing the discus for the sake of the maintenance of the world and the lotus for the sake of creation, the conch for the sake of liberation and also the club for the sake of destruction. [14] With the curl of hair and the *kaustubha*-jewel on His chest, adorned with the chaplet, dark blue as the neck of a peacock, He wears a yellow garment. [15]”¹¹³.

The word used to express the arising of this second Vāsudeva is *jāta*, which, from the verbal root *jan*, means “born, engendered, arisen, caused”; the ablative, when joined with such a word as this, indicates the origin from which there is a rising or issuing. Therefore, unlike the relation between the Supreme Being and the first Vāsudeva, which was marked by an eternal connection where the will of the former was realized by the appearance of the latter, the relation between the first and the second Vāsudeva must be considered as a causal relationship where the latter truly issues from the former. Moreover, with the verbs which mean “to be born”, whereas the father is in the ablative, the mother is in the locative¹¹⁴, thereby implying, as far as the father is concerned, that his causal relation to his offspring is somehow more distant than that of the mother to the child: the offspring is engendered by the father, but abides in the body of the mother and, at the moment of birth, comes directly out of her. Hence, in the same way the arising of the second Vāsudeva out of the the first must not be regarded as a true birth, but should be rather compared to the less direct, more distant causal relation between father and offspring.

As regards His identity, the second Vāsudeva must, like the first, be identified with the Supreme God. The text itself justifies this identification, though in a different context. In fact, in another point of the account of *śṛṣṭi*, the Supreme God who appears to Brahmā

¹¹³ PādS, jp, 2, 13-15: *vāsudevāt tato jāto vāsudevāhvayo’paraḥ | ekavaktraś caturbāhuś cakrādyāyudhalakṣaṇaḥ || 2.13 sthityai cakram sarasijaṃ dadhānaṃ śṛṣṭaye punaḥ | muktaye pāñcajanyaṃ ca gadāṃ saṃhṛtaye tathā || 2.14 śrīvatsakaustubhorasko vanamālāvibhūṣitaḥ | mayūrakaṇṭhavacchayāmaḥ pītanaisargikāmbaraḥ || 2.15.*

¹¹⁴ See Speijer 1998: 73-74, 106.

absorbed in meditation, is depicted as a shining four-armed figure, in which the characteristics of the two Vāsudeva-s are combined: “Thus, after having created this universe, the four-faced lotus-born indulged in the highest meditation, reflecting on his own origin. [16] In front of he who was meditating arose a mass of splendour, appearing as a thousand suns, resembling a cluster of lightning. [17] In the midst of that [he saw] an excellent being, with a shining yellow garment, his four arms holding the conch shell, the discus, the club and the lotus, [18] with the mark of the curl of hair [on his chest], with a gracious face, splendid with the *kaustubha*-jewel, his figure embellished by a glittering tiara, necklaces and other ornaments. [19] When the lotus-born saw that excellent being, he thought: ‘This [can be] only the Supreme God, the Lord of the whole universe. [20] One cannot see any existing being superior to Him’. So [he] approached Him in order to interrogate Him about various doubts. [21]” Any doubt about the identity of this divine figure is removed by the following dialogue: “[Brahmā:] Who are you, o Puruṣottama, a being with a wonderful appearance? [Please] reveal yourself to me, who am eager to know [you]. [22] [Śrī Bhagavān:] Know that I am the creator of all the worlds, the ancient highest being, without beginning, middle and end, immovable, eternal, [23] the origin of the whole world. Be in no doubt. I have come here as the remover of your doubts. [24]”¹¹⁵.

¹¹⁵ PādS, jp, 3, 16-24: *evam sṛṣṭvā jagad idaṃ padmayoniś caturmukhaḥ | dhyānaṃ paramam ātasthau kāraṇaṃ svasya cintayan || 3.16 dhyāyatas tasya purataḥ tejaḥ puñjam ivābhavat | divākarasahasrābhaṃ vidyutsaṅghātasannibhaṃ || 3.17 tanmadhye puruṣaśreṣṭhaṃ pītanirmalavāsasam | śaṅkhacakraḡadāpadmaṃ dhārayantaṃ caturbhujam || 3.18 śrīvatsāṅkaṃ *prasannāśya (em. prasanna āśyaṃ) kaustubhena virājitam | sphuratkirīṭahārādyaṃ bhūṣaṇair upaśobhitam || 3.19 taṃ drṣṭvā puruṣaśreṣṭhaṃ padmayonir acintayat | eṣa eva paro devaḥ sarvasya jagataḥ prabhuḥ || 3.20 nāsmāt parataraḥ kaścīd drśyate puruṣaḥ sthitaḥ | tam eva saṃśayaṇ praṣṭuṃ vividhān upacakrame || 3.21 [brahmā] kas tvam atyadbhūtākāraḥ puruṣaḥ puruṣottama | mahyaṃ jijñāsamānāya ātmānaṃ darśayasva me || 3.22 [śrībhagavān] sraṣṭāraṃ sarvalokānāṃ purāṇaṃ puruṣaṃ param | anādimadhyanidhanaṃ viddhi mām acalaṃ dhruvaṃ || 3.23 kāraṇaṃ sarvalokasya mā ca bhūt saṃśayas tava | saṃśayasya tvadīyasya chettāraṃ mām upasthitam || 3.24.*

Thus, insofar as they may both be identified with the Supreme God, the two Vāsudeva-s share the same ontological level, but the second one represents the Lord awakened to create, who periodically manifests Himself in the performance of His divine functions. The first Vāsudeva may be thus considered as the embodiment of the *svarūpa* of God, namely - according to the sense given to this term by Rāmānuja - the essential nature of God in the strict sense, the nature of God in Himself. The second Vāsudeva instead incarnates the *svabhāva* of God, namely - and again according to Rāmānuja's categories - the divine nature in a broader sense, including the qualities pertaining to God in His relation to the world¹¹⁶.

The two Vāsudeva-s thus represent the two aspects of the Supreme God and they may be distinguished in regard to their respective relation with Time: whereas the first Vāsudeva exists in the timeless dimension of eternity, the second one, both on account of the mode of His origin and of His activity in the world, moves in a temporal horizon. It is to this internal distinction within the highest godhead - as denoted in the PādS - that Veṅkaṭanātha seems to refer in his *Nyāyasiddhāñjana*¹¹⁷. Veṅkaṭanātha writes: "With regard to the body of God (*īśvara*), we should know that there are such distinctions as subtle (*sūkṣma* [= *para*]), *vyūha*, *vibhava* and so on, taught by the *pāñcarātrin*-s. To sum up: the subtle has a body made out only of the six *guṇa*-s, this is the Supreme *brahman*, called Vāsudeva, of which we had spoken before. With regard to this Supreme One, it should be kept in mind that there is a distinction between periodically manifest (*śāntodita*) and eternally manifest (*nityodita*)."¹¹⁸.

¹¹⁶ For a discussion of Rāmānuja's concepts of *svarūpa* and *svabhāva* see Carman 1974: 88-97 and 254-256.

¹¹⁷ I am indebted for the suggestion of this working hypothesis to G. Oberhammer.

¹¹⁸ NyS 1976: 394-395: *īśvaraśarīre ca sūkṣmavyūhavibhavādibhedāḥ śrīmatpāñcarātrādibhiḥ prapañcitā avagantavyāḥ | saṃgrahas tu – sūkṣmaṃ kevalaśāṅguṇyavivraham vāsudevākhyam param brahma pūrvoktam | parasmīn eva śāntoditanityoditavibhāgo'pi vibhāvyaḥ |*

For a discussion of the concepts of *nityodita* and *śāntodita* within the frame of the doctrine of God's eternal *vibhūti* in Veṅkaṭanātha, see Oberhammer 2000: 97ff.

As a matter of fact, the terms *nityodita* and *śāntodita* do not occur in the text of the PādS, neither here nor elsewhere¹¹⁹. However, the parallel between the theological ideas conveyed by the PādS and those alluded to by Veṅkaṭanātha is so striking, that it may be assumed that, when Veṅkaṭanātha used these terms in speaking of a doctrine traceable in the Pāñcarātra *samhitā*-s he was referring specifically to the PādS, a work of which he certainly had direct knowledge, as is proved by his frequent quotations from it in the *Pāñcarātrarakṣā*¹²⁰.

Veṅkaṭanātha speaks of God in His supreme state in the same terms as the PādS: the Supreme God is the Supreme *brahman* (*para brahman*), called Vāsudeva (*vāsudevākhyā*) and has a body made out of the six *guṇa*-s (*ṣaṅguṇyavigraha*), an expression occurring also in the *brahmalakṣaṇa* passage of the PādS¹²¹. Furthermore, it is possible to recognize in the *nityodita* (the “eternally manifest” form of God) the first Vāsudeva of the PādS and in the *śāntodita* (the “periodically manifest” form of the Lord) the second Vāsudeva, performer of the divine functions. The hypothesis that, by referring to the teachings of the Pāñcarātra, Veṅkaṭanātha was alluding particularly to the PādS, is further corroborated by the fact that, whereas in most Pāñcarātra *samhitā*-s there are only two Vāsudeva-s, namely the *para* and the *vyūha*, Veṅkaṭanātha mentions three Vāsudeva-s, namely the *nityodita*, the *śāntodita* and the *vyūha*. This corresponds exactly to the situation described in the PādS. In fact, in the account of the earliest stage of the *mūrtyutpatti*, the second Vāsudeva divides

¹¹⁹ In a survey of the occurrence and meaning of *nityodita* and *śāntodita* in the Pāñcarātra *samhitā*-s and in the late Viśiṣṭādvaita literature, Rastelli shows, on the basis of an accurate scrutiny of the textual sources, that these technical terms do occur in a few Pāñcarātra *samhitā*-s (AS, JS, PārS and PauṣS) - *śāntodita* being less frequently used, in a relevant meaning, than *nityodita* - but the *samhitā*-s do not provide definitions or explanations of these terms and it is only in the late Viśiṣṭādvaita literature that the ideas about *nityodita* and *śāntodita* are developed. See Rastelli 2006: 312ff.

¹²⁰ For the numerous references to the PādS in the *Pāñcarātrarakṣā*, see above, p. 30, note 22.

¹²¹ See PādS, *jp*, 5, 35a.

Himself in two parts, so that, as a result of this self-differentiation, a third Vāsudeva arises out of Him. This third Vāsudeva is the first of the four *vyūha*-s and, beginning from him, the other three *vyūha*-s successively arise, one from the other:

“The venerable Vāsudeva, who promotes creation, maintenance, destruction and liberation, for some reason divides himself again in two parts. [16] The first one, Vāsudeva, has the splendour of pure crystal, but the second, Nārāyaṇa, looks like a dark cloud. [17] From [that] Vāsudeva arose Saṃkarṣaṇa, from the latter Pradyumna [and] from Pradyumna Aniruddha. All these have four arms. [18]”¹²².

The presence of three Vāsudeva-s in the theology of the PādS can be explained by the influence of the system of Yādavaprakāśa: the first Vāsudeva of the PādS, first *rūpa* of the Supreme Being, corresponds to Īśvara, the first *aṃśa* of *brahman* in Yādavaprakāśa; the second and third Vāsudeva-s of the PādS correspond, respectively, to the *para* and *vyūha* Vāsudeva-s of the older tradition followed by other Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā*-s. Hence, by adopting the model of Yādavaprakāśa, the author(s) of the PādS had to add the *ādyarūpa* Vāsudeva to the traditional Pāñcarātric pair of the *para* and *vyūha* Vāsudeva-s, thus producing the situation described by Veṅkaṭanātha.

This is summarized in the table below:

Pāñcarātra <i>saṃhitā</i> -s	Yādavaprakāśa	PādS	Veṅkaṭanātha
1 <i>para</i> Vāsudeva	<i>brahman</i> īśvara (<i>aṃśa</i>)	<i>brahman</i> 1 <i>para</i> Vāsudeva (<i>rūpa</i>)	<i>nityodita</i>
2 <i>vyūha</i> Vāsudeva		2 <i>para</i> Vāsudeva	<i>śāntodita</i>
		3 <i>vyūha</i> Vāsudeva	<i>vyūha</i>

¹²² PādS, *jp*, 2, 16-18: *sa vāsudevo bhagavān sṛṣṭisthityantamuktidaḥ | ātmānaṃ sa dvidhā cakre punaḥ kenā'pi hetunā || 2.16 tayor eko vāsudevaḥ śuddhasphaṭikasannibhaḥ | nārāyaṇo dvitīyas tu nīlāmbudasamaprabhaḥ || 2.17 saṃkarṣaṇo vāsudevāt tasmāt pradyumnasaṃjñītaḥ | pradyumnād aniruddho 'bhūt sarva ete caturbhujāḥ || 2.18*

By means of the concepts of *nityodita* and *śāntodita*, in the sense in which Venkaṭanātha meant them, it is possible to recognize a categorization of the godhead that is implicitly introduced by the author(s) of the PādS; according to this categorization, the relationship between God and *śṛṣṭi* is understood in terms of the relationship between God and Time. In fact, the distinction between *nityodita* and *śāntodita* concerns the difference between the ontological state of God *in se*, in the timeless dimension of eternity, and his manifold manifestations, which are realized, in the course of time, both in the process of divine emanation called *mūrtyutpatti* and in the process of the evolution of the world. In order to explain how the *para* Vāsudeva, *rūpa* of the Supreme Being, can become the Lord engaged in the performance of the cyclic creation and reabsorption of the worlds and how He can transform Himself in the *vyūha* Vāsudeva, first of the *mūrti*-s, the theologian(s) of the PādS had to integrate the temporal dimension in his/their concept of the Supreme God. Hence Time, whose power actually makes possible every transformation of the godhead, becomes the category by means of which the passage from the *rūpa* to the *mūrti*-s of God may be comprehended.

The Arising of the Divine Figures (mūrtyutpatti)

The true *mūrtyutpatti* begins with the arising of the four *vyūha*-s, who are the first deities explicitly called *mūrti*-s¹²³. With regard to the earliest stage of the *mūrtyutpatti*, mention should be made of the figure of Nārāyaṇa, who arises, together with the *vyūha* Vāsudeva, out of the self-differentiation of the *śāntodita* Vāsudeva. In fact, Nārāyaṇa does not have any role in the subsequent development of the *mūrtyutpatti*, so that it is difficult to explain the reason of his presence in this context. But his connection with the divine figures mentioned so far (namely, the first two Vāsudeva-s and the four *vyūha*-s) is obviously regarded as important by the author(s) of the PādS, as is

¹²³ See PādS, *jp*, 2, 19d, quoted below, note 127.

proved by the reassertion of the association of Nārāyaṇa with these divine figures in a different context. In the portion of the *jp* dealing with cosmography, in which there is a description of the upper worlds, one reads: “Four are, according to order, [the worlds] presided by the four *vyūha*-s. I will describe them according to rank: [the first one] is named after Aniruddha, the next one [50] after Pradyumna, after these [the one] named after Saṃkarṣaṇa, then, afterwards, [the one] named after the *vyūha* Vāsudeva, o you having the lotus as a seat. [51] It is said that, after that, in due order, [there are] the worlds named after these two: the *vibhava* Vāsudeva and the Vāsudeva existing from eternity. [52] Then, nearby there is also the world of Nārāyaṇa. [53ab]”¹²⁴. These worlds and their respective Lords are mentioned in a hierarchical order, according to their progressive proximity to Vaikuṇṭha, the realm of the Supreme God, Bhagavān. As in the account of the *mūrtyutpatti*, three Vāsudeva-s are also found here, in the same order: 1. the *anādi* Vāsudeva, corresponding to the *nityodita* Vāsudeva; 2. the so-called *vibhava* Vāsudeva, corresponding to the *śāntodita* Vāsudeva; 3. the *vyūha* Vāsudeva, followed by the other three *vyūha*-s. The fact that the world of Nārāyaṇa is located near the worlds of the *anādi*- and *vibhava*-Vāsudeva-s testifies to the affinity among these three figures, an affinity due to their belonging to the highest level of manifestation of the Supreme God, Bhagavān. As a matter of fact, in the Pāñcarātra tradition the Supreme God is called either Vāsudeva or Nārāyaṇa. The PādS too states: “Indeed the sole Supreme God fully endowed with various powers performs the creation and destruction of the universe and he is called Nārāyaṇa. [42c-43b]”¹²⁵. These circumstances can explain why Nārāyaṇa is also mentioned in the account of the earliest stage of the divine emanation.

¹²⁴ PādS, *jp*, 12, 50-53b: *catvāraḥ kramaśaḥ santi caturbhiḥ samadhiṣṭhatāḥ | vyūhaiḥ krameṇa vakṣye tān aniruddhaḥ paraḥ smṛtaḥ || 12.50 pradyumno'nantaram teṣāṃ saṃkarṣaṇasamāhvayaḥ | vāsudevas tataḥ paścād vyūhākhyāḥ kamalāsana || 12.51 vibhavākhyo vāsudevas tadanantaram īritaḥ | anādir vāsudevaś ca tayoṛ lokāv anukramāt || 12.52 tato nārāyaṇasyāpi lokas tannikaṭe sthitaḥ || 12.53ab*

¹²⁵ PādS, *jp*, 6, 42c-43b: *eka eva paro devo nānāśaktisamanvitaḥ || 6.42cd karoti sargasaṃhārau sa ca nārāyaṇaḥ smṛtaḥ || 6.43ab*

The *vyūha* Vāsudeva - who is the first of the *mūrti*-s - stands out from the other three *vyūha*-s because he is the only one in which all the divine qualities are thoroughly manifest and equally distributed. He is the embodiment of the six *guṇa*-s, or, according to the expression of the *brahmalakṣaṇa* passage, it is the Supreme Being who, as *vyūha* Vāsudeva, has “a body endowed with the six *guṇa*-s”¹²⁶.

“Vāsudeva is characterized by the full and balanced manifestation of the *guṇa*-s beginning with knowledge (*jñāna*). The [other] divine figures are characterized by a diverse manifestation of the six *guṇa*-s, according to order. [19] Then, o brāhman (= Saṃvarta), the one who is called Saṃkarṣaṇa shall be mainly endowed with knowledge (*jñāna*), Pradyumna with strength (*bala*) and Aniruddha with sovereignty (*aiśvarya*). [20]”¹²⁷.

The idea that the six divine qualities do not manifest themselves in the same way in each of the three *vyūha*-s, but either one or two *guṇa*-s are dominant in each deity, is also found in other Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā*-s¹²⁸. As Schrader has remarked: “This, however, does not mean that each *vyūha* has only its two respective *guṇa*-s, but, as is repeatedly emphasized, each *vyūha* is Viṣṇu himself with his six *guṇa*-s, of which, however, two only, in each case, become manifest.”¹²⁹. Both in the AS and in the LT, for instance, the six *guṇa*-s are divided into three pairs, out of which *jñāna* and *bala* are mainly connected with Saṃkarṣaṇa, *aiśvarya* and *vīrya* with Pradyumna and *śakti* and *tejas* with Aniruddha¹³⁰. In the PādS instead,

¹²⁶ PādS, *jp*, 5, 35a: *ṣāḍguṇyavigraham*.

¹²⁷ PādS, *jp*, 2, 19-20: *jñānādiguṇasāmānye vāsudevaḥ prakīrtitaḥ | ṣaṇṇām guṇānām vaiṣaṃye vakṣyante mūrtayaḥ kramāt || 2.19 jñāne ’dhiko bhaved brahman saṃkarṣaṇasamāhvayaḥ | bale ’dhikas tu pradyumnaḥ syād aiśvarye ’niruddhakaḥ || 2.20*.

¹²⁸ For a survey of how the six *guṇa*-s are distributed among the four *vyūha*-s according to several *saṃhitā*-s, namely, the SS, AS, LT, PauṣS, PādS, ViśS, BBS and PārS, see Rastelli 2006: 284-303.

¹²⁹ Schrader 1916: 35.

¹³⁰ See AS, 5, 17-18b: *tatra jñānabaladvandvād rūpaṃ sāmkarṣaṇam hareḥ | aiśvaryavīryasambhedād rūpaṃ prādyumnam ucyate || 5.17 śaktitejaḥ samutkarṣād āniruddhī tanur hareḥ | 5.18ab*.

in each one of the three *vyūha*-s only one of the divine qualities is said to be dominant, namely, *jñāna*, *bala* and *aiśvarya* respectively¹³¹. Unfortunately the PādS does not provide an explanation - neither here nor elsewhere - for the predominance of any one of these three *guṇa*-s; there would appear not to be any association between the dominant *guṇa* and a specific function of the related *vyūha*.

The successive arising of the divine figures who make their appearance, forming a chain of divine emanations from the four *vyūha*-s, is described as follows: “And from [these] four divine figures twenty-four [other] divine figures are gradually born, o brāhman, as one light arises from another light. [21] All of them have four arms holding the lotus, the conch shell, the discus and the club. [22ab] Thus from Vāsudeva, the first, foremost god, were born Keśava, Nārāyaṇa and Mādhava, o best among the brāhmanas. [22c-23b] From Saṃkarṣaṇa arose Govinda, Viṣṇu and Madhusūdana. From Pradyumna were born Trivikrama, Vāmana and Śrīdhara, o best among the sages. [23c-24] And from Aniruddha, o virtuous one, [came forth] Hṛṣīkeśa, Padmanābha and Dāmodara. In this way twelve [divine] portions were produced. [25] And from Vāsudeva, Saṃkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha [arose four more beings] with their [same] names. [26] From these four gradually came into being Puruṣottama, Adhokṣaja, Nṛsiṃha and the fourth, the honoured Acyuta. [27] Then from those four were successively born Janārdana, Upendra, Hari and Kṛṣṇa, duly named. [28]”¹³².

See also LT, 2, 53c-54b: *ato jñānabale devaḥ saṃkarṣaṇa udīryate* || 2.53cd *aiśvarya-vīrye pradyumno 'niruddhaḥ śaktitejasī* || 2.54ab and LT, 4, 14ab, 15cd, 16cd: *teṣāṃ jñānabalonmeṣe saṃkarṣaṇa udīryate* || 4.14ab ... *vīryaiśvaryasamunmeṣe pradyumnaḥ parikīrtitaḥ* || 4.15cd ... *śaktitejaḥsamunmeṣe hy aniruddhaḥ sa īritaḥ* || 4.16cd.

¹³¹ As Rastelli remarks, the attribution of *jñāna*, *bala* and *aiśvarya* as dominant *guṇa* to Saṃkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha respectively, is also found in the *Viśvāmitrasaṃhitā* and *Bṛhadbrahmasaṃhitā*, two late works probably based on the PādS (see Rastelli 2006: 301-302 ; for the references related to ViśS and BBS, see in particular p. 302, note 927).

¹³² PādS, jp, 2, 21-28: *mūrtibhyaś ca caturbhyaś ca caturviṃśatimūrtayaḥ* | *jāyante kramaśo brahman dīpād dīpāntaram yathā* || 2.21 *sarve caturbhujāḥ*

The fact that these *mūrti*-s are designated as *aṃśa* (“portion”, verse 25d) - a technical term which conveys the “idea not of fragmentation, but of participation, hence of kindred in nature, of affinity”¹³³ - shows that, although they are particular, concrete and independent figures, yet the *mūrti*-s share and participate in the nature of the *ādyarūpa* Vāsudeva who is their ultimate source. The simile used to depict the mode of their emergence, “as one light arises from another light” (*dīpād dīpāntaram yathā*, verse 21d) suggests the same idea of “participation”: like lamps kindled by the same fuel and blazing with the same flame, similarly the *mūrti*-s shine with the same effulgent substance of Vāsudeva. Moreover, this simile is a suitable illustration of the dynamics of the *mūrtyutpatti*: just as lamps are lit one by the other and, hence, one after the other in temporal succession, similarly the *mūrti*-s arise from one another in a chain in which each divine figure originates from the preceeding one; in this way, their gradual progression has to be regarded as a temporal evolution. Thus, at this stage, *śṛṣṭi* may be considered as a system of “mūrtization”, where the Supreme God, while over the course of time bringing about the manifestation of more and more divine figures which are His own particular concretizations, remains unchanged in Himself, like a light source that remains unchanged while emitting its rays.

These twenty-four *mūrti*-s are divided into two sets of twelve. Those belonging to the first set are then subdivided into four groups

*padmaśaṅkhacakraḡadādharaḡḥ | vāsudevād ādidevāt prathamāt keśavas tathā || 2.22 nārāyaṇo mādhasaḡ ca jajñire bhūsurettama | saṁkarṣaṇāc ca govindo viṣṇuḡ ca madhusūdanaḡ || 2.23 trayas te samajāyanta pradymnāc ca trivikramaḡ | vāmanaḡ śrīdharaḡ caite jajñire munisattama || 2.24 aniruddhād hṛṣīkeśaḡ padmanābhaḡ ca suvrata | dāmodaraḡ ca tenetthaḡ dvādaśāṁśāḡ prajajñire || 2.25 vāsudevāc ca tannāmnā tathā saṁkarṣaṇād api | pradymnād api tannāmnā tannāmnāivāniruddhakāt || 2.26 abhūvaṇ kramaśas tebhyaś caturbhyaḡ *puruṡottamaḡ (em. puruṡottamaḡ) | adhokṡajo ṇṛsiṇhaś ca caturthaś cācyuto mataḡ || 2.27 caturbhya eva tebhyo ‘mī jajñire ca yathākramam | janārdanas tathopendro hariḡ kṛṣṇaḡ samākhyayā || 2.28.*

¹³³ TAK, I 2000: 73: “idée non pas de fragmentation, mais de participation, et donc de parenté de nature, d’affinité”.

of three and the members of each group are said to arise, respectively, out of one of the four *vyūha*-s. This situation is found also in the accounts of *sṛṣṭi* of several Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā*-s, where these twelve deities, on account of their origin, are called *vyūhāntara* (secondary or sub-*vyūha*)¹³⁴; this denomination, even if it is not traceable in the text of the PādS, is also appropriate for the twelve *mūrti*-s of the PādS. These divine figures are mentioned - though not in the same order - in a different context also, namely in the *cp*¹³⁵, in connection with the monthly calendar of religious obligations: as Lords of the months, they are each to be worshipped on a special day of the corresponding month. Hence, in the PādS the *vyūhāntara*-s are identified with the twelve gods of the months (*māsadevatā*)¹³⁶, who have a specific place in the ritual activities of the followers of the Pāñcarātra as well as of other Hindu traditions¹³⁷. It is not the case

¹³⁴ In the exposition of the pure creation of the AS, the same twelve deities who make their appearance after the *vyūha*-s are called *vyūhāntara*-s; see AS, 5, 46-48b: *vyūhāntaram daśa dve ca keśavādyāḥ prakīrtitāḥ | keśavāditrayaṃ tatra vāsudevād vibhāvīyate || 5.46 saṃkarṣaṇāc ca govindapūrvaṃ tritayam adbhutam | trivikramādyam tritayam pradyumnād uditam mune || 5.47 hr̥ṣīkeśādikaṃ tattvam aniruddhān mahāmune | 5.48ab*.

In the LT too, the twelve gods arising out of the self-differentiation of the *vyūha*-s are called *vyūhāntara*-s; see LT, 4, 27-28: *vāsudevādayo devāḥ pratyeḥkaṃ tu tridhā tridhā | keśavādisvarūpeṇa vibhajanti svakaṃ vapuḥ || 4.27 etad vyūhāntaram nāma pañcarātrābhiśabditam | kāryasya nayane devā dvādaśaite vyavasthitā || 4.28*.

For further references concerning the occurrence of the *vyūhāntara*-s in other Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā*-s, see Rastelli 2006: 349 and note 1093.

¹³⁵ See PādS, *cp*, 15, 121c-124b: *caitrādiṣu dvādaśaṣu māseṣu dvādaśādhipāḥ || 15.121cd arcanīyāḥ kramād viṣṇus tathaiva madhusūdanaḥ | trivikramo vāmanaś ca śrīdharas tadanantaram || 15.122 hr̥ṣīkeśaḥ padmanābho dāmodarasamāhvayaḥ | keśavo nāmadheyena tathā nārāyaṇaḥ smṛtaḥ || 15.123 mādhabo 'nyaś ca govindo dvādaśaite prakīrtitāḥ | 15.124ab*.

¹³⁶ Gupta argues that the *vyūhāntara*-s/*māsadevatā*-s are to be identified with the vedic Āditya-s and that “their worship reflects the old identification of Viṣṇu with the sun and hence with Time conceived as a yearly cycle.” (Gupta 1992: 165).

¹³⁷ For a brief account of the rituals and the *vrata*-s connected with the *māsadevatā*-s, see Rastelli 2006: 359-360. Rastelli argues that it is most probably on account of the broad popularity of the *vrata*-s connected with the *māsadevatā*-s that the Pāñcarātra, taking these deities from other sources and traditions, has

that in every Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā* the *māsadevatā*-s derive from the *vyūha*-s and are then identified with the *vyūhāntara*-s. In the account of *sr̥ṣṭi* of the ParS, for instance, these twelve gods are mentioned in the same order as in the *cp* of the PādS, and are similarly denominated as Lords of the months (*māsānam adhipa*), but instead of deriving from the *vyūha*-s, they are said to arise out of twelve *śakti*-s of God¹³⁸. To sum up, the twelve divine figures which, in the account of *sr̥ṣṭi* of the PādS, are *mūrti*-s derived from the *vyūha*-s and, in the ritual section of the work are to be worshipped as Lord of the months, may be assimilated into the group of gods which in other Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā*-s are called either *vyūhāntara*-s, or *māsadevatā*-s.

A peculiarity of the PādS is that the twelve *vyūhāntara*-s/*māsadevatā*-s are associated with a second set of twelve deities, thereby forming a group of twenty-four¹³⁹. These twenty-four *mūrti*-s are also mentioned in the *kp*, where their iconography is described in detail¹⁴⁰. As Rao observes in his treatise on Hindu iconography, the names of these twenty-four *mūrti*-s are regarded as the most important among the names of Viṣṇu and they “are daily repeated by many Brāhmaṇas in their daily prayers. Corresponding to these twenty-four names images of Viṣṇu are found sculptured in the Vaiṣṇava temples situated in the old Hoysala Land, where indeed they are met with more frequently than elsewhere.”¹⁴¹. There-

included them in its own cosmology (see Rastelli 2006: 351 and 360).

¹³⁸ See ParS, 2, 82-86: *etābhyo mūrtipālās ca dvādaśaivābhavan punaḥ | tathā tathaiva te śaktyā vikhyātā bhuvaneṣv iha || 2.82 māsānām adhipāṃś cāpi viddhi tāt eva padmaja | viṣṇur ādya madhau jñeyo mādhave madhusūdanaḥ || 2.83 śukre trivikramaḥ proktaḥ śucau māse tu vāmanaḥ | nabhasi śrīdharo jñeyo hr̥ṣīkeśo nabhasyapaḥ || 2.84 padmanābha iṣe brahman ūrje dāmodaraḥ prabhuḥ | keśavas sahasi proktaḥ sasye nārāyaṇaḥ prabhuḥ || 2.85 mādhas tapasi jñeyo govindas tu tapasyapaḥ | iti dvādaśa māsendrā māsīmāsi vyavasthitāḥ || 2.86.*

For further references concerning other Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā*-s where the twelve Lords of the months are not arising out of the *vyūha*-s, see Rastelli 2006: 351.

¹³⁹ As remarked by Rastelli, this group of 24 *mūrti*-s is found also in the *Śrīpraśnasamhitā* and in the *Bṛhadbrahmasamhitā*, which are both based on the PādS (for the relevant references, see Rastelli 2006: 350 and notes 1095, 1096).

¹⁴⁰ See PādS, *kp*, 14, 72c-79 and 16, 29b-47b.

¹⁴¹ Rao 1914, I: 227. For a detailed description of their iconography, see *Ibidem*:

fore, the PādS has incorporated both the broad Hindu tradition of the worship of the *māsadevatā*-s - assimilating these deities to the *vyūhāntara*-s of the Pāñcarātra - and the tradition - present in the region of Mysore¹⁴² - of iconic representation and worship of a larger group of twenty-four deities¹⁴³.

The process of “mūrtization” continues with the arising, out of the *vyūha* Vāsudeva, of a group of female *mūrti*-s: “From the first god Vāsudeva eight divine figures were born: Brahmī - the first one - Prājāpatī, Vaiṣṇavī, [29] Divyā, Ārṣī, Mānuṣī, Āsurī - the seventh - and, last among these divine figures, Paiśācī. [30]”¹⁴⁴. The respective meanings of the names of these female *mūrti*-s are: “relating to Brahmā, to Prajāpati, to Viṣṇu, to the gods, to the *ṛṣi*-s, to the human beings, to the *asura*-s and to the *piśāca*-s”. By using such denominations rather than true goddesses’ proper names, the text seems to indicate all the female beings dwelling in the three worlds, namely: the consorts of Brahmā, Prajāpati, Viṣṇu and the other gods, those of the sages and the other human beings and those of the demons. What is thereby implied is that a male God, Vāsudeva, is the ultimate source of every female being, including the divine consorts.

The subservient position of the female counterpart of the god-head is confirmed also by the fact that, later on in the *mūrtyutpatti*, the goddesses, beginning with Śrī, arise from the curl of hair on Viṣṇu’s chest (the *śrīvatsa*)¹⁴⁵; this indicates that the divine consort

227ff.

¹⁴² The fact that the tradition of the 24 *mūrti*-s is documented in the region of Mysore might provide a clue for determining either the geographical origin of the PādS or, at least, the area of its diffusion.

¹⁴³ A possible explanation for the doubling of the twelve *māsadevatā*-s might be that, since the lunar months are divided into two halves (the *śukla*- and *kṛṣṇa*-*pakṣa*-s), each of the twenty-four deities might have been associated with a half of each month. But this hypothesis is not supported by any textual evidence, at least as far as the PādS is concerned.

¹⁴⁴ PādS, *jp*, 2, 29-30: *vāsudevād ādidevān mūrtyaṣṭakam ajāyata | brāhmī ca mūrtilḥ prathamā prājāpatyā ca vaiṣṇavī || 2.29 divyā cārṣī mānuṣī ca saptamī cāsurī matā | paiśācī caramā tāsām mūrtinām aparā ... || 2.30.*

¹⁴⁵ See PādS, *jp*, 2, 38 quoted below, p. 100 and note 162.

as well as the other goddesses are generated by the Lord Himself. In a different context, in the mythical narrative related to the creation of Brahmā¹⁴⁶, there is a hint at an active role played by a goddess in the process of *śṛṣṭi*: Durgā is the one who begets the banyan tree on which Padmanābha settles, from whose navel arises a golden egg, germ of a lotus from which Brahmā will be born; but even here - as was the case of Śrī and, *mutatis mutandis*, of the eight female *mūrti*-s in the *mūrtyutpatti* - the goddess is said to originate from a portion of a male god, Aniruddha¹⁴⁷. These circumstances constitute further proof that the idea of *śakti*, meant as a female, active, creative principle personified by a goddess, has no role in the vision of *śṛṣṭi* of the PādS.

The *mūrtyutpatti* proceeds with the arising, again from the four *vyūha*-s, of ten more *mūrti*-s: “From the four *vyūha*-s, o sage, were produced in due succession the ten divine figures beginning with the fish: Matsya (the fish), Kūrma (the tortoise) and Varāha (the boar) arose from Vāsudeva; Nṛsiṃha (the man-lion), Vāmana (the dwarf) and Rāma Jāmadagnya (= Paraśurāma) were born from Saṃkarṣaṇa; then from Pradyumna arose the descendent of Raghu (= Rāma) [and] Balarāma; [and] from Aniruddha came forth Kṛṣṇa and Kalkin. [31-33b]”¹⁴⁸. These *mūrti*-s are to be identified with the ten classic *avatāra*-s; in the different parts and contexts of the work where these divine figures are mentioned, they are called either *avatāra*-s or *prādurbhāva*-s (“manifestations”, “appearances”)¹⁴⁹.

¹⁴⁶ This episode is related in PādS, *jp*, 3, 1-8b (for the translation see below, p. 310).

¹⁴⁷ See PādS, *jp*, 3, 2a: *aniruddhāṃśajā durgā*.

¹⁴⁸ PādS, *jp*, 2, 31-33b: *mīnādyā jajñire vipra caturvyūhād yathākramam | matsyaḥ kūrmo varāhaś ca vāsudevād ajāyata || 2.31 nṛsiṃho vāmano rāmo jāmadagnyo'py ajāyata | saṃkarṣaṇāt tathā jajñe pradyumnād rāghavo balī || 2.32 aniruddhād abhūt kṛṣṇaḥ kalkīti daśa mūrtayaḥ | 2.33ab*

¹⁴⁹ With regard to the *mantra*-s related to the *avatāra* forms of the Lord, in the *cp* the ten *mūrti*-s beginning with the Fish are called *avatāra*-s (see *cp*, 27, 1ab: *matsyādidaśamūrtīnām avatārakramān manuḥ | 27.1ab*). With regard to the icons to be used for domestic worship, in the *kp* the divine figures beginning with the

Several other *saṃhitā*-s - namely, the SS, AS, LT, ĪS and PārS - provide a longer list of 38 *prādurbhāva*-s, in which the ten classic *avatāra*-s are included; in these *saṃhitā*-s the divine figures forming this bigger group are also called *vibhava*-s¹⁵⁰, a term which does not occur in the PādS. Moreover, in the SS, as well as in the LT, these *vibhava*-s come into being out of the *viśākhayūpa*¹⁵¹, the column which is divided into four sections, each one presided by one of the four *vyūha*-s, and representing the oneness of the godhead. Vice versa, in the PādS, although the ten *avatāra*-s/*prādurbhāva*-s originate from the four *vyūha*-s, there is no trace of the notion of *viśākhayūpa*.

While the PādS diverges from the *saṃhitā*-s mentioned above in so many details concerning this group of divine figures, its enumeration of the ten *mūrti*-s corresponds to the list of the *prādurbhāva*-s occurring in the *adhyāya* 326 of the *Nārāyaṇīyaparvan* of the MBh, also with regard to their order: “Śrī Bhagavān said: Listen, o great sage Nārada, in truth these [are my] ten manifestations (*prādurbhāva*): Matsya (the fish), Kūrma (the tortoise) and Varāha (the boar), then Nārasimha (the man-lion), Vāmana (the dwarf), Rāma (= Paraśurāma), Rāma (= Dāśarathi Rāma) and Rāma (= Balarāma), Kṛṣṇa and Kalkin.”¹⁵² This list is found in a variant reading in the critical apparatus of the critical edition of the MBh. In his study of the textual history of *adhyāya* 326 of the *Nārāyaṇīya*, Oberlies argues that the passage to which the variant refers belongs to a late

Fish are called *prādurbhāva*-s (see *kp*, 32, 9ab: *prādurbhāvaiś ca mīnādyais tathā divyāyudhair api* | 32.9ab).

¹⁵⁰ For a detailed comparative analysis concerning the *vibhava*-s, their number and characteristics, in these *saṃhitā*-s, see Rastelli 2006: 361ff. Rastelli shows that, as far as this topic is concerned, the AS, LT, ĪS and PārS are all based on the SS; the latter, both in the AS and in the LT, is explicitly referred to as a primary source for any information concerning the *vibhava*-s.

¹⁵¹ The origin of the *vibhava*-s in the SS and LT is extensively discussed in Rastelli 2006: 371-375. The notion of *viśākhayūpa* and its relation to the four *vyūha*-s is discussed in Gupta 1971 (see in particular pp. 198ff).

¹⁵² Mbh, 12, 326, Mss. Ds2 D7 T G1-3.6 Kumbh. ed. 12.326.71cd: 835*: *śrībhagavān uvāca śrṇu nārada tattvena prādurbhāvān mahāmune | matsyaḥ kūrmo varāhaś ca nārasimho'ṭha vāmanaḥ | rāmo rāmaś ca rāmaś ca kṛṣṇaḥ kalki ca te daśa*.

Pāñcarātra interpolation¹⁵³. It would be difficult to prove that the author(s) of the PādS referred directly to such an ancient source as the *Nārāyaṇīya* (not later than the IV-V cent. A. D), or even to a late textual interpolation. Nevertheless, the parallel mentioned above does suggest that this authoritative epic work may be regarded as the primary source for the textual tradition which influenced at least some of the contributing author(s) of the PādS.

Returning to the account of the *mūrtiutpatti*, three more *mūrti*-s - Puruṣa, Satya and Acyuta - are said to arise from the *vyūha*-s: “[Then] Puruṣa arose from Saṃkarṣaṇa, Satya from Pradyumna, [33cd] Acyuta was born from Aniruddha...[34a]”¹⁵⁴. Although they are mentioned in the *kp* - in a chapter dealing with the consecration of the icons of the different *mūrti*-s of the Lord, where they form a group of three¹⁵⁵ as well as a group of five together with Vāsudeva and Ananta¹⁵⁶ - Puruṣa, Satya and Acyuta do not have any specific function in the theology of the PādS. Their presence in the system of the *mūrti*-s seems to derive from a different theological tradition, namely that expounded in the JS, where these three deities are the first manifestations of Vāsudeva. According to the JS, at the earliest stage of pure creation the Supreme God Vāsudeva emanates Acyuta who, in his turn, emits Satya, who then brings forth Puruṣa¹⁵⁷. As Rastelli remarks¹⁵⁸, in the JS account of the *śuddhasarga* these three gods replace Saṃkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. Therefore, it must be on account of their importance in the JS, a source often

¹⁵³ See Oberlies 1997: 119-138.

¹⁵⁴ PādS, *jp*, 2, 33c-34a: *saṃkarṣaṇāc ca puruṣaḥ satyaḥ pradyumnasambhavaḥ* || 2.33cd *jāto'cyuto'niruddhāc ca ...* | 2.34a.

¹⁵⁵ See PādS, *kp*, 18, 57ab: ... *trimūrtis tu satyaś cācyutapūruṣau* | 18.57ab.

¹⁵⁶ See *Ibidem*, 66-68b: *pañcamūrtipratīṣṭhānam adhunā samudīryate* | *sthāpayed vāsudevābhyaṃ mūrtiṃ garbhagrhe sudhīḥ* || 18.66 *divye bhāge'thavā brāhme bahiḥ prāg diśi *pūruṣam* (em. *puruṣam*) | *satyamūrtiṃ dakṣiṇasyāṃ pratīcyāṃ acyutaṃ tathā* || 18.67 *anantākhyam udīcīne calāṃ vā yadi vā'calāṃ* | 18.68ab.

¹⁵⁷ The origination of these three gods is described in JS, 4, 4-7. On this topic, see Rastelli 1999: 45-47.

¹⁵⁸ See *Ibidem*: 52-53.

quoted or referred to in the PādS, that these three deities have been included in the account of the *mūrtyutpatti*.

Up to this point, the dynamic process by which the Lord, differentiating Himself, becomes a plurality of divine figures, has given rise to a system of *mūr*ti-s including: the four *vyūha*-s, the twenty-four deities in which the twelve Lords of the months are comprised, the female *mūr*ti-s, the ten *avatāra*-s and the triad of Puruṣa, Satya and Acyuta. This “pantheon”, formed by homogeneous groups of deities which are present also in other Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā*-s, is endowed with a certain internal coherence.

The harmonic progression of the *mūrtyutpatti* seems then to be broken by the introduction of further divine figures, whose mutual relation and affiliation to the preceding *mūr*ti-s is difficult to comprehend. For this reason, it seems likely that the following passage, in which these new figures are mentioned, is an interpolation: “Buddha - the one who bewilders the three worlds -, Dāśārha, Śauri and Anneśa were born from Vāsudeva. [34] From Saṃkarṣaṇa [came forth] Hayagrīva, Nṛkesari (the man-lion) Śaṅkhodara, the foremost divine figure Vaiṣṇuṭha, Mukunda and Vṛṣākapi [35] and, still there, Ādivarāha; then, also from Saṃkarṣaṇa, was born Ananta, the powerful serpent with a thousand hoods. [36]”¹⁵⁹.

It is noticeable that this group of *mūr*ti-s is heterogeneous, bringing together: the Buddha; Kṛṣṇa, under the names of Dāśārha (epithet derived from the name of a warrior tribe) and Śauri (patronymic of Kṛṣṇa); Anneśa, a synonymous with Annamūr

¹⁵⁹ PādS, *jp*, 2, 34b-36: *buddhas trailokyamohanaḥ | *daśārhaḥ* (em. śrī. ma. *dāśārhaḥ*) *śaurir anneśo vāsudevād ajāyata || 2.34bcd saṃkarṣaṇādd hayagrīvaḥ śaṅkhodaranṛkesarī | vaiṣṇuṭhamūrtir ādyā tu mukundaś ca vṛṣākapiḥ || 2.35 tatraivādivarāhaś ca tataḥ saṃkarṣaṇād api | anantaḥ pannago jātaḥ sahasraṇāvān bali || 2.36*.

¹⁶⁰ TAK I 2000: 129. This deity is described, together with its *mantra*, in PādS, *cp*, 28, 7-23, where he is called Annādhpati (in verse 7a) and Annapati (in verse 15a).

a divine figure identified with the Sun; the *avatāra*-s Nṛkesari (= Nṛsiṃha, the man-lion)¹⁶¹ and Varāha (the boar), both already mentioned within the ten *avatāra*-s; and finally the serpent Ananta. To the lack of internal coherence of this group of divine figures, must be added the fact that these *mūrti*-s arise out of Vāsudeva and Saṃkarṣaṇa, without being accompanied by other deities which would be expected to derive from the other two *vyūha*-s.

The inconsistency of the content of this passage is in contrast with the logical conclusion of the *mūrtyutpatti*, which is found in the following verses: “The weapons beginning with [the discus] Sudarśana and the ornaments beginning with the tiara came into existence, together with the divine figures, at the time of the appearance of these [figures]. [37] In like manner the goddesses beginning with Śrī (Śrīyā), having attained the condition of distinct divine figures, arose from the curl of hair [on Viṣṇu’s chest], the divine mark provided with limbs (*sakala*), [38] [as well as] Garuḍa, lord of the birds, [divine] vehicle, the best among the powerful ones. The Vedic hymns arose as *mūrti*-s from the divine figures beginning with Vāsudeva. [39] All the lords of beings beginning with Kumuda, together with their attendants, sprung up by thousands from the feet of Aniruddha. [40]”¹⁶².

Since the weapons and ornaments adorning the heavenly bodily form of the *para* Vāsudeva¹⁶³ are the concretizations of his divine qualities or functions, these too may be considered as divine *mūrti*-s. Likewise, the divine consort Śrī, the vehicle of the Lord and the at-

¹⁶¹ Nṛsiṃha Śaṅkhodara is mentioned, in the *kp*, as the sixth in a group of six *mūrti*-s. See PādS, *kp*, 18, 59-60a: *ṣaṣṭmūrtir annādhipatiḥ śaktīśaḥ kālanemijit | trailokyamohano jajñavarāhaś ceti pañcamah || 18.59 śaṅkhodaro nṛsiṃhaś ca ... | 18.60a*.

¹⁶² PādS, *jp*, 2, 37-40: *sudarśanādyāyudhāni kirītādivibhūṣaṇam | mūrtyāvīrbhāvasamayā sahaivaitāni jajñire || 2.37 devyaḥ śrīyādayas tadvat mūrtibhedam samāśritāḥ | śrīvatsād eva sakalāj jajñire divyalāñchanāt || 2.38 garuḍaḥ pakṣiṇām indro vāhanaṁ balinām varaḥ | vāsudevādimūrtibhyaś chandomūrtir ajāyata || 2.39 kumudādyāś ca bhūteśāḥ sarve pāriṣadaiḥ saha | pādātāś cāniruddhasya samabhūvan sahasraśaḥ || 2.40*.

¹⁶³ For its description see PādS, *jp*, 2, 8c-11a and 13-15, quoted above, pp. 81-83.

tendants who form His retinue¹⁶⁴, are also to be regarded as *mūrti*-s of God.

* * *

The account of the *mūrtyutpatti* illustrates the progressive transformations of the *ādyarūpa* Vāsudeva. By the repeated use of the term *mūrti*, which subsumes every type of divine figure coming into being in this stage of *sr̥ṣṭi* - *vyūha*-s, *vyūhāntara*-s, *avatāra*-s and so on - the author(s) of the PādS convey the idea that all these divine figures belong to one and the same category: as *mūrti*-s, all these beings, taken together, represent the actualization of the Supreme Being's will to manifest Himself. Then, in the variety of their appearing, each one with its own distinctive individual characteristics, the *mūrti*-s turn the power of self-differentiation of the *para* Vāsudeva into reality, showing vividly how the Supreme God unfolds in a manifoldness of divine beings. The problem of how to harmonize the multifariousness of a rich pantheon with the concept of One and Supreme God is solved by the PādS by considering all these *mūrti*-s as manifestations, particular concretizations of the *para* Vāsudeva; as such their relation to Him is marked by a difference-and-non-difference: even if each one of them has an identity of its own, all of them are God.

The Presence of God in Meditation and Ritual Worship

The PādS provides a complete and consistent picture of the reality of God and His world. The account of the *mūrtyutpatti* deals with the reality of the godhead from the point of view of its inner dynamics, retracing the manifestation of the *mūrti*-s in the temporal dimension of the process of *sr̥ṣṭi*. The treatment of the sacred cosmography (in the last chapters of the *jp*) contains a description of

¹⁶⁴ After the creation of the world, these divine beings dwell with the Lord in his resting-place. See PādS, *jp*, 2, 46-49 (for the translation see below, pp. 309-310).

the existence of God in His own heavenly realm. While Bhagavān, the Supreme Being, dwells in *Vaikuṇṭha*¹⁶⁵, the *nityodita* and the *śāntodita* Vāsudeva-s, Nārāyaṇa and the *vyūha*-s preside over their own respective worlds, whose progressive proximity to the highest abode of Bhagavān corresponds, in the spatial dimension, to the order of the appearance of these deities in the earliest stage of *śṛṣṭi*¹⁶⁶.

But, as may be inferred from the arising of the *avatāra*-s in the course of the *mūrtyutpatti*, God does not exist only in His own divine world, He is present also in the human world, where He periodically descends for the maintenance of the *dharma* and for the good of living beings. Furthermore, besides the mythological or historical circumstances of His appearance upon the earth and of His involvement in worldly events in the form of *avatāra*, on account of His immanence and all-pervasiveness, the Lord manifests Himself in other forms, in the spiritual, religious dimension of the life of human beings.

So long as they are bound to the phenomenal world, men cannot gain any understanding of God in His transcendent state. Therefore, to enable them to have the salvific experience of His presence, the Lord shows His favour and out of His gracious disposition towards human beings, He reveals Himself in forms in which He can be

¹⁶⁵ See PādS, *jp*, 12, 54c-58a: “In the world which is situated outside these [worlds, i.e. those of the *vyūha*-s, the two Vāsudeva-s and Nārāyaṇa], abides the unborn Bhagavān. [54cd] [He who] has no beginning, [who] is called Vāsudeva, shines in a jewelled pavilion, sitting together with Śrī and Bhū on a heavenly throne consisting of the serpent Śeṣa, [55] surrounded by the eight *śakti*-s beginning with Vyāpti, who carry chowries in their hands [and] are served by the attendants, Seneśa and so on, who are nearby. [Vāsudeva] is served by the weapons beginning with the discus, which are bowing before [him], [He] is continually revered by the emancipated [beings] ...[56-58a]” *tebhyo bahiḥ sthito loke yatrāste bhagavān ajah* || 12.54cd *anādīr vāsudevākhyāḥ śobhate maṇimaṇḍape | śeṣabhogāsane divye śrībhūbhyaṁ samam āsthitaḥ* || 12.55 *vyāptyādibhis *tayāṣṭābhiḥ* (em. *tathāṣṭābhiḥ* by Rastelli in Rastelli 2003: 436, note 35) *śaktibhiḥ parivāritaḥ | *bālavyajanahastābhiḥ* (em. *vālavayajanahastābhiḥ* by Rastelli in *Ibidem*) *sevyamānābhir antike* || 12.56 *seneśādyaiḥ pāriṣadais cakrādyair āyudhair api | praṇamadbhiḥ sevyamānaḥ* ... || 12.57ac *muktais ca* | 12.58a.

¹⁶⁶ See PādS, *jp*, 12, 50-53b, quoted above, p. 89 and note 124.

comprehended. Thus, in order to be meditated and worshipped, He manifests Himself in a linguistic form in the *mantra*-s, He appears in the mental images contemplated by the meditating devotees and He descends into the cult-images, which correspond to and represent His various *mūrti*-s.

The idea that the transcendent God cannot be known in Himself, but is to be approached only in a concrete form, particularly in a visible, corporeal shape, a *mūrti*, is clearly expressed in a passage of the ParS. The ParS emphasizes the necessity of the *mūrti*, insofar as the *mūrti* enables men to perform the acts of devotion and adoration which lead them to salvation: “He is to be worshipped only in a corporeal form, there is no worship of the formless one; He takes corporeal forms, meant for ritual worship, in order to show His favour to the world. [5] Hence, after having imagined the unshakeable one (Acyuta) in a human form and having worshipped Him with the utmost devotion, men attain the highest goal. [6] If the Lord of the gods is without form, neither worship, nor meditation, nor praise is possible for men, therefore one should worship Him endowed with a form. [7] If adoration, praise or meditation of a concrete form [of God], are offered according to the rule known from the scriptures, it shall be [as if they were] offered to God Himself. [8] The God of gods, drawn to themselves by the *yogin*-s by their utmost devotion, assumes the four-armed form in order to show His favour to them. [9] Therefore one should worship the God of gods only in that form. [10ab]”¹⁶⁷.

¹⁶⁷ ParS, 3, 5-10b: *mūrtimān eva pūjyo'sāv amūrter na tu pūjanam | kāryārthaṃ mūrtayas tasya lokānugrahaḥetavaḥ || 3.5 ataḥ puruṣarūpeṇa kalpayitvā tam acyutam | abhyarcya parayā bhaktyā siddhiṃ gacchanti mānavāḥ || 3.6 nirākāre tu deveṣe nārcanaṃ sambhaven nṛṇām | na ca dhyānaṃ na ca stotraṃ tasmāt sākāram arcayet || 3.7 ākāre tu kṛtā pūjā stutir vā dhyānaṃ eva vā | vidhinā sāstradrṣṭena deva eva kṛtā bhavet || 3.8 bhaktyā paramayā'kṛṣṭo devadevas sa yogibhiḥ | teṣām anugrahārthāya rūpaṃ bheje caturbhujam || 3.9 tasmāt tenaiva rūpeṇa devadevaṃ samarcayet || 3.10ab*

This passage is extensively discussed by Oberhammer in “L’expérience de la transcendance dans l’Hindouisme” (Oberhammer 1983); the ideas expounded therein will often be referred to in the following pages.

A mutual relationship is established between God and man: if, on the one hand, it is God who takes concrete forms (*mūrti*) in order to be venerated, on the other hand, it is by means of their imagination that human beings manage to construct - either mentally or physically (as expressed by *kalpayitvā* in verse 6b¹⁶⁸) - images of God (*mūrti*) in order to adore Him. As Padoux observes: “It is this invisible absolute that, by evolving, by condensing (as expressed by the verbal root *mūrch*, from which the word *mūrti* designating the divine image derives), gives rise to the forms which are worshipped by men: it is to this absolute that men attribute the forms, which they imagine in order to worship them.”¹⁶⁹ But the human imagination must not be allowed to roam freely, it has rather to be inspired by God Himself, who prescribes how the divine images must be constructed, through His injunctions handed down in the revealed scriptures (*vidhinā śāstradr̥ṣṭena*, as in verse 8c). Therefore one should properly speak of a “believing imagination”¹⁷⁰, which enables the believers, who follow a particular religious tradition, to approach God through codified forms; it is only through the *mūrti*-s conforming to the traditional canons that the devotees can have the salvific experience of the presence of God. As Oberhammer says: “It is only through the memory of the religious traditions, which is linguistic and supra-

¹⁶⁸ *Kalpayitvā*, from the causative of the verbal root *klp*, which means “to prepare, to make, to form, to imagine”, indicates both the mental and the physical construction [of an image].

¹⁶⁹ Padoux (ed.) 1990a: 1: “C’est cet absolu invisible qui, évoluant, se condensant, (ce qu’exprime la racine *mūrch*, à la quelle se rattache le mot *mūrti* désignant l’image divine), donne les formes qu’adorent les hommes: c’est à lui que ces derniers attribuent des formes, qu’ils imaginent pour les adorer.”

¹⁷⁰ Oberhammer 1983: 32: “imagination croyante”. In his discussion of the problem of the legitimization of the *mūrti*, Oberhammer quotes this significant passage of the ParS: “Therefore ... the learned man should pay homage to the Supreme God either for liberation or for [a worldly] fruit, [he] should always worship [the Supreme God] in his own form, the one which I taught you in this text (*tantrē’smin*) and not [one] imagined by [your] intellect (*buddhivikalpitam*).” (ParS, 24, 5c-7b) *tasmād ... paṇḍitaḥ* || 24.5cd *paraṃ devam upāsīta muktayaiva phalāya vā | svarūpaṃ cāsya tantrē’smin kathitaṃ yan mayā tava* || 24.6 *tad eva pūjayen nityaṃ na tu buddhivikalpitam* | 24.7ab.

individual, that the figurative representation serves as mediation for the divine presence.”¹⁷¹.

By treating of the forms taken by God for the sake of human beings and by explaining the experience of the presence of God in meditation and in ritual worship - that is to say, by dealing with the reality of God in its relational aspect - the author(s) of the PādS re-interpret the terms and concepts of *rūpa* and *mūrti*, which acquire a different shade of meaning from the sense given to them in the context of *śṛṣṭi*. In the *yp* one reads: “Indeed for the *yogin* who is practising meditation, seeing in the lotus of his heart any form (*rūpa*) whatsoever of the god endowed with all forms (*viśvarūpa*), the gross, the subtle or another one, the object [of meditation] becomes immediately manifest. [15-16b]”¹⁷². Here *rūpa* refers to the ways in which the Lord reveals Himself, in His apparition to the meditating *yogin*-s, and to how they visualize Him in the lotus of their hearts. There is a passage which, elucidating the above quoted verses of the *yp*, explains how the Supreme God, or one of His *mūrti*-s¹⁷³ - according to the chosen object of meditation - is represented in the mind of the *yogin*-s in the progressive stages of meditation¹⁷⁴: “It has a threefold form (*rūpa*): gross (*sthūla*), subtle (*sūkṣma*) [and] supreme (*para*). The gross one is to be known as having limbs (*sakala*), the subtle one as having limbs-devoid of limbs (*sakalanīṣkala*) [37] and the supreme form shall be devoid of limbs (*nīṣkala*), o lotus-born. [38ab]

¹⁷¹ Oberhammer 1983: 28: “C’est seulement par la mémoire des traditions religieuses, qui est langagière et supra-individuelle, que la représentation figurée sert de médiation à la présence divine.”

¹⁷² PādS, *yp*, 5, 15-16b: *viśvarūpasya devasya rūpaṃ yat kiṃcid eva hi | sthāvīyaḥ sūkṣmam anyad vā paśyan hṛdayapaṅkaje || 5.15 dhyāyato yogino vastu sākṣād eva prakāśate | 5.16ab*.

¹⁷³ The terms *rūpa* and *mūrti* assume different meanings from those given in the account of *śṛṣṭi*, also in terms of how they relate to each other: whereas in the account of *śṛṣṭi* the *rūpa* of the Supreme Being (i.e. Vāsudeva) was the source of the *mūrti*-s, in the yogic-ritual context each *mūrti* of God can be experienced in different *rūpa*-s.

¹⁷⁴ The progressive stages of meditation and its dynamic structure are discussed in detail below, pp. 274-277.

The *sakala* form of the Supreme *ātman* is endowed with a thousand heads and so on. [38cd] The *sakalanīṣkala* form appears like a mass of splendour. The primeval form, consisting of being, consciousness and bliss, is called *nīṣkala*. [39]¹⁷⁵. The *sthūla/sakala rūpa* corresponds to an inner image of God which is endowed with the concrete corporeal features traditionally codified by iconography; the *sūkṣma/sakalanīṣkala rūpa* corresponds to the aniconic representation of the deity, perceived as a blazing light; the *para/nīṣkala rūpa* corresponds to the apprehension of the godhead in its true essence, in its transcendent state. In the course of such a meditation, which is characterized by a dynamic structure, the *yogin/devotee* passes through the contemplation of increasingly subtle and abstract forms of God, by discarding, progressively, the more material and concrete forms in which the Lord appears in the lotus of his heart; then, in the highest stage of meditation, in *samādhi*¹⁷⁶, he attains the experience of the transcendent God.

It is possible to recognize a correspondence between, on the one hand, the forms of God contemplated by the *yogin/devotee* in the course of meditation and, on the other hand, the forms of the divine manifestation in the course of *sṛṣṭi*. Accordingly, the *para/nīṣkala rūpa* would correspond to the Supreme Being, i.e. God in His transcendent state; the *sūkṣma/sakalanīṣkala rūpa*, “appearing like a mass of splendour”¹⁷⁷, might be equated with the *nityodita* Vāsudeva, “radiant like the fire of a thousand suns and millions of moons”¹⁷⁸; the *sthūla/sakala rūpa* would correspond to the *mūrti* stage of the divine manifestation. According to a pattern common in the meditations characterized by a dynamic structure, the increasingly subtle forms of God are contemplated in a sequence that is in reverse order to

¹⁷⁵ PādS, jp, 6, 37-39: *sthūlaṃ sūkṣmaṃ paraṃ tasya trividhaṃ rūpaṃ īritam | sthūlaṃ tat sakalaṃ jñeyaṃ sūkṣmaṃ sakalanīṣkalam || 6.37 paraṃ nīṣkalam eva syād rūpaṃ kamalasambhava | rūpaṃ sahasraśīrṣādi sakalaṃ paramātmanaḥ || 6.38 tejah puñjam ivābhāti rūpaṃ sakalanīṣkalam | saccidānandarūpādirūpaṃ nīṣkalasaṃjñitam || 6.39.*

¹⁷⁶ The experience of *samādhi* is discussed below, pp. 277-281.

¹⁷⁷ PādS, jp, 6, 39a.

¹⁷⁸ PādS, jp, 2, 9ab.

their progressive manifestation in the course of *sr̥ṣṭi*; thus, the transcendent Supreme Being, principle of the process of *sr̥ṣṭi*, is attained at the end of the process of meditation.

A problem arises in how to understand the relation between the objectivity of the divine manifestations in the course of *sr̥ṣṭi*, resulting from God's will to take concrete, particular forms and the subjectivity of the experience of these same forms in the course of meditation, resulting from the human faculty of visualizing and actualizing them. The question - which concerns any meditation focused on God - can be put in these terms: what is the relationship between the reality of God in Himself and His presence for His devotees? As Oberhammer remarks: "...the form through which He manifests Himself for the adoration of His devotees is not His own reality, but rather His 'mythicized presence', granted by His grace."¹⁷⁹

Actually, this problem may be tackled from two different perspectives. Seen from a viewpoint that is extraneous to the religious tradition in question, both the reality of God as described by the theology and the presence of God as experienced by the meditating devotees, are products of the "*imagination croyante*" of the followers of this particular religious tradition; therefore, one cannot properly speak either of the objectivity of the divine reality, or of how the latter might be related to the subjectivity of the experience of the divine presence, because the whole question has to be reduced to a matter of subjective belief. On the contrary, if one tackles the problem from the inside of this religious tradition, the central question is whether the believers consider and perceive the divine presence - which is evoked by the construction, contemplation and worship of a mental image of God - as an actual descent of God, of God in person, in the lotus of their hearts.

Such statements as those according to which the *yogin*-s, thanks to their devotion, can draw God to themselves¹⁸⁰, testify the faith

¹⁷⁹ Oberhammer 1983: 27-28: "...la forme par laquelle il se manifeste pour l'adoration de ses fidèles, n'est pas sa réalité même, mais plutôt sa 'presence mythique', donnée par sa grace."

¹⁸⁰ See the above quoted ParS, 3, 9, where the verb *ā-kṛṣ* means "to draw towards

in the possibility of bringing about the appearance of God Himself in the inner world of the devotees. In fact, out of His grace, God manifests Himself also in forms which provide His devotees with the means of transforming the divine presence into actual reality. These forms are the *mantra*-s, of which the PādS gives the following general definition: “By means of the *mantra* God is brought into [the heart], indeed by means of the *mantra* [He] is dismissed; of all knowledges, the sages consider the knowledge of the *mantra*-s as the knowledge which has this as its highest object. [98]”¹⁸¹. Thus, the *mantra*-s are considered as effective instruments offered by God to human beings, in order to make it possible for them to experience the encounter with their Lord. Such is the salvific power of the *mantra*-s, and indeed this is their chief function, according to the definition of the PādS.

The *mantra*-s may furthermore be regarded as *mūrti*-s of God, insofar as they are particular concretizations of the godhead in the form of powerful entities, endowed with a phonic, linguistic nature. Just as those *mūrti*-s which have corporeal, anthropomorphic features can be meditated and worshipped, on account of being visibly perceivable and representable, similarly, the “*mantra-mūrti*-s”, which have phonic, linguistic features may be audibly perceivable and reproducible and may thereby be used by men in meditation and in ritual worship.

The role played by the *mantra*-s in bringing God near to His devotees and in actualizing His presence for the purpose of worship is clearly exemplified in the rituals of installation and consecration (*pratiṣṭhā*) of the cult-images (*arcā*) in the temples. In these rituals the Lord is invoked and, with the help of particular *mantra*-s, is requested to descend into the cult-image, in order to vivify and

one’s self, to attract“.

¹⁸¹ PādS, cp, 23, 98: *mantreṇa sthāpyate devo mantreṇaiva visrjyate | jñānānāṃ tatparaṃ jñānaṃ mantrajñānaṃ vidur budhāḥ* || 23.98.

This definition echoes that given in ParS, 6, 3cd: “By means of the *mantra*-s God is drawn to one’s self and by means of the *mantra*-s [He] is dismissed.” *mantrair ākrṣyate devo mantrair eva visrjyate* || 6.3cd.

divinize it; when He enters the *arcā*, the latter, charged with the divine presence, ceases to be a physical icon and becomes a living manifestation of God, worthy of adoration and fit for ritual worship.

Although the *pratiṣṭhā* ceremonies - extensively treated in the *kp* of the PādS - are beyond the concern of this study, it is worth quoting the description of the meditation to be performed by the *ācārya* during the consecration of the chief icon (*mūlabera*) of the temple. This description is relevant for the present discussion because it highlights the essential function of the *mantra*-s in the crucial “passage” of the sacralizing power of the divine presence from the heart of the meditating devotee to the cult-image:

“In front of the chief icon, remaining in the bound lotus posture, having held his breath, the pure-minded one should meditate on the eternal *brahman* [as]: [52] Vāsudeva, unborn, tranquil, luminous, eternally manifest, without beginning, middle and end, one, immovable and permanent, [53] nothing but consciousness, supreme bliss, beyond the darkness, imperishable, fully endowed with knowledge (*jñāna*), power (*śakti*), strength (*bala*), sovereignty (*aiśvarya*), valour (*vīrya*), and splendour (*tejas*); [54] not tangible as far as feet and hands [are concerned and] as far as the faculties of seeing, hearing and so on [are concerned, yet] having hands, voice and feet everywhere, having eyes, heads and mouths everywhere; [55] free from growth and decline, blazing like millions of suns, consciousness, all-pervading, eternal, [He who is] beyond the heaven, the wonderful one, [56] the common ground of the sentient [beings] in this world, the Supreme [one], consisting of the *mūlamantra*, Viṣṇu in such a form as [being] eternal joy, consisting of the *praṇava*. [57] Having impelled Him, he should let the venerable Great Viṣṇu enter Viṣṇu and, after having invited Viṣṇu into the lotus of [his] heart, he should worship Him according to the regular order. [58] Afterwards, having brought [Him] together with Śrī to the throne within the *añjali* by means of the *puruṣamantra*, the *guru* should then meditate with [the help of] the *viśvamantra*. [59] After having uttered the *nivṛttimantra* he should make Nārāyaṇa enter into the cult-image, unborn, all-pervading, to be understood as essentially splendour; [60] he should

think of [Him] entered into the cult-image through the way of the *brahmarandhra* by means of the *sarvamantra*, abiding there by pervading it (i.e. the image), o lotus born. [61]¹⁸².

The object of the meditation of the *ācārya* is *brahman*, i.e. the Supreme Being, in His *rūpa* of *nityodita Vāsudeva* (*vāsudevam ... santatoditam*, verse 53ab), which is described with expressions that strongly recall those used in the *brahmalakṣaṇa* passage. Absorbed in the thought of God in His *para* form, the *ācārya* “should let the venerable Great Viṣṇu enter Viṣṇu”: this expression means that the transcendent form of God (*mahāviṣṇu*) should “narrow” into the *mūrti* of Viṣṇu to become approachable by the meditating devotee. In fact, the *ācārya* is supposed to attract God, in the form of Viṣṇu, and make Him present in the lotus of his heart, in order to worship Him¹⁸³. Then, by means of particular *mantra*-s¹⁸⁴, the *ācārya* summons up God in the hollow of his hands and, finally, he makes Him enter the cult-image. It is thanks to the power of the *mantra*-s that

¹⁸² PādS, kp, 28, 52-61: *purato mūlaberasya baddhapadmāsanasthitaḥ | prānān āyamaṃ śuddhātmā dhyāyed brahma sanātanam || 28.52 vāsudevam ajaṃ śāntam *ujjalaṃ (em. ujjvalaṃ) santatoditam | anādimadhyānidhanam ekaṃ cāpy acalaṃ sthiram || 28.53 cidghanaṃ paramānandaṃ tamaśaḥ param avyayam | jñānaśaktibalaiśvaryaṃ vyatejāsamanvitam || 28.54 āpādapāṇim asprśyam *acakṣuḥśravaṇādikaṃ (em. ācakṣuḥśravaṇādikaṃ) | sarvatra karavākpādaṃ sarvato 'kṣiṣiromukham || 28.55 gatāgatavinirmuktaṃ ravikoṭisamaprabham | caitanyaṃ sarvagaṃ nityaṃ vyomātītaṃ tad adbhutam || 28.56 citsāmānyaṃ jagaty asmin mūlamantrātmakaṃ param | evaṃ vidhaṃ sadā viṣṇuṃ āhlādaṃ praṇavātmakaṃ || 28.57 taṃ niyujya mahāviṣṇuṃ mataṃ viṣṇau niveśayet | viṣṇuṃ ca *hṛdaye padme (em. hṛdayapadme) samāvāhyārcayet kramāt || 28.58 samāvāhyā śrīyā paścān mantreṇa puruṣātmanā | aṅjalisthe tataḥ pīṭhe dhyāyed viśvātmanā guruḥ || 28.59 tejonidānam adhyeyaṃ nārāyaṇam ajaṃ vibhum | nivr̥ttimantram uccārya pratimāyāṃ niveśayet || 28.60 brahmarandhreṇa mārgeṇa praviṣṭaṃ pratimākṛtau | vyāpya sthitaṃ smaret *sarvaṃ mantreṇa (em. sarvamanetreṇa) kamalāsana || 28.61.*

¹⁸³ The text alludes to the practice of internal worship, the so-called *antaryāga*, where the devotee performs, without any physical support or gestures, the worship of a deity evoked in the lotus of his heart, by reproducing, mentally, the ritual acts prescribed for external worship.

¹⁸⁴ The *mantra*-s mentioned, *puruṣamantra*, *viśvamantra* and *sarvamantra*, belong to the group of the *pañcopaniṣad-mantra*-s.

the all-pervading Lord descends into the icon, permeating it with His powerful presence.

Although the last verses of this passage suggest the idea that this - so to speak - consecrating meditation brings about the descent (*avatāra*) of the Lord into the *arcā*, neither the term nor the concept of *arcāvatāra*¹⁸⁵ is traceable, as such, in the PādS. On the basis of the teachings of the PādS concerning the forms of God and the mode of their manifestation, the consecrated *arcā* ought rather to be understood as a specific type of divine *mūrti*. Such an interpretation is justified not only by the fact that the *vyūha*-s, *avatāra*-s, goddesses and so on mentioned in the account of the *mūrti*utpatti are the very ones whose images are built and installed for the purpose of temple worship. This parallel between the diachronic dimension of the arising of the *mūrti*-s during *sṛṣṭi* and the synchronic dimension of their presence within the enclosure of the temple certainly proves the consistency of the theological and ritual teachings of the PādS. But, what is even more important is that besides these correspondences, the affinity between *mūrti* and *arcā* is substantial. As each and every *mūrti* is a manifestation of the Supreme God, so each and every *arcā* is permeated with the presence of the same Supreme One. In fact, not only the chief icon of the temple (with which the above quoted passage of the *kp* is concerned) is charged with the presence of the *para* Vāsudeva, but every *arcā* is pervaded by God in His *para* form¹⁸⁶. What distinguishes the *mūrti* from the *arcā* is

¹⁸⁵ The concept of *arcāvatāra* is discussed in other Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā*-s and has its place in the doctrine of the five forms of God (*para*, *vyūha*, *vibhava*, *antaryāmin* and *arcā*) elaborated by some authors of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta. For a short excursus about this doctrine in the Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā*-s and in Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta, see Rastelli 2006: 322ff. Actually Rastelli shows that the concept of the five forms of God is not nearly as widespread as it is claimed, and is mentioned only in a few more recent *saṃhitā*-s.

¹⁸⁶ See, for instance, PādS, *kp*, 28, 34-38b, where the *para* Vāsudeva is invoked and requested to imbue with his presence the cult-images of the subsidiary attendant deities (*parivāradevatā*): *āvāhayet tato devaṃ tamasah param avyayam | ānandaṃ sarvagaṃ nityaṃ vyomātītaṃ parātparam || 28.34 marīcicakramadhyasthaṃ vāsudevam ajaṃ vibhum | mūlamantreṇa viśveśam āvāhya gurur ātmavān ||*

the way in which the Supreme God concretizes Himself: whereas in the case of the *mūrti* there is a condensation of the godhead, a taking shape resulting in the arising of a particular divine figure, in the case of the *arcā*, there is an impregnation, a pervasion by the godhead, of a material shape which is already given.

The multivalency of the concept of *mūrti* is further testified by a crucial feature of the meditation under discussion. Unlike the meditations aiming at the experience of the identity - attained in *samādhi* - between individual soul and Supreme Soul, the purpose of the meditation of the *ācārya* is the divinization of the cult-image. By meditating and by making use of the appropriate *mantra*-s, the *ācārya* manages to evoke and somehow to transfer the divine presence from himself - that is, from the hollow of his heart and then, of his hands - to the cult-image. Thus, the person of the *ācārya* becomes the way leading God to his abode in the cult-image. God does not enter the *arcā* directly, but passes through the body of His devotee, thereby charging this too with His powerful presence. The human body made of flesh and blood, like the idol made of stone, is sacralized by the divine presence. In such a way, the meditating devotee becomes himself a *mūrti* of God.

28.35 *brahmarandhrena bimbāntaḥ praviṣṭaṁ paricintayet | kumbhasthaṁ paramātmānaṁ pratimāyāṁ niveśayet ||* 28.36 *mantranyāsaṁ tataḥ kuryān mūlamantreṇa deśikaḥ | yāceta devaṁ sānnidhyaṁ parivārān prakalpayet ||* 28.37 *samārādhya tato devaṁ pāyasānnaṁ nivedayet |* 28.38ab

2 THE INDIVIDUAL SOUL (JĪVA)

Puruṣa and prakṛti: rūpa-s of the Supreme Being

The teachings of the PādS concerning the creation of the phenomenal world of living beings and the origination of the individual souls have to be understood within the framework of the concept, discussed above, of the threefold manifestation of the Supreme Being. Accordingly, the author(s) of the PādS adjust the Sāṃkhya-derived notions of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* to their theological views and consider these two as *rūpa*-s of the Supreme God.

“*Prakṛti* and *puruṣa*, these two are my unfathomable forms. - says Bhagavān - Having entered into this pair, I excite [them] according to my wish. [9]”¹⁸⁷. *Prakṛti* and *puruṣa* are the *rūpa*-s, respectively non-spiritual and spiritual¹⁸⁸, by which God brings forth the creation of the world¹⁸⁹. While pervading matter (*prakṛti*) and spirit (*puruṣa*), which are His own manifestations, God stimulates them and, with the power of His will (*icchayā*, *jp*, 5, 9d), gives the first impulse to the evolution of *prakṛti*.

The *prakṛti-rūpa* of the PādS is conceived, in the same way as the *prakṛti* of the classical Sāṃkhya, as primordial matter, eternal, one and active. Having no beginning, existing from eternity (*anādi*, *jp*, 5, 10b) and being imperishable (*avināśin*, *Ibidem*), *prakṛti* is eternal (*nitya*, *jp*, 8, 16c), hence coeternal with the Supreme Being. Non-spiritual (*acetana*, *jp*, 8, 16a), original matrix of all things, she remains

¹⁸⁷ PādS, *jp*, 5, 9: *prakṛtiḥ puruṣaś cobhe mama rūpe duratyaye | anupraviśya dvitayaṃ kṣobhayāmy ahaṃ icchayā || 5.9.*

¹⁸⁸ See PādS, *jp*, 7, 44ab: *acetanaṃ cetanaṃ ca rūpaṃ.*

¹⁸⁹ See *Ibidem*, 48cd: *acetanāc cetanāc ca sṛṣṭir.*

undeveloped, that is to say in a condition of latency where her inherent qualities, the three *guṇa*-s, are withdrawn into herself in a state of equilibrium, until, urged by the Supreme *ātman*, *prakṛti* begins to evolve, bringing forth from herself the world of living beings. As in the classical Sāṃkhya, so also in the PādS the products of the evolution of *prakṛti* result from a transformation (*pariṇāma*) of primordial matter, such as that by which clarified butter is produced out of coagulated milk (according to the simile occurring in the text)¹⁹⁰.

In the passage which systematically outlines the unfolding of *prakṛti* through the principles/entities (*tattva*) constituting the phenomenal world (PādS, *jp*, 5, 9-20b), it is said that, whereas the *paramātman* arouses *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*, thereby setting in motion the evolution of the latter, *puruṣa* - i.e. the *puruṣa-rūpa* of the *paramātman* - superintends the whole process of evolution: “O Brahmā, *prakṛti*, consisting of the three *guṇa*-s, existing from eternity, imperishable, superintended by *puruṣa*, produces the immovable and movable beings. [10]”¹⁹¹. After retracing the development of the *tattva*-s, the text maintains that *puruṣa* too plays a part in it: “The *tattva*-s (*viśeṣa*) beginning with the great principle are said [to arise because of] *prakṛti* and *puruṣa* [20ab]”¹⁹².

¹⁹⁰ See PādS, *jp*, 8, 15-17b: “[Śrī Bhagavān:] O four-faced one, by the sages *prakṛti* is said to be the complete contraction of the *guṇa*-s beginning with *sattva*. [15] Non-spiritual, the womb of everything, undeveloped, eternal, she brings forth from herself the whole world by the injunction of the Supreme *ātman*. [16] She is existing as non-different and different like clarified butter with regard to coagulated milk. [17ab]” [*śrībhagavān*] *anyūnādhikarūpāṇāṃ satvādīnāṃ caturmukha | guṇānāṃ saṃhṛtiṃ yā sā prakṛtiḥ sadbhir ucyate* || 8.15 *acetanā sā viśvasya yonir avyākrtaḥ svayam | nityā sūte jagat sarvaṃ niyogāt paramātmanaḥ* || 8.16 *avibhaktā vibhaktā ca dadhni sarpir iva sthitā* | 8.17ab. See also PādS, *jp*, 7, 45: “The undivided, one, undeveloped form of the Supreme *ātman* is existing as non-different and different like clarified butter with regard to coagulated milk. [45]” *abhinnaṃ ekam avyaktaṃ rūpaṃ tat paramātmanaḥ | avibhaktaṃ vibhaktaṃ ca dadhni sarpir iva sthitam* || 7.45.

¹⁹¹ PādS, *jp*, 5, 10: *prakṛtis triguṇā brahman anādir avināśinī | puruṣādhiṣṭhitā sūte sthāvarāṇi carāṇi ca* || 5.10.

¹⁹² *Ibidem*, 20ab: *mahadādiviśeṣās tāḥ pradhānapuruṣeritāḥ* | 5.20ab.

Whereas in the text questions are asked and explicit definitions are given about the nature of *prakṛti*¹⁹³, the notion of *puruṣa* can be inferred only on the basis of the statements concerning the relation of *puruṣa* with *paramātmā* and *prakṛti*. Accordingly, *puruṣa* is conceived as the consciousness (*cetana*), the spiritual principle which, insofar as it is a *rūpa* of the *paramātmā*, is coeternal with Him, like the other two *rūpa*-s forming the threefold manifestation of the godhead, namely Vāsudeva¹⁹⁴ and *prakṛti*, both regarded as eternal. This *puruṣa* rules over the activity of *prakṛti*, which is said to be “superintended by *puruṣa*”¹⁹⁵. As it is formulated in the text¹⁹⁶, this expression signifies that, in the dynamics of *sṛṣṭi*, whereas it is the *paramātmā*, i.e. God Himself, who provokes the conversion of *prakṛti* from her undeveloped to her developed state¹⁹⁷, it is in His

¹⁹³ See, for instance, PādS, *jp*, 8, 14ff: “[Brahmā:] O God, what is the nature of *prakṛti*, how does she bring forth this world? Tell [me] everything, entirely, o Bhagavān, o you causing the welfare of living beings. [14] ...” [*brahmā*] *kiṃ rūpā prakṛtir deva sūte katham idaṃ jagat | brūhi sarvaṃ aśeṣeṇa bhagavan bhūtabhāvāna* || 8.14 (the answer, given in the verses that follow, is quoted above in note 190).

¹⁹⁴ See PādS, *jp*, 2, 11ac: ... *saumyaṃ rūpaṃ ādyaṃ sanātanaṃ | sa vāsudevo vijñeyah*... “Vāsudeva is to be known as the first, eternal, auspicious form [of *brahman*]”.

¹⁹⁵ PādS, *jp*, 5, 10c: *puruṣādhiṣṭhitā*.

¹⁹⁶ See PādS, *jp*, 5, 9-10, quoted above in notes 187 and 191.

¹⁹⁷ Likewise, it is always God who provokes the reabsorption of all the *tattva*-s into *prakṛti* at the time of the cyclic dissolution of the worlds.

See PādS, *jp*, 5, 21cd: “At the beginning of creation the whole world was produced in this way out of *prakṛti* [21cd] [and] at the end of a *kalpa* indeed it is reabsorbed into *prakṛti*, o you having the lotus as a seat.” *sargādaṃ prakṛter evaṃ udbhūtaṃ akhilaṃ jagat* || 5.21cd *līyate prakṛtāṃ eva kalpānte kamalāsana* ||.

See also PādS, *jp*, 8, 17c-19 : “At the end of a day of Brahṃā, the Lord called Saṃkarṣaṇa, as Rudra, according to his own will, withdraws the creatures within *prakṛti*. At the beginning of a day [of Brahṃā], as Brahṃā himself, the creator of the world, he begets again, as before, in due succession, all the world with its creatures. [17c-19b] Thus the creation and destruction of the world have been thoroughly enunciated by me. [19cd]” *saṃkarṣaṇākhyo bhagavān prakṛtāṃ eva tāḥ prajāḥ* || 8.17cd *rudraḥ saṃharati svairāṃ brahmaṇo divasakṣaye | divasādaṃ jagat sarvaṃ punar evāśṛjat prajāḥ* || 8.18 *lokakartā svayaṃ brahmā yathāpūrvaṃ yathākramam | ity evaṃ sargasaṃhārau mayā samyag udīritau* || 8.19.

form (*rūpa*) of *puruṣa* that God presides over the successive evolution and activity of *prakṛti*.

By formulating this idea, the author(s) of the PādS seem to have been inspired by the AS, where - at the beginning of the account of the so-called impure creation¹⁹⁸ - one reads that *prakṛti* begins to evolve from her undeveloped state (*avyakta*), when she is impelled by God's will (*viṣṇusaṃkalpacodita*) and superintended by *puruṣa* (*puruṣādhiṣṭhita*)¹⁹⁹. But what is actually meant by *adhiṣṭhitā*? The PādS does not provide any further explanation as to the meaning of this expression; the AS simply says that *puruṣa*, which is not subject to transformation, becomes the cause of the transformation of *prakṛti*, "because of his nearness (or: presence)" (*saṃnidhānena*)²⁰⁰. In the JS, where the relationship between matter and spirit is also expressed in terms of control of the former by the latter, this relationship is likened to the magnetic attraction of iron by lodestone²⁰¹. To

¹⁹⁸ The theory of creation of the AS - where the *śakti* of Viṣṇu, in her twofold aspect of *kriyā-śakti* and *bhūti-śakti*, plays a central role in setting the process of *sṛṣṭi* in motion - is articulated in the so-called pure creation (*śuddhasṛṣṭi*), concerning the divine emanations, and impure creation (*śuddhetarasṛṣṭi*), related to the arising of the world. The topic is discussed extensively in chapters 5-7 of the work. An annotated English translation of these chapters is given in Matsubara 1994: 203-238 ; for an analysis of and comment on the creation theory of the AS, see Schrader 1916: 29ff.

¹⁹⁹ See AS, 7, 7-8b : *puruṣādhiṣṭhitāt tasmād viṣṇusaṃkalpacoditāt | kālena kalitāc caiva guṇasāmyān mahāmune || 7.7 mahān nāma mahattattvaṃ avyaktād uditam mune | 7.8ab*

²⁰⁰ See *Ibidem*, 5c-6b : *payomṛdādivat tatra prakṛtiḥ pariṇāminī || 7.5cd pumān aparīṇāmī san saṃnidhānena kāraṇam | 7.6ab*

²⁰¹ See JS, 3, 13-15: "[Nārada:] O Lord, how can this non-spiritual principle, which is the seat of the qualities, which exists as one and manifold, be nevertheless spiritual? [13] [Śrī Bhagavān:] The principle of the self, which exists in *brahman* as non-different [from it], consists of spirit; since this [matter] is blended with that [spirit], matter appears as it were consisting of spirit, o twice-born. [14] As one sees that [something made] of iron is dominated and drawn by a lodestone, in like manner, indeed, is what I have told. [15]" *[nāradaḥ] acetanam idaṃ nātha katham syāc cetanam punaḥ | etad guṇāspadam tattvaṃ yac caikaṃ naikadhā sthitam || 3.13 [śrībhagavān] cidrūpam āmatattvaṃ yad abhinnaṃ brahmaṇi sthitam | tenaitac churitaṃ bhāti acic cinmayavad dvija || 3.14 yathā'yaskāntamaṇinā*

explain the nature of this power exerted by *puruṣa* towards *prakṛti* - as it is specifically understood by the PādS - it is necessary to elucidate the concept of *puruṣa-rūpa* and in this the text of the AS proves useful. Indeed, reference to certain expressions and ideas occurring in the AS helps fill in the gaps in the scanty illustration of the concept of *puruṣa* provided in the text of the PādS. It thus seems plausible to suggest that the author(s) of the PādS were influenced by formulations traceable in the text of the AS; accordingly, these formulations may be considered as part of the conceptual background of certain statements of the PādS which are otherwise difficult to interpret.

In the AS *puruṣa* is defined as “totality” (*samaṣṭi*), “womb” (*yonī*), “highest, immovable” (*kūṭastha*)²⁰². “Totality” is to be understood as the totality of the souls; in fact, in another part of the text, one reads that *puruṣa* is traditionally known as the totality of the selves and as such is likened to a beehive²⁰³. By “womb” is meant that *puruṣa* is the source of the manifold individual souls²⁰⁴. This *puruṣa* is qualified as *kūṭastha* because of his highest position of ultimate origin of the souls, whereby he is said to be the self of all, powerful in every respect, omniscient, all-pervading²⁰⁵.

In this regard, it is also worth mentioning the definition of *kūṭastha puruṣa* given in the LT: “*Puruṣa* [is] the highest enjoyer, omniscient, having heads everywhere; from him come forth, as his portions, all the eternal individual souls and, at the time of the dissolution [of the universe], the souls [bound] by *karman* go back to him, the Supreme Person. [11-12b]”²⁰⁶. This definition aids understanding of

lohasyādhiṣṭhitam tu vai | drśyate valamānaṃ tu tadvad eva mayoditam || 3.15.

²⁰² See AS, 7, 2cd : *samaṣṭiḥ puruṣo yonīḥ sa kūṭastha itīryate || 7.2cd.*

²⁰³ See AS, 6, 33cd, 34b: *sarvātmanāṃ samaṣṭir yā koṣo madhukṛtām iva || 6.33cd ... sa puruṣaḥ smṛtaḥ || 6.34b.*

²⁰⁴ See AS, 10, 19bc: *... pumān kūṭavat sthitaḥ | nānājīvamahāyonis ... || 10.19bc.*

²⁰⁵ See the definition of *kūṭastha puruṣa* given in AS, 4, 56-57: *sarvātmā sarvataḥ śaktiḥ puruṣaḥ sarvatomukhaḥ | sarvajñaḥ sarvagaḥ sarvaḥ sarvam āvṛtya tiṣṭhati || 4.56 manūnām eṣa kūṭasthaḥ puruṣo dvicaturmayāḥ | kṛtsnakarmādhikāro vai devadevasya vai hareḥ || 4.57.*

²⁰⁶ LT, 7, 11-12b: *puruṣo bhoktrkūṭasthaḥ sarvajñaḥ sarvatomukhaḥ | aṃśataḥ prasaranty asmāt sarve jīvāḥ sanātānāḥ || 7.11 *pralaye tv api yanty enaṃ (em. A.*

the simile of the beehive occurring in the AS: the *jīva*-s come forth and return to the *kūṭastha puruṣa*, like bees coming forth and returning to a beehive; in this way it is easy to understand how, in the AS, the idea of source (*yonī*) is linked to and integrated with the idea of totality (*samaṣṭi*)²⁰⁷.

By considering these features of *puruṣa* - as they are outlined in the AS - it is possible to substantiate the corresponding concept in the PādS. In the first place, just as in the AS the *kūṭastha puruṣa* is one, so too for the PādS there is one *puruṣa-rūpa* of the *paramātmān*; thus, while agreeing on this point, both the AS and the PādS differ from the classical Sāṃkhya, in which the *puruṣa*-s are infinite in number. Moreover, since in the PādS *prakṛti* is the primordial matter, the root of the phenomenal world, the “womb of everything”²⁰⁸, *puruṣa*, which represents the original consciousness, ought to be correspondingly regarded as the “womb” (*yonī*) of the manifold individual souls, as well as their “totality” (*samaṣṭi*), in the sense that all the *jīva*-s are contained in their source, *puruṣa*, like bees in a beehive.

Furthermore, there is a statement of the PādS concerning the relationship between *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* which becomes comprehensible if one considers *puruṣa* as a “highest and immovable” (*kūṭastha*) ruling principle: “*Puruṣa* is called the Supreme *ātmān*. The one which is composed of the three *guṇa*-s, superintended by Him, brings forth the whole world consisting of consciousness and by His command she also destroys all that. [41-42b]”²⁰⁹. This statement raises a question: how is it possible for insentient *prakṛti* to bring forth a

pralaye tv api yānti enaṃ) *karmātmāno naraṃ param* | 7.12ab

²⁰⁷ It is worth remarking that the concept of *puruṣa* as *samaṣṭi* is also found in Yādvaparakāśa. Dealing with the *bhoktr-aṃśa*, Nārāyaṇārya, in his *Nītimālā*, writes: “There [is] one *puruṣa* [which], endowed with the power of being an enjoyer [constitutes] the totality of the enjoyers.” (NM, 5: *tatra bhoktrtvaśaktiyukto bhoktrsamaṣṭipuruṣa ekaḥ* |).

²⁰⁸ PādS, *jp*, 8, 16a: *viśvasya yonih*.

²⁰⁹ PādS, *jp*, 6, 41-42b: *puruṣaḥ paramātmākhyāḥ teneyaṃ triguṇātmikā | adhiṣṭhitā jagat sarvaṃ prasūte cetanātmakam* || 6.41 *saṃharaty api tat sarvaṃ niyogād eva tasya sā* || 6.42ab

world consisting of consciousness? Or, according to the formulation of the JS: “how can this non-spiritual principle, which is the seat of the qualities, which exists as one and manifold, be nevertheless spiritual?”²¹⁰. By supplementing the text of the PādS with expressions taken from both the AS and JS, this question may be answered by saying that the world of the moving and alive creatures (*jagat*) produced by the *acetanā prakṛti* is *cetana* because of the intervention of *puruṣa*, by which living beings are endowed with consciousness. As a lodestone which, leading to move the inert iron²¹¹, itself remains immovable, likewise *puruṣa*, making sentient the insentient products of the evolution of *prakṛti*, remains himself “immovable” (*kūṭastha*), that is to say unchanged, unaffected by the manifold activities of the variety of embodied souls of whom he is the ultimate source. *Puruṣa* is rightly also called *kūṭastha* in the sense of “highest, supreme”, because it is the *paramātmān* Himself who, in His *puruṣa-rūpa*, i.e. as *puruṣa*, gives rise to the *jīva*-s, by concretizing Himself in every particular individual soul. This explains why in the text of the PādS *puruṣa* could be equated with the *paramātmān*; indeed he is “called the Supreme *ātmān*”.

The expression *puruṣādhiṣṭhītā*, which is used in PādS, AS and JS²¹² to describe the relationship between *prakṛti* and *puruṣa* and is variously interpreted as “control” in the PādS, “presence or nearness” (*saṃnidhāna*) in the AS and “magnetic influence” (*valamāna*) in the JS, thus becomes understandable. On the one hand, it indicates the utter dependence of *prakṛti* on God who, in His form of *puruṣa*, is supervising *prakṛti* in the progressive stages of her evolution, during the whole process of *sṛṣṭi*. On the other hand, at the level of the existence of the beings living in the world, this expression signifies, more concretely, that for each and every living being the *jīva*, which is a particular concretization of the *puruṣa-rūpa* of God, is the actual, spiritual, conscious principle ruling over each respective material

²¹⁰ JS, 3, 13. For the Sanskrit text, see above, note 201.

²¹¹ See *Ibidem*, 15. For the Sanskrit text, see above, note 201.

²¹² See PādS, *jp*, 5, 10c and *jp*, 6, 41c, AS, 7, 7a and JS, 3, 15b, quoted above in notes 191, 209, 199 and 201 respectively.

organism, which is the product of the evolution of *prakṛti*; therefore it is said that *prakṛti*, actualized as a particular body, is ruled by *puruṣa*, actualized as a particular soul.

In the light of the notions of *prakṛti* and *puruṣa* in the PādS elucidated so far, and taking into account the suggested influence of the thought of Yādavaprakāśa, it is now possible to clarify the respective relationships of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* to the *paramātmān*.

Just as, according to Yādavaprakāśa, "...all the bodies are endowed with a soul by virtue of one and the same soul..."²¹³, in the same way, for the PādS, *puruṣa* represents the ur-soul, the one and the same spiritual principle which, by relating itself to *prakṛti*, actualizes itself in every *jīva*. In accordance with Yādavaprakāśa's concept of *aṁśa*, the *puruṣa-rūpa* is to be regarded as simultaneously non-different and different from the *paramātmān*: *puruṣa* is non-different from the Supreme Being, which is "nothing but consciousness" (*cidghana*)²¹⁴, because of his nature, namely, because of his being the original consciousness, because of his being the direct emanation, as ur-*ātmān*, of the Supreme *ātmān*. But, on account of his specific function towards *prakṛti*, *puruṣa* represents a differentiated form of the *paramātmān*; in actual fact, the *puruṣa-rūpa* can be defined as the concrete form assumed by the *paramātmān* in his relation to *prakṛti*. As such *puruṣa* is different from the *paramātmān* because of his specific *raison d'être*, which consists in his narrowing in the individual souls.

The difference-and-non-difference with respect to the Supreme Being is even more conspicuous in the case of the *prakṛti-rūpa*. In fact, insentient *prakṛti* may be considered as different from the Supreme Being, which, due to His being "nothing but consciousness", is actually said to be "other than *prakṛti*" (*prakṛter anya*)²¹⁵.

²¹³ In his commentary *Śrutaparakāśikā* on Rāmānuja's *Śrībhāṣya*, Sudarśanasūri refers to this teaching of Yādavaprakāśa, which is refuted by Rāmānuja: "and it is said that all the bodies are endowed with a soul by virtue of one and the same soul..." *yac cōktam – ekenātmānā sarvāṇi śarīrāṇy ātmavantīti...* (ŚruP, II p. 245, 12. For a German translation see *Materialien* N° 22 in Oberhammer 1997: 140-141).

²¹⁴ As stated in the *brahmalakṣaṇa* passage (see PādS, *jp*, 5, 39d).

²¹⁵ As stated in the *brahmalakṣaṇa* passage (see PādS, *jp*, 5, 36a).

However the Supreme Being, with His power of becoming everything (*sarvaśaktiyukta*), can unfold also into something “other than” Himself, by suppressing His own qualities. Actually, as advocated by Yādavaprakāśa, “*prakṛti* ever-subject to transformation [is] the substance to be enjoyed (*bhogyā*), in which the qualities of *brahman* are mostly concealed; therefore she is said to be non spiritual.”²¹⁶. Hence *prakṛti*, as a manifestation of the Supreme Being coeternal with Him, is to be regarded as non-different from Him. Nevertheless, on account of her specific function as the form in which the Supreme Being, concealing His essential qualities, materializes Himself in the phenomenal world, she is to be distinguished from Him.

But, as a *rūpa* of the *paramātmān*, *prakṛti* cannot be considered on a par with *puruṣa*, they are not on an equal level of manifestation of the Supreme Being. Indeed, although both of them are urged by God to bring forth the world of the creatures²¹⁷, *prakṛti* is superintended by *puruṣa*, so that there is a one-sided dependence of the former on the latter. This disparity, which characterizes their mutual relationship, concerns also their inner dynamics, as well as their respective relations to the *paramātmān*. In fact, whereas *puruṣa* is not subject to transformation, the distinctive and chief characteristic of *prakṛti* is her transformation potential²¹⁸: while evolving through her derivatives (*vikṛti*), she undergoes a “change” (*pariṇāma*), which is likened to that of coagulated milk into clarified butter²¹⁹. This is a peculiar feature of *prakṛti*, differentiating her from the other two *rūpa*-s of the *paramātmān*: the process through which the *ādyā rūpa* Vāsudeva gives rise to the manifold *mūrti*-s is to be regarded as a self-differentiation of the Supreme God, rather than a “change”; likewise, the process through which the *puruṣa-rūpa* gives rise to the manifold *jīva*-s is to be regarded as a narrowing of the ur-soul

²¹⁶ NM, 5: *satatapariṇāmi prakṛtidraṇyaṃ bhogyam, tasmin brahmaguṇāḥ prāyeṇa tirohitāḥ | ata evācetanam ity ucyate |*.

²¹⁷ See PādS, *jp*, 5, 9cd: *anupraviśya dvitayaṃ kṣobhayāmy aham icchayā || 5.9cd.*

²¹⁸ As expressed by the AS (7, 5d-6a): ... *prakṛtiḥ pariṇāminī || 7.5d pumān aparīṇāmī ... | 7.6a.*

²¹⁹ See PādS, *jp*, 8, 17b and 7, 45, quoted above in note 190.

in the particular individual souls, rather than a “change”. Therefore, among the three *rūpa*-s, *prakṛti* is the only one which develops by means of true *pariṇāma*-s²²⁰. With regard to the respective relations of the three *rūpa*-s to the *paramātmān*, a further peculiarity of the *prakṛti-rūpa* is evident. Whereas the *paramātmān* appears in the form of Vāsudeva, as well as in the form of *puruṣa*, so that both of these are His own direct emanations, His relationship to *prakṛti* is not so evenly matched: by inducing her to develop into the phenomenal world, the *paramātmān* - as stated explicitly in the text²²¹ - has *prakṛti* at His command.

Therefore, while applying to *puruṣa* and to *prakṛti* the term and concept of *rūpa* - in the sense of the *aṁśa* of Yādavaprakāśa - these peculiarities of *prakṛti* should be given due consideration.

Besides the influence of the ideas of Yādavaprakāśa, it is the ParS²²² which has to be considered as a direct literary source for the text of the PādS, especially as regards the creation of living beings. According to the creation theory of the ParS²²³, God performs the creation of the world by means of his five *śakti*-s, called *pañcapaniṣad*-s: these, being the sources of the *guṇa*-s of *prakṛti*, have a decisive role in bringing forth the evolution of the world of living beings. From the point of view of their function, the *pañcapaniṣad*-s of the ParS can be

²²⁰ In this regard see also the remark by Oberhammer about the difference between the concepts of *aṁśa* and *kārya* in Yādavaprakāśa's teaching on the world (see Oberhammer 1997: 32).

²²¹ See PādS, *jp*, 8, 16cd: *nityā sūte jagat sarvaṁ niyogāt paramātmānaḥ* || 8.16cd.

²²² The numerous parallels between PādS and ParS will be shown and discussed in the following pages.

²²³ The story of creation in the ParS is articulated in two parts: a first, Sāṃkhya-derived account of the creation of the world is given in the first portion of the second chapter of the work (see ParS, 2, 3-27); a second, tantric-featured account is contained in the second portion of the second chapter (see in particular ParS, 2, 28-52). Here, only this second account is taken into consideration, both because of its importance within the theology and ritual system of the ParS and because of its relevance for a comparison with the PādS. For an exposition and discussion of the creation theory of the ParS, see Czerniak-Drożdżowicz 2003: 49-53 and 108-118. For the explanation of the term and of the notion of *pañcapaniṣad* see also the relevant entry in TAK III 2013: 370.

compared to the *rūpa*-s of the PādS: the *śakti*-s, like the *rūpa*-s, embody the dynamic aspect of the godhead, its inner power of transformation, its being *sarvaśaktiyukta*. Therefore the concept of the PādS of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* as divine *rūpa*-s setting in motion the process of *sṛṣṭi* substitutes, functionally, the idea of the five *śakti*-s which, in the ParS, are at the basis of the evolution of the world. The PādS re-elaborates the idea of the creative function of the *pañcopaniṣad*-s and replaces the *śakti*-s with the *rūpa*-s of God. It is worth mentioning that, even if the *pañcopaniṣad*-s do not play any part in the creation theory of the PādS, nevertheless, the numerous occurrences of the *pañcopaniṣad*-mantra-s in the ritual prescriptions contained in the *kp* and *cp*²²⁴ testify that in the PādS too the *pañcopaniṣad*-s have great importance as *mantra*-s. Thus the same element, passing from one text to the other, has survived in the sphere of the ritual, but has vanished from the domain of creation theory, only to appear again with a different name (*rūpa*), but with a similar function.

The Origination of the jīva-s

The influence of the ParS is certainly recognizable in the Sāṃkhya-derived sequence of *tattva*-s by which the PādS illustrates the emergence of living beings within the process of *sṛṣṭi*. In fact, in their respective descriptions of the evolution of *prakṛti*, both PādS and ParS differ from the model of the classical Sāṃkhya and some of the relevant differences concern, in both texts, the same points.

The outline of the development of the material, psycho-physical organisms of the creatures begins, in the PādS, as follows: “Now, from that one which possesses the equilibrium of the *guṇa*-s (= *prakṛti*), superintended by *puruṣa*, came into existence the Great

²²⁴ Compare, for instance, PādS, *cp*, 33, 12: *pañcopaniṣadān mantrān atha te kathayāmy aham | parameṣṭhī pumān viśvo nivṛttaḥ sarva eva hi || 33.12* and ParS, 2, 30: *parameṣṭhī pumān viśvo nivṛttiḥ sarvasaṃjñītaḥ | śaktayaḥ pañca tasyoktāḥ pañcopaniṣad ākhyayā || 2.30*.

Principle (*mahat*), threefold because of the three *guṇa*-s. [11]”²²⁵. In the ParS too the *mahat*, i.e. the intellect (*buddhi*), is said to be threefold on account of the influence of the three *guṇa*-s on its different states. Accordingly, merit (*dharma*), knowledge (*jñāna*), passionlessness (*vairāgya*) and power (*aiśvārya*) are conditioned by *sattva*; passion (*rāga*) is conditioned by *rajas*; demerit (*adharma*), ignorance (*ajñāna*) and powerlessness (*anaiśvārya*) are conditioned by *tamas*²²⁶. In the classical Sāṃkhya instead, the eight states (*bhāva*) of *buddhi* are classified according to the predominance either of *sattva* or of *tamas*; the sattvic states are *dharma*, *jñāna*, *vairāgya* and *aiśvārya*, whereas their opposite are regarded as tamasic. Therefore, although the PādS does not explicitly mention the states of *buddhi*, the assertion about the threefold *mahat* must have been inspired by the text of the ParS.

“Then arose the *ahaṃkāra*, of which three kinds are mentioned: *vaikārika*, *taijasa* and *bhūtādi*. [12] From the *vaikārika ahaṃkāra*, characterized by the quality of *sattva*, the five organs of sense (*jñānendriya*) came into existence; moreover, from the *taijasa* [*ahaṃkāra*], characterized by the quality of *rajas*, the five [13] organs of action (*karmendriya*) were produced; then from the *bhūtādi* [*ahaṃkāra*], characterized by the quality of *tamas*, the subtle element of sound (*śabda-tanmātra*) came into existence and the latter produced the ether (*ākāśa*). [14]”²²⁷.

²²⁵ PādS, jp, 5, 11: *guṇasāmyātmanas tasmāt puruṣādhiṣṭhitāt punaḥ | ajāyata mahat tatvaṃ trividhaṃ trividhair guṇaiḥ || 5.11.*

²²⁶ See ParS, 2, 41-44: *buddhir aṣṭavidhā jātā guṇebhyaḥ triguṇātmikā | sattvāt sukhātmikā jātā rajaso duḥkhasaṃyutā || 2.41 tamaso mohasaṃsrṣṭā tatra bhedān imān śruṇu | sāttvikāni ca catvāri rūpam ekaṃ tu rājasam || 2.42 tāmasāni punas trīṇi yāni vakṣyāmi nāmataḥ | dharmaṃ jñānaṃ ca vairāgyam aiśvāryam iti sāttvataḥ || 2.43 vairāgye viparītaṃ tu rūpam rājasam iṣyate | dharmādi viparītāni tāmasānīti dhāraya || 2.44.*

²²⁷ PādS, jp, 5, 12-14: *ahaṃkāras tato jātas tasya tisro vidhāḥ smṛtāḥ | vaikārikas taijasaś ca bhūtādiś ceti tat tridhā || 5.12 vaikārikād ahaṃkārat sāttvikāt pañca jajñire | jñānendriyāni pañcaiva rājasāt taijasāt punaḥ || 5.13 karmendriyāni jātāni bhūtādes tāmasād atha | śabdatanmātram abhavat tac cākāśam ajījanat || 5.14.*

With regard to the unfolding of the *ahaṃkāra*, the PādS diverges from the classical Sāṃkhya, where the threefold *ahaṃkāra* is the starting point of a twofold, not a threefold, development: from the *vaikārika ahaṃkāra* derive the mind (*manas*) and the ten organs of sense and action (*jñānendriya*-s and *karmendriya*-s) and from the *bhūtādi ahaṃkāra* derive the subtle elements (*tanmātra*); on the other hand, the *taijasa ahaṃkāra*, which works together with the *vaikārika* and *bhūtādi ahaṃkāra*-s, does not generate, by itself, any *tattva*. As in the PādS, so also in the ParS the threefold *ahaṃkāra* gives rise to a threefold evolution: from the *vaikārika ahaṃkāra* arise the *jñānendriya*-s, from the *taijasa ahaṃkāra* the *karmendriya*-s and from the *bhūtādi ahaṃkāra* the *tanmātra*-s; but, unlike the PādS, the ParS adds to the evolutes of the *taijasa ahaṃkāra* also mind (*manas*), time (*kāla*) and space (*diś*)²²⁸. Apart from the omission of *kāla* and *diś*, the PādS seems then to have taken its outline of the evolution of the *ahaṃkāra* from the ParS. However, by comparing the two texts, a further discrepancy appears, due to the fact that in the above quoted sequence of the PādS *manas* is missing. On the other hand, in the abridged account of the evolution of *prakṛti*, which is found in another passage of the *jp*, *manas* is duly mentioned²²⁹; furthermore, in the daily ritual of self-purification (*ātmaśuddhi*) - where the

²²⁸ See ParS, 2, 45-50b: *jāto buddher ahaṃkāras trividhas triṣuṇātmakeṣu | yena jantur anātmānam ātmānam iti manyate || 2.45 vaikārikaṃ sātत्वikākhyāt rājasāt taijasaḥ smṛtaḥ | bhūtādis tāmasād rūpād ahaṃkāras tridhā bhavet || 2.46 vaikārikād ahaṃkārāt pañca buddhīndriyāṇi tu | samutpannāni yair jñānaṃ puruṣasyeva siddhyati || 2.47 karmendriyāṇi pañcaiva karmāraṃbhāṇi taijasāt | mano jātadvirūpaṃcā tatas saṅkalpasādhanam || 2.48 kālaś ca taijasād eva jātas tu kṛtalakṣaṇaḥ | kālād diśaś ca saṃbhūtāḥ pūrvādyāḥ kramaśaḥ sthitāḥ || 2.49 bhūtād eva ca jātāni tanmātrāṇi yathākramam || 2.50ab*

²²⁹ See PādS, *jp*, 7, 46-48b: “Sometimes the undeveloped is changed into the developed, due to the wish of *puruṣa*. Then from the undeveloped arose the Great Principle and from the latter the *ahaṃkāra* was produced. [46] From the *ahaṃkāra* arose the mind, then the group of the five subtle elements and the ten organs of sense came into existence, o lotus-born, [47] [and] after that the aggregate of the five great elements beginning with earth. [48ab]” *avyaktaṃ vyaktam āpannaṃ kadācit puruṣecchayā | mahān jātas tato vyaktād ahaṃkāras tato janī || 7.46 ahaṃkārān mano jātam tanmātrāpañcakaṃ tataḥ | indriyāṇi *daśaikaṃ (em.*

devotee is supposed to mentally dissolve and re-create his own body by retracing the dissolution and arising of the *tattva*-s according to the *pralaya*- and *śṛṣṭi*-order - *manas* has its place among the other *tattva*-s²³⁰. These items of textual evidence suggest that the absence of *manas* in the passage in question (PādS, *jp*, 5, 12-14) was an isolated omission, hence not particularly relevant.

In its description of the successive arising of the subtle and great elements out of the *bhūtādi ahaṃkāra*, the PādS diverges not only from the outlook of the classical Sāṃkhya, according to which the subtle elements (*tanmātra*) are the sources of the great elements (*mahābhūta*)²³¹, but also from the interpretation of the classical sequence given in the *Yuktidīpikā*, according to which each subtle element produces the corresponding great element²³². In the peculiar sequence given in the PādS, the *tanmātra*-s alternate with the *mahābhūta*-s in the roles of producers and products of evolution:

“... then from the *bhūtādi [ahaṃkāra]*, characterized by the quality of *tamas*, the subtle element of sound (*śabda-tanmātra*) came into existence and the latter produced ether (*ākāśa*). [14] Thus, from ether the subtle element of touch (*sparsa-tanmātra*) [and] from the latter air (*vāyu*) came into existence; then from air the subtle element of form (*rūpa-tanmātra*) [and] from the latter fire (*agni*) came into existence; [15] from fire was produced the subtle element of taste (*rasa-tanmātra*) [and] from the latter sprang up water (*āpas*); from

daśakam) ca *samajāyata padmaja* || 7.47 *mahābhūtaṃ pṛthivyādīpañcakam tadanantaram* | 7.48ab

²³⁰ See PādS, *cp*, 3, 29c-51b, quoted and discussed in detail below, pp. 255-259.

²³¹ The ParS instead is in accordance with the classical model. See ParS, 2, 50-51c, 54: *bhūtād eva ca jātāni tanmātrāṇi yathākramam | prathamam śabdatanmātraṃ dvitīyaṃ sparśapūrvakam || 2.50 rūpatanmātraṃ tṛtīyaṃ tu rasatanmātraṃ caturthakam | pañcamam gandhatanmātraṃ 2.51ac ... tanmātrebhyas tu bhūtāni kramād jātāni pañca vai | kham ca vāyuś ca tejaś ca jalapṛthvī ca pañcamī || 2.54.*

²³² See the commentary on the *kārikā* 37, in YD, 118: *tatra śabdatanmātrād ākāśam, sparśatanmātrād vāyuh, rūpatanmātrād tejaḥ, rasatanmātrād āpaḥ, gandhatanmātrād pṛthivī* |. For a presentation of the *Yuktidīpikā*, see also Larson, Bhattacharya (eds.) 1987: 227ff. With regard to the subtle and great elements, see *Ibidem*: 264.

water the subtle element of smell (*gandha-tanmātra*), then from the subtle element of smell, earth (*mahī*). [16]”²³³.

A possible source of the PādS might have been the LT, where the same pattern is found: “From the *bhūtādi* [*ahaṃkāra*], the subtle element of sound [was produced]; from [this] subtle element, sound was produced; [38cd] then from the element of sound (= ether), urged by me, arose the [subtle] element of touch; [39ab] the [element of] touch (= air) [arose] from the subtle element of touch; from that element (i.e. air), urged by me, was manifested the subtle element of form and from the latter, urged by me, was manifested [the element of] the first form (= fire); then, from that, the [subtle] element of taste; [39c-40] from that [subtle] element of taste, impelled by me, arose the [element of] taste (= water), then arose the subtle element of smell and, from that, urged by me, the [element of] pure smell (= earth) was produced. This is the distinction relating to the elements. [*Tan*]mātra-s are the subtle elements and the other are the great elements. [41-42]”²³⁴. The hypothesis that the author(s) of the PādS might have been inspired by the LT is corroborated by the fact that the LT, like the PādS, maintains that the *jñānendriya*-s arise from the *vaikārika ahaṃkāra* and the *karmendriya*-s from the *taijasa ahaṃkāra*²³⁵.

The PādS follows the so-called “accumulation theory”, advocated by the classical Sāṃkhya, according to which the great elements

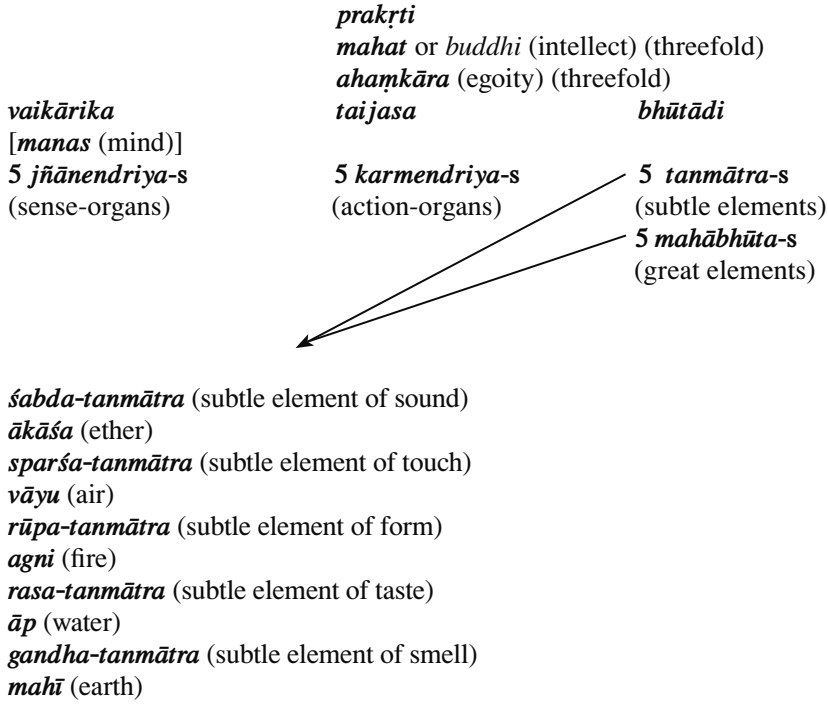
²³³ PādS, *jp*, 5, 14b-16: ...*bhūtādes tāmasād atha | śabdatanmātram abhavat tac cākāśam ajījanat || 5.14bcd sparśamātram tathākāśāt tasmād vāyur ajāyata | rūpamātram tato vāyos tasmād agnir ajāyata || 5.15 rasamātram ajany agnes tasmād āpaḥ prajajñire | gandhatanmātram adbhyo’pi gandhamātrāt tathā mahī || 5.16.*

²³⁴ LT, 5, 38c-42: *bhūtādeḥ śabdatanmātram tanmatrāc chabdasambhavaḥ || 5.38cd matpreritāc chabdamātrāt sparśamātram babhūva ha | sparśas tu sparśatanmātrāt tanmātrāt preritān mayā || 5.39 tadāsīd rūpatanmātram tasmāc ca preritān mayā | rūpam āvirbabhūvādyaṃ rasamātram tataḥ param || 5.40 rasamātrān mayā kṣiptāt tasmāj jajñe rasas tataḥ | gandhatanmātram apy āsīt tasmāc ca preritān mayā || 5.41 śuddho gandhaḥ samudbhūta itīyaṃ bhautikī bhidā | mātrāṇisūkṣmabhūtāni sthūlabhūtāni cāpare || 5.42.*

²³⁵ See PādS, *jp*, 5, 13-14a, quoted above (p. 124 and note 227), and LT, 5, 50c-51b: *vaikārikād ahaṃkārad āsīc chrotrādīdhindriyam || 5.50cd karmendriyaṃ ca vāgādi taijasāt saṃpravartate || 5.51ab.*

possess the qualities pertaining to the subtle elements in increasing number²³⁶: “Ether [has] as its only quality sound, air [has] as qualities sound and touch; so, in like manner, sound, touch and form are said [to be the qualities] of fire. [17] Water is regarded as endowed with four qualities: sound, touch, form and taste. Earth has five qualities: sound, touch, form, taste and smell. [18]”²³⁷.

The following table sums up the evolution of *prakṛti*, as outlined in the PādS:



²³⁶ For a discussion of the “accumulation theory”, see Frauwallner 1993 (Reprint): 280.

²³⁷ PādS, *jp*, 5, 17-18: *śabdaikaḡuṇam ākāśam śabdasparsaḡuṇo’nilaḡ | śabdasparsāu tathā rūpaḡ tadvad agner udāhṛtāḡ || 5.17 śabdasparsāu *raso rūpaḡ (em. śrī rūparasau) cāturguṇyam apāḡ smṛtam | śabdasparsāu rūparasau gandhaḡ pañcaguṇā mahī || 5.18.*

Thus, in the process of *sṛṣṭi*, the material support of living beings originates out of the evolution of *prakṛti*, which provides them with their psycho-physical organism, marked by the three *guṇa*-s and constituted by: the internal organ (*antaḥkaraṇa*), formed by *buddhi*, *ahaṃkāra* and *manas*; the external organ (*bāhyakaraṇa*), formed by the five *jñānendriya*-s and the five *karmendriya*-s; and the body (*deha*), which is the aggregate of the *mahābhūta*-s endowed with the qualities of the *tanmātra*-s.

How this material organism is endowed with consciousness by *puruṣa* is not explicitly illustrated in the text of the PādS. Thus, for want of a direct explanation of the origination of the individual souls of living beings, the way of the arising of the *jīva*-s may be inferred by analogy with the process of the *mūrtyutpatti*, through which the divine figures appeared as particular concretizations of the *para* Vāsudeva, *ādyarūpa* of the Supreme Being. In like manner, the *jīva*-s ought to arise as particular concretizations of the *puruṣa-rūpa* of God.

Notwithstanding the incompleteness of the text, there is a passage where the existence of a plurality and variety of individual souls - even if not explained - is acknowledged, on account of the actual existence of many and different bodies. In the same passage, the identity between individual souls and Supreme Soul is asserted, on account of the evidence of the *śruti*:

“The identity of the two *ātman*-s, [namely] the Supreme Soul and the individual soul, is taught by the *śruti*. [15cd] The manifoldness of this individual soul is ascertained on account of the variety of the bodies, indeed [it is] like the multiplicity of one and the same image reflected in [many] mirrors. [16] The body is the aggregate of the five [elements derived from] the *bhūtādi* [*ahaṃkāra*]; the individual soul abides there. The sages know that this soul is called supreme. [17]”²³⁸.

²³⁸ PādS, *jp*, 6, 15c-17: *paraḥṣetrajñāyor aikyaṃ ātmanoḥ śruticoditam* || 6.15cd *ṣetrajñasyāsya bāhulyaṃ dehabhedāt pratīyate | ekasyaiva hi bimbasya darpaṇeṣu *yathā tathā* (em. śrī. *yathā bhidā*) || 6.16 *bhūtādipañcasamghātaṃ ṣetraṃ tatra vyavasthitaḥ | jīvo yas taṃ viduḥ prājñāḥ ṣetrajñāṃ paraśamjñitam* || 6.17.

The assertion of the identity (*aikya*) between *jīva* and *paramātmān* - where the term *aikya* is to be understood in the sense of sameness of nature - implies also the idea of the ultimate similarity of all souls. This idea is suggested by the simile contained in the second half of the above quoted verse 16. In fact, while the existence of many and diverse bodies of living beings provides evidence for the existence of a plurality and variety of souls, the text advocates that, like one and the same image appearing multiplied in several mirrors, it is actually one and the same spiritual principle which is dwelling in the diverse bodies. This spiritual principle is the *puruṣa-rūpa* of God in its concrete realization as a *jīva*. Thus, the individual souls are essentially non-different one from the other, because, ultimately, they are nothing but particular concretizations of the unique *puruṣa-rūpa* of God, which is their common source. This idea harmonizes with the teaching of Yādavaprakāśa according to which, like Viṣṇu Nārāyaṇa who is the same in all his different incarnations (*avatāra*), in the same way the *brahman*, in its concretization (*aṁśa*) of enjoyer (*bhoktr*), is present as soul (*jīva*) in the bodies of living beings, a soul which is the same in all the different bodies: "... indeed *brahman* is the individual soul. For it is the *brahman* that experiences [its] being an individual soul in all the bodies." ²³⁹. Furthermore, according to Yādavaprakāśa: "The individual souls are his (i.e. of the *bhoktr/puruṣa*) manifestations, existing according to their respective bodies; and they [are] minute, infinite and eternal; and [they are] self-luminous on account of [their] being particular concretizations of *brahman*; and in these

²³⁹ This teaching of Yādavaprakāśa is referred to in a quotation from Rāmānuja contained in Sudarśanasūri's commentary *Śrutaprakāśikā* on the *Śrībhāṣya*: "And it is not to be feared that the individual soul is a false reality on account of the falsity of the phenomenal world, because indeed *brahman* is the individual soul. For it is the *brahman* that experiences [its] being an individual soul in all the bodies." *na ca prapañcamithyātvena jīvamithyātvaṁ āśaṅkanīyaṁ brahmaṇa eva jīvabhāvāt. brahmaiva hi sarvaśarīreṣu jīvabhāvaṁ anubhavati* (ŚruP, II p. 237, 9f.). For a German translation see Oberhammer 1997: 50, fn. 113; for a discussion of this teaching of Yādavaprakāśa, see *Ibidem*: 32-34.

souls] some qualities of *brahman* become manifest, some [remain] concealed.”²⁴⁰

The assertion of the ultimate sameness of nature of *puruṣa-rūpa* and *jīva*-s, as well as the suggestion that the variety of the individual souls is only due to their connection with the respective material organisms, need to be substantiated by the illustration of the process of differentiation by which the *puruṣa-rūpa* becomes a manifoldness of embodied souls. Such an elucidation, which is lacking in the PādS, may be supplied by the ParS.

In the account of *sr̥ṣṭi* of the ParS, where the *śakti*-s of God play a crucial function in the creation process, the individual souls are considered as *śakti*-s of the Supreme *puruṣa*, i.e. God²⁴¹. These *śakti*-s are evolving through stages of progressive concretization and limitation, thereby acquiring material bodies and becoming embodied souls (*jīva* or *dehin*). Then, on account of their *karman*, they are involved in *saṃsāra* and, as transmigrating souls, these *śakti*-s/*jīva*-s, due to the variety of their origins, names and nature, become more and more differentiated. But although as *saṃsārin*-s, on account of their respective peculiar characteristics, the *jīva*-s appear as if (*iva*) they were different from one another, indeed, with regard to their essential nature, they cannot be distinguished one from the other, because they are ultimately all *śakti*-s of God²⁴².

²⁴⁰ NM, 5: ... *tatra bhokṛtvaśaktiyukto bhokṛtsamaṣṭipuruṣa ekaḥ | tasya vyūhāḥ pratiśarīram avasthitā jīvāḥ | te cāṇavo'nantā nityāḥ; brahmāmśatvena svaprakāśās ca | teṣu ca brahmaguṇāḥ kecid āvirbhūtāḥ; kecit tirohitāḥ ||*.

²⁴¹ This account is given in ParS, 2, 28-104 (see above, p. 122 and note 223). It should be borne in mind that when the ParS speaks of the *jīva*-s in terms of *śakti*-s it is not the *pañcōpaniṣad*-s which are meant.

²⁴² See ParS, 2, 58-59: “Indeed, the *śakti*-s of the Supreme *puruṣa* become lower according to the sheaths; on account of the difference of origin, name and nature they exist as if [they were] distinct [one from the other] [58]. Having obtained a material body, because of their acquiring *karman*, they wander a long time in *saṃsāra*. These are the creatures wandering in *saṃsāra*. [59]” *parasya puruṣasyaiva śaktayaḥ kośaśo'parāḥ | jātīnāmasvarūpāṇāṃ bhedādbhinnā iva sthitāḥ ||* 2.58 *śarīraṃ bhautikaṃ prāpya karmabhiḥ svair *upārjanaiḥ* (em. A; *upārjitaiḥ* GOS) *| dīrghaṃ bhramanti saṃsāre te ca saṃsāriṇo janāḥ ||* 2.59.

The adverbial form *kośaśaḥ* (verse 58b), which is used to indicate the way the

As already remarked with regard to the role of the *śakti*-s (specifically the *pañcopaniṣad*-s) in the creation theory of the ParS, the PādS notion of *rūpa*-s of the *paramātmān* fulfils the same function as the ParS notion of *śakti*-s of God²⁴³. Accordingly, the passage of the ParS (2, 58-59) may be read as an elucidation of the passage of the PādS (*jp*, 6, 15c-17). The ParS passage may be considered as a description of the process through which the *puruṣa-rūpa* of God, by taking lower, concrete forms, gives rise to the finite souls, which then differ from one another because of individual characteristics - physical, psychic, moral and so on - acquired and determined by their respective *karman*. In such a way, by referring to the passage of the ParS, it becomes possible to explain the PādS statement that the multifariousness of the souls is due to the multifariousness of the bodies. On the other hand, the PādS itself, by asserting the sameness of nature of *jīva* and *paramātmān*²⁴⁴, makes explicit what is only implicit in the *iva* (verse 58d) of the ParS.

The parallel reading of these passages of PādS and ParS has shown how the texts of the two *saṃhitā*-s complement each other.

śakti-s of God are becoming increasingly concrete and limited, derives from *kośa*, a technical term which literally means “sheath” and which occurs in several texts and traditions, beginning with the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*. Within the Pāñcarātra literature, the notion of *kośa* is found, for instance, in the LT, where it indicates the stages of *śṛṣṭi* through which the *śakti* unfolds in increasingly gross forms: “... in each stage *Śakti* projects herself into various manifestations while yet remaining the transcendental inner principle. These stages are the *śaktikośa*, *māyakośa*, *prasūtikośa*, *prakṛtikośa*, *brahmāṇḍakośa* and *jīvakośa*.” (Gupta 1972: XXVIII). The *śaktikośa* corresponds to the transcendent state of the godhead, to the so-called pure creation, where the *vyūha*-s make their appearance; beginning with the *māyakośa*, through the *prasūtikośa*, up to the *prakṛtikośa*, the *śakti* manifests herself in the material creation, marked by the three *guṇa*-s; the *brahmāṇḍakośa* corresponds to the evolution of the *tattva*-s and in the *jīvakośa* the *śakti* materializes in the bodies of living beings (For a description of the *kośa*-s, see in particular chapter 6 of the LT). The author(s) of the ParS seem to use the term and concept of *kośa* in a sense similar to that of the LT.

²⁴³ See above, pp. 122-123.

²⁴⁴ See also PādS, *jp*, 6, 20cd: “actually there is no difference at all between the Supreme Soul and the individual soul.” ... *vastuto naiva bhedo'sti parajīvaayoḥ* || 6.20cd.

This is true also with regard to the metaphors respectively used to illustrate the origination of the *jīva*-s. In fact, the simile of the PādS regarding the one and the same image reproduced in many mirrors - which is meant to suggest the arising of a plurality of entities out of a unique source - lays special stress on the sameness of all these entities, the *jīva*-s, and their source, the *puruṣa-rūpa*. On the other hand, the ParS provides a simile which aims specifically at explaining the diversity of the individual souls: “As the colour of a crystal-gem seems to change according to the different colours of the objects which are its support, similarly the Supreme *puruṣa*, who is indeed one, takes different forms according to the nature of living beings consisting of the *guṇa*-s [of *prakṛti*] and becomes, in this world, the bound and the emancipated. [88c-90b]”²⁴⁵. Hence, by each of these two similes each *saṃhitā* expresses one aspect of the polarity of the difference-and-non-difference, which characterizes the relationship between *jīva*-s and *paramātman*.

The Transmigrating Soul (saṃsārin)

The Causes of Bondage

The PādS deals extensively with what separates the original identity between individual souls and Supreme Soul and the final realization of this identity in liberation, that is to say, the peregrinations of the *jīva*-s within the circuit of worldly existence and their striving after emancipation. The descriptions given in the PādS of the different types of beings and of their condition of bound or liberated souls, as well as the ascertainment of the causes of their involvement in *saṃsāra*, prove to be chiefly based on the ParS. With regard to

²⁴⁵ ParS, 2, 88c-90b: *yathaiva bhinnavarṇānām dravyāṇām āśraye sati || 2.88cd sphāṭikasya maṇe rūpam anyac cānyac ca lakṣyate | tathā guṇamayair bhāvair eko hi puruṣaḥ paraḥ || 2.89 bhinnarūpo jagaty asmin baddho muktaś ca jāyate | 2.90ab*

these topics the two *saṃhitā*-s show, besides the textual correspondences or similar formulations, a basic agreement of ideas.

Because of its connection with the psycho-physical organism and, thereby, with the objects of the senses, the individual soul is affected by the qualities of matter, the three *guṇa*-s of *prakṛti*. These *guṇa*-s do not pertain to the *jīva* as such, they have an impact on the soul on account of its dwelling in a body and its being thus subject to the laws regulating the functioning of the body²⁴⁶. As a result of his connection with the *triguṇā prakṛti*, the *jīva* becomes a *saṃsārin* and lives in the world as if he were plunged into a deceitful sleep, which makes him take his *guṇa*-determined nature for his true self²⁴⁷. In-

²⁴⁶ See PādS, *jp*, 4, 21-24: “[Brahmā:] How is the connection of man with these *guṇa*-s? And [how] should the man who is seeking deliverance be released from the bonds of [his] *karman*? [21] [Śrī Bhagavān:] The *guṇa*-s of man are following the law of the body. These [*guṇa*-s] occur and do not occur due to the power of the object [of the senses]. [22] [Brahmā:] O great Lord, what is this so-called object [of the senses] for men, through the contact of which these *guṇa*-s occur and do not occur? [23] [Śrī Bhagavān:] O Brahmā, the object [of the senses] for the embodied soul is told to be *prakṛti*, consisting of the three *guṇa*-s. Through the connection with this the living being is bound [and] through the disjunction from this [he] is emancipated. [24]”. For the Sanskrit text see the table below.

This passage is based on ParS, 1, 73-76, where one can find the same ideas, sometimes even expressed by the same words: “[Brahmā:] The connection of man with the three *guṇa*-s indeed exists. How could there be disjunction [from these] for the *yogin* who wishes liberation? [73] [Parama:] O you having the lotus as a seat, these three *guṇa*-s do not [pertain] to the man [as such], these occur and do not occur due to the power of the object [of the senses]. [74] [Brahmā:] O best of the gods, what is this so-called object [of the senses] for men, through the contact of which these *guṇa*-s occur and do not occur? [75] [Parama:] *Prakṛti* consisting of the three *guṇa*-s should be known as being the object [of the senses] of the embodied soul. Joined with her [these souls] are bound, separated from her they are liberated. [76]”. For the Sanskrit text see the table below.

²⁴⁷ See PādS, *jp*, 4, 25-26c: “The [individual] *puruṣa* is always aware of the *prakṛti* composed of the three *guṇa*-s and she constantly produces a manifold sleep. [25] This powerless [being] spontaneously forgets, through this sleep, his own nature. This is regarded as the bondage of man. [26ac]”. For the Sanskrit text see the table below.

This passage is based on ParS, 1, 77-78: “The [individual] *puruṣa* is always aware of the *triguṇā prakṛti* and she constantly produces his manifold sleep. [77] The

volved in the world, man performs acts which are influenced by the various combinations of the three *guṇa*-s, so that, according to the preponderance of either *sattva* or *rajas* or *tamas*, three kinds of acts are produced. These acts determine the working of *karman*²⁴⁸. The ultimate cause, which induces the *jīva* to the false identification of his true self with his material substratum constituted by the products of *prakṛti*, is the deluding power of *māyā*²⁴⁹. *Māyā* is established by God Himself and her power on human beings is the result of the working of their own *karman*.²⁵⁰

The causes of bondage are further discussed in chapter 7 of the *jp*, which provides a synthesis of the views of the PādS on the subject, as well as another instance of reference to the ParS. The text reasserts that the ultimate cause of *saṃsāra* is *māyā*, which is always dependent on the Lord Himself; all beings, including the gods, have fallen into her power, bewildered by ignorance. Ignorance is threefold, according to the prevalence of either of the three *guṇa*-s, and as such it brings forth three kinds of sleep and three kinds of action. The embodied soul, performing various activities, produces *karman* and, accordingly, is involved in *saṃsāra*. Thus *avidyā*, which is due to

one who is enjoying the sleep, as it were a beloved agreeable woman, forgets this light. [This] is regarded as the bondage of man. [78]”. For the Sanskrit text see the table below.

²⁴⁸ See PādS, *jp*, 4, 19-20b: “Truly a threefold action is produced out of the three distinct *guṇa*-s combined, [the ones] mentioned before, *sattva* and so on. [19] By the effect of this [action] the human beings, according to their former conduct, take part in the worldly existence. [20ab]”. For the Sanskrit text see the table below.

²⁴⁹ See PādS, *jp*, 5, 1-2: “[Brahmā:] Which is the reason of the connection of man with *prakṛti*? O Bhagavān, disclose this mystery, [which is] difficult to be grasped for me. [1] [Śrī Bhagavān:] O Brahmā, this *māyā*, existing from eternity, imperishable, is the cause which connects man with the *prakṛti* formed by the *guṇa*-s. [2]”. For the Sanskrit text see the table below.

²⁵⁰ See ParS, 1, 79-80: “[Brahmā:] Which is the reason of the connection of man with *prakṛti*? O God, teach me this, which is regarded as a great secret. [79] [Parama:] The cause of that is only *māyā*, [which] has been determined by me since the beginning. Only due to *karman* [man] remains sunk into *māyā*. [80]”. For the Sanskrit text see the table below.

the power of *māyā*, is the cause of *karman* and *karman* is the direct cause of *saṃsāra*²⁵¹.

²⁵¹ See PādS, *jp*, 7, 8c-10, 13-17b, 31-32b, 34-36: “[Śrī Bhagavān:] ... Now, o four-faced one, I will explain the cause of *saṃsāra*. [8cd]. [Men] fallen into the power of *māyā* perform good and evil acts [and,] having attained a body, this and that *karman* is continuously produced. [9] Men, subject to [its] impulse, enjoy pain or pleasure. This is *saṃsāra*, o four-faced one; indeed *karman* is the cause of it. [10] ... *Saṃsāra* becomes ascertained: it has been explained as having *karman* as [its] cause. Man himself, powerless because of ignorance, produces *karman*. [13] There are three kinds of ignorance, whose actions [can be either] joined or separated. By these *karman* is made either good or evil. [14] A manifold sleep is produced by these three [kinds of ignorance] as cause of *karman* and this [sleep] is called *māyā* by the best among the learned ones. [15] From *sattva* [arises] a sleep full of joy and pleasure, from *rajas* a [sleep] filled with actions, from *tamas* a [sleep] called the deluding one. By these man is bewildered. [16] Being powerless due to *saṃsāra*, [man] performs *karman* [which is] the cause of rebirth. [17ab]... Thus man, fallen into the power of *māyā*, connected with the three *guṇa*-s, performs manifold acts; getting a body according to these acts, being [immersed] in *saṃsāra*, he finds birth and death. [31-32b]. ... [Brahmā:] Now, how might there be connection with or disjunction from these *guṇa*-s? [34ab] [Śrī Bhagavān:] O you having the lotus as a seat, these three *guṇa*-s occur and do not occur for man due to [his] connection with and disjunction from *māyā*. *Māyā*, never ceasing, eternal, constant, is based upon myself. [34c-35]. All beings, even the gods beginning with Brahṁā, fallen into the power of *māyā*, roam about, bewildered by ignorance, o you having the lotus as a seat. [36]” [śrībhagavān] ... *saṃsārahetum adhunā kathayāmi caturmukha* || 7.8cd *śubhāśubhātmakeṣu karma kṛtvā māyāvaśaṃ gatāḥ* | *bhogāyatanam āsthāya tattatkarma pravāhajam* || 7.9 *duḥkhaṃ sukhaṃ va puruṣa *bhuñjate niyatendriyāḥ* (em. śrī. ma. *bhuñjante hetuyantritāḥ*) | *saṃsṛtiḥ sā caturvaktra tasyāḥ karmaiva kāraṇam* || 7.10 ... *kalpate saṃsṛtiḥ karmahetur uktā viniścītā* | *karoti karma cāvidyāvivaśaḥ puruṣaḥ svayam* || 7.13 *gaṇā eva *trayo vidyā* (em. *trayo vidyā*) *saṃsavyāsavṛttayaḥ* | *tair eva kurute karma śubhaṃ vā yadi vā śubham* || 7.14 *tais tribhir vividhā nidrā jāyate karmakāraṇam* | *saiśa vidyā ca māyā ca kathyate kovidottamaiḥ* || 7.15 *satvāt sukhamayī nidrā rajasāḥ karmasaṅkulā* | *tamaso mohinī nāma tābhir nirgalitāḥ pumān* || 7.16 *saṃsārato vaśaḥ karma karoti janikāraṇam* | 7.17ab ... *evaṃ bahuvīdhaṃ karma pumān māyāvaśaṅgatāḥ* | *karoti triguṇair yuktaḥ karmabhis taiḥ pumālayam* || 7.31 *saṃsāre pi gato janmanāśaṃ ca pratipadyate* | 7.32ab ... [brahmā] *ebhir guṇais tathā yogo viyogo vā kathaṃ bhavet* | [śrībhagavān] *puruṣasya guṇā ete trayo pi kamalāsana* || 7.34 *māyāyogaviyogābhyāṃ bhavanti na bhavanti ca* | *māyānapāyinī nityā mayi tiṣṭhati śāśvatī* || 7.35 *māyāvaśaṃ gatāḥ sarve bhramanty ajñānamohitāḥ* | *brahmādayo pi kimuta devādyāḥ kamalāsana* || 7.36.

The parallel passages of PādS and ParS quoted in the previous pages are shown in the table below:

-----	PādS, jp, 4, 19-20b <i>tribhir eva guṇair vyastaiḥ samastaiḥ pūrvam īritaiḥ satvādibhiḥ kriyā cāpi trividhā saṃpravartate 4.19 tayā saṃsāram ṛcchanti puruṣāḥ pūrvavṛttayaḥ 4.20ab</i>
ParS, 1, 71-72 <i>[paramaḥ] tribhir eva guṇair brahman samāsavyāsavṛttibhiḥ tri dvidhā kriyate nidrā badhyante puruṣās tayā 1.71 satvā sukhamayī nidrā rajasah karmasaṅkulam tamasaḥ sambhṛtākārā saṃbandhas trividhaḥ smṛtaḥ 1.72.</i>	PādS, jp, 7, 15-16 <i>tais tribhir vividhā nidrā jāyate karmakāraṇam saiṣā vidyā ca māyā ca kathyate kovidottamaiḥ 7.15 satvāt sukhamayī nidrā rajasah karmasaṅkulā tamaso mohinī nāma tābhir nirgalitaḥ pumān 7.16</i>
ParS, 1, 73-76 <i>[brahmā] tribhir eva guṇair yogaḥ puruṣasyāvatiṣṭhate katham vā viprayogaḥ syāt muktikāmasya yoginaḥ 1.73 [paramaḥ] puruṣasya guṇā naite trayo'pi kamalāsana </i>	PādS, jp, 4, 21-24 <i>[brahmā] katham ebhir guṇair yogaḥ puruṣasyopajāyate karmapāśair vimucyeta mokṣyamāṇas ca puruṣaḥ 4.21 [śrībhagavān] puruṣasya guṇā ye te dehadharmānuvartinaḥ </i>

The text of the PādS is proven to refer to the ParS and to share, basically, the views of the latter. As for the textual correspondences, with regard to the role of *māyā*, PādS, jp, 7, 8c-10, 13, 31-32b, 34-36 can be compared, from the point of view of the contents, with the already quoted ParS, 1, 80. Moreover, with regard to the threefold sleep, PādS, jp, 7, 15-16 corresponds to ParS, 1, 71-72: “[Parama:] O Brahmā, a three-twofold sleep is produced by the three *guṇa*-s occurring in conjunction and separation. By that [sleep] men are bound. [71] From *sattva* [arises] a sleep full of joy and pleasure, from *rajas* a [sleep] filled with actions, from *tamas* [a sleep] filled with [deceitful] appearances. [This] is regarded as the threefold bondage. [72]”. For the Sanskrit text see the table below.

*viṣayasya vaśād ete bhavanti
na bhavanti ca* || 1.74
[brahmā] *ko'sau viṣaya ity
uktaḥ puruṣāṇām* surottama |
*yasya yogād bhavanty ete na
bhavanti ca guṇāḥ* || 1.75
[paramaḥ] *prakṛtiḥ triguṇā
jñeyā dehino viṣayasthitā* | *tayā
yuktās tu badhyante mucyante
rahitās tayā* || 1.76.

ParS, 1, 77-78

jānāti puruṣo nityam triguṇām
prakṛtisthitām | *sā ca prasūte
satatam nidrām asya
prthagvidhām* || 1.77

*kāntām eva bhajān nidrām
svatantram iva saṁsthitām* |
*surucaṁ viśmaraty eṣa
saṁbandhaḥ puṁsa iṣyate* ||
1.78.

ParS, 1, 79-80

[brahmā] *prakṛtyā tasya
saṁyogo jāyate kena hetunā* |
*etad ācakṣva me deva guhyam
etat paraṁ matam* || 1.79
[paramaḥ] *māyaiva kāraṇam
tasya purastād vihitā mayā* |
*bhūyaḥ karmavaśād eva
māyāmagneva tiṣṭhati* || 1.80.

*viṣayasya vaśād ete bhavanti
na bhavanti ca* || 4.22
[brahmā] *ko'sau viṣaya ity
uktaḥ puruṣāṇām* maheśvara |
*yasya yogād bhavanty ete na
bhavanti ca te guṇāḥ* || 4.23
[śrībhagavān] *triguṇā prakṛtir
brahman viṣayo dehinaḥ smṛtaḥ* |
*tadyogād badhyate jantus
tadyogād (em. śrī. *tadviyogāt*)
vimucyate || 4.24.

PādS, jp, 4, 25-26c

jānāti puruṣo nityam prakṛtiṁ
triguṇātmikām | *sā ca prasūte
satatam* *nidrālasyam (em. ma.
nidrām asya) *prthagvidham
(em. ma. *prthagvidhām*) || 4.25
*svarūpaṁ viśmaraty eṣa nidrayā
vivaśaḥ svayam* | *sa bandha
iṣyate puṁsām...* || 4.26c.

PādS, jp, 5, 1-2

[brahmā] *prakṛtyā tasya
saṁyogo jāyate kena hetunā* |
*etad ācakṣva bhagavan
rahasyaṁ durlabham mama*
|| 5.1 [śrībhagavān] *yan māyā
kāraṇam brahman anādir
avināśinī* | *yunakti puruṣaṁ saiṣā
prakṛtyā guṇarūpayā* || 5.2.

Sattvic, Rajasic and Tamasic Beings

Within the condition of *saṃsārin*-s, the nature of the *jīva*-s is determined by the *guṇa*-s of *prakṛti* which, according to their various proportions and combinations, affect the proclivity either to knowledge and goodness, or to passion and activity, or to ignorance and inertia; thus the three *guṇa*-s influence human beings and turn them into either sattvic, or rajasic, or tamasic creatures. The PādS provides a thoroughgoing classification of the *guṇa*-determined types of men, specifying their respective characteristics, virtues, activities, modes of worship and destinies after death. This classification, particularly with regard to the moral aspect of the influence exerted by the predominance of any one of the three *guṇa*-s on the characters of men, has an impact on the doctrine of liberation: in fact, as will be shown, the virtues of the sattvic beings are the very ones which make the man desiring liberation, the *mumukṣu*, worthy of the divine grace.

With regard to the origin of the three categories of beings, one reads: “Thus, on account of these three *guṇa*-s as [their] origin, high, low and middle [beings] come into existence. I shall speak about them according to rank. [49] O four-faced one, when in these beings [the quality of] *sattva* [is present] in the highest degree, [there shall be] an excellent [man]; when chiefly influenced by [the quality of] *rajas*, a middle one; when [the quality of] *tamas* is prevalent, [there shall be] the worst [kind of man]. [50]”²⁵². As for their respective conditions: “There is a threefold condition according to the three kinds [of people]: for the one who is devoted to *sattva* there shall be a going up; for the one who is full of *rajas*, a remaining in the middle; for the tamasic ones, a going down. [61]”²⁵³. Up to here the text limits itself to the commonplace of a threefold *guṇa*-determined

²⁵² PādS, jp, 7, 49-50: *tribhir evaṃ guṇair etair uttamādhamamadhyamāḥ | jāyante kāraṇavaśāt tān bravīmi kramād aham || 7.49 bhāveṣu teṣu bhūyiṣṭhaṃ satvaṃ śreyāṃś caturmukha | bhūyiṣṭharājaso madhyo jaghanyas tamasādhikaḥ || 7.50.*

²⁵³ PādS, jp, 7, 61: *satvasthasyordhvagamanam sthitir madhye rajodhike | adhogatis tāmasānām trividhānām tridhā gatiḥ || 7.61.*

classification²⁵⁴. What is more significant is the description of how the *guṇa*-determined characters of men can affect the way they worship God and, accordingly, their eventual condition of either transmigrating or liberated souls.

Thus, of the tamasic creatures, it is said: “... the one affected by *tamas* is regarded as [endowed with] wickedness, reviling others, sleepiness, mischievousness and so on; [these] are mentioned as the qualities depending on *tamas*, o four-faced one. [64b-65b]”²⁵⁵. Even these people can worship the Lord, but their tamasic attitude will cause, after death, a sojourn in the atmosphere or in the nether worlds and, afterwards, a low rebirth: “Those who worship, having *tamas* as their chief quality will remain in the atmosphere, whence they will undergo transmigration in the terrestrial world. [53bd] The *yakṣa*-s, *bhūta*-s, *piśāca*-s and so on, who worship mainly endowed with [the quality of] *tamas*, after having dwelled in terrible places of torment, will be born again among living beings. [54] ... O four-faced one, for the man devoted to *tamas*, after death, there shall be rebirth in low-caste families of dull [people] again and again. [68c-69b]”²⁵⁶.

On the other hand, the reward for the *rajas*-featured worshippers shall be a temporary sojourn in heaven followed by further rebirths, but high ones: “egotism is said to be threefold, [namely,] pride, an-

²⁵⁴ The author(s) of the PādS pay attention also to the concrete aspects of daily life, enumerating, for instance, the manifold activities presided over by the mind, according to its being chiefly endowed with the qualities of *sattva*, *rajas* or *tamas* and its dealing, in turn, with each of the five elements: earth, water, fire, air and ether (see PādS, *jp*, 7, 17c-30, for the English translation see below, pp. 321-322); the text then describes the three kinds of food preferred by the three categories of beings, as well as the corresponding three kinds of sleep (see *ibidem*, 57c-60, for the English translation see below, p. 324).

²⁵⁵ *Ibidem*, 64b-65b: ... *tāmasasya tu kathyate | paiśunyaṃ paranindā ca nidrālasyaṃ nṛśaṃsatā || 7.64bd ityādayas tamodhīnā guṇāḥ proktāś caturmukha | 7.65ab*

²⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, 53b-54, 68c-69b : ... *yajante ye tamodhikāḥ | teṣāṃ bhuvāḥsthale vāsaḥ kṣaye bhūlokasaṃsrīḥ || 7.53bd yakṣabhūtapiśācādi yajante tamasādhikāḥ | uṣitvā narake ghore janma syāj jaṅgamādiṣu || 7.54 ... pralaye tamasi sthasya puruṣasya caturmukha || 7.68cd mūḍhayoniṣu janma syān nikṛṣṭāsu punaḥ punaḥ | 7.69ab*

ger and deceit [63cd]: these are the qualities of the *rajas guṇa*. [64a] ... Those twice born who worship with a disposition mainly influenced by [the quality of] *rajas*, will dwell in heaven as [an abode] characterized by return and, at the end of that [stay in heaven], they will undergo [again] transmigration. [52] ... For the one devoted to *rajas*, when he dies, [there shall be] only a rebirth in a noble family. [68ab]”²⁵⁷.

Whereas both tamasic and rajasic people cannot escape the fetters of *saṃsāra*, the condition of the sattvic beings is quite different: “When *sattva* is unobstructed, it is enlightening because of its purity. Truth, knowledge, asceticism, silence, constancy, purity, equanimity, patience [62] and so on: [these are] the qualities producing good fortune for the one who is grounded on *sattva* [63ab]. ... Then those beings chiefly endowed with [the quality of] *sattva*, who pay a homage (*arcanā*) by which I am pleased, will get as a fruit [of their devotion] either worldly enjoyment or final beatitude, according to their wish. [51]”²⁵⁸. The PādS reasserts here the idea of non-irreconciliability of the two opposite aims of human life, *bhukti* and *mukti*; thus *bhoga* and *apavarga* are both considered as valuable and appropriate goals for sattvic beings, according to their peculiar temperaments, dispositions and wishes. But what is essential is that, unlike tamasic and rajasic beings, those who perform the worship (*arcanā*) of God with a sattvic disposition shall be released from *saṃsāra*. With regard to the suitable way of worship, it is said: “being restless, those who are wholly engaged in the sacrificial rites (*yajñakarman*) will be born again; [but] those who are devoted to my adoration (*ārādhana*), henceforth will not be born again. [55]”²⁵⁹. By opposing *ārādhana*

²⁵⁷ *Ibidem*, 63c-64a, 52, 68ab : *ahaṃkāras tridhā darpaḥ krodho dambha itīṛitaḥ || 7.63cd guṇā rajoḡṇasyaite...7.64a ... rajasādhikabhāvena yajante ye dvijātayaḥ | teṣāṃ triviṣṭape vāsaḥ punar āvṛtilakṣaṇaḥ || 7.52 ... rajassthasya pralīnasya janmamātraṃ mahākule | 7.68ab*

²⁵⁸ *Ibidem*, 62-63b, 51: *tatra satvaṃ nirmalatvāt prakāśakam anāvṛtam | satyaṃ jñānaṃ tapo maunaṃ dhṛtiḥ śaucaṃ śamaḥ kṣamā || 7.62 ityādayaḥ satvaniṣṭhe guṇāḥ kalyāṇakāriṇaḥ | 7.63ab ... tatra satvādhikair bhāvair arcanā mama toṣiṇī | bhogo vāpy apavargo vā phalaṃ teṣāṃ yathepsitam || 7.51*

²⁵⁹ *Ibidem*, 55: *gatvā gatvā nivartante yajña*dharmaparāyaṇāḥ* (em. ma

(as well as *arcanā*) - both technical terms indicating the tantric way of worship²⁶⁰ - to the orthodox Vedic-derived term *yajñakarman*, the author(s) of the PādS mean that it is only through the Pāñcarātric way of ritual worship taught in the *saṃhitā*-s that liberation may be attained. But the mere performance of the prescribed ritual is not enough to change the condition of man from *saṃsārin* to *mukta*; an essential prerequisite is the inner, sattvic disposition accompanying the ritual practice. In a definition of *saṃsārin* and *mukta*, provided in another portion of the work, one reads: “The one who is performing an action enjoined by the *Veda*-s aiming at its result, [that one] is bound [by the fetters of existence]; [whilst] the one who is performing an action free from desire, [that one] is not bound. [14]”²⁶¹. By contrasting the ritual performed in conformity with the orthodox Vedic prescriptions and aiming at a fruit - i.e. the *yajñakarman* - with the ritual act devoid of any expectation of a result, the text intends to praise and recommend the disinterested devotion which characterizes the sattvic performer of the Pāñcarātric *ārādhana*.

In addition to moral virtues, to be possessed of knowledge is an essential quality distinguishing the sattvic man: “When the other two lower *guṇa*-s have disappeared and *sattva* is fully developed, then arises the highest knowledge by which one reaches the supreme abode, difficult to be attained within *prakṛti*; [65c-66] having reached that [abode, men] are not born again in *saṃsāra*, which is a source of sorrow. [Hence, those who are] devoted to *sattva*, when they die, enter the eternal worlds. [67]”²⁶². Thus, once he has overcome the bewilderment depending on *tamas*, as well as the excessive egotism due to the preponderance of *rajas*, the sattvic man who

karmaparāyaṇāḥ) | *adyāpi na nivartante ye mamārādhane sthitāḥ* || 7.55.

²⁶⁰ For a definition of *arcanā*, see TAK I 2000: 142-143; for *ārādhana*, see *Ibidem*: 203.

²⁶¹ PādS, *jp*, 4, 14 : *phalakāmanayā karma vihitam vaidikam bhajan | badhyate niḥsprhaḥ karma bhajamāno na badhyate* || 4.14.

²⁶² PādS, *jp*, 7, 65c-67: *pralīnayoḥ itarayoḥ guṇayoḥ ca jaghanyayoḥ* || 7.65cd *satve pravṛddhe vijñānam utkr̥ṣṭam jāyate dhikam | tena prāpnoti paramam sthānam prakṛtidurlabham* || 7.66 *yat prāpya na nivartante saṃsāre duḥkhasambhava | deham tyajantaḥ satvasthāḥ lokān yānti sanātanaṁ* || 7.67.

has triumphed over his shortcomings attains the knowledge leading him to the supreme abode, i.e. the *parama pada* of Viṣṇu, Vaikunṭha, which is defined as *prakṛtidurlabha* (verse 66d) because the world of God is above and beyond the realm of *prakṛti*. What is essential, in order to attain this supreme abode, is the highest, liberating knowledge, which is both an attribute qualifying the sattvic man and the fruit of his virtuous actions in every field of his religious and spiritual life.

The causal relation between sattvic nature and knowledge is highlighted also with regard to the practice of asceticism (*tapas*): “[Everything which is] duly performed by men having faith and not looking for beneficial consequences, is to be known as asceticism characterized by *sattva*, on account of its [being] a source of knowledge. [5c-6b]”; on the other hand, “[everything which is performed] for the sake of accomplishing religious observances, honour, worship and so on, is [known as] asceticism characterized by *rajas*. [6cd] But what [is performed] for the destruction of others and so on, shall be [known as] asceticism characterized by *tamas*. These two kinds of activities shall never be sources of knowledge. [7]”²⁶³.

Therefore, any activity related to the religious life, which is performed with a sattvic disposition, produces knowledge; and the knowledge arising out of a virtuous action has a salvific function, insofar as it prevents the further development of *karman*. In fact, “knowledge being preponderant, there shall be liberation of the self from *saṃsāra*; *karman* being preponderant, [*saṃsāra*], being unrestrained, arises again. [11] *Karman*, which is the cause of *saṃsāra*, comes to nothing on account of knowledge; when *karman* as cause of *saṃsāra* is destroyed, immediately after [follows] liberation. [12]”²⁶⁴.

²⁶³ PādS, jp, 8, 5c-7: *śraddadhānaiḥ kṛtaṃ samyak aphalākāṃkṣibhir naraiḥ* || 8.5cd *sātvikaṃ tat tapo jñeyam taddhi vijñānakāraṇam* | *satkāramānapūjādi*sidhyartham* (em. *siddhyartham*) *rājasam tapaḥ* || 8.6 *tāmasam tu tapas tat syāt yat parotsādanādikam* | *karma tad dvividham naiva vijñānotpattikāraṇam* || 8.7.

²⁶⁴ PādS, jp, 7, 11-12 : *muktir *jñānādhike* (em. *jñānādhikye*) *tasyāḥ saṃsṛter ātmano bhavet* | **karmādhike* (em. *ma. karmādhikye*) *punaḥ saiva jāyate niravagrahā* || 7.11 *saṃsārahetubhūtaṃ tat karmajñānena naśyati* | *kṣiṇe karmaṇi saṃsārahetau muktir anantaram* || 7.12.

The nature and contents of the sattvic liberating knowledge is discussed in several passages of the *jp*. In the definition of *sāmsārin* and *mukta* quoted above it is said: “The one whose knowledge is relating to worldly objects, based on the faculty of seeing and so on, [that one] is bound; the one whose knowledge [is relating to] the Supreme God, [that one] is liberated. [15]”²⁶⁵. Here the knowledge based on the sense perceptions, and hence limited to the phenomenal world of *prakṛti*, is opposed to the salvific knowledge related to God. The latter should be intended not only as insight into the nature of the godhead, but also as knowledge of the way of attaining God by means of worship and meditation, that is to say, true understanding and proficiency in ritual and *yoga*: “A pure knowledge, free from the influence of the external objects, arises for the [man] who [has achieved] the destruction of the ignorance having no beginning through the performance of the rites of propitiation of Bhagavān and the limbs of *yoga*, *yama* and so on. [2-3b]”. For this learned and virtuous devotee, “arises an awareness turned inwardly. When knowledge and awareness arise, men devoted to ritual perceive - through [them] - the abode, having reached which they will never be born again, free from birth and death. [7-8b]”²⁶⁶.

Therefore, the knowledge pertaining to the sattvic man is to be regarded at one and the same time prerequisite and result of his sattvic worship and meditation. This sounds like a paradox, but, as a matter of fact, this is the paradox of the revealed scriptures, whose contents of knowledge, regarding theological speculations about the nature of the godhead, instructions for the techniques of meditation

²⁶⁵ PādS, *jp*, 4, 15: *jñānaṃ vaiṣayikaṃ yasya cakṣurādīnibandhanam | badhyate sa pare deve yasya jñānaṃ sa mucyate || 4.15*. The verse 14 is quoted above (see p. 142 and note 261).

²⁶⁶ PādS, *jp*, 7, 2-3b, 7-8b: *bāhyoparāgarahitaṃ nirmalaṃ tasya jāyate | vijñānaṃ yasya bhagavatsamārāadhanakarmabhiḥ || 7.2 anādyavidyāvilayo yogāṅgaiś ca yamādibhiḥ | 7.3ab ... jñānaṃ pratyañmukhaṃ jātaṃ tena jñānti tat padam | yat prāpya na nivartante janmamṛtyuvivarjitāḥ || 7.7 puruṣāḥ karmaniratā jñānaviñājanmani | 7. 8ab*.

The whole passage (*jp*, 7, 2-8b) is discussed in detail below, pp. 199ff; with regard to the discussion of the so-called *sattvajñāna*, see in particular pp. 206ff.

and prescriptions about ritual worship, cannot be considered as true, living, liberating knowledge until the relevant teachings are properly meditated upon, deeply understood and, above all, practiced by the devotees. Only its practice endows knowledge with its essential living substance and with its liberating power.

The topic of the sattvic, rajasic and tamasic beings is dealt with also in the ParS. In its Sāṃkhya-derived account of *śṛṣṭi*, creatures are classified as best, middle and worst according to their respective association with the three *guṇa*-s of *prakṛti*. The *guṇa*-s also affect their behaviour (*caryā*) and mode of worship (*arcanā*): the worship of the sattvic beings pleases the Lord and grants His grace (*prasāda*), the worship of the rajasic brings enjoyment (*bhoga*) and the worship of the tamasic results in obnubilation (*moha*). Therefore - it is said - having overcome desire and delusion, one should worship only with a sattvic disposition²⁶⁷. Further on, in an illustration of the destinies of the embodied souls, the ParS says that, on account of the respective predominance of *sattva*, *rajas* or *tamas*, the beings are accorded a high, middle or low condition, that is, an existence as gods, men or animals²⁶⁸. Since the ParS introduces only a few slight variants, with respect to the PādS, in the well known *guṇa*-determined classification, a detailed comparison with the latter would contribute little to a better understanding of the teachings of the PādS on this subject.

²⁶⁷ See ParS, 2, 7-10: *tribhir eva guṇair ete prakṛtisthais samanvitāḥ | sarve bhāvā bhavanty ete śreṣṭhā madhyās tathā'dhamāḥ || 2.7 śreṣṭhās tu sattvabhūyiṣṭhā madhyamās tu rajomayāḥ | adhamās tāmasā jñeyāḥ teṣāṃ caryāsu tādṛśāḥ || 2.8 tatra sattvamayair bhāvair arcanā matprasādinī | rājasair bhogasiddhiḥ syāt tāmasair mohakāraṇam || 2.9 tasmān māṃ praty *upāsīnaṃ (em. upāsīnaḥ) sarvabhāvānukramāt | kurvīta sātṭvikenaiḥ nāśayitvā rajastamaḥ || 2.10.*

The same idea is resumed in another point of the ParS (3, 28c-29a), where, with regard to the three kinds of worship - by deeds, speech and mind - it is said that each of these three is in its turn threefold, according to the prevalent *guṇa* and, accordingly, bestows a threefold fruit: "The *sattvic* [worship] grants liberation, the *rajasic* the fulfillment of wishes, the *tamasic* harm to others...". ... *sātṭviki muktihetos tu rājasī kāmasiddhaye || 3.28cd tāmasī parapīḍārthaṃ ... 3.29a.*

²⁶⁸ See ParS, 2, 63-64: *guṇānāṃ tu samudrekāt karmabhiḥ svaiś śubhāśubhaiḥ | uttamām ahamām madhyām gatiṃ gacchanti dehinaḥ || 2.63 teṣāṃ sattvaguṇodreke gatiḥ devatvam iṣyate | mānuṣyaṃ rājasāt proktaṃ tiryaktvaṃ tamasaḥ tathā || 2.64.*

The *mumukṣu*

Notwithstanding his being permeated by the *guṇa*-s of *prakṛti*, thanks to the effect of the *sattva guṇa*, man strives after emancipation; his longing for a condition beyond his worldly existence, as well as his endeavour to achieve his aim, are impelled and made possible by the divine grace (*prasāda*), which, by means of the revelation, bestows on him the salvific knowledge. The idea that *prasāda*, the highest of the divine functions, has an essential role in the final emancipation of the *jīva* is duly emphasized in the PādS: “Without my favour - says Bhagavān - there cannot be cessation of that [*māyā*] for anyone; until I become pleased, *māyā* will be unfathomable and insurmountable. [3] ... Therefore know, o you having the lotus as a seat, that anywhere, nothing except my favour can confer final emancipation to the transmigratory beings. [6]”²⁶⁹. Further on it is said: “This *māyā*, which is depending on myself, indeed vanishes by the effect of [my] favour. Those who are bound on account of *māyā* are liberated when they adore me. [37]”²⁷⁰. The same statements are found in the ParS, which claims that *māyā*, caused by God Himself, cannot be overcome without the intervention of divine grace; therefore in order to attain the highest goal man needs only the blessing of divine favour²⁷¹. The similarities between the two *saṁhitā*-s are evident: both mention the contradictory yet complementary divine functions of veiling and unveiling, bewildering the *jīva*-s by means of the

²⁶⁹ PādS, *jp*, 5, 3, 6: *matprasādaṁ vinā tasya na virāmo 'sti kasyacit | yāvan nāhaṁ prasīdāmi tāvaṁ māyā duratyayā || 5.3 ... tasmāt saṁsāriṇāṁ puṁsāṁ matprasādaṁ vinā kvacit | niḥśreyasakaraṁ nānyad budhyasva kamalāsana || 5.6.*

²⁷⁰ PādS, *jp*, 7, 37: **matprasādāvasānā (em. ma. prasādād eva sāmāyā) yā madadhīnā vīnaśyati | māyāyogena badhyante *mucyate (em. mucyante) *tām jayanti (em. ma. mām bhajanti) ye || 7.37.*

²⁷¹ See ParS, 1, 81-82, 86: *matkṛtāyās tu māyāyā matprasādād vinā kvacit | na virāmosti loke 'smin nātra kāryā vicāraṇā || 1.81 yāvad eva na māyeyaṁ matprasādena hīyate | tāvat puṁsas tu saṁsāro muktir asya viparyaye || 1.82. ... tasmāt saṁsāriṇāṁ puṁsāṁ matprasādād vinā kvacit | niḥśreyasakaraṁ *nānyat datveṣṭavyaṁ (em. nānyad anveṣṭavyaṁ) pitāmaha || 1.86.* The verse 86 is reproduced, almost *verbatim*, in PādS, *jp*, 5, 6, quoted above, note 269.

illusory power of the divine *māyā* and revealing the salvific teaching which shows the path towards liberation; furthermore both emphasize the crucial function of divine grace for the attainment of *mukti*.

The agreement between PādS and ParS also concerns the qualifications required for deserving divine favour. Indeed, besides portraying the *guṇa*-determined categories of men, both *saṃhitā*-s pay special attention to the characteristics distinguishing the *mumukṣu*, characteristics which, to some extent, are already delineated in the descriptions of the sattvic devotee. Thus, the ParS indicates faith, devotion and meditation (*śraddhā*, *bhakti* and *samādhi*) duly placed upon the Lord as causes of His favour and, accordingly, of emancipation. In order to emphasize the importance of *bhakti*, the ParS goes as far as to say that the fervent devotion directed towards the Lord can bestow its boons even to a foolish man, who ignores the prescriptions of the revealed and authoritative scriptures²⁷².

In the PādS too, one reads that faith, devotion and meditation duly placed upon the Lord can move His gracious disposition and, accordingly, lead to liberation: “Faith, devotion and meditation placed on me in the right way, according to the rules settled in the authoritative scriptures and not otherwise, [this] shall be the cause [of my favour]. [39]”²⁷³. After having recommended that the teachings and injunctions of the authoritative texts of the tradition must inspire and direct the faith, devotion and meditation of he who desires emancipation, the text indicates the suitable objects of *śraddhā*, *bhakti* and *samādhi*: “After having known my *avatāra* forms as arisen from me as their source, for the sake of the cessation of *adharma* and the increase of desire for *dharma*, the many [forms] apt to be known, then one should practise these three [attitudes]. [41-42b]”²⁷⁴. In this

²⁷² See ParS, 1, 84-85: *śraddhā bhakti samādhiś ca mayi praṇihitā janaiḥ | śubham eva vivicyante tat prasādam avaihi me || 1.84 śāstrāgamavihīnā ca bhaktir mayi samarpitā | śubham evāvahet puṁso mūrkhasyāpi na saṁśayaḥ || 1.85.*

²⁷³ PādS, jp, 7, 39: *śraddhā bhaktiḥ samādhiś ca mayi samyak samarpitā | kāraṇaṁ śāstradr̥ṣṭena vidhinā nānyathā bhavet || 7.39.*

²⁷⁴ PādS, jp, 7, 41-42b: *mamāvatārarūpāṇi budhvā sṛṣṭāni manmukhāt | adharmasyopaśāntyartham dharmakāmapravṛddhaye || 7.41 bahūni boddhuṁ योग्यानि त्रयम् तत्रा समācaret || 7.42ab.*

context, *avatāra* has to be understood as *mūrti*, in the sense of any particular, concrete divine figure. In fact, further on it is said: “The form of the Supreme *ātman*, which is devoid of any concrete shape, difficult to be known, is not within the range of these, i.e. faith and so on. [42c-43b]”²⁷⁵. The intention here is to underscore that the Supreme Being as such is inaccessible to human beings, the Absolute being approachable only by taking a particular, concrete form: only as *mūrti* God becomes a possible object of adoration. Thus the sense of the whole passage is that *śraddhā*, *bhakti* and *samādhi*, directed to a *mūrti* of God according to the rules of the authoritative scriptures, are the virtues which make the *mumukṣu* worthy of divine grace²⁷⁶.

By specifying the nature of the object of *śraddhā*, *bhakti* and *samādhi*, the author(s) of the PādS may be seen to refer to a passage of the ParS which provides a clear and synthetic definition of the function of the *mūrti*, namely ParS, 3, 5-10b²⁷⁷. Parallels may be drawn between the *stotra*, *pūjā* and *dhyāna* mentioned in this passage of the ParS and the *śraddhā*, *bhakti* and *samādhi* mentioned in the passages in question of both ParS and PādS: praise of God (*stotra*) can be considered as the verbal expression of the faith (*śraddhā*) of the devotee, the acts of ritual worship (*pūjā*) can be regarded as the practical expression of his devotion (*bhakti*) and *samādhi*, as the final stage and crowning of meditation, stands for *dhyāna*. While these correspondences prove that the matter at issue is the same in both passages of the ParS (namely ParS, 1, 83-85 and ParS, 3, 5-10b), they also make it clear that the author(s) of the PādS had associ-

²⁷⁵ *Ibidem*, 42c-43b: *sarvākāravīnirmuktaṃ rūpaṃ yat paramātmānaḥ || 7.42cd durvijñānaṃ tad eteṣāṃ śraddhādīnāṃ agocaram || 7.43ab*.

²⁷⁶ The whole passage PādS, *jp*, 7, 38-43b is based, for its content, on ParS, 1, 83-85. Both passages are introduced by the same question of Brahman, who wonders what could ever induce a god that is completely pleased and satisfied to show an attentive concern for the destiny of living beings. Compare: PādS, *jp*, 7, 38: [*brahmā*] *paripūrṇasya bhagavan prasādas tava kiṃkutaḥ | na vedmi kāraṇaṃ tatra tan me brūhi yathātatham || 7.38* and ParS, 1, 83: [*brahmā*] *paripūrṇasya te deva prasādaḥ kiṃ nibandhanaḥ | na jāne kāraṇaṃ tasya tad brūhi puruṣottama || 1.83*.

²⁷⁷ This passage is quoted and discussed above, pp. 103ff.

ated these two passages of the ParS, combining the ideas expressed therein in order to formulate their own views²⁷⁸.

Accordingly, the statement in the PādS that the object of *śraddhā*, *bhakti* and *samādhi* cannot be the *paramātmā* devoid of form, but must instead be the *avatāra* forms of the Lord, becomes clearer in the light of the passage of the ParS. When the ParS asserts that there cannot be worship without *mūrti*, this does not mean that worship of the *mūrti* is not directed to the Supreme God; on the contrary, for human beings, worship of the *mūrti* is the only possible way of approaching the Supreme One. God Himself has taken these *murti*-s out of His benevolent attitude towards His devotees, in order to enable them to express their devotion for Him, thereby opening for them a way to salvation. This idea that the *mūrti* is not only a concrete manifestation of God, but also the tangible expression of His wish to bestow grace, is highlighted in the PādS by the choice of the term *avatāra*, suggestive of divine concern for the welfare of the world and living beings.

To conclude, it is worth remarking that, whereas the ParS strongly emphasizes the value to be attached to a fervent devotion²⁷⁹, for the PādS *bhakti* does not seem to be the privileged path to the attainment of divine favour and, hence, emancipation. There are other, not less essential qualities of the devotee which are factors leading to the final goal. “When the eternal, Supreme *ātman* is inclined to grace, then, liberated from *māyā*, absorbed in *yoga*, being one who has subdued his senses, by means of knowledge [man] attains the Supreme *brahman*, which is characterized by happiness. [32c-33]”²⁸⁰. Thus,

²⁷⁸ Both PādS and ParS assert - by using the same expression (*śāstradr̥ṣṭena vidhinā* in PādS, *jp*, 7, 39cd and *vidhinā śāstradr̥ṣṭena* in ParS, 3, 8c) - that the worship of the *mūrti* has to be performed only according to the rules of the *śāstra*-s. This parallel corroborates the hypothesis that the author(s) of the PādS had referred to this passage of the ParS.

²⁷⁹ See ParS, 1, 85, quoted above, p. 147, note 272.

²⁸⁰ PādS, *jp*, 7, 32c-33: *yadā prasādasumukhaḥ paramātmā sanātanaḥ || 7.32cd tadā māyāvimuktaś ca yogayukto jīteन्द्रियाḥ | vijñānena paraṁ brahma prāpnoti sukhalaṅkāṣaṇam | 7.33.*

to be a *jñānin* and a *yogin* are necessary qualifications which, complementing that of being a faithful devotee, contribute to making the *mumukṣu* worthy of divine grace.

3 THE DOCTRINE OF LIBERATION

The Concept of mukti as sāyujya

The simile of the mirrors²⁸¹, meant to illustrate the origination of the *jīva*-s, conveys the idea of the original identity between individual souls and Supreme Soul; this identity, of which man is unaware on account of the power of *māyā* and *avidyā*, is realized in liberation: “What [is] the difference - asks Brahmā - between your lordship, o Puruṣottama, and a liberated soul? Tell [me] this, o Lord Bhagavān, if it is not too secret. [16]”. The Lord answers: “Indeed they are me, there is no difference at all. In whatever way I enjoy my existence, so, in the same way do the liberated souls. [17]”²⁸². The latter statement corresponds, word for word, to a verse of the ParS²⁸³. Besides this instance of textual correspondence, in the ParS too, the *jīva*-s originally partake of divine nature, insofar as they are *śakti*-s of God; these *śakti*-s then become lower²⁸⁴ and, as embodied souls (*dehin*), wander in *saṃsāra*, until, upon their release, as emancipated souls, they resume their original condition of non-difference from God: “For the non-liberated there is difference between individual

²⁸¹ See PādS, *jp*, 6, 16 quoted above, p. 129 and note 238.

²⁸² PādS, *jp*, 4, 16-17: [*brahmā*] *muktātmanaś ca bhavato bhedaḥ kaḥ puruṣottama | etad ācakṣva bhagavan nātiguḥyaṃ yadi prabho || 4.16* [*śrībhagavān*] *aham eva bhavanty ete na bhedas tatra kaścana | yathāhaṃ viharāmy evaṃ tathā muktāś ca dehinaḥ || 4.17*.

²⁸³ See ParS, 1, 69: [*paramah*] *aham eva bhavanty ete na bhedas tatra kaścana | yathā’haṃ viharāmy eva tathā muktāś ca dehinaḥ || 1.69*.

²⁸⁴ See ParS, 2, 58-59 quoted above, p. 131, note 242.

soul and Supreme Soul. For the liberated there is no difference, because the cause of difference ceases to exist. [65]”²⁸⁵.

The expression *na bheda* can be understood, and indeed should be understood as having a twofold meaning, both in the PādS and in the ParS. If it is understood as “non-difference”, it refers to the ontological state of the *jīva*-s: once liberated of all the conditioning factors linked to their condition of *saṃsārin*-s, the *jīva*-s, as *mukta*-s, resume and realize their original sameness of nature with their source, the *puruṣa-rūpa* of God (in the PādS), or they become once more *śakti*-s of God (in the ParS²⁸⁶). This sameness of nature does not signify equality between *mukta*-s and God, because the *mukta*-s do not possess all the attributes and powers of God, they are not capable of performing the divine cosmic functions of creating the world and so forth; hence “non-difference” means that the *mukta*-s share the essential nature of the godhead, Its being consciousness, Its bliss, but not all of Its qualities.

But, if there is no longer any difference between the liberated souls and the Lord, what remains of the *jīva*-s, of their individuality, in liberation? Actually both PādS and ParS specify (in the half verses 4.17cd and 1.69cd respectively) that the *mukta*-s enjoy the same existence of God in the same way as God, thereby certainly alluding to the experience of divine bliss in *Vaikuṇṭha*. Hence, although once emancipated, the *jīva*-s all become substantially like the *paramātmān*, this does not entail the loss of their individuality; in liberation they do not merge into the godhead, but remain experiencing subjects, numerically distinct. Therefore, if *na bheda* is understood in the sense of “non-separation” or “union”, this expres-

²⁸⁵ ParS, 12, 65: **amukte* (em. A; *amuktau* GOS) *bheda eva syāt jīvasya ca parasya ca | muktasya tu na bhedo’sti bhedahetor abhāvataḥ || 12.65*. See also ParS, 30, 96cd: *saṃsāragocarātītā nirviśeṣāḥ sadā mama || 30.96cd*. For a discussion of the idea of non-difference between *jīva*-s and *para* in the ParS, see also Czerniak-Drożdżowicz 2003: 130.

²⁸⁶ With regard to the ParS, both the simile of the beehive occurring in the AS (see above, p. 117 and note 203) and the definition of the *kūṭastha puruṣa* of the LT (see above, p. 117 and note 206) fit very well with the idea of the *jīva*-s who, when released, go back to the Lord, returning to their original condition of *śakti*-s.

sion refers to the situation of the *mukta*-s in *Vaikuṇṭha*, where they experience, together with God, the beatitude of His heavenly world and are forever united with Him.

The twofold meaning of *na bheda*, i.e. “non-difference” and “non-separation”, is also implied by two similes which, in the *PādS*, depict the situation of the liberated: “As showers of rain, which are separated [from each other] when they are falling from a cloud in the sky, become one on earth, so the *yogin*-s [become one] in *brahman*. [50] The flow of the rivers varies in many ways, [each river having] its own peculiar nature and so on, [but, once] entered [into the ocean], the water of the ocean does not differ from the water [of the rivers]. [51] Likewise, o four-faced one, the liberated souls, by becoming one [with It], abide in the Supreme *brahman*, so that there shall be a being in Its same world. [52]”²⁸⁷. While the non-difference is vividly expressed by the image of the rivers which, flowing into the ocean, blend their waters with the waters of the ocean, so that any difference between fresh and salt water is lost, the non-separation is suggested - perhaps not so cogently - by the image of the rains which, falling from clouds scattered in the sky, come down together on earth. Actually, the explanation of the similes (contained in verse 52) lays stress on the non-separation, i.e. the union between liberated souls and God, specifying that what ensues from their becoming one is the dwelling in the same sphere (*sālokya*). This is expressed also by another simile, certainly more clear and cogent than that related to the rains: “As the inhabitants of a town enter into it through

²⁸⁷ *PādS*, *jp*, 6, 50-52: *varṣadhārāḥ pṛthagbhūtāḥ patantyō divi meghataḥ | bhūmāv aikyaṃ yathā yānti tadvad brahmaṇi yoginaḥ || 6.50 arṇo nadīnām bahudhā tat svarūpādi bhedavat | praviṣṭaṃ vāridher vāri no dakād vyatiricyate || 6.51 tathaiva brahmaṇi pare muktātmānāś caturmukha | ekībhāvena tiṣṭhanti tatsālokyaṃ yathā bhavet || 6.52.*

The simile of the rains (verse 50) is found also in *JS*, 4, 121: *meghād dhārāgaṇenaiva pṛthag ambugataṃ kṣitau | prāpnoty aikyaṃ tathā sarve bhavaty api yoginaḥ || 4.121.* The simile of the rivers (verse 51) is found also in *JS*, 4, 123: *saritsaṅghād yathā toyaṃ saṃpraviṣṭaṃ mahodadhau | alakṣyaś codake bhedaḥ parasmīn yoginām tathā || 4.123.* These parallels have been remarked by Rastelli in Rastelli 1999a: 66.

the city gates [located] in the various directions, likewise the beings always enter the Supreme Being as worshippers through the highest knowledge. [43c-44]”²⁸⁸.

The doctrine of liberation taught by the PādS, making explicit and elaborating these metaphorical expressions, conceives the becoming one (*ekibhāva*) of individual souls and Supreme Soul as a union (*sāyujya*) consisting in an intersubjective relationship. In a passage of the *jp*, which is important because it constitutes the first occurrence in the work of a critical discussion about the concept of liberation, one reads: “... O four-faced one, liberation is said to be threefold [according to its being]: endowed with distinction (*bheda*), devoid of distinction (*abheda*), or a combination of the two (*miśra*). In the [variety called] *bheda*, liberation is characterized by servitude: as here, in these worlds, men are intent on the conduct prescribed by Hari, so in Vaiṣṇava the liberated souls, who are living in the world of God, the Supreme *ātman*, abide near Him, being His servants, always concentrated [and] intent to please Him. [28-31b]. The liberation [called] *abheda* shall be the absolute identity between the Supreme Soul and the individual soul; [31cd] for the one who is engaged in the meditation on the self consisting of [the idea]: “I am that”, with a sense of identity, to him occurs the liberation consisting of the oneness between individual soul and Supreme Soul. [32] But in the [liberation] consisting of a combination [of the other two] (*miśra*), [taught] in the *siddhānta*, he who is in a state of difference, after having pleased the Supreme God by paying Him homage and so on, then, being concentrated [33] by means of a continuous attention focused only on the Supreme *ātman*, pure consciousness, obtains the identity (*aikya*). That liberation is said to be characterized by union (*sāyujya*). [34]”²⁸⁹.

²⁸⁸ PādS, *jp*, 6, 43c-44: **nānādikkaiḥ* (em. ma. *nānādigbhiḥ*) *puradvārair yathā puranivāsinah* || 6.43cd *antarviśanti yadvac ca puruṣāḥ puruṣaṁ param | upāsakā viśanty antar vidyayā parayā sadā* || 6.44.

²⁸⁹ PādS, *jp*, 8, 28c-34: *bhedena cāpy abhedena miśreṇa ca caturmukha* || 8.28cd *tridhaiva muktir uditā bhede kainkaryalakṣaṇā | muktir yatheha lokeṣu haricaryā parā narāḥ* || 8.29 *devasya tadvad evaite vaiṣṇave paramātmānaḥ | loke tasya*

The text discusses three different concepts and, accordingly, three different kinds of liberation, highlighting that the means of attaining each kind of *mukti* correspond to each respective goal. The verses speaking of the *bheda mukti* describe, according to a Purāṇic, Vaiṣṇava view of Vaikuṇṭha, the situation of the liberated souls, who are dwelling in the abode of Viṣṇu, enjoying the proximity of God, always intent on paying homage and pleasing Him as His servants. This kind of liberation consists of an everlasting service (*kainkarya*) of God, by abiding in His world, near Him. The means of attaining the *bheda mukti* is said to be the observance of the *haricaryā*, i.e. the way of life prescribed by Hari, the Vaiṣṇava *dharma*. “My favour - says Bhagavān - is great to those who conform to the law of the classes and stages of life, which has been established by me. [5]”²⁹⁰. Besides the fulfilment of the obligations related to the *varṇāśrama* order, the conduct (*caryā*) prescribed by Bhagavān includes the adoration and worship of God in His shrines and temples, that is to say, the service carried out by the devotees for the Lord in His abodes on earth, a service which prepares for and corresponds to the *kainkarya* of the *mukta*-s in Vaikuṇṭha.

The verses dealing with the *abheda mukti* envisage liberation as absolute identity (*atyanta aikya*) between *para* and *jīva*, according to a pure advaitic view. The means of attaining this kind of liberation consists in the practice of the *bhāvanā*, i.e. the meditation at the highest stage of which the *yogin* has the experience of the oneness of his self with the *paramātmān*. The *mantra* which enables this salvific experience is *so’ham*, that is to say, the reversed form of *haṃsa*, which is “a symbol since the Vedas for the supreme entity, a symbol

samīpasthā muktātmānaḥ samāhitāḥ || 8.30 *vasanti kiṅkarāḥ santaḥ tatprasādaparāḥ sadā* | *abhedamuktir atyantam aikyaṃ syāt parajīvaḥ* || 8.31 *ātmano bhāvanā caikyē so’ham ity evaṃ ātmikā* | *yasya tasyaikatāpattir muktir jīvaparamātmānoḥ* || 8.32 *siddhānte miśrarūpe tu bhede sthitvā’rcanādibhiḥ* | *toṣayitvā param devaṃ tato yuktaḥ samāhitāḥ* || 8.33 *vijñānenaikatānena paramātmāni cidghane* | *aikyaṃ prāpnoti sā muktir uktā sāyujyalakṣaṇā* || 8.34.

²⁹⁰ PādS, jp, 5, 5: *varṇānām āśramānām ca maryādā yā mayā kṛtā* | *tāṃ ye samanuvartante prasādas teṣu me mahān* || 5.5.

also for the individual soul, one with *brahman*”²⁹¹. The LT, dealing with the *haṃsa-mantra*, calls its reverted form, that is to say *so’ham*, the *mantra* of the Supreme Soul (*paramātmā-mantra*)²⁹². Through the appropriate repetition of this *mantra* the devotee realizes immediately the *atyanta aikya* with the Lord, so that in the case of this kind of *mukti* the means coincides *ipso facto* with the goal.

By stating that the third kind of liberation is the one taught in the *siddhānta*, the text implies that, among the three concepts of *mukti*, the *miśra* is the very one advocated by the PādS. This kind of *mukti* consists in *sāyujya*, i.e. the union of *jīva*-s and *paramātmān*, where the term *sāyujya* complements the expression *na bheda* of the statement quoted and discussed above²⁹³. For the *jīva*, this union entails the realization of his true nature, of his ultimate identity with the *puruṣa-rūpa* of the *paramātmān*, as well as his encounter with God; hence *sāyujya* can be defined as a “becoming one” (*ekibhāva*) between liberated souls and Supreme Soul, which is continuously intensified through a dynamic mutual relationship between the *mukta*-s and God.

This kind of *mukti* is called *miśra* because its means and goal are a combination of the means and goals of the other two kinds of liberation. In fact, it is said that, in order to attain *sāyujya*, one should practice both worship and meditation: after having pleased God with the prescribed ritual acts of homage and adoration (*arcanā*), the devotee should dedicate himself to the discipline of *yoga*, particularly to the meditation exclusively focused on the *paramātmān*, until, having reached the highest stage of meditation, in *samādhi* he experiences his identity (*aikya*) with God. The *arcanā* may be regarded as standing for the ritual worship enjoined by the *haricaryā* associated with the *bheda mukti* and the concentration on the *paramātmān*, granting *aikya*, as taking the place of the *bhāvanā* related to the *abheda mukti*. The PādS concept of *mukti* as *sāyujya* thus represents a synthesis between, on the one hand, the orthodox Vaiṣṇava idea of liberation

²⁹¹ Padoux 1990: 140.

²⁹² See LT, 24, 66ab: *ayam eva viparyas taḥ paramātmamanuḥ smṛtaḥ* | 24.66ab.

²⁹³ See PādS, *jp*, 4, 17 quoted above, p. 151 and note 282.

as everlasting service fervently devoted to the Lord in His heavenly abode and, on the other hand, the pure advaitic idea of liberation as immediate realization of the oneness of *jīva* and *paramātmā*.

With regard to the correspondence between means and goal - which has been remarked for the other two kinds of liberation - in the condition of *sāyujya*, the *mukta*-s continue, in *Vaikuṇṭha*, to pay homage to God, as they worshipped Him in the temples during their existence in the world, and to enjoy forever the experience of identity which they had undergone, during their life, whenever they had attained *samādhi*.

This discussion about the three kinds of *mukti* is placed within a longer passage (PādS, *jp*, 8, 20-36b), which is partially based on a passage of the ParS (ParS, 30, 82-107). The parallel reading of these two passages will show how the author(s) of the PādS, while elucidating their own concept of *mukti*, have used the text of the ParS in order to introduce the issue of the relation between *mukti* and *siddhi*-s.

Both passages begin with similar questions addressed to the Lord. In the PādS this reads as: “[Brahmā:] What is the eightfold superhuman power (*aiśvarya*) which is obtained by a man endowed with devotion? Of what kind is the union (*sāyujya*) of a wise *yogin* [with the Lord]? [20] And, having got all [that] superhuman power, what is the reason he desists from [it]?”²⁹⁴. In the ParS the corresponding questions are: “[Brahmā:] What is the eightfold supernatural power (*aiśvarya*) which a devotee of Viṣṇu obtains? After having obtained this, does the embodied soul desist from [it]? What will be the particular mode of his desisting [from it] and [what of] the union (*sāyujya*) mentioned [by you]? [82-83]”²⁹⁵. In their respective first replies, both texts provide similar descriptions of the various

²⁹⁴ PādS, *jp*, 8, 20: [*brahmā*] *aiśvaryam aṣṭaguṇavat kiṃ tad yad bhaktimān pumān | āpnoti kīdrk sāyujyaṃ yuñjānasya sumedhasaḥ || 8.20 labdhvā caiśvaryam akhilaṃ kena pratinivartate |* .

²⁹⁵ ParS, 30, 82-83: [*brahmā*] *kim aṣṭaguṇam aiśvaryaṃ viṣṇubhaktō yad aśnute | kim etad adhigamyāpi dehī pratinivartate || 30.82 nivṛtter asya ko bhedaḥ sāyujyaṃ kīrtitaṃ bhavet || 30.83.*

siddhi-s and of the benefits which can be obtained by means of these supernatural powers²⁹⁶.

Then, whereas for the PādS the problem of a definition of liberation represents the chief matter at issue - as proved by the following discussion about the three concepts of *mukti* - the ParS is mainly concerned with the question of the possible reconciliability of the opposite goals of *mukti* and *siddhi*-s²⁹⁷. In this regard, the text of the ParS states that both those who are seeking the superhuman powers and those who are longing only for emancipation will be able to achieve the desired aim thanks to a steadfast devotion to God. The men in which the quality of *rajas* prevails acquire and enjoy the *siddhi*-s and, after a successful life, they will attain a high rebirth in a good family; by showing constant devotion, acting as servants (*kiṃkara*) of the Lord, they might make the experience of the union (*sāyujya*) with Him even during their lifetime and, eventually, they will escape *saṃsāra*; but any lapse in their devotion will cause their return to the world again and again. On the other hand, when the quality of *sattva* prevails, men become detached from the aims of worldly life (*nivṛtta*) and, their devotion to the Lord being devoid of any negligence, they will be released from *saṃsāra* sooner and granted the highest reward. The nature of liberation, which is regarded as the supreme achievement (*parāsiddhi*), or the supreme condition (*parāgati*) and is indifferently called *vaiṣṇava pada*, *apavarga*, *mukti* or *nirvāṇa*²⁹⁸, is not elucidated in this passage of the ParS.

Returning to the PādS, following the description of the *siddhi*-s and before the discussion of the three kinds of *mukti*, the text reasserts the importance of a steadfast devotion: "If men forget me, - says Bhagavān - [as] confused by a pleasant sleep (i.e. *māyā*), because of the waning of devotion for me, [they become] similar to rivers

²⁹⁶ See PādS, *jp*, 8, 21-25 and ParS, 30, 84-87.

²⁹⁷ See ParS, 30, 88-107. For a discussion of this portion of the passage of the ParS, see also Czerniak-Drożdżowicz 2003: 92.

²⁹⁸ See ParS, 30, 97c-98: *vedāntair idam evoktaṃ vaiṣṇavaṃ paramaṃ padam || 30.97cd apavargaś ca muktiś ca nirvāṇaṃ caiva dehinām | etad eva parāsiddhir gatīnām paramā gatīḥ || 30.98.*

flowing up the stream. [26]”²⁹⁹. The situation of those who neglect *bhakti* is likened to that of rivers flowing upstream, thus reversing the image previously used to describe the condition of the *mukta*-s, who were compared to rivers flowing into the ocean as their natural final receptacle³⁰⁰. Then, echoing the ParS, the PādS says: “However, if they worship me with the purpose of acquiring supernatural powers, they will be born again in eminent lineages of great men [27] [and] they shall be released from this reprehensible existence thanks to my favour. [28ab]”³⁰¹.

With these verses, the topic of the *siddhi*-s - which is extensively discussed in the passage of the ParS - is dropped and the PādS introduces the discussion of *mukti*, which forms the core of the whole passage and is its main concern. Finally, the concluding verses of the PādS passage reproduce the meaning of the final statements of the ParS passage: “The eightfold supernatural power, that of becoming as small as an atom and so on, which is very difficult to obtain, or else the liberation consisting of the attainment of the highest bliss: the devotion to the Supreme *ātman* produces them both, according to the wish of men [35-36b].”³⁰². The ParS says: “In this way this twofold condition (i.e. *aiśvarya* and *mokṣa*) [has been described]. Therefore while aiming at [whichever] condition, be devoted always to me; [106bd] and in a continuous devotion occurs the desired goal. [107]”³⁰³. These closing lines harmonize with the fervent devotion-

²⁹⁹ PādS, *jp*, 8, 26: *yadi mām vismareyus te sukhanidrāvimohitāḥ | madbhaktikṣaraṇād eva pratisrotovahā janāḥ* || 8.26. Verse 26ab reproduces, almost word for word, verse 90ab of the ParS (see the table below).

³⁰⁰ See PādS, *jp*, 6, 51 quoted above, p. 153 and note 287.

³⁰¹ PādS, *jp*, 8, 27-28b: *jāyante punar utkrṣṭavaṇṣeṣu mahatām satām | *punar bhajeyur mām eva yajante* (em. śrī. *punar yajeyuḥ mām eva yadi te*) *siddhikāmyayā* || 8.27 *mucyante matprasādena janmano 'smād vigarhitāt* | 8.28ab. Verse 27 corresponds to verse 92 of the ParS (see the table below).

³⁰² PādS, *jp*, 8, 35-36b: *aiśvaryam aṇimādyasṭaguṇāvāptiḥ sudurlabhā | muktir vā paramānandaprāptirūpā yadīpsitam* || 8.35 *pumsām tadubhayaṃ *muktiḥ* (em. śrī. *bhaktiḥ*) *prasūte paramātmāni* | 8.36ab.

³⁰³ ParS, 30, 106b-107: ... *ity eṣā dvividhā gatiḥ | tasmāt tu gatim anvicchan madbhaktaḥ sarvadā bhavet* || 30.106bd *bhaktiḥ ca vartamānāyāṃ bhavaty evaṇṣitā gatiḥ* || 30.107.

alism which pervades the whole chapter 30 of the ParS³⁰⁴.

The table below shows the parallels between the two passages of PādS and ParS:

PādS, jp, 8, 20-36b

[*brahmā*]
aiśvaryaṃ aṣṭaguṇavat kiṃ tad
yad bhaktimān pumān |
āpnoti kīdṛk sāyujyaṃ
yuñjānasya sumedhasaḥ || 8.20
labdhvā caiśvaryaṃ akhilaṃ
kena pratinivartate |

PādS, jp, 8, 21-25: description
of the *siddhi*-s

yadi mām vismareyus te
sukhanidrāvimohitāḥ |
madbhaktikṣaraṇād eva
pratisrotovahā janāḥ || 8.26
jāyante punar utkr̥ṣṭavaṃśeṣu
mahatām satām |
**punar bhajeyur mām eva yajante*
(em. śrī. punar yajeyuḥ mām eva
yadi te) siddhikāmyayā || 8.27
mucyante matprasādena janmano
‘smād vigarhitāt | 8.28ab

ParS, 30, 82-107

[*brahmā*]
kim aṣṭaguṇam aiśvaryaṃ
viṣṇubhaktō yad āśnute |
kim etad adhigamyāpi dehī
pratinivartate || 30.82
nivṛtter asya ko bhedaḥ
sāyujyaṃ kīrtitaṃ bhavet ||
30.83

ParS, 30, 84-87: description
of the *siddhi*-s

ParS, 30, 88-107: discussion
about rajasic and sattvic
yogin-s

...
yadi mām vismaranty ete
sukhanidrāvimohitāḥ | 30.90ab
 ...

labhante tatra te janmavaṃśe
śreṣṭhe mahātmanām |
bhajante tatra mām eva te
punaḥ siddhikāmyayā || 30.92
 ...

³⁰⁴ See ParS, 30, 80c-81b: “Devoted to me, meditating on me, depending on me, having me as his final aim and last refuge and having thought of me in the last moments [of his life], he attains union (*sāyujya*) with me.” *madbhakto madanudhyāyī manniṣṭho matparāyaṇaḥ || 30.80cd antyakāle ca mām smṛtvā mama sāyujyam āśnute | 30.81ab.*

PādS, jp, 8, 28c-34: discussion
of the three kinds of *mukti*

<i>aiśvaryam aṇimādyasṭaguṇāv</i>	<i>... ity eṣā dvividhā gatiḥ </i>
<i>āptiḥ sudurlabhā </i>	
<i>muktir vā</i>	<i>tasmāt tu gatim anvicchan</i>
<i>paramānandaprāptirūpā</i>	<i>madbhaktaḥ sarvadā bhavet </i>
<i>yadīpsitam 8.35</i>	<i>30.106bd</i>
<i>pumsām tadubhayaṃ *muktiḥ</i>	<i>bhaktiḥ ca vartamānāyām</i>
<i>(em. śrī. bhaktiḥ) prasūte</i>	<i>bhavaty evaṣitā gatiḥ 30.107</i>
<i>paramātmāni 8. 36ab</i>	

Reference to this passage of the ParS is pertinent to the matter in question because in this way the author(s) of the PādS introduce a crucial issue concerning the figure of the *sādhaka*, namely, whether the acquisition and enjoyment of the *siddhi*-s could hinder the pursuit of his final emancipation.

The historically testified presence and social role of the figure of the *siddhi*-seeking *sādhaka*³⁰⁵, together with the descriptions of his extraordinary powers found in the old tantric-oriented tradition of the *mantraśāstra*, have left important traces in the Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā*-s. Discussions as to the value to be attributed to the *siddhi*-s and the various answers to the controversial question of whether the pursuit and enjoyment of the *siddhi*-s should be considered as an obstacle on the path towards liberation - all of which are contained in the various *saṃhitā*-s or in the different layers of one and the same

³⁰⁵ As explained by Brunner, in the older Śaiva tantric sources the term *sādhaka* designates a particular type of initiate who, by mastering the *mantra*-s, acquires several *siddhi*-s and takes advantage of these extraordinary powers in order to achieve various worldly aims for himself or for others. Brunner argues that historically, the *sādhaka* has become a “personnage oublié” in South India, and she indicates the causes of the progressive disappearance of this figure: on the one hand, the *sādhaka*-s have been replaced, in certain of their traditional social functions, either by the magicians or by the *ācārya*-s; on the other hand, the pursuit of the *siddhi*-s has been devalued because it serves selfish and worldly purposes and it has been blamed for diverting the *sādhaka* from striving exclusively after liberation (See Brunner 1975).

saṃhitā - give expression to different outlooks, or at least emphasize diverse standpoints³⁰⁶.

In this regard, both PādS and ParS express the opinion that, during his lifetime, the *sādhaka* should change his attitude and choose between the two ideal orientations and goals, progressively abandoning the pursuit of the *siddhi*-s and devoting himself only to the attainment of *mukti*. In the ParS, thanks to divine favour earned by constant devotion, the *siddhi*-seeker is able gradually to overcome his rajasic nature and, once the sattvic qualities have prevailed, he is ready to reap the fruit of final emancipation. While upholding the idea that *bhakti* and *prasāda* grant the *sādhaka*-s both *siddhi*-s and *mukti* “according to the wish of men”³⁰⁷, the PādS specifies that the pursuit of these different boons pertains to progressive stages of the *sādhaka*’s spiritual “career”. In fact, in a passage of the *cp* which concludes the explanation of the benefits acquired through the proficient use of the twelve syllable *mantra*³⁰⁸, it is recommended that the

³⁰⁶ For instance, in the SS, which represents an old, mostly tantric-oriented stage of the Pāñcarātra tradition, there are three possible initiations (*dīkṣā*), which grant, respectively, either *mukti*, or *mukti* and *bhukti*, or *bhukti* only; the candidate can choose the type of *dīkṣā*, according to his wish and *bhukti* is considered as a legitimate aim in itself. See SS, 19, 3-4: *ekānekaśvarūpāṃ vai dīkṣāṃ saṃsāriṇāṃ śṛṇu | āsādyā yāṃ samāyānti dehānte 'bhimataṃ padam || 19.3 kaivalyaphaladā'py ekā bhogakaivalyadā parā | bhogadaiva tṛtīyā ca prabuddhānāṃ sadaiva hi || 19.4*. With regard to this problem, the JS shows evidence of different orientations: in chapter 5 of the work, the aim of the *mantrasāadhanā* is the attainment of the emancipating knowledge, rather than the acquisition and enjoyment of the *siddhi*-s; in other parts of the *saṃhitā* instead, both *siddhi*-s and *mukti* are regarded as valid aims for the *sādhaka* (see Rastelli 2000 and, particularly, p. 372, note 11)

³⁰⁷ PādS, *jp*, 8, 35d-36a: *yadīpsitam puṃsām*.

³⁰⁸ See PādS, *cp*, 24, 85-86: “By means of the acts of muttering *mantra*-s (*japa*) and offering oblations with fire (*homa*) the *sādhaka* should make manifest for himself manifold fruits, the first among which are the supernatural powers of subjecting [people] to one’s own will and attracting an absent person into one’s presence by magic formulas. [85] The objects of enjoyment which are difficult to obtain in the lower regions, in heaven or on earth, may be obtained by man on earth by means of the worship of the Puruṣottama. [86]” *vaśyākaraṣaṇamukhyāni japahomādikarmabhiḥ | phalāni citrarūpāni darśayet sādhaḥ svayam || 24.85 pātāle divi vā bhūmau ye bhogā bhuvi durlabhāḥ | tān avāpnoti puruṣaḥ*

mantrin, after prolonged practice of the *mantrasāadhanā*, which has granted him manifold fruits, i.e. manifold *siddhi*-s, should become indifferent to the advantages of the powers bestowed by the *mantra*³⁰⁹. In such a way, by developing the virtue of *vairāgya*, in the sense of detachment from worldly objects and freedom from all desires - or, according to the expression of the ParS, by becoming a *nivṛtta*³¹⁰ - the *sādhaka* will turn the power acquired through his *mantra*-mastering ability into a power whose unique fruit will be liberation³¹¹.

The Fourfold mukti

In the chapter of the *cp* concerning the twelve-syllable *mantra*, there is a passage dealing with a ritual of yogic suicide, where the author(s) of the PādS introduce the idea of a fourfold liberation consisting of *sālokyādi* (“being in the same world and so on”)³¹², where by *ādi* are meant *sāmīpya* (“nearness”), *sārūpya* (“likeness”) and *sāyujya* (“union”)³¹³. Although this passage is not specifically concerned with the topic of *mukti*, it can be read and used as a source of information about an idea of liberation which is possibly older than the concept of *mukti* as *sāyujya* discussed in the *jp*.

This passage (PādS, *cp*, 24, 87c-109) includes: A) the description of a ritual practice of yogic suicide (verses 93-104), which will be extensively discussed in the second part of this study, concerned

puruṣottamapūjyā || 24.86.

³⁰⁹ See *Ibidem*, 87ab: “It is said that a man who has mastered the *mantra*-s (*mantrin*) ought to turn away from the enjoyment of the objects of desire. [87ab]” *kāmopabhogavaimukhyaṃ mantriṇaḥ kāryaṃ ucyate* | 24.87ab.

³¹⁰ See ParS, 30, 96: *nirvṛtās tu viśiṣyante sarvebhyaḥ puruṣottamāḥ | saṃsārago-carātītā nirviṣeṣāḥ sadā mama* || 30.96.

³¹¹ As will be discussed in detail below (see pp. 281ff), the twelve-syllable *mantra* can be used, either for obtaining *siddhi*-s (see *cp*, 24, 85-86, quoted above, note 308), or for performing a last ritual of yogic suicide, in order to hasten the attainment of liberation.

³¹² See PādS, *cp*, 24, 89cd: *sālokyādicaturbhedāṃ muktīm*.

³¹³ See *Ibidem*, 90 and 108-109, quoted below, pp. 164-165 and notes 315, 316.

with *yoga*, and specifically, within the context of the *yoga*-permeated rituals³¹⁴; B) the indication of the places where this yogic suicide can be performed, namely, different sorts of holy places connected, respectively, with the four states (*sālokya* and so on) experienced in liberation (verses 87c-92); C) the description of the situation of the *mukta* who experiences these four states (verses 105-109).

On account of their relevance to the doctrine of liberation, the following extracts of the passage in question [indicated under B) and C)] will be now discussed:

B) “Reaching the divine abode (*siddhāyatana*), the best dwelling place, granting as unique fruit liberation, having the door situated southwards [87c-88a], there, by propitiating the fourfold divine form (*rūpa*) of the enemy of Madhu (= Viṣṇu) - [namely]: [the forms] made by men, by ṛṣi-s, by gods and the self-manifested one - the man desiring liberation, well concentrated, obtains the fourfold liberation consisting of *sālokya* and so on. There is no doubt about it [88b-89]. He obtains, in due order, the being in the same world (*sālokya*) by means of [the form made by] men, the nearness (*sāmīpya*) by means of the [one] made by ṛṣi-s, the likeness (*sārūpya*) by means of the [one] made by gods [and] the fourth (= *sāyujya*) by means of the self-manifested [form] [90]. [One measures] the *vaiṣṇava* region, where prosperity [is granted] in progressive order: for the abode [made by] men [it extends as far as] the loud sound of the conch-shell blown at the door of the temple is heard, then for the [abode made by] ṛṣi-s it is double that size, but for that made by gods it is three times that size and for the self-manifested [abode] it is four times that size [91-92].”³¹⁵.

³¹⁴ See below, pp. 281ff.

³¹⁵ PādS, cp, 24, 87c-92: *mokṣaikaphaladaṃ dhāma dakṣiṇadvāraṃ uttamam* || 24.87cd *siddhāyatanam āsādy tatra daivaṃ caturvidham* | *manuṣyanirmitaṃ cārṣaṃ daivaṃ rūpaṃ madhudviṣaḥ* || 24.88 *svayaṃvyaktaṃ samārādhyā mokṣakāmaḥ samāhitaḥ* | *sālokyādicaturbhedāṃ muktīm āpnoty asaṃśayam* || 24.89 *sālokyam mānuṣād āṛṣāt sāmīpyaṃ devanirmitāt* | *sārūpyaṃ *tulyaṃ* (em. *turyam*) *āpnoti svayaṃvyaktād anukramāt* || 24.90 *prāsādadvāri cādhmāte śaṅkhe tasya mahādhvaniḥ* | *śrūyate yatra taṃ deśaṃ vaiṣṇavaṃ mānuṣālaye* || 24.91 *tato dviguṇam āṛṣe tu triguṇam devanirmite* | *caturguṇam svayaṃvyakte deśe rddhir*

C) “This one reaches the Supreme *brahman* called Vāsudeva, the imperishable. [105ab] As sesame oil with regard to sesame seed, clarified butter with regard to fat, milk with regard to milk [and] water with regard to water, likewise no difference can be grasped between individual soul (*jīvātman*) and Supreme Soul (*paramātman*) [105c-106b]. As water which has vanished in [contact with] glowing iron never springs [again], as seeds roasted by fire do not grow again, likewise the individual soul is not born again, o you having the lotus as a seat [106c-107]. The attainment of the Venerable’s nature is called ‘likeness’ (*sārūpya*) by the wise ones. The service with devotion near God is ‘nearness’ (*sāmīpya*). Dwelling forever in His world called Vaikuṇṭha, which is free from rebirth, this is called ‘being in the same world’ (*sālokya*). [108-109]”³¹⁶.

In extract B) the text speaks of a fourfold liberation, but explicitly mentions three states only, namely *sālokya*, *sāmīpya* and *sārūpya*. Since the PādS advocates the concept of a liberation characterized by “union” (*sāyujya*), one is induced to believe that the unmentioned “fourth” element of the tetrad should be *sāyujya*³¹⁷. The four states of the *caturbhedā mukti* are hierarchically ordered (as expressed by *anukramāt*, in verse 90d), so that *sāyujya* is considered as the highest one. But, since the union with God represents the ultimate goal for the individual soul, *sāyujya* designates by itself the essential feature of liberation; hence, it cannot be considered as one element of the

anukramāt || 24.92. I am indebted, for the interpretation of half-verse 87cd, as well as for the understanding of verses 91-92, to G. Colas (personal communication of 12th December 2007).

³¹⁶ PādS, cp, 24, 105-109: *sa brahma param abhyeti vāsudevākhyam avyayam | tile tailaṃ ghr̥te sarpiḥ kṣīre kṣīraṃ jale jalam* || 24.105 *tadvan na bhedo gr̥hyeta jīvātmaparamātmanoh | taptalohe yathā toyam līnam naiva prajāyate* || 24.106 *agnidagdāni bījāni na rohanti yathā punaḥ | tadvan na jāyate bhūyo jīvātmā kamalāsana* || 24.107 *sārūpyam bhagavadrūpaprap̥tiḥ sadbhir udāhṛtā | sāmīpyam sannidhau sevā devasya paricaryayā* || 24.108 *sālokyam ca tad ākhyātam loke vaikuṇṭhasamjñite | tadīye nityavāso ’yam punarāvṛttivarjite* || 24.109.

³¹⁷ By emending *tulyam* (“the same”) - which does not make much sense in this context - to *turyam*, the more fitting term “the fourth” is obtained (see PādS, cp, 24, 90c, quoted above, note 315).

tetrad in the same way as the other three, but it has to be regarded as something more than and beyond the other three. Therefore *sālokya*, *sāmīpya*, *sārūpya*, which designate specific states characterizing the condition of the emancipated souls, must be held to be subsumed under *sāyujya*.

The terms *sālokya*, *sāmīpya*, *sārūpya* and *sāyujya* are not specific to the PādS. They occur in authoritative scriptures, such as the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*³¹⁸ and the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*³¹⁹. Moreover, as mentioned by Colas, references to *sālokya* etc. may be found also in Vaikhānasa texts, such as the *Marīcisamhitā*, the *Atrīsamhitā* and the *Kāśyapajñānakāṇḍa*³²⁰. With regard to the Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā*-s, these terms are not found, at least taken together in association with the concept of *mukti*, either in the ParS, or in the JS, or in the AS, which are important sources for the PādS. They occur instead in the SS, in a passage (SS, 7, 105-120b) that the extract B) of the PādS is in fact based upon.

What is concretely meant by the four states experienced in liberation is explained in extract C), which describes the situation of the *mukta*. If the above interpretation of the relations among the four elements of the *caturbheda mukti* is correct, then it is logical that, whereas in extract B) the four states are enumerated progressively in order of their attainment, from the lowest to the highest, in extract C) instead, which illustrates the full achievement of *mukti*, the order

³¹⁸ See ChU, II, 20, 2: “Thus he who knows this [chant] Rājana, woven on the deities, attains the same world (*salokatā*), the equality of condition (*sārṣṭitā*) and the union (*sāyujya*) with these deities...” *sa ya evam etad rājanam devatāsu protam vedaitāsām eva devatānām salokatām sārṣṭitām sāyujyam gacchati...*

³¹⁹ See BhP, 3, 29, 13: “Without serving me people do not obtain *sālokya*, *sārṣṭi*, *sāmīpya*, *sārūpya* and also identity (*ekatva*) [with me] after death” *sālokyasārṣṭisāmīpya sārūpyaikatvam apy uta | dīyamānam na grhṇanti vinā matsevanam janāh.*

³²⁰ For detailed references see Colas 1986: 84.

As far as the *Marīcisamhitā* is concerned, Colas remarks that the title *Vimānārcanakalpa* seems more appropriate than *Marīcisamhitā* (see Colas 1996: 47, note 2); however, since this work is already well known by scholars under the latter title, in this study the title *Marīcisamhitā* has been maintained.

of the previous extract is reversed and begins with the highest of the four states. Accordingly, the condition attained by the one who “reaches the Supreme *brahman* called Vāsudeva” is to be recognized as the union (*sāyujya*) with the Lord, which includes *sārūpya*, *sāmīpya* and *sālokya*. *Sārūpya* - to which allude, most probably, the similes contained in verses 105c-106b - means having the same nature (*rūpa*) as God. In the light of the theological views of the PādS, this “likeness” must refer to the *puruṣa-rūpa* of God: by discarding his body after death, the *jīva* - who is a particular concretization of the *puruṣa-rūpa*, endowed with a psycho-physical organism which constitutes his material support - is released from his material support and can thus realize his original and ultimate identity with the *puruṣa-rūpa*, which is the source of every individual soul. Thus, the experience of *sārūpya* means that, when released, the *jīva* returns to the form (*rūpa*) assumed by the Lord in order to give rise to the particular spiritual portion (*aṁśa*) of Himself, which are the individual souls; as *mukta*, the *jīva* realizes his true nature, which is the same as that of the *puruṣa-rūpa* of the Lord.

Sāmīpya and *sālokya* denote the essentially relational feature of the union with God. In fact, to abide in *Vaikuṇṭha*, enjoying the proximity of Bhagavān and worshipping Him, means that, even upon release, the *jīva*-s continue to behave as devotees, paying homage to their Lord, and thereby acting as distinct subjects. The relationship between the *mukta*-s and God, with its continuous flow of devotion and adoration on one side, and grace and blessing on the other, involves a dynamics of intersubjectivity and reciprocity. The existence of the *mukta*-s at the side of God in his world is referred to also in a passage of chapter 12 of the *jp*, where the liberated ones are portrayed as ideal *pāñcarātrin*-s: “[Vāsudeva] is continually revered by the emancipated [beings] who are in the states of nearness and so on (*sāmīpyādi*), and who know the five periods of time, the *siddha*-s who are in the condition of servants, who meditate upon the twelve-syllabled [*mantra*], [57d-58] who are fully accomplished in the eightfold *yoga*, by the many who are wholly devoted to Bhagavān, who know the truth and the aim of Pāñcarātra, always satisfied, stand-

ing beside [the Lord], suitably intent on the [ever]lasting worship of Bhagavān, the high-souled ones. [59-60b]”³²¹.

While extract C) elucidates the meaning of the four states of *mukti*, extract B), which precedes the teaching about the ritual of yogic suicide, indicates the places suitable for the performance of this ritual. The *sādhaka*, who intends to put an end to his life in order to hasten the achievement of his final emancipation, should attend certain types of temples, worshipping the cult-images placed therein, in order to attain, after death, as a *mukta*, the states of *sālokya* etc. The text also specifies what reward is to be expected, that is to say what state shall be experienced in liberation by attending the respective temples, which are classified according to their founders or builders.

At this point it is opportune to make a digression about temple classification. The categorization of temples and images according to their origin, as well as the idea that the power and beneficial influence of a temple is commensurate with the status of its founder or builder, is to be found in several Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva texts and traditions³²². As far as the PādS is concerned, besides the classification provided in extract B) of the *cp*, in a different context - in a passage of the *kp* - the temples are assigned to two categories: the divine abodes (*siddhasthāna*), which are believed to be built by the gods in a natural setting and, respectively, the non-divine abodes (*asiddhasthāna*), which are built by men in a human environment³²³.

³²¹ PādS, *jp*, 12, 57d-60b: ... *sāmīpyādīpadasthitaiḥ* || 12.57d *muktaiś ca pañcakālajñaiḥ siddhaiḥ kiṃkaratām gataiḥ* | *upāśyamānaḥ satataṃ dvādaśākṣaracintakaiḥ* || 12.58 *aṣṭāṅgayogasamsiddhair bahubhir bhagavanmayaiḥ* | **pañcarātrārthatattvajñair* (em. *pañcarātrārthatattvajñair*) *nityatrptaiḥ samīpagaiḥ* || 12.59 *yathārhaṃ bhagavaccheṣakarmaniṣṭhair mahātmabhiḥ* | 60ab.

³²² For a discussion of the diverse categories of temples, particularly according to the Vaikhānasa sources, see Colas 1996: 189-192 and Colas 1997: 242-245.

³²³ See PādS, *kp*, 1, 12-15b : “The abode is said to be twofold on account of the subdivision as divine and non-divine (*siddhāsiddha*). At the basis and on the top of hills, on the bank and at the confluence of rivers, on the sea-shore, on a small island in a lake, by a bathing place (*tīrtha*) and in a forest: an abode built in these [places] by Viśvakarman is said to be divine, if I am installed there by the gods according to the rules. [12-14b] The abode built by men as my temple in towns and so on, (or: [the one] built by men, made for me in villages, towns

By comparing these two classifications, which are based on the same criteria, it may be seen that the temples and images made by men and ṛṣi-s, mentioned in extract B) of the *cp*, can be subsumed under the category of *asiddhasthāna* of the *kp*, just as the abodes made by gods mentioned in the *cp* coincide with the *siddhasthāna* of the *kp*; in addition to these, extract B) of the *cp* mentions the *svayaṃvyakta*³²⁴ sanctuaries, which are the holiest ones, because in them the Lord reveals Himself directly.

Since the *kp* is the section of the work which deals specifically and in detail with the methods of classification of the temples³²⁵,

and so on,) know it as a non-divine abode, due to its staying in villages and so on. [14c-15b]” *dvividhaṃ sthānaṃ ākhyātaṃ siddhāsiddhaprabhedataḥ | mūle mūrdhani śailānāṃ nadyās tīre ca saṅgame || 1.12 samudratīre puline hrade tīrthe ca kānane | eteṣu nirmitaṃ sthānaṃ siddhākhyāṃ viśvakarmaṇā || 1.13 devādibhir ahaṃ tatra sthāpitaś ced yathāvidhi | manuṣyair nirmitaṃ sthānaṃ *nagarādi kṛtaṃ* (em. sa. ma. *nagarādaḥ grhaṃ*) *mama* (or, em. by Smith, in Smith 1963: 5: *manuṣyair nirmitaṃ grāmanagarādikṛtaṃ mama*) || 1.14 *asiddhāyatanaṃ viddhi grāmādisthitihetukam | 15ab.*

The translation of the expression *siddhāsiddha sthāna* (verse 12ab) is problematic: by understanding the *siddha*-s as the great adepts who possess the *siddhi*-s and every perfection, then *siddha sthāna* should be rendered as “abode [built] by the *siddha*-s” (as in SS, 7, 111-114, quoted below, pp. 170-171 and note 326). However by *siddha sthāna* the text indicates a locus of divine presence founded by the gods and by *asiddha sthāna* a temple built by men. Therefore in the present case *siddha* and *asiddha* have to be understood as having a divine and, respectively, a non-divine (i.e. human) origin and thus translated as “divine and non-divine”. As Smith observes, by *siddhasthāna* the text probably means to refer to temples which are popularly considered as eternal, because their origin goes back beyond human recall and their foundation is thus attributed to the gods (see Smith (ed.) 1963 : 5, note 13).

³²⁴ According to Smith, “*svayaṃvyakta*, lit., ‘self-manifest’, usually refers to an image or a place that is believed to be a potent *locus* of divine presence, so holy that it needs no preliminary *pratiṣṭhā* rites to make worship valid.” (Smith 1980: 123).

³²⁵ In his critical edition of the first ten chapters of the *kp*, Smith observes that in this section of the PādS the types of temples are classified with different methods, the criteria of which may refer either to the technical, architectural characteristics of the temples, or, as in the present case, to their builder (see Smith (ed.) 1963 : 132-133, note 5).

it might be expected to be the primary reference for these matters. However, certain features of the above-quoted extract B) of the *cp*, such as a temple classification that is more differentiated than that of the *kp* and an account of the relation between the different types of temples and the extent of their respective beneficial influence, which is not mentioned in the *kp*, make it clear that this extract of the *cp* was based on some other source. In fact, it is based on the following passage of the *Sātvatasamhitā*:

“Thus, [after having] at first [accomplished] the perfect purification of the mind, [which is] connected with the [ritual of] self-purification, the one who is strenuously determined shall go to the divine abode (*divyāyatana*) [105] for the complete and immediate fulfillment of a vow, or to an abode of the *siddha*-s (*siddhāyatana*), or else to a beautiful abode near a town and so on, [106] so that the vow of those who undertake it might be fulfilled without hindrance there. [107ab]

[The one who is] pure with regard to his acts, speech and mind, who is practising austerities, who is attentive to the performance of his duties, [107cd] who is truly wholly devoted to Bhagavān, not worshipping any other god, having his gaze fixed on any form [of the Lord], *vibhava* or *vyūha*, [that one] shall become very wise through the explanation of the *āgama*-s [given] with devotion by a trustworthy [teacher]. [108-109b] Out of compassion for this one, as well as for such like men, God indeed manifests Himself spontaneously as inner support [of a material object]; know that such a place, which is granting liberation, [is] a divine abode (*divyāyatana*). [109c-110] Those who are thoroughly versed in the *mantra*-s and are the best among the sages, learned and pure, for the welfare and the fame of the natives of the country and of themselves too, [111] after having imagined a stone on the ground as being the form of a *mantra*, or having considered a holy, huge tree as the dwelling-place of God, they make Him dwelling concealed there by the power of the [*mantra*] and then they dismiss Him. [112-113ab] Know that this is the characteristic of the abode of the Lord of all: [113cd] having made [Him] present there, endowed with His bodily shape, by

means of his *mantra* and [having] worshipped [Him] with leaves, flowers and so on, that [place] is named the abode of the *siddha*-s (*siddhāyatana*). [114]

But [where] the image of Bhagavān is installed by brāhmins and so on, for obtaining a result and for raising up their own family, that is to be known as abode. [115]

Know that the customary characteristic [of the abode] of the Lord of all, the all-pervading Lord, represents a component of the ritual. [116]

The Vaiṣṇava land covers an area that extends, in all directions beginning with the east, from the door of the temple, as far as the fading away of the sound of the conch-shell. [117] This [area] is declared twice as large where God is made to descend [into the icon] by the *siddha*-s and three times as large where [God] manifests himself spontaneously.

Since the mind of men is afflicted with moral stains on account of their corrupted senses, at the time of death it undergoes a perfect purification in the abode of Nārāyaṇa; [thus] the fruit [attained] after death by those whose souls are cultivated by meditation is to be understood as [attainable], according to order, beginning with the being in the same world (*sālokyatā*). [118-120b]³²⁶.

³²⁶ SS, 7, 105-120b: *prāḡ evaṃ cittasaṃśuddhiṃ bhāvaśuddhisamanvitām | niścayīkṛtya yatnena divyam āyatanam vrajet || 7.105 vrataśamsiddhaye nūnam siddhāyatanaṃ eva vā | athavā'yatanaṃ raṃyam āsannanagarādikam || 7.106 nirvighnena vrataṃ yasmān niṣpadyetātra karminām | karmavānmanasaiḥ śuddhas taponiṣṭhaḥ kriyāparaḥ || 7.107 yo nānyadevatāyājī tattvato bhagavanmayaḥ | kasmīnścid vaibhave rūpe vyūhīye vā subuddhimān || 7.108 baddhalakṣyo bhaved bhaktyā tv āptāgamanidarśanāt | tasyāpi tādrśānām ca bhavinām anukampayā || 7.109 vyaktatām āgamad devaḥ svayam eva dharātmanā | yatra mokṣapradam viddhi divyam āyatanam hi tat || 7.110 mantrasiddhaiś ca vibudhair munimukhyais tathāmalaiḥ | śāntaye deśajānām tv apy ātmanaś cāpi kīrtaye || 7.111 mantrākṛtimayaṃ dhyātvā pāśānam vasudhātale | pāvanam vā tataṃ vṛkṣam jñātvā vā devatāśrayam || 7.112 kṛtvā tacchaktisaṃruddham visṛjya ca tad āśritam | viddhi sarveśvarasyaivaṃ sthitam nilayalakṣaṇam || 7.113 svamantrasannidhiṃ tatra kṛtvā tadvigrahānvitam | pūjitam patrapuṣpādyais tat siddhāyatanaṃ smṛtam || 7.114 phalāptaye tu viprādyaiḥ svakuloddhāraṇāya ca | sthāpitam bhagavad bimbaṃ jñeyam āyatanam hi tat || 7.115 kriyāṅgabhāgaṃ yātasya sarvagasya ca vai vibhoḥ*

Comparing the threefold classification of holy places presented in this passage of the SS with the fourfold classification given in extract **B)** of the *cp* of the PādS, several similarities and divergences may be remarked. The divine abode (*divyāyatana*) of the SS, where God manifests Himself spontaneously as the inner support, the actual, spiritual reality of a particular object or place of worship, corresponds in the PādS, not to the *daiva*, which is an abode or image fashioned by the gods, but to the *svayaṃvyakta*, because there the Lord manifests Himself directly. The abode of the *siddha*-s (*siddhāyatana*), which in the SS is a natural site where the *siddha*-s worship God after having summoned up the divine presence with the power of the *mantra*-s, is perhaps equivalent to the temple or image made by the *ṛṣi*-s in the PādS. The abode (*āyatana*) of the SS, which is consecrated by the brāhmans, corresponds to the temple or image made by men in the PādS. The correspondences are shown in the table below:

PādS, <i>cp</i> , 24, 87c-92	SS, 7, 105-120b
<i>manuṣyāyatana</i> (abode built by men)	<i>āyatana</i> (abode built by men)
<i>ārṣāyatana</i> (abode built by <i>ṛṣi</i> -s)	<i>siddhāyatana</i> (abode consecrated by <i>siddha</i> -s)
<i>daivāyatana</i> (abode built by gods)	
<i>svayaṃvyaktāyatana</i> (self-manifested abode)	<i>divyāyatana</i> (self-manifested abode)

| *viddhi sarveśvarasyaivaṃ sthitaṃ niyatalakṣaṇam* || 7.116 *prāsādadvāradeśāc ca yatra śaṅkhadhvanikṣayaḥ* | *pūrvādi sarvadik tāvat kṣetraṃ bhavati vaiṣṇavam* || 7.117 *siddhāvatāritād devāt tad etad dviguṇaṃ smṛtam* | *triguṇaṃ ca svayaṃvyaktād dehānte bhāvitātmanām* || 7.118 *phalaṃ sālokyatāpūrvaṃ parijñeyaṃ kramād yataḥ* | *duṣṭendriyavaśāc cittam nṛṇām yat kalmaṣair vṛtam* || 7.119 *tad antakāle saṃśuddhiṃ yāti nārāyaṇālaye* | 7.120ab.

Setting aside the variances in their respective classifications, there are several reasons why the passage of the PādS may be shown to derive from the SS. In the first place, the SS details (in verses 107c-115) the characteristics of types of sanctuaries which are simply enumerated in the PādS. In the second place, while reasserting the belief that the temple and the divine image worshipped therein have a beneficial influence and grant prosperity over the area surrounding the divine abode, the PādS takes from the SS the idea that this power increases according to a hierarchical order which is based on the status of the founders of the sanctuaries; in the third place, by acknowledging that to the various sorts of temples correspond different extents of the Vaiṣṇava region, the PādS also takes from the SS the standard of measurement of this region, which is given by the area in which the sound of the conch shell blown at the temple gate is audible.

Finally, what is most relevant for the present discussion, the SS makes clear that, to purify the mind at the time of death (*antakāle*, verse 120a), it is necessary to go to a holy place or a temple (*nārāyaṇālaye*, verse 120b). In the context of the PādS this means that he who intends to commit the yogic suicide must go to a sanctuary in order to purify himself and make himself fit for the performance of this last ritual. The SS then says that the attendance in the abode of God grants, after death (*dehānte*, verse 118d), the attainment of the states of *sālokya* etc., according to order (*kramāt*, verse 119b). The PādS elaborates what is stated by the SS, showing how the enhancing power of the different kinds of sanctuaries determines the respective rewards granted by attending them, and specifying (in verse 90) the one-to-one connection between each type of sanctuary to be attended and the respective states to be experienced in liberation, in their due order (*anukramāt*, verse 90d). Accordingly, by paying homage to a cult-image where the divine presence has been conjured up by means of the ritual of installation (i.e. the *pratiṣṭhā* ceremonies) performed by the priests, the devotee, once released, will reach the world of God (*sālokya*). By worshipping an image whose origin, not historically traceable, is ascribed to legendary

figures such as the *ṛṣi*-s, the devotee will experience, as *mukta*, a true nearness (*sāmīpya*) to the Lord. By attending a sanctuary consecrated by divine beings, the devotee will realize, in liberation, the essential likeness between his soul and the Supreme soul (*sarūpya*). Finally, by being in a *locus* of spontaneous self-manifestation of the godhead, the devotee will enjoy union with God (*sāyujya*).

But what is meant in the SS and PādS by the expressions *kramāt* and, respectively, *anukramāt*? What does it signify that the four states are experienced “according to order”? The necessity of clarifying this point was noted by Alaśiṅga Bhaṭṭa (XIX cent.) who, in his commentary on this passage of the SS, illustrates two possible, different interpretations of the idea of the fourfold *mukti*.

In commenting the verses 118-119 of the SS³²⁷, Alaśiṅga Bhaṭṭa explains that, in the expression *sālokyatāpūrvam* (“beginning with *sālokyā*”) by *pūrvam* are meant *sāmīpya*, *sārūpya* and *sāyujya*; *kramāt* - he says - indicates a distinction among human beings according to their rank³²⁸. This explanation implies that the four states are experienced by different sorts of liberated souls, according to a hierarchy. Alaśiṅga Bhaṭṭa himself raises the question whether this teaching might not contradict the statements of *śruti* and *smṛti* (and he quotes from the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, *Bhagavad Gītā* and *Brahma Sūtra*), asserting that liberation is one and the same for every *mukta*³²⁹. In order to answer this question, Alaśiṅga Bhaṭṭa quotes Veṅkaṭanātha, who claims that, as the situation of the door-keepers is not the same as that of every inhabitant of a town, likewise, in liberation, the condition of *mukta* is not the same for everyone: some experience a particular state and others experience other states. Veṅkaṭanātha writes: “In reaching the Venerable in the worlds of Viṣṇu and so on, there is such a distinction as in the case of the door-keepers and so on; the specification is meant to explain the difference of what is attainable

³²⁷ See SS, 7, 118-119, quoted above, p. 171-172 and note 326.

³²⁸ See Alaśiṅga Bhaṭṭa's comm. in SS 1982: 139, 6-7: *sālokyatāpūrvam ity atra pūrvapadena sāmīpyasārūpyasāyujyāni gṛhyante | kramād mānuṣādikrameṇety arthah* |.

³²⁹ See *Ibidem*.

for those who are looking for [liberation]. As it is said: some dwell in the worlds of Viṣṇu and some desire [His] nearness, but others partake of the same nature [as God] and others [attain] union [with Him]. This is called liberation.”³³⁰

For the PādS, this interpretation of the idea of the fourfold liberation would signify that the *sādhaka*, who intends to perform the ritual of yogic suicide with the view of attaining *mukti*, ought to attend the type of temple suitable to his rank, in order to experience, once liberated, the corresponding state. It is possible that by rank is meant the social rank, the *varṇa*. Actually the idea that the social order of this world is reproduced also in liberation is explicitly expressed in the Vaikhānasa *Marīcisamhitā*, where it is said that, in liberation, the brāhman attains the *sāyujya-pada*, i.e. the [highest] abode in union with Viṣṇu, the *kṣatriya* obtains the *sārūpya-pada*, the *vaiśya* the *sāmīpya-pada* and the *śūdra* the *sālokyā-pada*³³¹. It is therefore possible that, in the PādS too, an orthodox, conservative outlook has expressed this hierarchical idea of liberation, which does not necessarily correspond or agree with the concept of *mukti* as *sāyujya* as expounded in the *jp*.

But Alaśiṅga Bhaṭṭa also gives another, different explanation of the verses 118-119 of the SS. He writes: “Or else, *kramāt* means *sālokyā*, *sāmīpya* and so on, by degrees, so that there is no doubt with regard to the explanation of the meaning, because of the possibility that indeed every place has the opportunity of granting the fourfold fruit, *sālokyā* and so on.”³³². According to this explanation, the four states would represent successive stages, all granted in due order by every type of temple and, probably, all experienced gradually by every liberated soul. In this case, since the four states are in

³³⁰ *Ibidem*, 13-16: *tathāhi – “bhagavatprāptāṁ api viṣṇulokādiṣu dvārapālādiṣv iva tathāvidhabhedo’stīti tad apekṣiṇām prāpyabhedadyotanāya prthaṇ nirdeśaḥ | yathāhuh – lokaṣu viṣṇor nivasanti kecit samīpam icchanti ca kecid anye | anye tu rūpam sadṛśam bhajante sāyujyam anye sa tu mokṣa uktaḥ || iti”*.

³³¹ See Colas 1986: 84.

³³² Alaśiṅga Bhaṭṭa’s comm. in SS 1982: 140, 1-2: *yadvā kramād ity atra sālokyā-sāmīpyādikrameṇetyarthavarṇane nāsty etad āśaṅkāyā evāvakāśaḥ sarvasyāpi kṣetrasya sālokyādiphalacatuṣṭayapradatvasambhavāt || 118-119 ||*.

a progressive and hierarchical order, *sāyujya*, which is the highest, should subsume the other three, so that the one who attains *sāyujya*, experiences the other three as well.

With regard to the PādS, this second interpretation would imply that the idea of the fourfold liberation expounded in the *cp* does not disagree with the concept of *mukti* as *sāyujya* advocated in the *jp*; on the contrary, the former could be regarded as an elaboration of the latter. In fact, the assertion of the *jp* that liberation was characterized by *sāyujya* would appear to be elucidated by the description given in the *cp* of the states of *sālokya*, *sāmīpya* and *sārūpya*, regarded as the diverse and successive stages leading to the full experience of the union between *jīva* and *paramātmā*.

This second interpretation, which assumes a basic agreement between the relevant teachings of *jp* and *cp* and suggests that these teachings may be considered as complementary, adds consistency to the doctrine of liberation of the PādS. However, it seems hardly convincing for the following reasons: first of all, if every type of sanctuary “has the opportunity of granting the fourfold fruit, *sālokya* and so on” - as stated by Alaśiṅga Bhaṭṭa - then, for what reason and according to what criterion should the *sādhaka* choose to attend a particular kind of temple rather than another one? Moreover, it is difficult to understand how the four states could be successively experienced by the *mukta*, because the idea of progressive stages would introduce a temporal and relative dimension to the everlasting condition of the liberated soul.

On the other hand, the first interpretation seems to be more cogent, not only because it is the very one advocated by Veṅkaṭanātha, at least as far as the SS is concerned. In fact, the PādS manifests a conservative outlook with regard to social distinctions on several occasions³³³. To quote just few examples, in the *jp* one reads that the

³³³ With regard to the PādS Smith remarks a “... rather atypical attitude toward class distinctions that are to be maintained among devotees. Whereas the typical note struck time and again in other works, both ‘earlier’ and ‘later’, is a disappearance of class distinctions among the devoted followers of the Lord, in the *Pādma*, despite its heavy emphasis on the grace of God, there is an exclusiveness main-

varṇāśrama order was established by God Himself and, by complying with it, one obtains divine favour³³⁴; with regard to the eligible person to whom the content of the *saṃhitā* can be revealed, it is said: “This secret, salvific doctrine should not be revealed ... to an outcaste person ... and never to one non-initiated by the investiture with the sacred thread ...”³³⁵ but “it should be communicated to a pure, accomplished *brahmacārin* ... proficient in the *Veda* with all its supplements, well born, ascetic, member of the first three *varṇa*-s.”³³⁶; in the instructions about the performance of *prāṇāyāna* given in the *yp*, it is clear that the practice of *yoga* is a prerogative of the members of the first three classes³³⁷. Therefore, a hierarchical concept of liberation, where the social distinctions among human beings and among devotees are maintained even in the condition of liberated souls, thereby determining the kind of state respectively experienced by the *mukta*-s, is not inconsistent with the orthodox outlook testified in the PādS. It is thus plausible that the relevant teachings of *jp* and *cp* belong to different layers of the text and give voice to the ways of thinking of different groups within the Pāñcarātra community.

tained with regard to social origins of the faithful.” (Smith 1975: 198).

³³⁴ See PādS, *jp*, 5, 5: “[Śrī Bhagavān:] My favour is great to those who conform to the law of the classes and stages of life, which has been established by me. [5]” *varṇānām āśramāṇāṃ ca maryādā yā mayā kṛtā | tāṃ ye samanuvartante prasādas teṣu me mahān || 5.5.*

³³⁵ PādS, *jp*, 12, 67ab, 69a, 69c: *naitad guhyataraṃ jñānam ākhyeyam...12.67ab ... na hīnavarṇine ... 69a ... naiva cānupanītāya ... 69c.*

³³⁶ *Ibidem*, 70cd, 73ac: *vaktavyaṃ ca vinītāya śuddhāya brahmacāriṇe || 70cd ... chandāṃsyadhītine sāṅgaṃ kulīnāya tapasvine | traivarnikāya ...73ac.*

³³⁷ See PādS, *yp*, 3, 1, 6cd: “A member of the first three classes, who behaves according to the established rules of conduct proper to his own class and also suitable to his stage of life, who is intent upon the homage paid to Vāsudeva [1] ... should practise the regulation of breath by means of the prescribed method. [6cd]” *traivarnikaḥ svavarnoktair āśramānugūṇais tathā | ācārair ācaran yuktair vāsudevārcane rataḥ || 3.1 ... yathoktavidhinā prāṇāyāmaṃ samācaret || 3.6cd*

