

CHAPTER III

THE PRELIMINARY RITES OF *ḌĪKṢĀ*

The purpose of the preliminary rights is to purify the mind of the pupil. The pupil who is to receive *dikṣā* shall be asked to reveal to the preceptor about his activities in the past. The preceptor shall prescribe the ways atoning for lapses in the activities of the pupil. *Kṛcchra*¹ and *atikṛcchra*² kinds of expiation shall be enjoined on the pupil. He shall then be given *brahmakūrca*³. He shall be given little food or to live on fruits for four days and bulbous roots. *Brahmakūrcapañcagavya*⁴ shall be given if the sins are more heinous. If necessary, gold shall be given as gift(*dāna*). Two or more months are to be spent in this way.

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1. *Kṛcchra* is a kind of religious penance to be carried out with great difficulty.
 2. A severe austerity of expiation lasting for twelve days vide-SS XVI.8-10.
 3. *Brahmakūrca*- water made holy by the utterances of *mantra*.
 4. *Brahmakūrca pañcagavya*. A *kūrca* (bundle of *darbha*) is used to stir the *pañcagavya* and *homa* is made with this. Vide-SKS .

According to the nature of the past acts these expectations annihilate the effects of sins done in this birth and to get over the effects of sinful deeds done in many previous births too. Then *Nṛsimha dīkṣā* is to be given to the pupils. Lord *Nṛsimha* shall be worshipped for eight months¹. The commentator observes that there is no compulsion to use *Nṛsimha mantra*. Any *mantra* of the divine descents (*vibhava*) could be used. In order to get *mokṣa* and prosperity in life, the three kinds of *dīkṣā* Viz. *vibhava*, *vyūha* and *sūkṣma* are to be administered to the pupils².

3.1 NṚSIMHA DĪKṢĀ

The mystic diagram *cakra* representing God *Nṛsimha* shall be drawn on the ground. After propitiating God *Nṛsimha*, there the letters of the *mantra* shall be written³. The *Ācārya* shall duly perform *bhūta śuddhi* and two *dhāraṇas*⁴. In this process he

1. see comm. on SS XVI 25-29 also cf. *AhS* L IVI 2-5, 150 XXI-25
Nṛsimha mantra is dealt with in detail in SS XVII.

2. Vide comm. SS XVI 35 and comm. there on;

3. The *mantra* is *namo bhagavate nārasimhāya*.

Dhāraṇa and *āpyāyana* cf. *parama saṁhitā* III 223-224.

4. See Appendix 17.

envisages as if flaming his own body with the *mantras*. Using the *mantras* of God he shall sprinkle his body and contemplate the divine form of God in his heart (*āvāhana*). He shall then do *nyāsa*¹. Performing *mudrās*,² he considers himself to be identical with God. The figure of God shall be drawn in the *maṇḍala*³ that is already got ready on the ground. After worshipping Him then the *Acārya* shall do *homa* in the fire. Giving a send off to God (*visarjana*), the *Ācārya* would have completed the inner worship known as *antaryāga*. Then he shall begin the external worship. A *maṇḍala* shall be drawn and the presence of God in it, is to be invoked. Then, the form of *Nṛsimha* shall be worshipped.

After worshipping God as before he shall chant *Nṛsimha mantra*. After offering the food to Him, the assistants are to be given a share of it. After taking his share the priest shall offer the

1. See Appendix 20

2. See Appendix 24

3. See Appendix 22

remaining share to *Viṣvaksena*. He shall then go home. Every day he shall do *japa* of *Nṛsimha mantra*. After reciting eight lakhs of *hṛm* and other *mantras* the priest would obtain *mantra siddhi*. He should then use this *mantra* for removing the *tāpatraya*¹ and for avoiding evils(*śāntika*² and *pauṣṭika*³). He could get also the four pursuits of life.viz Dharma,Artha,Kama and Mokṣa.

3.2 *ADHIVĀSA DĪKṢĀ*

In between the *Nṛsimha dīkṣā* and *ādhivāsa dīkṣā* proper, another rite, namely *ādhivāsa*⁴ is enjoined. It is a *Dīkṣā*, that facilitates the devotee to stay at a place and witness the act of *Dīkṣā*⁵.

1. *Adhyātmika Ādibhautika* and *Ādidaivika* are the three kinds of obstacles..

2. This is to mitigate the vigour of evil.

3. This is a rite to give nourishment to the weak.

4. *Bhaktañam adhivāsārtham kṣmāparigrahamācaret SS Ch XVIII 4b.*

5. See SS. XVI 34.

The time for the undertaking of these *adhivāsa*s may be *daśami* (tenth day of the lunar phase) for collecting the materials required for and *dvādaśī* (twelfth lunar phase) for *dīkṣā*.

According to *Jayākhya saṁhitā*,¹ the evening of *daśamī* is suited for the collection of materials. According to the *Pādma saṁhitā*,² *Ekādaśī* (eleventh day) is suited for *adhivāsa*. The *Sāttvata saṁhitā*³ simply mentions the time for *adhivāsa*, that when the star or constellation is auspicious and favourable and when the *lagna*⁴ gets the favourable position of auspicious planets.

The members of the four castes shall get initiated into this rite in particular seasons only. Thus the first of the four *varṇas* shall have it in *Vasanta*⁵, *Kṣatriya* in *grīṣma*⁶, *Vaisyā*

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1. JS XVII 4a, JS XVI 59-90a
 2. Pad-S U-7b-8a
 3. SS XVII 4a
 4. The moment of the sun's entrance into a zodiacal sign. MM Williams Sanskrit English Dictionary p 893.
 5. Spring season, comprising "*Citrā* and *Vaikāśī*" month.
 6. Summer, corresponding to *Jyestha* and *Āṣāḍha*.

in *śarat*¹ and the fourth class in *hemanta*². Women can have *dikṣā* in rainy season.³

The site which is to be acquired for *dikṣā* shall be a holy place and must be favourable to the presence of God. Men, water, mud, fruits, flowers, animals and *darbha* grass should be available there in abundance. It should be a place conducive to cows, crops of corn and rice and free from cruel beasts. Sacred birds and deers should have the habitation in that place.

Temples, *maṭha*⁴, shops and homes are also to be situated. The place, should abound in tanks and cottages for hermits, cultivated land, free from fear of floods and men of good behaviour. It shall be surrounded by forests, groves villages and

1. Autumn, corresponding to *Aśvin* and *Kārtika*.

2. Winter comprising *Mṛga śirṣa* and *Pauṣ'a*.

3. Rainy season comprising *Māgha* and *Paṅuni* (*Varṣa kāla*) SKS Indra IV 2-7 Fourth class born of a brahmin and *Kṣatriya* woman.

4. *Maṭha* huts for ascetics, cloisters for students

township. If such a place is not available one's own house may be preferred. It shall be levelled by piling it with mud interspersed with small stones or gems. It shall be sprinkled with *Pañcagavya*¹. In such a site God shall be worshipped and meditated upon. *Bali*² shall be offered to the spirits³ and cows are to be fed with fodder. The brahmins are to be given food and fees (*dakṣiṇā*).

A pavilion is to be erected in the eastern part of the site with two pillars in the corners (*Koṇa*). Its pedestal, made out of mud, shall be placed in the centre of the site. It shall be octagonal or circular or a square in size. This shall be high by seven *aṅgulas*⁴ (measurement). There shall be another pedestal by its side. It shall be wide twice the height of the main pedestal and

1. See Appendix २४

2. *Bali*: cooked rice boiled with milk

3. Spirits meant here are *Kumuda*, *kumudakośa* and other attendants of God.

4. An *aṅgula* is a finger's breadth.

Note: The selection of the site is given in SS. XV111 5---13. Identical passage is in IS SS XXI 31b---40a.

its height shall be the same as that of the main pedestal. This shall be in the western direction and have edges resembling the tip of the elephant's trunk. The food offering shall be placed in this pedestal and offered to Gods. Another pavilion shall be erected to the south of this main pavilion for doing *homa*. It shall have enough space to move with in. It is to be provided with windows and a door with bolts and base with fire pits (altar). It shall be sprinkled with water sanctified by *astramantra* and cow dung. The two pavilions¹ should be well decorated. If the aspirant does not have enough money *adhivāsa* shall be done in a brahmin or *Ācārya's* house. Here the process, as stated before, shall be carried out upto *bhūtatarpaṇa*².

This is to ward off these angry spirits which are bent up on doing harm to the persons there. To announce the commencement and *uḍumbara* wood, others except in liquid form in huge quantity for

1. The two pavilions are main and the one intended for doing *homa*.

2. *Bhūtatarpaṇa* is pleasing the spirit. It is performed with cooked rice mixed with curd, ghee, honey and water.

auspicious nature of this *adhivāsa*, the bell must be rung for a relatively long time¹. The priest shall utter *praṇava* and bring , in the pavilion, the following requirements viz fried grains, white mustard, fruits, bilva fruits, sandals, *gorocana*,² white shell, flowers, cluster of blossoms from trees, green *darbha*, several gems, gold, medicinal herbs, hide of the deer, cardamom, fragrant sandal in large quantity, *padmaka*,³ *Śāṅkha**puṣpa*,⁴ *Viṣṇukrānta*,⁵ *Kundara*,⁶ seven kinds of grains procured from the forests, seven kinds of seeds got from the village, six kinds of seeds of the same size, rice of fine variety, millet, rice of the ordinary kind all in large quantity, milk, curd, ghee, urine of the cow and cow dung. The products got from the cow are poured in a vessel made of

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1. *IS XX 1 40b --52 identical with SS XV111 1b---26a.*
 2. *Gorocana* is a bright yellow pigment prepared from the bile of the cow.
 3. This is *padmaka* pericarp of a lotus.
 4. Name of a flower
 5. Name of a plant.
 6. A kind of gem.

use every now and then in more new vessels for *pādyā* and *ācamana*¹ are to be made ready.

Vessels made of gold and others or cups made of soft leaves for offering cooked rice mixed with curd, white silk, new pair of clothes, sacred thread (*yajñopavīta*), upper cloth, washed and white pair of garments, *pavitra* made of *darbha*, *Kañkaṇa*², thread for tying round the wrist, rings (to be worn in the finger), rosary of garland made of crystal beads for counting, discus made of five metals³ and twelve spokes, conch, blanket made of *darbha*, *yogaṭa*,⁴ cloth for the eye, hide of deer, cushion, piece of cloth, silk, wheat and black gram, garland in four colours⁵

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1. *pādyā*- water for washing the feet. *ācamana*- for sipping
 2. *Pavitra* ring for purification made of *darbha*.
 3. Five metals are gold, silver, copper, tin, and lead
 4. Silk cloth tightly tied to the head.
 5. Four colours black, red, yellow and white.

incense sticks, collection of leaves green in colour mixed up with blue fresh grass, *guggulu*, powdered incense, oil for lamps, wicks, mirror, bell, vessel for *arghya* and others, pollen, pair of *karaṇi*¹, *pālikā*,² white small pitcher, icons of Gods made of gold in about five *aṅgulas*, five *darbhas* (in group), white thread coloured with lac, scissors, blade, eight sticks with unbroken edge, and having the plume of the peacock or sticks made of metal or mud or wood, long and having a firm edge, lamp stand, pitcher for water, vase, leaf³, pitcher with stand filled with roots grown out of time, a vessel (round shaped laddle with lid), *cūlikā*⁴ seat with four

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1. *Karaṇi* a particular measure.
 2. *pālikā*-small cup with wide mouth to be filled in mud and grains for *ankurārpaṇa*.
 3. Leaf of a typical plant.
 4. *culikā*--a kind of water pot.

legs, new rectangular and long, *mātrāvitta*,¹ *tāmbūla*,² group of sticks for cleaning the teeth, *araṇi* sticks³ with dried *palāśa*, tender grass, fresh *samit* sticks with unbroken edges, large quantity of dried fire wood, smeared in ghee, sesame, hush and two big vessel⁴ .

3.3 ADHIVĀSA DĪKṢĀ

The ritual

God must be worshipped in the jar and fire. The *Ācārya* shall imagine then to have beheld God before Him and appeal for His presence and stay till the act is over. After duly worshipping God, he shall worship the deities of the sites. He shall then go to the kitchen and prepare the food for offering. He shall boil the milk in the vessel and place rice there, after it is completely boiled, honey and ghee shall be poured into it. He shall place it on a stand in the other *maṇḍala*. He shall then do *sampāta homa* The offering, which is then prepared, shall be divided into four parts

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1. money to purchase things which are needed .
 2. betal leaves with nut.
 3. *araṇi* is a kind of wood which could produce fire with another wood of its own kind when rubbed. Vide LT XXXIX.
 4. ISXX153-73 identical with SSXV111—27—46a

and each part shall be placed in separate vessels, - that which is in three vessels are to be placed in the ground, pitcher and fire. The *homa* is to be done with the fourth part. The pupil shall be asked to occupy a seat in a new *mandala* made in the northern part of the pavilion . The *Ācārya* shall sprinkle the pupil with the water and sprinkle him on the head with white mustard and sesame. The pupil's eyes shall be covered with a cloth uttering the *netra mantra*. His palm shall be filled with flowers and sandal paste.

Then he is led near the fire where the pitcher is kept and is made to offer the flower over it. The cloth tied to his eyes are removed without other's notice . Finding him happy and modest, the *Ācārya* could take him as fit for *dīkṣā*. The *Ācārya* shall then relieve the pupil of the latent impressions created by matter beginning from the earth and ending with the intellectual (*buddhi*). In order to effect the complete destruction of *karma* of the pupil, the *Ācārya* shall offer worship to the deities presiding over the matter beginning from earth and ending with the intellect

(*buddhi*). The *Ācārya* shall think to have drawn a lotus with the six petals and place the deities *Viśvarūpa*, *Vagīśa*, *Khagāna*, *Narasimha*, *sāyin* and *Varahā* one in each of this six petals. They shall be worshipped separately. The *Ācārya* shall then take the pupil near the fire. The pupil shall hold the right foot of the *Ācārya* and shall sit in the seat made of *darbha*. The preceptor shall touch the pupil's head with the *sruva* filled with ghee and do *homa* at the level of of *jñāna*. This is called *Sampāta homa*.

3.4 THE PROCESS

The preceptor shall then take a red string and fold it number of times. It shall be stretched from the head of the pupil upto the little toe. It shall be thought of having control of the internal parts of the body of the pupil . It is thus the *Ācārya*, creates a body made of a string. Then he shall behold the seven deities beginning from *Nārāyaṇa* with the *Pāñjala śayana* in the earth, in water, in air, seven from *Lokanātha* in fire, seven from *Narasimha*, six from *Krodātman* is *akāśa*, three from *śakti* in

the mind and *Padmanābha* in the *buddhi*. Earth, water and others mentioned here are not literally the elements but as entities to be imagined. This much is to be done in *Vibhava dīkṣā adhvāsa*. The string shall be cut into seven parts and each shall have a knot which shall be smeared with saffron and other coloured material. The pupil shall then be taken to God who is there in the *maṇḍala*. Then he is given *Pañcagavya*, *caru* and tooth stick. After taking these the pupil shall clean his teeth and throw it away. If the stick falls in the north, west or east then the *Ācārya* can assume of success in doing *dīkṣā*, otherwise there will not be success in this undertaking. So to avert this failure he will offer one hundred oblations with *Vīrya Mantra*. He shall place in the Northern side incense, sandal paste, small pitchers, seasumum, ghee and other things. These are to be covered with new cloth which is not used and not washed and sanctified with *Kavaca mantra*. After worshipping God who is present there, all these shall be put in this pitcher or fire. The pupil shall be made to sleep on the *darbha* grass spread on the ground. The head facing the east and the body wrapped with *hṛdaya mantra*. Then the *Ācārya* goes out of that place, washing his own teeth and shall sleep there on the bed of *darbha* with the head facing the south and touching the sleeping pupil with his feet. He shall pray to God for their successful act of *dīkṣā*. The *Īṣvara saṁhitā* which follows the

tradition of *Sātvata saṁhitā* states that *ankurārpaṇa*¹ is to be done on the day before *adhivāsa*² *dīkṣā*. *Pādma saṁhitā* states *adhivāsana* shall be done but does not describe it³.

The string shall be cut and *homa* is to be done with it. How many parts it should be cut is not stated. The content of *adhivāsa dīkṣā* as given in the *Sātvata saṁhitā* are given here as, part of *dīkṣā* without mentioning them as preliminary to *dīkṣā*.

The *maṇḍala* that is drawn is stated to be *Cakrāḥa maṇḍala*. Two fire pits are to be get ready. Their measurements are given. Other texts do not mention the preparatory position as *adhivāsa dīkṣā*. The *Jayākhyā saṁhitā* follows a different tradition regarding the rites which are preparatory. *Acyuta (Nārāyaṇa)* is only one though He presents Himself in various forms. His forms are *Piṇḍa, Upāṅga and ādhyā*. Thus, he is presenting in the three kinds of *mantras* which are gross, subtle

1. SS XXII 84-233

2. ISXXII 75 a

3. See Appendix 4.

and transcendental or absolute. The *mantras* are related to twenty five *tattvas*. God also remains there in each of them. The *tattvas* are shown to be related to the three kinds of *dikṣā* as condensed, middle and expansive.

God is to be understood as present everywhere in the ritual. Knots are made from one to three in the strength which represents the physical body that is used in the ritual. He is to be imagined as present in more parts of the body, if the knots are more. *Tattva homa* is described in detail¹. This description is not generally available in the *Pāñcarātra* texts. This is followed by extensive description of *Samṗāta homa*.

Bali is then to be offered at every entrance in the hall by the *Ācārya* accompanied by the pupil. Pegs are to be fixed all round the hall. *Caru* must be taken by the *Ācārya* along with his disciples. The pupils are then to be given the tooth sticks which shall vary in length according to the nature of the pupil. While the pupil are made to sleep, the *Ācārya* shall get up and cut the

1. *Padmācārya* 9 a to 14 b.

sūtra (string) into three parts and colour them with powder and cover it with cloth, place it beyond the look of others. He shall awaken the pupils in the morning and ask them to narrate the dream they had. A list of omens, good and bad are enumerated. *Adhivāsā dikṣā* is not mentioned in other *āgamas*. This word is strange in use. *Adhivāsa* is from the root *vas* with *adhi*. *Vas* means to dwell, stay or rest. The word *Adhi* has the creative sense. The word *Adhivāsa* then would mean placing something in a place, for instance, *Jalādhivāsa Kṣīrādhivāsa*. Here nothing is stated as to what is to be placed and where. Evidently, the materials that are prescribed for the ritual are intended here and the *Ācārya* and the *śiṣya* should possess a fair knowledge of all the materials. This helps the initiate and the initiator to perform the act of *dikṣā* in a precise way.