Article

Viṣṇu the Saviour: On the Festival of the Romantic Quarrel (*praṇayakalahotsava*) in the Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā*s

Ewa Dębicka-Borek

Department of Oriental Studies, Jagiellonian University in Kraków, 31-007 Kraków, Poland; debicka.debicka@uj.edu.pl

Abstract: Built on the theme of the lovers' quarrel that eventually ends in reconciliation, the Festival of the Romantic Quarrel (*praṇayakalahotsava*) displays a wide scope of meanings, so far discussed primarily in regard to its current reenactment in the South Indian Vaiṣṇava temples dedicated to Viṣṇu and his wife, Lakṣmī/Śrī. The paper explores the rare treatments of the festival found in the Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā*s, namely the texts which serve as a prescriptive base for the ritual order in many of these temples. The analysis aims to demonstrate how the account of this particular festival might have served to channel ideas connected to a soteriological doctrine of self-surrender to Viṣṇu (*prapatti*), perhaps as a result of reinterpreting the teachings of the Pāñcarātra under the influence of the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition.

Keywords: Pāñcarātra; *praṇayakalaha*; Festival of Romantic Quarrel; Viṣṇu; *gajendramokṣa*; *prapatti*; Śrīpraśnasaṃhitā; self-surrender

1. Introduction

The late Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā*s, i.e., the texts which provide a prescriptive base for many of South Indian Vaiṣṇava temples, incorporate a number of prescriptions for temple festivals (*utsava*) aimed at periodical celebrations of Viṣṇu and his consort, Śrī/Lakṣmī. As Smith remarks, what such accounts often share is they present temple celebrations as "bio-fests", i.e., as focused on honoring biographical or biological events in the life of the god. In other words, the festivals often translate mundane chores into a temple's microcosm, either in regard to the routine of a human day, from getting up in the morning to retiring for the night, or in regard to events that are repeated, albeit not so much standardized, such as hunting, swinging on a swing, or quarreling (Smith 1982, p. 40).

The Festival of the Romantic Quarrel or the Quarrel in Love (*praṇaya-kalaha-utsava*), which I would like to discuss below, transfers human behavior to the divine couple by means of a motif of an argument between the lovers. This motif recurs in Sanskrit treatises on love (*kāmaśāstra*s) and Sanskrit poetry in terms of the element of one's mortal love-life. Conventionally, it is a jealous woman who starts the quarrel, and the quarrel ends in reconciliation. When ritualized on the premises of the South Indian Vaiṣṇava temples, the quarrel takes place between Viṣṇu and his wife Lakṣmī/Śrī.

Only a couple of the Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā*s include recommendations pertaining to the *kalaha*. The fullest treatment of this festival is found in the *Śrīpraśnasaṃhitā* (ŚrīprśS), whose compiler, in addition to providing ritual practicalities, enriches the account with a narrative drawn on the well-known episode of Viṣṇu rescuing an elephant (*gajendramokṣa*). As a result of certain adjustments to its plot, basically known in its version coming from the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*, in a new context of the ŚrīprśS, the narrative assumes the role of explaining the god's reasons for leaving his spouse secretly in terms of his urge to protect his devotee. Although the ŚrīprśS seems to be the only Pāñcarātra text which makes use of this narrative, we know that both the proponents of the Viśiṣṭādvaita school of thought and their predecessors, the Tamil Āḻvārs, happened to evoke it when they spoke about the

prapanna, i.e., the devotee who, while having troubles, takes refuge in god (Hopkins 2002, pp. 272–73). The same soteriological concept, i.e., *prapatti*/*śaraṇāgati*, is discussed in the ŚrīprśS. My primary concern is therefore to explore how and why the notion of a quarrel, framed by temple festival's prescriptions, might have been used by the compiler of the ŚrīprśS as a means to illustrate the doctrine of seeking refuge in god.

I begin my essay with a brief reiteration of crucial ideas concerning the notion of the *praṇayakalaha* in various Sanskrit textual traditions which predominantly contextualize it within the erotic sphere of human life. Next, I refer briefly to the modes of the present day reenactment of the *praṇayakalaha* festival in the South Indian Vaiṣṇava temples, chiefly based on the outcomes of research presented by Younger (1982) and Narayanan (1996) in regard to the Srirangam tradition[1]. With its elaborate oral narratives, aimed at explaining the reason for the divine couple's quarrel as caused by Viṣṇu's secret romance, the Srirangam pattern of the *kalaha*—moulded locally over centuries under social and political influences and changing Śrīvaiṣṇava concepts—puts the romantic aspect at the forefront. Nonetheless, it offers a range of readings, including those that seem to refer to the same conceptual core as the ŚrīprśS does.

In the final part of the paper, I discuss the ŚrīprśS *kalaha* passage in terms of a potent exemplification of the doctrine of *prapatti*, in which the erotic/romantic features of the couple's argument are veiled by the notions related to Viṣṇu's protective aspect. This poses a question about the traces of the influence of Viśiṣṭādvaita thought on ŚrīprśS teachings.

2. Instances of *praṇayakalaha* in Sanskrit Literary Traditions

A couple's quarrel, by definition ending in reconciliation, has long been known to the authors of Sanskrit treatises and poems as an expression of an integral element of a (man's) love-life. In this sense the lovers' argument was perceived as providing the couple with particularly intense sensations during their first intimacy after an argument (Agrawala 1992, p. 651) and thus strengthening the relationship. As a matter of literary convention, it is usually a woman who loses her temper suspecting her beloved's infidelity[2]. To mitigate her anger, the man is advised not only to use appropriate words, but even to use specific gestures, for instance, to prostrate himself at her feet (Hara 2001, p. 181; Agrawala 1992, pp. 650–51)[3]. To the Sanskrit poets, the concept must have been exemplifying various shades of love to such an extent that they applied the term *kalahāntaritā* to refer to a certain type of a beloved (*nāyikā*) "who has turned away from her lover after a violent quarrel [...] although he now speaks gently to her" (Lienhard 1984, p. 93). Quarreling as marked with eroticism has also been often linked with the spring season (*vasanta*), during which a quarrel was enjoyed by couples as an element of spring celebrations. As shown, for instance, in the *Viṭanidrābhāṇa* (14th cent.) from Kerala which refers to the vernal Festival of Love, in such cases the argument was meant to be mocked and performed in privacy, when the couple was alone (Vielle 2019). In turn, the *Virūpākṣavasantotsavacampū* by Ahobala (14/15th cent.)[4] depicts the *kalaha* in a manner that seems to blur the distinctions between a literary motif and ritual account. Its author, too, vividly relates the amorous quarrel within the frameworks of the Spring Festival, which in this case overlaps with the Great Festival (*mahotsava*) annually celebrated in Hampi. The context of the early Vijayanagara implies that the Spring Festival to which the *kalaha* belongs glorifies fertility and rebirth, but, when it comes to the notion of royal power, the symbolical revitalization of kingship as well. The protagonists of this *kalaha*—Śiva-Virūpākṣa, who throughout the text is homologized with a Vijayanagara king, and Pārvatī—quarrel after the Hunt Festival which constitutes another part of the celebrations of spring. Pārvatī blames Śiva—depicted both as a festive image and an active agent—for sporting with other ladies, among them Gaṅgā, during his trip to the forest (note the mythically connotated, aggressive, and erotic features of Śiva). The angry goddess does not let him into the ceremonial hall, but after a long exchange of arguments she calms down and the couple eventually reconciles. Śiva assumes the form of a half-man and half-woman (*ardhanārīśvara*), so that in the final scene he is worshipped together with Pārvatī (Anderson 1994, pp. 247–49). Similarly, the *Mahotsavavidhi* by Aghoraśiva

(12th cent.), a manual for a nine day long festival used in the South Indian Śaiva temples, recommends a *kalaha* performance on the day preceding the wedding of the god and the goddess, yet it does not provide any details (Davis 2010, pp. 132, 134).

3. The *praṇayakalaha* in Current Practice of South Indian Vaiṣṇava Temples

Before turning to the so far unstudied Pāñcarātra accounts of the *praṇayakalaha*, let us first briefly reiterate what has been written so far in regard to its current reenactments in the Śrīvaiṣṇava temples. The festival is known in a number of temples in South India; however, the one most often evoked and studied is a variant of celebrations associated with the Rāṅganātha temple in Srirangam. The Srirangam tradition of the *praṇayakalaha* offers a wide scope of interpretations, from both the perspectives of popular beliefs and the Śrīvaiṣṇava theology.

As we learn from Younger (1982), in Srirangam the *kalahotsava* is held in spring, within the larger frameworks of the ten day long *paṅkuṇi* (*āti brahmōtsava*) festival. The *paṅkuṇi* festival has a long history: references to some forms of its celebrations appear in inscriptions from the 11th cent. onwards (Younger 1982, p. 623). As far as its present mode of celebration is concerned, in addition to the daily procession, the image of Viṣṇu, known as Nam Perumāḷ ('Our Leader') or Aḷakiya Maṇavāḷan ('the Handsome Groom'), is taken on four longer trips in the four cardinal directions. On one of the levels of interpretation, by means of these trips, during which Viṣṇu comes into contact with various local communities—symbolized by the deities or the sites he visits—the storyline behind the *paṅkuṇi* festival reveals a bunch of religious and social issues connected to the Srirangam temple and its environment. It is god's third trip, which due to its engagement with the motif of illicit love, triggers a scenario of quarrel between the god and his wife. According to local beliefs, early in the morning, the deity leaves the temple to secretly meet with the Cōḷa princess Kamalādevī in the city of Uraiyur[5]. When, after completing his last, fourth trip, the god returns home for good, his official wife, the goddess Raṅganayakī, closes the door in his face. After several unsuccessful attempts to enter her shrine, Viṣṇu realizes that she knows about his romance with the princess. Eventually the saint Nammāḻvār intervenes and persuades the goddess to let the god in. After reconciliation, the couple is properly married.

Whilst Younger does not particularly focus on the *kalaha* as a ritual/festival in itself, he shows it as an integral element of two intersecting motifs he perceives essential for the *paṅkuṇi* scenario: the wanderings of Viṣṇu and illicit love. These two motifs find their expression both in popular beliefs and Śrīvaiṣṇava thought. During his wanderings, Viṣṇu, though remaining transcendent, becomes easily accessible to his worshippers. On account of his affair, however, "the romantic or mystical longing of the heart for God is expressed in the two contrasting quests of the spontaneous, illicit love of the innocent princess and the more studied and demanding love of the formidable wife" (Younger 1982, p. 645). To put it differently, the engagement of the two women beloved by Viṣṇu in the narrative behind the festival foregrounds clearly the two soteriological paths available to a devotee, or, in Younger's words, "the two essential dimensions of the soul's appropriation of the divine life": *prapatti*, i.e., the self-surrender, embodied by the princess, whose love for the god is "painful and uncertain" and marked by longing[6], and *bhakti*, i.e., devotion, embodied by the god's legal wife, whose love "is strong and lasting" (Younger 1982, pp. 650–51).

Narayanan (1996, pp. 101–2) complements Younger's observations by pointing that in view of Śrīvaiṣṇava theology, the crucial aspect of a quarrel between the god and his wife seems to be the establishment of Nammāḻvār's role as a teacher. This is achieved by making him the one who reconciles the couple. Such an approach, as she continues, entails however that Viṣṇu and Śrī are inseparable: Nammāḻvār is able to re-unite them knowing that divine justice (Viṣṇu) and divine grace (Lakṣmī/Śrī) are mutually bound. In addition, Narayanan presents several other options for reading the symbolism of the *kalaha*. For instance, Śrī might be taken as representing a human being who should understand that the god cares about other humans as well. Alternatively, the story behind the festival reenactment may imply that as a human soul Śrī is reconciled with Viṣṇu due to the salvific

power of Nammālvār's words. Lastly, Śrī's jealousy caused by the unfidelity of her husband may point to certain local legends that were appropriated into the mainstream with the help of Śrī-related stories.

In terms of ritual practice, the quarrel is acted out by two parties. The respective groups—in the case of Srirangam, these are the special cantors called *araiyar*s who embody the goddess and the priests who assume the role of the god—stand by the respective images and exchange arguments on behalf of the deities. While reenacting Śrī's anger towards the god, the cantors sing and perform certain verses from the works of Ālvārs. Viṣṇu offers some excuses and presents his wife with flowers. Upon eventual reconcilement, achieved thanks to Nammālvār's persuasion, the couple exchanges flower garlands (Narayanan 1996, p. 102).

The ritual pattern of the *kalaha* may of course locally differ in regard to certain elements. For instance, in the Alvar Tirunagari, it is performed on the ninth night of the *Tiruvāymoli* recitation during the Festival of Recitation (Narayanan 1996, pp. 107–8)[7]. In the Śrī Pārthasārathi temple in Triplicane, the festival is performed on the ninth day of the *brahmotsava*. In the Celuvanārāyana temple in Melkote, celebrations of the *praṇayakalaha* conclude the ten day long *brahmotsava* (Narasaraja Bhattar 1998, p. 229). In turn, in Tirupati it is observed two months after the *brahmotsava*, which may point to its independent character (Ramesh 2000, p. 125).

To sum up, the *kalaha* festival which is currently held in the South Indian Vaiṣṇava temples may undoubtedly comprise several layers of meaning, and an important role in vesting it with many of them has been played by the ideas disseminated by the Śrīvaiṣṇava *ācārya*s. In the next section I shall demonstrate that its conceptual core, namely the expression of a certain model of the soul–god relationship, which is the self-surrender (*prapatti*), seems to be also present in the Pāñcarātra ritual prescriptions despite being voiced by means of a different narrative.

4. Ritual Prescriptions on *praṇayakalahotsava* in Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā*s

The Pāñcarātra authors did not give much space to teachings concerning the *praṇayakalahotsava*. The topic is dealt with in three *saṃhitā*s—*Viṣṇutilakasaṃhitā*, *Īśvarasaṃhitā* (ĪS), and ŚrīprśS—out of which only the latter two are available to me[8]. The compositions of the ĪS and the ŚrīprśS most likely have approximate dates. The ĪS, dated not earlier than 13th–14th cent. (Matsubara 1996, pp. 28–31), is the source of some textual borrowings for the ŚrīprśS[9].

As far as the issue of the *kalahotsava* in the ĪS considered, I do not take into account the passage ĪS 12.24–40, which, in Smith's opinion, treats the Festival of Quarrel in an alternative way, yet is "confusingly equated with vasantotsava" (Smith 1982, p. 48). According to me, the ĪS 12.24–40 belongs to a larger unit of recommendations which continues up to ĪS 12.62 and, as a whole, pertains to various rites connected to the Spring Festival (*vasantotsava*). In brief, the passage discerned by Smith begins with remarks on the *jalakrīḍā/jalayuddha* (play/sport with water), which, in its ultimate verse, seems to be equated with the *vasantotsava*, provided the latter takes one day only (*kevalaṃ jalayuddhaṃ tu kuryād ekāha utsave* ||ĪS 12.40cd||; "But during the one-day-long [*vasanta*-] *utsava* one should perform only the battle with water"). The *jalakrīḍā/vasantotsava* is scheduled for the period of two vernal months called collectively Madhumādhava, (March/April–April/May), preferably in the light half of the lunar month (*madhumādhavamāse tu śuklapakṣe viśesataḥ* || ĪS 12.24cd ||). Besides its one day variant, the *vasantotsava* itself may take three, five, seven, or nine days (ĪS 12.26). Within its frameworks, every day the god should be taken out in a procession. Before this happens, at midday, just after a *bali* offering, the god, in his processional image (*yātrāmūrtigata vibhu*), along with Śrī and Puṣṭi, should be brought in a palanquin to a great pavilion (*maṇḍapa*) and put on a seat made of grain, which is daubed with the powder (*cūrṇādhivāsana*) (ĪS 12.29cd–31). After worshipping the god with *arghya* and other offerings, until the oblation with fire (*havis*) (ĪS 12.32ab), his image along with those of the goddesses should be anointed with the powder (*cūrṇa*) to the accompaniment of the *Śrīsūkta* recitation

(ĪS 12.32cd–34ab). When, eventually, the procession carrying the divine and his consorts reaches the streets, the festivities turn into a mocked battle (*yuddhakrīḍā*) carried out with the use of various substances which participants throw on each other. Such a battle is reenacted every day during the *vasantotsava*. The selection of substances to be used—such as perfumed powders, flowers, and liquids—depends on the day in which the battle takes place (ĪS 12.34cd–40)[10]. The joyful character of this mocked battle, devoid of any resentments between the Lord and his consort/s, but additionally engaging various strata (and genders) of the Vaiṣṇava society—from renouncers (*yati*) to various types of temple women (*gaṇikā, devadāsī*) (ĪS 12.54–55)[11]—complies much more with the atmosphere of various traditions of Spring celebrations described in Sanskrit literary sources (see e.g., Anderson 1994, pp. 37–40; Nugteren 2005, pp. 103–7) than with a couple-oriented verbal argument prescribed in the Pāñcarātra passages dealing with the *kalahotsava*. This also seems to be suggested by the purposes of the variation in the festival treated in detail in ĪS 12, which is the play/sport with water (*jalakrīḍā/jalayuddha*). Sprinkling each other with water grants the devotees a state of absorption in Viṣṇu, but also brings pleasure to Varuṇa; in other words, it ensures rains and purifies the people (ĪS 12.56–58).

However, the romantic quarrel (*praṇayakalaha*) is surely mentioned in the previous chapter of the ĪS, which recommends it to be held on the eighth night of *brahmotsava/mahotsava*. No ritual advice is given, nor any hints pertaining to the reason for the argument between the god and his spouse/s (ĪS 11.312–314ab):

At the eighth day's night, preceded by mounting a swing (*ḍolārohaṇam*),

he should have [god] mount a horse and engage in hunting (11.312),

[one should make him into] a play of protecting [a] devotee/s (*bhaktasantrāṇalīlā*) on the *brāhma*[*muhūrta*?],[12] and the purification of a city (*nagaraśodhanam*) (11.313ab).

There should be a mutual amorous argument (*praṇayaḥ kalaha*) between the god and two goddesses.

One should perform an act of their reconciliation and recite: "let it be forgiven" (313cd–314ab)[13].

The sequence involving a ritual hunt (*mṛgayotsava*) followed by a *praṇayakalaha* was known to later Sanskrit authors, e.g., the already mentioned Vijayanagara poet Ahobala, who depicted a hunting expedition of Śiva as the occasion for a romance and, thus, subsequently, the reason of the couple's argument. It is however not entirely clear in the above verses of the ĪS whether the mentioned events are meant to be performed one by one as the elements of a wider ritual pattern or simply on the same night. Secondly, the Pāñcarātra's use of terms, such as *bhaktasantrāṇalīlā* (a play of protecting a devotee/s) and *nagaraśodhanam* (purification of a city)[14], is quite obscure to me, for I could not find any occurrence of these terms in other *saṃhitā*s. According to the editors-cum-translators of the ĪS, M.A. Lakshmithathachar and Varadachari (2009, p. 605), all the enumerated activities in which the god should engage in after swinging on a swing (*dolārohana*) succeed one another. In addition, M.A. Lakshmithathachar and V. Varadachari note that the play of protecting *bhakta*s refers in this case to the reenactment of the episode connected to the tradition of Tirumaṅkai Āḻvār, in the light of which he, along with his comrades, robbed Viṣṇu on his way to the wedding. Having heard a mantra chanted in his ear by the god, Tirumaṅkai gave up banditry and became Viṣṇu's follower. The rite the editors refer to seems to be the Vedupari (Tam. *vēṭupaṟi*—lit. hunter's robbery). Its best known variant is linked to the Srirangam tradition, in which it is enacted as an element of the *adhyāyānotsava*, though many other South Indian temples of Viṣṇu include it in their festival calendar as well (L'Hernault and Reiniche 1999, pp. 73–74)[15]. In regard to the account of the ĪS, Lakshmithathachar and Varadachari further claim that the play of protecting *bhakta*/s is followed by the ceremony of "purification of the city", which aims at inspecting the town by the god in order to gather the remaining dispersed thieves and bring them back to the lore of Vaishnavism[16]. Unable to find any hints of the *bhaktasantrāṇalīlā* in other Pāñcarātra

*saṃhitā*s, I alternatively propose to link it with another narrative on Viṣṇu's power to save, namely with the already mentioned narrative on rescuing *gajendra*. The narrative does not occur in the ĪS but is adduced within the framework of the ŚrīprśS' treatment of the *kalaha* in the form of an episode which takes place before the quarrel between the god and the goddess starts. Considering that the ĪS and the ŚrīprśS were composed most likely at a similar time, and the compiler of the latter might have known the content of the former, it seems plausible that the short formula of the *bhaktasantrāṇalīlā* could have inspired him to reach for a popular motif centered on the god's eagerness to protect his devotees. Alternatively, with a purpose to emphasize concepts which were pivotal for the teachings presented in the ŚrīprśS, he just skillfully expressed what was also intended, yet not elaborated, by the ĪS' compiler. Whether or not this presumption is correct, traces linking the concept of protecting devotees with the *praṇayakalahotsava* appear to be currently discernible in the temple practice of Melkote, i.e., the town to which the ĪS is traditionally linked. According to local beliefs pertaining to the *kalahotsava*, when accused by his wife of a secret romance, Viṣṇu excuses himself saying that he went out for the sake of his devotee (Narasaraja Bhattar 1998, p. 229).

This brings us to the account of the *kalaha* in the ŚrīprśS. In contrast to the ĪS, the ŚrīprśS does not mention any other grand festival which overlaps with the *praṇayakalaha*, and thus makes the impression of recommending it as an independent full-fledged event. According to this *saṃhitā*, the romantic quarrel should be celebrated in the springtime, in the period between the months of Makara (the latter half of January–the former half of February) and Mīna (the latter half of March–the formerᵗ half of April) (ŚrīprśS 47.22cd–23).

The ŚrīprśS' treatment of the *praṇayakalaha* begins with Viṣṇu's first-person account of his own deeds performed during his solo trip beyond the temple. Abiding by the structure of the *saṃhitā*, which, as implied by its title (Śrīpraśna = 'questions [asked by] Śrī [to Viṣṇu]'), the narrative is built around Viṣṇu's answers to his consort's questions, as the god unfolds the story of his doings in front of the goddess. His report, overtly presented as a teaching about the festival, which is "a quarrel caused by love", is introduced as a sort of reply (sometimes, as we shall see, interrupted by Lakṣmī) to what he learned earlier about her "adventures in the previous eons" (ŚrīprśS 47.1cd–2ab: *jñātam adya mayā pūrvakalpavṛttaṃ tava priye* ||47.1|| *vadāmi hy utsavaṃ bhadre praṇayāt kalahas tava* | 47.2ab |).

As mentioned above, Viṣṇu's account draws on a popular narrative telling how Viṣṇu rescued the king of the elephants (*gajendra*) from a crocodile. In his article on a Telugu adaptation of the *gajendramokṣa* episode by Bommera Potana (15th cent.), Shulman (1993, p. 127) notes that this narrative owes its popularity to a version transmitted in the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* 8.2–4, in which it is told by Śuka to Parikṣit. Saying that this particular *purāṇa*, composed in Sanskrit in South India circa the 9th cent., has been significantly permeated with Tamil Āḻvārs' "emotional" *bhakti*, Shulman refers to the influential opinion of Friedhelm Hardy (1983, pp. 488–89). This hypothesis has been however recently questioned by Edwin Bryant. Taking into consideration the iconographical evidence gathered by Dennis Hudson (1995) in the Vaikuṇṭha Perumāl temple in Kanchipuram, i.e., the sequence of panels following certain episodes found in the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*[17], Bryant (2002, p. 61f.) proposes to take the 8th cent. as an upper limit the date of the text's composition, i.e., the time when the temple was completed. If so, as he argues, it is likely that the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* might have attained its final form by the Gupta period, the North might have been the locus of its composition, and these might have been Āḻvārs who were influenced by the text and not vice versa. On the other hand, Patton Burchett (2019, pp. 76–83) reasons that emotional *bhakti* associated with the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* might have been earlier expressed in the *Śivadharma*, the Śaiva text which was most likely composed in North India (6th–7th cent.)[18].

Possibly the earliest visual representations of the *gajendramokṣa* motif are the scenes carved on the pillar from Mathura (early 5th cent.) and the Gupta panel from Deogarh (early 6th cent.) (Shulman 1993, p. 127). On the other hand, in its localized variations, the narrative contributed to various legends connected to certain South Indian temples dedicated to Viṣṇu. For instance, the alternative name of the Varadarāja Perumal temple in

Kanchipuram, i.e., Hastigiri/Hastiśaila/Hastipura—recorded in various sources as early as the 11th cent.—is connected to legends that say it is built on a hill that represents the abode of the elephant (Sanskr. *hastin*) Gajendra saved by Varadarāja ([Raman 1975](), pp. 6–9)[19]. In terms of literary production, this is already Tirumaṅkai Āl̲vār, who recalls the motif of Gajendra in one of his compositions devoted to Lord Raṅganātha to express his protectiveness towards his devotees ([Chari 2009](), p. 139). In the same context, the episode was often evoked, for instance, by Vedānta Deśika (13–14th cent.), one of the famous Śrīvaiṣṇava teachers and exponents of the Viśiṣṭādvaita thought. Vedānta Deśika refers to it both in his poems ([Hopkins 2002](), p. 190) and the treatise on the defense of the Pāñcarātra, i.e., *Śrīpāñcarātrarakṣā*[20].

In the case of the ŚrīprśS, the *gajendramokṣa* episode can be incorporated smoothly into the teachings on the *kalaha*. Contrary to its rather elaborate and poetically valued *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* variant[21], the narrative put by the ŚrīprśS' compiler into Viṣṇu's mouth is condensed, encapsulated within a few verses and rather dull. Structurally, the episode is followed by a short remark of the goddess on the purpose of the *kalaha* festival, and, again fashioned as Viṣṇu's lines, an account of ritual practicalities. The consistency of this teaching owes to the narrative persuasiveness of the *gajendramokṣa* episode when it comes to providing a motif which might have made Viṣṇu forget to inform his consort that he was leaving the temple. Another reason is the recurrent reference to Viṣṇu's protectiveness which appears throughout the passage notwithstanding its narrative and ritualistic character[22].

Viṣṇu's account begins with a recalling of a mythical setting of his secret trip's destination. For example, in the case of the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*[23], the landscape he depicts is discerned by the Trikūṭa mountain situated in the middle of the Śvetadvīpa, on the Ocean of Milk[24] (ŚrīprśS 47.2cd–3ab). Nearby the mountain, there is a beautifully situated pond, which is cooled by the gusts of a fragrant, light wind, and, crucially for the narrative, inhabited by a great crocodile (*makara*) (ŚrīprśS 47.2cd–7). The descriptive character of the passage becomes more dynamic when Viṣṇu turns to the appearance of a herd of elephants led by their king (*gajendra*). The animal approaches the pond to quench his thirst. When *gajendra* plunges his trunk in the water, a crocodile gets hold of his foot. In distress, the elephant recites a sort of prayer (ŚrīprśS 47.10–11ab), the addressee of which is unnamed[25]. Out of all gods, it is only him, Viṣṇu, who at once, without even informing his wife, comes to Gajendra's rescue (ŚrīprśS 47.7cd–14):

[...] O Goddess! The leader of a herd of intoxicated elephants and elephant-females,

afflicted by heat and disturbed by [his] condition (*dharmārta*)[26]

swiftly came to this pond to drink water. (47.7cd–8)

Having drawn cold water with the tip of his trunk, he was drinking

when a crocodile caught his foot (47.9)[27]

Unable to release himself from him, he cried loudly in this way:

"Bow to the majesty, the root, the cause of universe, in whom this world is merged,

of which he is the support, of which he is the cause!" (47.10–11ab)

He lamented thus [but] in spite of that gods such as Śiva did not come (47.11cd)[28]

Therefore, after ascending Garuḍa swiftly, regardless of you, indeed,

and approaching him, cutting off with a disk the head of the cruel crocodile,

I saved the noble elephant (47.12–13ab).

I killed the most excellent crocodile and set free the elephant (47.13cd)

Released from a curse, they both gained divinity, and bowed to me (47.14ab).

Having granted the two of them the residence in the same heaven with me (*matsālokya*),

I returned to Vaikuṇṭha (47.14cd).[29]

The ŚrīprśS merely mentions that after killing the crocodile, the god releases both the elephant and the crocodile from a curse that turned them into animals (47.14ab). The *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* explains, however, that the crocodile was previously a Gandharva named Huhu who was cursed by the sage Devala, and Gajendra was the Pandya king Indradyumna, who offended the sage Agastya by not honoring him as he was immersed in worshipping Viṣṇu (Shulman 1993, p. 133). Whereas according to the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*, as a result of being released from a curse, the crocodile comes back to his world, and the elephant is freed from the fetters of ignorance and joins Viṣṇu's retinue (Shulman 1993, pp. 133–34), the ŚrīprśS slightly modifies the end of the story. The two, the crocodile and the elephant, are released from the curse, and, moreover, they both gain divinity and are granted *sālokya*, i.e., the residence in heaven with Viṣṇu. In addition, the rest of Viṣṇu's account constitutes a sort of creative sequel to the episode, by means of which the motif of a quarrel between him and his consort (*kalaha*) can be interlaced into the ŚrīprśS' teaching. Continuing in the narrative mode, Viṣṇu reminds the goddess that she was not willing to listen to his explanation concerning the reason why he suddenly disappeared until the two approached her to confirm his words. Viṣṇu continues his account up to the moment of reconciliation with his spouse (ŚrīprśS 47.15–18ab):

Then I was kept off, indeed, by you at the door (47.15ab).

When I explained the reason, O Dear One, and you did not listen to [my] words,

then these two came, saluted respectfully to your feet,

and told [you] about the event at the pond. Then you settled for my words (47.15cd–16cd).[30]

Thus, O Beloved, I rest with you on the coils of the snake (47.17ab).

The festival related to this [event] (*tadutsavam*), O You-with-the-best-hips,

should be performed especially with regard to my image (*arcā*)

[in the form just described, i.e., Viṣṇu and Śrī resting on the coils of the snake?][31]

I tell you, O Lotus-eyed, its manner (47.17cd–8ab).[32]

The remaining verses, as announced in the last line of Viṣṇu's part, provide ritual recommendations concerning the *kalaha* reenactment. Before they are given, Lakṣmī interrupts her husband with a remark on the festival's purpose (ŚrīprśS 47.18cd–22ab):

This, verily, festival should be performed then, O You who are kind

to worshippers!, (47.18cd)

wherever there are devotees who are unable to serve [you], O Hari.

To whom it is forbidden to enter [your] abode to see [you], o Lord of the World,

because of an order and illnesses,

after ascending, in the form of an image, the palanquin, o God, Keśava,

show [them] yourself, the bliss that destroys all sins,

to fulfill the desire of devotees standing along every street (47.19–21).

Release those who are pressed by seizing/crocodile of *saṃsāra* like [you released] the elephant-king! (47.22ab)[33]

The goddess frames the purpose of the festival as providing the devotees with a chance to approach a god whom otherwise they would not have a chance to come face-to-face with. Basically this is a common aim of the *utsava*s, to be perceived as events during which

an image of the god is processionally taken outside the temple. Noteworthy in these lines is, however, the way Lakṣmī plays with Viṣṇu's account when she incites him to release his devotees from the *grāha* of *saṃsāra* (note the double meaning of *grāha*: 'seizing' or 'crocodile') as he did in the case of Gajendra. The evoking of the *gajendramokṣa* episode again creates, in a way, the impression that what matters the most from the ŚrīprśS' point of view is not the amorous quarrel between Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī, but what happened before, namely the act proving Viṣṇu's protective power.

The subsequent ritual instructions, embedded in the lines of the Venerable One (Bhagavān), seem to confirm such supposition. After customary rituals and then the transferal of the god from a fixed image to a festival one, the ŚrīprśS recommends taking him in a palanquin to a *maṇḍapa* which is far from the temple. This should happen at the end of the day. The lack of remarks on any tumult that should accompany this event indicates that this phase of the celebrations reflects Viṣṇu's secret outing which Lakṣmī was not informed about. Next, after a rest, the god should be brought back from the *maṇḍapa* to the goddess's shrine, this time with the accompaniment of music, dancers, etc. However, here the angry Lakṣmī refuses to let Viṣṇu enter the shrine. Eventually, the couple is reconciled thanks to mediation from a priest, who, on behalf of the god, recites lines justifying his secret trip. In accordance with the background of the festival sketched by the means of the *gajendramokṣa* narrative, the priest evokes Viṣṇu's urge to protect his devotee:

> Conducting the daily rituals, etc., before dawn,
>
> he should enter the temple and complete the daily *pūjā* inside. (47.24).
>
> "O Venerable One! Lotus-eyed! The one who is ready for protecting devotees!
>
> for your [and] Lakṣmī's favor, due to love of you two, O Hari,
>
> today I wish to perform *kalahotsava*, O Mādhava!
>
> For this sake you shall approach the movable image, O Ocean of Compassion! (47.25–26)"[34].
>
> –after requesting thus, having invited the Lord of Lakṣmī from the fixed [image] to the movable one used in ritual,
>
> having worshipped [him] with *arghya* etc., one should offer food consisting of beans etc. (47.27)
>
> Having placed him in the palanquin, one should carry [him] along the streets in order,
>
> but, when the eventide comes, to some place far from the abode (47.28)[35].
>
> After placing him in a *maṇḍapa* to ease Hari's fatigue,
>
> offering *arghya* etc. and presenting food afterwards,
>
> placing him in a palanquin and decorating Lord Hari with perfumes, etc.,
>
> with accompaniment of instrumental music of *vīna*, etc., and frequent dances,
>
> he, with chewed betel on his lips, and served by groups of temple-women,
>
> should be led to the abode, but the Goddess should deny him [an entrance] (47.29–31)[36].
>
> In this way, having denied him [on behalf of the Goddess] three or four times, a *guru* [on behalf the God] should request thus:
>
> "O Lakṣmī, the Venerable One went outside today with a desire of protecting his devotee;
>
> you should not think otherwise, O Lotus-born!" (47. 32–33ab)
>
> One should perform weaving of lamps in front of the God and Goddess (47.33cd)[37].

> After performing a night *pūjā*, one should take the two of them to bed (47.34ab).
>
> After worshipping them with objects expedient for the bed, waking Mādhava up in the morning,
>
> transferring [god's] potency to the fixed [image], the *guru* should then ask (47.34cd–35ab):
>
> "O Lord of Lakṣmī, destroyer of the pain of the elephant, today was your festival of love.
>
> If any disrespect was made, let it be forgiven, O Treasure of Mercy!"
>
> After requesting thus the Lord of Lakṣmī, one should perform *pūjā* (47.35cd–36)[38].

As we can see, all requests to be uttered by the priest responsible for carrying out the *kalahotsava* (47.25–26, 47.32cd–33ab, 47.35cd–36ab), whether addressed to the god or, on the god 's behalf, to the goddess, underline the protective aspect of Viṣṇu. While requesting the god to approach the festive image, the priest calls him "ready for protecting devotees" (*bhaktarakṣaṇadīkṣita)*. In the next statement, addressed to Lakṣmī who is upset at her husband, the priest on behalf of the Lord justifies his disappearance with the desire to protect his devotees (*bhaktarakṣaṇakāmyayā*). Finally, when the priest customarily asks the god to forgive any involuntary disrespect towards him, he addresses Viṣṇu with the epithet "destroyer of the pain of the elephant," (*gajārtihara*). The latter is an obvious allusion to the *gajendramokṣa* episode, and in a way conceptually binds together the content of the whole teaching on the *kalaha*: from the well-known narrative on rescuing *gajendra* placed in Viṣṇu's mouth, through its sequel by means of which its message might have been adjusted to the frameworks of a festival centered on the quarrel, and, last but not least, to the ritual prescriptions for the quarrel enactment.

Now, let us summarize the questions which may arise in connection to what was said above. Does the ŚrīprśS teach at all about the *kalahotsava* as centered on the divine couple's quarrel? Why is the concept of Viṣṇu the rescuer of Gajendra so emphasized here? What makes these two issues conceptually interrelated? Moreover, last but not least, can the account of the *praṇayakalaha* shed some light on the features of the ŚrīprśS against the backdrop of other Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā*s and, in this connection, the milieu of its compilation?

5. Viṣṇu the Savior, Gajendra the Saved, Lakṣmī the Mediator?

A concept which seems pivotal for solving the above poised questions is the doctrine of *prapatti/śaraṇāgati* ("seeking refuge in Viṣṇu" or "self-surrender to Viṣṇu"). The doctrine has been taught both in the Pāñcarātra s*aṃhitā*s and the Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta corpus as another path, besides *bhakti* (devotion), to liberation. Traditionally the main proponent of the Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta school of thought is the South Indian theologian, Rāmānuja (11th/12th cent.)[39]. After Rāmānuja's death it developed into the religious tradition called Śrīvaiṣṇava, which, besides the teachings of Rāmānuja and his pupils, embraced the Sanskrit Vedic and *smṛti* texts, spiritual hymns of Tamil Āḻvārs and, as the ritual basis, the scriptures of the Pāñcarātra. The term "Śrī" in the name of this tradition denotes its particular attitude towards Śrī/Lakṣmī—in contrast to other Vaiṣṇava religious communities, Śrīvaiṣṇavas consider her as inseparable from Viṣṇu and indispensable in the process of *prapatti*. This concept remains fundamental although it has been interpreted in many ways due to a dispute in the 13th/14th cent. that the Śrīvaiṣṇavas entered into which led to a split into two schools, the so-called Vaṭakalai (Northern, favoring Sanskrit, following the lineage of Vedānta Deśika) and Teṅkalai (Southern, favoring Tamil, following the lineage of Piḷḷai Lokācārya). Whereas for the former Śrī is equal with Viṣṇu and therefore she can save devotees herself, the latter claimed that she supports the devotees in the process of surrender, but she is not equal with the god (Narayanan 1996, p. 90).

The dispute between the Vaṭakalais and the Teṅkalais involved several other issues, among them the question of the relationship between *bhakti* and *prapatti* (the Vaṭakalais consider them alternative means to liberation, the Teṅkalais favour *prapatti*), or whether

a soul should undertake any effort to be saved (according to the Vaṭakalais it should, according to the Teṉkalais it should not) (Mumme 1988).

The conditions of the emergence of the doctrine of *prapatti* are still not clear. The notion might have occurred either as the result of influences of orthodox Vaiṣṇavism on the Pāñcarātra and on Viśiṣṭādvaita thinkers (Oberhammer 2007), or as the result of mutual influences between the latter two; in any case, a significant role was played by the spirituality of Tamil Āḻvārs (e.g., Gupta 1986; Mumme 2007; Raman 2007)[40]. In accordance with the Pāñcarātra and Viśiṣṭādvaita textual traditions, the belief in Viṣṇu's commitment to protect his devotees constitutes one of the methods/aspects advised for the act of self-surrender. As I shall discuss below, in the case of the ŚrīprśS, this thought is complementarily expressed in the teaching on *prapatti* (ŚrīprśS 53; here it is called the *bharanyāsa*) and in the treatment of the *praṇayakalaha* in which it is figuratively rendered through the re-use of the *gajendramokṣa* episode. Both teachings, for instance, intersect when it comes to the need to request the god for protection. Yet, considering that the ŚrīprśS' account of the *praṇayakalaha* actually involves three parties—Gajendra who is saved, Viṣṇu the savior, and Lakṣmī—an issue I shall also address is how the ŚrīprśS defines the role of the goddess in the context of the quarrel, and whether in this context it corresponds with her role as hinted in the lines on *prapatti* in the ŚrīprśS 53. A picture of Lakṣmī/Śrī who according to the Śrīvaiṣṇavas permanently accompanies Viṣṇu differs from her portrayal in some of the Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā*s, in which she is treated as the God's potency (*śakti*)[41], or, for instance, in the *Lakṣmītantra* (LT), in which she is the supreme being (Narayanan 1996, p. 90). This point is therefore important because particular features of Lakṣmī/Śrī—mentioned in the ŚrīprŚ 53 but also, as I propose, metaphorically channeled by means of prescriptions on the *kalaha*—may shed some additional light on the circumstances of the compilation of the ŚrīprśS. We already know that, as it was compiled after the 13th cent. in South India[42], the ŚrīprśS reveals certain traces of influence from the Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta. As Rastelli (2007, pp. 310–11) pointed out, such influence is for instance visible in the ŚrīprśS' treatment of the five obligations of a devotee (*pāñca kāla*), which involves the teaching on the relationship between the god and the individual soul expressed as the relationship between the owner of the remnant (*śeṣin*) and the remnant (*śeṣa*), which is the relationship particular to the Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta thought.

The two earliest Pāñcarātra *saṃhitā*s which offer concise recommendations pertaining to *prapatti* are the LT (12th–13th cent; Gupta 1972) and the *Ahirbudhnyasaṃhitā* (AhS) (between 11th and 13th cent; Rastelli 2018, p. 423). They both refer to the doctrine by means of parallel passages that present it as six-folded (*ṣaḍvidhā*), that is, comprising six mental methods/aspects by means of which the devotee may take refuge in/surrender to the god. These are: *ānukūlyasya saṃkalpa* (the will to do what is pleasing); *prātikūlyasya varjanam* (avoidance of what is displeasing); *rakṣiṣyatīti viśvāso* (faith that he [god] will protect); *goptṛtvavaraṇaṃ* (asking for protection); *ātmanikṣepa* (self-surrender), *kārpaṇyam* (helplessness)[43]. These passages are also quoted in the terms of authority when the doctrine of *prapatti* is debated in the Śrīvaiṣṇava Sanskrit and Maṇipirāvala literature (Oberhammer 2007; Mumme 2007).

The same lines on the six-folded *prapatti* occur in the ŚrīprśS 53.18cd–19, which, we can safely state, was later than the LT and the AhS. Out of the two, it must have been the *Lakṣmītantra* which served as the source of quotations for the compiler of the ŚrīprśS. Besides the passage that defines the six aspects of *prapatti*, the ŚrīprśS 53 includes a number of other lines which elucidate the doctrine, being either identical with the verses of LT 17 or slightly modified. Often, but not always, these modifications are simply the result of the need to adjust the teaching to the structure of the ŚrīprśS (e.g., the names of interlocutors). There are also, however, slight conceptual differences between the LT and the ŚrīprśS. Let us firstly focus on the parallel verses which pertain to the two aspects of *prapatti* that concern god's will to protect: *rakṣiṣyatīti viśvāso* (faith that he [god] will protect) and *goptṛtvavaraṇaṃ* (asking for protection).

In the ŚrīprśS, all the six methods/aspects of *prapatti* are explained by the Lord to Śrī. In regard to *rakṣiṣyatīti viśvāso* (faith that he [god] will protect) and *goptṛtvavaraṇaṃ* (asking for protection)—corresponding with LT 17.70–73—he says (ŚrīprśS 53.26cd–29):

> Because of capability, being easy to be approached because of being constantly joined with compassion,
>
> because of the relation between the Master and the thing to be mastered–
>
> even if it is not the first time–
>
> there is a firm thought: "[he] will protect us who ask"
>
> which is 'faith', O Goddess, that destroys all evil deeds (53.26cd–28ab).
>
> Even [if he is] compassionate, capable of manifesting [himself], the Lord of living beings,
>
> he may not protect if unrequested—therefore there is the idea that one must request him:
>
> "Be the protector". So it shall be 'asking for protection' (53.28cd–29)[44]
>
> And after a couple of lines (ŚrīprśS 53.34–35) (corresponding with LT 17.78cd–79):
>
> Out of the faith 'he will protect' [shall arise mental] fashioning of a method of protecting,
>
> namely 'asking for protection', that is proclaiming one's own wish (53.34).
>
> Even all-knowing Universal spirit, even [if] always compassionate,
>
> expects a request for protection due to the maintenance of the order of *saṃsāra* (53.35)[45].

The notion which recurs in these two passages is the need to ask the god for protection. As pointed out by Mumme, the same verses are reused, throughout the LT, in the works of Vedānta Deśika and the Vaṭakalai school. What they emphasize is that salvation through self-surrender requires some effort from the devotee which means requesting the god for protection. This idea, even if only signified in the LT, later on became one of the most characteristic to the Vaṭakalais (Mumme 2007, p. 119). In the context of the ŚrīprśS, the meaning of these lines is in addition perfectly illustrated by the *gajendramokṣa* narrative, regardless of its embedding in the teaching on the *kalaha*: Gajendra the elephant recites a sort of prayer in the moment of distress, or, the other way round, Viṣṇu urgently rushes to save the elephant when he asks for help.

The question is, what made the ŚrīprśS compiler introduce the *gajendramokṣa* episode into the text by means of the *kalaha* account? It seems to me that he might have applied such a strategy because the theme of a couple's quarrel gives an opportunity to allegorically voice two issues. On the one hand, it smoothly allows to emphasize the god's will to protect for the motif itself entails an occasion to justify a husband's [allegedly] improper behavior, i.e., leaving his wife without a notice. On the other, it facilitates articulating Lakṣmī's position on the matter of the excuse. Therefore, on the whole, when transferred from a mortal dimension to divine, these two elements seem to convey the doctrine of self-surrender, including the role of Lakṣmī in the process of seeking refuge in Viṣṇu.

As mentioned above, for Narayanan (1996, p. 103), who examines the various meanings of the Srirangam *kalaha* festival from the perspective of the Śrīvaiṣṇava theology, one of its fundamental aspects is to express the inseparableness of Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī (emphasized, as mentioned before, already in the name of the community). Despite the quarrel and the couple's temporal uncoupling, Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī's reunion is inevitable for it is actually determined by the unbreakable connection between them. Certain lines in the ŚrīprśS seem to point to the same idea of the couple's constant bond. In the ŚrīprśS 2.13–14, the Venerable One (Bhagavān) addresses Śrī with words:

> O Lotus-hued One! In the three worlds nothing may be hidden by me from you, O Beloved!

You stay with me in [all] incarnations etc., O You, who observes religious vows!

Or, when it is like that, what could be hidden by me [from you], O Queen of the World!

You know all about me, O Goddess, [but] as if ignorant, O Dear,

you ask me, O Lovely-faced, desiring the welfare of the World (12.13–14)[46].

By means of saying that Viṣṇu cannot hide anything from Śrī, Śrī knows everything about Viṣṇu, and he remains by him in all his incarnations, the ŚrīprśS shows the goddess as his perpetual companion. This pertains also to the teaching on *prapatti*, in which, as Smith has already noticed, "she is seen as an intercessory figure between the devotee and the Lord" (Smith 1975–1980, p. 449). Differently than in the AhS and LT, the ŚrīprśS compiler opens the teaching on *prapatti* with words, addressed by the Venerable One (Bhagavān) to Śrī, which is similar to the Śrīvaiṣṇava's concept of the indispensability of Śrī's presence while seeking salvation on the path of self-surrender: "Having recited this mantra, one should seek refuge in me with you" (*mantram etaṃ samuccārya tvayā māṃ śaraṇaṃ vrajet* | |ŚrīprśS 53.17cd| |). Viṣṇu comes back to this idea in the ŚrīprśS 53.59cd: "one should seek refuge in me with you…": *saha tvayā māṃ śaraṇaṃ vrajed…* | |ŚrīprśS 53.59cd| |. In the ŚrīprśS 53.47ab he says that one should first seek refuge in the goddess and then in him: *tvatpūrvakaṃ māṃ śaraṇaṃ vrajed…* |ŚrīprśS 53.47ab|.

In light of the passages that pertain to Lakṣmī's specific features, the narrative "sequel" to the *gajendramokṣa* episode provided by the compiler of the ŚrīprśS with the aim of accommodating it to the pattern of the *kalaha* festival appears to assume yet another layer of meaning. As we remember, before the couple eventually reconciles, the two, elephant and crocodile, who, thanks to Viṣṇu's intervention, were released from the curse and regained their true bodies, approach Lakṣmī to excuse Viṣṇu's disapearance. It is only after Lakṣmī agrees to receive them and listen to their version of the story that the episode is complete. Her role as a mediator in the narrative on the *kalaha* in ŚrīprśS 47 appears to resonate with her role in the teaching on *prapatti* given in the ŚrīprśS 53, which in both cases are ascribed to her as the result of the reinterpretations of the "source text": the *Lakṣmītantra* and the popular narrative on rescuing Gajendra.

6. Conclusions

Judging from the estimated dates of composition of the *saṃhitā*s which mention the *praṇayakalahotsava*, the festival might have become important rather late, i.e., in the post-Rāmānuja period, but not earlier than the 13th cent[47]. If the mention in the ĪS does not contribute much to the understanding of its function as it is actually restricted to providing the time of the event, the account of the ŚrīprśS, along with the narrative behind the festival and the detailed practicalities, situates its meanings in the context of the doctrine of *prapatti*. As I attempted to show, this is achieved through accommodation of the popular myth about saving the king of elephants (*gajendramokṣa*) by putting its retelling into Viṣṇu's mouth so that he can justify his undisclosed trip outside the temple. As a result, instead of focusing on the notion of a lover's quarrel, which underlies the concept of the *praṇayakalaha* festivities, the teaching of the ŚrīprśS draws attention to the protective aspect of Viṣṇu, emphasized both in the narrative and the ritualistic part of the account. By expressing in its adapted version Viṣṇu's will to protect his devotees—provided they request such protection and, eventually, approach his wife, Śrī—the narrative skillfully illustrates the doctrine of *prapatti* as complementary to what was taught in the ŚrīprśS 53. In addition, the doctrine as presented by the ŚrīprśS' compiler brings to mind its understanding by the Viśiṣṭādvaita's proponent Vedānta Deśika (13th/14th cent.) and what later became the Vaṭakalai school of the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition[48]. According to Mumme, the roots of the theological dispute which led to the spilt into the Vaṭakalai and the Teṇkalai schools should be traced to circles of teachers (*ācārya*) in the 13th cent. linked to Kanchi and Srirangam, respectively (Mumme 1988), which from a historical point of view might explain the potential infiltration of the ŚrīprśS by these ideas. All in all, the ŚrīprśS' interpretation of the *kalaha* could be an

outcome of the process in which, as Carman puts it, "the Tantric dimension of Pāñcarātra was minimized or reinterpreted in the ongoing development of Śrīvaiṣṇavism" (Carman 2007, p. 68)[49], the traces of which have been already noticed in the ŚrīprśS by Rastelli (2007) in reference to other ritual prescriptions that are clearly influenced by Viśiṣṭādvaita thought. However, the focus on the protective aspect of Viṣṇu does not make the concept behind the ŚrīprśS' prescriptions for the *kalaha* much different from the perception of its current reenactment in Srirangam, the traditional centre of the Teṅkalai tradition, which is saturated with love themes common to the works of Āḻvārs: eventually both reveal meanings connected to the models of salvation and the inseparableness of Viṣṇu and Śrī.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: Not applicable.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

Notes

1   See also a purely descriptive treatment of the performance of the *kalaha* in Srirangam by Hari Rao (1967, pp. 149–50; cf. Jagannathan 1994, pp. 200–2) in reference to the cycle of festivals which are held there annualy.

2   On the semantical analysis of such compounds as *praṇaya-kalaha* ('quarrelling in love'), *praṇaya-kopa* ('anger in love'), etc. based on a number of excerpts from Sanskrit poems, see (Hara 2001, pp. 180–84).

3   The latter pose, alongside the pose of a man touching his ears in front of a woman, was in turn successfully used by Indian visual artists to portray a man apologizing to his wrathful beloved after an argument (Agrawala 1992).

4   On dating the text see (Sudyka 2019, pp. 276–77).

5   The poetic account of this episode, including the eventual marriage of Viṣṇu with the princess, was given by Uttamanambi Tirumalācarya in his 15th cent. *Lakṣmīkāvya*. Viṣṇu's visit to Uraiyur as a part of the *paṅkuṇi* festivities is also mentioned in some Vijayanagara inscriptions from the site (Younger 1982, pp. 623–24). Noteworthy, the theme of a love-triangle between the god, his legal wife, and his mistress, happened to be used, both in Sanskrit and local traditions, to transmit ideological messages aimed at reconciliation of various religious and social realms, provided that the legal wife, whether initially jealous or not, accepted the mistress (and thus symbolically her whole community) as a co-spouse. Another instance of such a usage of this motif can be the drama *Vāsantikāpariṇaya* ascribed to the 7th pontiff of the Ahobilam *maṭha* (16th cent.), in which a local girl, Vāsantikā, surrenders to Viṣṇu-Narasiṃha (shown both as the god and the king) and becomes his second consort (see Dębicka-Borek 2016).

6   Younger remarks that in popular imagination, princess Kamalādevī happens to be substituted with other local "symbols" of self-surrender to the god, such as Aṇṭāl, a Muslim princess or a lovesick girl known from the poems of Nammāḻvār (Younger 1982, pp. 645–46).

7   Narayanan mentions also Tirumokkur and Tirumaliruncolai, but remarks that celebrations are rather brief (Narayanan 1996, pp. 107–8).

8   Smith (1982, p. 42) mentions that the *Viṣṇutilakasaṃhitā* contains a short and undetailed passage on the subject, therefore I hope that the lack of references to it does not significantly affect the outcomes of my reseach.

9   See a list of paralell verses in Padmanabhan (2006, pp. cxii–cxviii). However, the ŚrīprśS most often draws on the *Pādmasaṃhitā* (see the list of parallel verses in Padmanabhan 2006, pp. lxxxix–cxi).

10 ĪS 12.34cd–40: *tadā devasya devyoś ca yuddhakrīḍāṃ ca kārayet* ||12.34|| *prathame gandhayuddhaṃ tu dvitīye puṣpayuddhakam* | *tṛtīye cūrṇayuddhaṃ ca caturthe tailayuddhakam* ||12.35|| *pañcame kṣīrayuddhaṃ syāt ṣaṣṭhe karpūrakuṅkumaiḥ* | *nārikelajalair yuddhaṃ saptame tu samācaret* ||12.36|| *gandhāmbhasāṣṭame yuddhaṃ navame jalayuddhakam* | *gehādigrāmamadhyāntaṃ bhaktair bhāgavataiḥ saha* ||12.37|| *gaṇikādevadāsībhiḥ kāryaṃ yuddhaṃ vinodataḥ* | *yuddhakrīḍāṃ tu kṛtvaivaṃ devam antaḥ praveśayet* ||12.38|| *saptāham utsave kuryāt cūrṇayuddhādisaptakam* | *pañcāham utsave kuryāt kṣīrayuddhādipañcakam* ||12.39|| *tryahotsave nālikelarasayuddhādikam bhavet* | *kevalaṃ jalayuddhaṃ tu kuryād ekāha utsave* ||12.40||—"Then he shoud make god and goddesses play a battle (34cd). On the first [day of the 9-day-long festival] there should be a fight with perfumes, on the second [day] a fight with flowers, on the third [day] a fight with the powder, on the fourth [day] a battle with seasamum oil, on the fifth

[day] a battle with milk, on the sixth [day] he should conduct a battle with camphor and saffron, on the seventh [day] with coconut-water, on the eighth [day] a battle with fragrant water, on the nineth [day] a battle with water (35–37ab). The battle should be performed with joy, from the temple up to the centre of a village, with devotees of the Venerable One (Bhagavān), temple-women (*gaṇikā*) and temple-dancers (*devadāsī*). (37cd–38ab). Having performed the play of the battle, one should lead the god inside [the temple] (38cd). During the 7-day-long festival, one should perform 7-folded [battle] starting with the powder (*cūrṇa*), during the 5-day-long festival one should perform 5-folded battle starting with milk, during the 3-day-long festival there should be a [three-folded] battle starting with coconut-juice. But during the 1-day-long festival (*utsava*) one should perform only the battle with water (*jalayuddha*) (39–40).".

[11] ĪS 12.54–58: *yajamāno mūrtipāś ca bhūsurā vaiṣṇavottamāḥ | yatayo brahmaniṣṭhāś ca siñceyur maṅgalāmbhasā | | 12.54 | | cāturvarṇyabhavāḥ sarve puruṣāṃś ca striyo 'pi ca | gaṇikā devadāsyaś ca tathānye vādyavādakāḥ | | 12.55 | | parasparaṃ ca siñceyuḥ sarve maṅgalavāribhiḥ | gaṅgāsnānaphalaṃ prāpya viṣṇusāyujyam āpnuyuḥ | | 12.56 | | yāne devaṃ samāropya saha snānārdravāsasā | jalakrīḍāpuraskaṃ tu yātropakaraṇaiḥ saha | | 12.57 | | bhrāmayed grāmavīdhīṣu prītaye varuṇasya ca | prajānām api sarveṣāṃ pavitrīkaraṇāya ca | | 12.58 | |*— "The donor (*yajamāna*), and priests who guard the image, brahmins, the best of Vaiṣṇavas and renouncers (*yati*) absorbed in contemplation of Brahman, should sprinkle [each other] with auspicious water (54). All men and even women originating from four *varṇa*s, temple-women (*gaṇikā*) and temple-dancers (*devadāsī*) as well as other musicians (55), should sprinkle each other with auspicious water. Having obtained the fruit of bath in the Ganga, they may attain the state of absorpion in Viṣṇu (56). But having placed the God provided with procession paraphernalia, who had previously (*puraskam*) attended *jalakrīḍā*, in cloths wet due to bath, on a carriage, one should take him to the streets of a village for Varuṇa's pleasure and for purification of all people (57–58).".

[12] If the term *brāhmamuhūrta* is really meant here—this is how it is understood by Lakshmithathachar and Varadachari (2009, p. 605) and supported by ŚrīprśS 40.39ab (I owe this reference to one of the peer-reviewers)—one of possibilities to estimate the time is, as noted in other context by Rastelli (2007, p. 295) based on explanation by Vijñeśvara, one and a half hours before sunrise.

[13] ĪS 11.312–314ab: *aṣṭame 'hni tu tadrātrau ḍolārohaṇapūrvakam | aśvāroham tataḥ kuryāt mṛgayāṃ cāpi kārayet | | 11.312 | | bhaktas-antrāṇalīlāṃ ca brāhme nagaraśodhanam | praṇayaḥ kalahaś ca syād devyor devena vai miśraḥ (?/mithaḥ?) | | 11.313 | | sandhānam ubhayoḥ kuryāt kṣamyatām iti coccaret |.*

[14] In Kannada, *nagaraśōdhana* means 'inspection of a town; searching a town' (Kittel 1968–71). I owe this remark to one of the peer-reviewers.

[15] Although the modes of the reenactment of stealing Viṣṇu's jewelery vary among temples, exceptional seems to be the case of a ritual practiced in Upper Ahobilam. Contrary to a rather standarized Vedupari which is reenacted in Lower Ahobilam on the 8th day of *mahotsava*, the version known in Upper Ahobilam involves the tribal community of the Chenchu. The performance maintains the meanings linked to a salvific power of Viṣṇu (here Viṣṇu-Narasiṃha) which brings the outsiders into the fold of Vaishnavism, however here instead of Tirumaṅkai these are Chenchus, as they assume the role of thieves. If we consider that the Chenchus symbolize a local, second wife of Narasiṃha, who comes from their tribe, and the part of Narasiṃha is acted out by the priests, the pattern of performance may be perhaps taken as revealing certain traits of a couple's argument.

[16] One may wonder whether such an interpretation is not influenced by the shape of today practice in Srirangam, where reenactments of both the *praṇayakalaha* and Tirumaṅkai Āḻvār's attack on Viṣṇu are very elaborate. However I could not find any confirmation that they are performed one after the other.

[17] The panels include the depiction of the *gajendramokṣa* episode (Hudson 2008, pp. 152–56).

[18] I thank one of the peer-reviewers for drawing my attention to the works of Bryant and Burchett.

[19] Raman understands the term Hastigiri as a Sanskritisation of Attiyūr, the original name of the place, deriving from the *atti* tree (Ficus Glomerata, Skt. *udumbara*) (Raman 1975, p. 5f.).

[20] In the *Pāñcarātrarakṣā* 87.17–89.7, Vedānta Deśika evokes the *gajendramokṣa* episode in the context of meditation which should be carried by a devotee every morning in order to assume a particular attitude to the god (on this meditation see Rastelli 2007). Recalling the god in the aspect of a rescuer of *gajendra* (*gajendramokṣaka*) is one of ways to do so. The lines on *gajendramokṣaka* are most likely quoted from another source.

[21] On the characteristics of the stylistic features of the *gajendramokṣa* episode found in the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*, see (Shulman 1993, pp. 124–27).

[22] Given that there are more instances of narrative passages drawing on certain myths which serve in the ŚrīprśS as an explanation of some other festivals' background (e.g., the wedding festival or the *kālyanotsava* (ŚrīprśS 25); else the festival of lamps or the *dīpotsava* (ŚrīprśS 55); see summary of the relevant chapters in Smith 1975–1980), it seems that introducing the *gajendramokṣa* episode into the text is not the result of the *saṃhitā*'s later textual reworking, but rather a strategy which had been consciously applied within the whole text, and, possibly, by one and the same person.

[23] To one of the peer-reviewers I owe a remark that given that Rāmānuja and the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition paid little, if any, importance to the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* (Bryant 2002, pp. 52–53), it is questionable whether the text was the original source of inspiration for the compiler of the ŚrīprśS. If so, this case would shed a fresh light on the issue of the relationship between the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition and the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* and thus merits more attention. As for now I cannot answer this question.

[24] On setting the scene in the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*'s version see (Shulman 1993, p. 129).

25 In the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* the prayer in the form of a *stotra* is significantly longer, but also without a specified addresee; see (Shulman 1993, pp. 130–31).

26 As one of the peer-reviewers pointed out, a better reading would be *gharmārta* (suffering from heat), however the printed edition does not provide such a variant.

27 ŚrīprśS 47.7d–47.9: . . . *devi grīṣmakālābhipīḍitaḥ* | |47.7| | *mattamātaṅgayūthānāṃ kariṇīnāṃ ca yūthapaḥ* | *dharmārtaś codakaṃ pātuṃ tatsaraḥ prāviśaj javāt* | |47.8| | *gṛhītvā salilaṃ śītam apibat puṣkareṇa saḥ* | *etasmin samaye tasya grāho 'gṛhṇāc ca tatpadam* | |47.9| |.

28 ŚrīprśS 47.10–11: *tasmān moktum aśaktaḥ sannuccair ittham aghoṣayat* | *yatkāraṇam yadādhāraṃ yasmin līnam idaṃ jagat* | |47.10| | *tasmai jagatkāraṇāya mūlāya mahase namaḥ* | *ity ākrandat tato devā nāgacchan druhiṇādayaḥ* | |47.11| |.

29 ŚrīprśS 47.12–14: *tato garuḍam āruhya tvām anādṛtya vai javāt* | *tatsamīpam upāgamya nakrasya krūrakarmaṇaḥ* | |47.12| | *cakreṇa śira utkṛtya nāgarājam arakṣayam* | *mayā hato nakravaro gajaś cāpi vimokṣitaḥ* | |47.13| | *śāpād vimuktau devatvaṃ prāpitau māṃ praṇematuḥ* | *matsālokyaṃ tayor datvā vaikuṇṭhaṃ punarāgataḥ* | |47.14| |.

30 ŚrīprśS 47.15–16: *tadā tvayāhaṃ dvāry eva pratiṣiddho 'bhavaṃ kila* | *avocaṃ kāraṇam bhadre na śṛṇoṣi yadā vacaḥ* | |47.15| | *tadā tau ca samāgatya bhavatpādābhivanditau* | *avocatāṃ sarovṛttaṃ tato madvacanaṃ nyathāḥ* | |47.16| |. The verb *nyathāḥ* seems corrupted. I propose to take it as *nyaithāḥ*, assuming that the verb is *i*, and a prefix -*ni*.

31 I thank one of the peer-reviewers for suggesting revisions.

32 ŚrīprśS 47.17–18ab: *tatas tvayā nāgabhoge vallabhe śāyitāsmy aham* | *tadutsavaṃ varārohe mamārcāyāṃ viśeṣataḥ* | |47.17| | *kāryaṃ tasya prakāraṃ ca vadāmi kamalekṣaṇe* |.

33 ŚrīprśS 47.18cd–22ab: *utsavo 'py eṣa vai kāryas tarhi tvam bhaktavatsala* | |47.18| | *yatra yatrāsate bhaktāḥ sevituṃ na kṣamā hare* | *praveśas tv ālaye yeṣāṃ pratiṣiddho jagatpate* | |47.19| | *śāstreṇa vyādhibhiś cāpi teṣāṃ darśanasiddhaye* | *āruhya śibikāṃ deva hy arcārūpeṇa keśava* | |47.20| | *sarvavīthisthitānāṃ ca bhaktānām iṣṭasiddhaye* | *darśayātmānam ānandaṃ sarvapāpapraṇāśanam* | |47.21| | *saṃsāragrāhasaṃdaṣṭān gajendram iva mocaya* |.

34 ŚrīprśS 47.24–26: *aruṇodayataḥ pūrvaṃ nityakarmādikāṃś caran* | *athālayaṃ praviśyāntar nityapūjāṃ samāpayet* | |47.24| | *bhagavan puṇḍarīkākṣa bhaktarakṣaṇadīkṣita* | *lakṣmyās tava priyārthāya praṇayād yuvayor hare* | |47.25| | *kalahotsavam adyāhaṃ kartum icchāmi mādhava* | *tadarthaṃ kautuke bimbe saṃnidhatsva kṛpānidhe* | |47.26| |.

35 ŚrīprśS 47.27–28: *iti vijñāpya lakṣmīśaṃ mūlāt karmaṇi kautuke* | *āvāhyārghyādinābhyarcya mudgānnādi nivedayet* | |47.27| | *śibikāyāṃ samāropya bhrāmayet vīthiṣu kramāt* | *sāyāhnasamaye prāpte dūratas tv ālayāt kvacit* | |47.28| |.

36 ŚrīprśS 47.29–31: *maṇḍape sthāpayitvā taṃ śramaśāntyai tato hareḥ* | *datvārghyādīni bhakṣyāṇi nivedya tadanantaram* | |47.29| | *yānam āropya gandhādyair alaṃkṛtya hariṃ prabhum* | *vādyair vīṇādigānaiś ca nṛtyair bahubhir anvitam* | |47.30| | *tāmbūlacarvitoṣṭhaṃ ca gaṇikāgaṇasevitam* | *praveśayed ālayaṃ tu devī taṃ pratiṣedhayet* | |47.31| | *tāmbūlacarvitoṣṭhaṃ* should be corrected into *tāmbūlacarvitauṣṭham* |.

37 ŚrīprśS 47.32–33: *evaṃ tricaturo vārān pratiṣidhya tato guruḥ* | *he lakṣmīr bhagavān adya bhaktarakṣaṇakāmyayā* | |47.32| | *bahirgato nānyathā tvaṃ mantum arhasi padmaje* | *iti saṃprārthya devena devyā nīrājanaṃ caret* | |47.33| |.

38 ŚrīprśS 47.34–36: *rātripūjāṃ tataḥ kṛtvā śayyāyāṃ tau niveśayet* | *saṃpūjya bhogaiḥ śayyāṅgaiḥ prātar udbodhya mādhavam* | |47.34| | *mūle śaktiṃ niyojyātha prārthayec ca tato guruḥ* | *gajārtihara lakṣmīśa praṇayotsavam adya te* | |47.35| | *kṛtaṃ tv anādaraṃ kiṃcit tatkṣantavyaṃ dayānidhe* | *iti saṃprārthya lakṣmīśaṃ tataḥ pūjām upakramet* | |47.36| |.

39 On theology of Rāmānuja, see, e.g., (Carman 1974; Bartley 2002; Ganeri 2015).

40 The doctrine of *prapatti* has been also discussed, for instance, in the context of its links to the ritual called *pañcasaṃskāra*, namely the ritual which gives a right to perform rituals for others, known to both the Pāñcarātra and the Vaikhānasa schools (Hüsken 2009, pp. 125–39).

41 For a short summary of views on the role of Śrī/Lakṣmī in the Pāñcarātra see Carman 2007 (referring to Rastelli 1999; Schrader 1916).

42 See discussion concerning the textual elements pointing to the late South Indian origin of the ŚrīprśŚ or, at least, its final redaction, in Raghavan 2006.

43 LT 17.60–61ab = AhS 37.28–29ab: *ānukūlyasya saṃkalpaḥ prātikūlyasya varjanam* | *rakṣiṣyatīti viśvāso goptṛtvavaraṇaṃ tathā* | *ātmanikṣepakārpaṇye ṣaḍvidhā śaraṇāgatiḥ* |. My translation of the terms denoting six methods/aspects follows that proposed in Mumme 2007. Yet another *saṃhitā* that transmits the same concept of the sixfold nature of *prapatti* is a *Viṣvaksenasaṃhitā*, different than the *saṃhitā* availabale today under the same title, but quoted as authority by Varadaguru in his *Prapannapārijāta*; see (Oberhammer 2007, pp. 49–50).

44 ŚrīprśS 53.26cd–29: *śakteḥ sūpasadatvāc ca kṛpāyogāc ca śāśvatāt* | |53.26| | *īśeśitavyasaṃbandhād anidaṃprathamād api* | *rakṣiṣyaty anukūlān na iti yā sudṛḍhā matiḥ* | |53.27| | *sa viśvāso bhaved devi sarvaduṣkṛtanāśanaḥ* | *karuṇāvān api vyaktaṃ śaktaḥ svāmy api dehinām* | |53.28| | *aprārthito na gopāyed iti tatprārthanāmatiḥ* | *gopāyitā bhavety evaṃ goptṛtvavaraṇaṃ tathā* | |53.29| | (These lines correspond with LT 17.70–73, except for replacing the vocative *chakra* [*śakra*] in LT 17.72ab with *devi* in ŚrīprśS 53.28ab, and *smṛtam* in LT 17.73cd with *tathā* in ŚrīprśS 53.29; compare translation of this passage (or its portions) in Gupta 1972, p. 94; Mumme 2007, p. 119; Akepiyapornchai 2016, p. 73).

45 ŚrīprśS 53.34–35: *rakṣiṣyatīti viśvāsād rakṣaṇopāyakalpanam* | *goptṛtvavaraṇaṃ nāma svābhiprāyanivedanam* | |53.34| | *sarvajño 'pi hi viśvātmā sadā kāruṇiko 'pi san* | *saṃsāratantravāhitvāt rakṣāpekṣāṃ pratīkṣate* | |53.35| | (These lines correspond with LT 17.78cd–79;

[46] except for replacing *viśveśaḥ* in LT 17.79cd with *viśvātmā* in ŚrīprśS 53.35ab; compare translation of this passage (or ist portions) in (Gupta 1972, p. 95; Mumme 2007, p. 119).

[46] ŚrīprśS 2.13–15ab: *padme tvatto 'pi me gopyaṃ trailokye nāsti vallabhe | avatārādiṣu mayā saha tiṣṭhasi suvrate ||2.13|| itthaṃ sthite mayā gopyaṃ kiṃ vāsti jagadīśvari | sarvajñā hy asi māṃ devi tvam ajñeva mama priye ||2.14|| lokasya hitam icchantī māṃ pṛcchasi varānane |.*

[47] The *Viṣṇutilakasaṃhitā* which I was unable to refer to is, according to Smith, of the post-Rāmānuja period (Smith 1975–1980, p. 385). That makes it chronologically close to both the ĪS and the ŚrīprśS.

[48] In this context it may be of some importance that the ŚrīprśS is believed to be canonical in Kumbhakonam (see, however, a sceptical opinion of Raghavan 2006), where the Śārṅgapāṇi temple belongs to Vaṭakalais (I thank Marzenna Czerniak-Drożdżowicz for this remark).

[49] Carman's words constitute a polemics with Gupta, according to whom the ŚrīprśS actually represents the ultimate phase in the developement of the Pāñcarātra, namely the phase when the Pāñcarātra school has been totally accomodated to the Śrīvaiṣṇavism. As she suggests, this is for instance seen in the replacement of the figure of *sādhaka* ("a seeker of mundane pleasures") by a figure of *prapanna* ("surrender-of-the self"), which happened in result of the spread of a new doctrine of *prapatti* (Gupta 1983, pp. 85, 88–89).

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