VEDĀNTADEŚIKA'S INTERPRETATION OF RĀMĀNUJA'S PRAPATTI: A STUDY BASED ON THE *NIKṢEPARAKṢĀ*

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition's validation of the doctrine of surrendering oneself to a Personal God (*prapatti*). Prapatti was mentioned by Rāmānuja, the tradition's most authoritative teacher, as an auxiliary to bhaktiyoga that he taught as a means to mokṣa. After the time of Rāmānuja, prapatti was developed as an alternative means. In order to validate the doctrine of prapatti, the post-Rāmānuja teachers were committed to arguing that Rāmānuja taught prapatti as an independent means to mokṣa (*aṅgi-prapatti*). I focus on Vedāntadeśika, the most famous post-Rāmānuja teacher, and his interpretation of Rāmānuja's prapatti. I argue that, in his *Nikṣeparakṣā*, Vedāntadeśika reinterpreted Rāmānuja's teaching of prapatti as a teaching of aṅgi-prapatti. Vedāntadeśika's interpretation reflects his harmonization of Rāmānuja's incoherent statements regarding prapatti and synthesization of both intra- and extra-traditional authorities. This study ultimately shows Vedāntadeśika's intellectual contribution and the role of his interpretation in the doctrinal validation of aṅgi-prapatti.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Manasicha Akepiyapornchai was born in Bangkok, Thailand on the 10th of March 1992 and was raised in the city of Ayutthaya (which was named after Ayodhya, the birthplace of Rāma). She received her bachelor's degree (first-class honors) from the Department of Eastern Languages, Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University Bangkok in 2014. In the same year, she was granted a scholarship from the non-profit Anandamahidol Foundation under the Royal Patronage of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand to pursue her graduate studies abroad. From August 2014 to May 2016, she studied for her master's degree in South Asian Studies at Cornell University. After obtaining her degree, she will continue her study in the Department of Asian Studies at Cornell University as a PhD student in Asian Literature, Religion, and Culture.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABH	*Ahirbudhnyasaṃhitā*
BGBh	*Bhagavadgītābhāṣya*
Gadyas	*Gadyatraya*
GadyasBh	*Gadyatrayasārabhāṣya*
Gītā	*Bhagavadgītā*
LT	*Lakṣmītantra*
NR	*Nikṣeparakṣā*
SK	*Sātyakitantra*
TPC	*Tātparyacandrikā*

Introduction

The Tamilnadu-centered Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition, which is devoted to the worship of Viṣṇu, took shape as a religious community during the life-time of the most influential teacher (ācārya) of the tradition, Rāmānuja (traditional dates: c. 1017-1137 CE).[1] Rāmānuja is revered by the tradition as the establisher of the traditional philosophy which is later known as "Viśiṣṭādvaita" (qualified non-dualism), one branch of the Vedānta school of Hindu philosophy. Moreover, Rāmānuja is well-known for his teaching of the doctrine of *bhaktiyoga* ("devotion to a Personal God"), which he derived from the *Bhagavadgītā* (not earlier than the second century BCE), one of the main scriptures of the Vedānta school.

However, the doctrine of bhaktiyoga established by Rāmānuja is restricted only to the three upper castes who are eligible to study the Vedas. In the *Vedārthasaṃgraha* ("Condensation of the Meaning of the Vedas"), one of Rāmānuja's philosophical works, Rāmānuja explains bhaktiyoga as a form of knowledge of God which is fostered by *karmayoga* ("the means of work") and *jñānayoga* ("the means of knowledge"). Rāmānuja states that, in order to attain mokṣa, one is required to have "the requisite knowledge" of the nature of God and to engage in meditation on God which is comprised of Vedic rituals.[2] This knowledge of the nature of God as well as the meditations can only be acquired from the Vedas. This fact disqualifies Śūdras, outcastes, and women from

[1] Narayanan, "Śrīvaiṣṇavism," 556.
[2] Van Buitenen, *Vedārthasaṃgraha,* 250.

attaining mokṣa by default since these groups of people, unlike three upper castes, were prohibited from studying the Vedas.[3]

Thus, the post-Rāmānuja tradition presumably offered a soteriological doctrine known as the doctrine of *prapatti* ("surrendering oneself to a Personal God") as an alternative means to mokṣa for people other than the three upper castes. The doctrine of prapatti was systematized and explicitly taught in philosophical and theological works, commentaries, and the rahasya-literature (which focuses on commenting on the three sacred mantras of the tradition: the Tirumantra, the Dvayamantra, and the Caramaśloka ("last verse") or *Bhagavadgītā* 18.66 in the post-Rāmānuja period.[4]

Srilata Raman illustrates that the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition maintains that the doctrine of prapatti is taught uninterruptedly from the first three ācāryas of the tradition -- Nāthamuni (traditional dates: 9 century CE), Yāmuna (traditional dates: c. 918-1038 CE), and Rāmānuja -- as part of the *stotra* ("devotional hymn of praise") literature as follows:

> The traditional Śrīvaiṣṇava view, in contrast [to general scholarly views that the doctrine of prapatti does not exist in the works of the first three ācāryas of the tradition], is that there is no ideological break between Rāmānuja and the later *ācāryas* on *prapatti*. This is in keeping with the overall traditional perspective that there exists an unbroken line of *prapatti*-literature within the Śrivaiṣṇava canon starting with sections of certain *Upaṇiṣads*, the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Pāñcarātrāgamas*, moving on to the devotional works of the *ācāryas* beginning with that of Yāmuna and Rāmānuja and culminating in the commentaries and rahasya-literature of the post-Rāmānuja period.[5]

[3] Lipner, *The Face of Truth,* 104-105.
[4] For more information on the three sacred mantras, see Francis X. Clooney, *The Truth, the Way, the Life: Christian Commentary on the Three Holy Mantras of the Śrīvaiṣṇava Hindus*. Leuven: Peeters. 2008.
[5] Raman, *Self-Surrender,* 24.

The Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition views Yāmuna's *Stotraratna* ("Jewel Among Devotional Hymns") as a model for the traditional stotra literature that presents prapatti as a means to mokṣa. Also, the *Gadyatraya* ("Three Prose Works"), the stotra collection of the next ācārya Rāmānuja, like Yāmuna's *Stotraratna* before it, is also claimed by the tradition to teach the doctrine of prapatti.

However, Rāmānuja's emphasis on the doctrine of bhaktiyoga in his philosophical and theological works makes the claim of an uninterrupted stream of "prapatti literature" difficult. Although it is undeniable that Rāmānuja established the doctrine of bhaktiyoga as a means to mokṣa in his main works, namely, the *Śrībhāṣya* ("Glorious Commentary") and the *Vedārthasaṃgraha*, in this study I suggest that in fact Rāmānuja did not as clearly address the doctrine of prapatti. It is my contention that the connection between Rāmānuja and the doctrine of prapatti was constructed by the post-Rāmānuja ācāryas by necessity since Rāmānuja is regarded as the most authoritative figure of the tradition. In order to validate their doctrine of prapatti, the post-Rāmānuja ācāryas turned to Rāmānuja's *Bhagavadgītābhāṣya* ("The Commentary on the *Bhagavadgītā*") and *Gadyatraya* - which are less philosophically-oriented. Although these two works of Rāmānuja mention prapatti, they do not present prapatti as a means to mokṣa separate from bhaktiyoga.

This study, thus, examines the way post-Rāmānuja ācāryas dealt with the unstated doctrine of prapatti in Rāmānuja's works. I choose Vedāntadeśika (traditional dates: c. 1268-1369 CE) as representative of those post-Rāmānuja ācāryas who attempted to argue that Rāmānuja taught prapatti as an independent means to mokṣa. Vedāntadeśika, arguably the most famous post-Rāmānuja ācārya, is retrospectively regarded as the

founder of the Vaṭakalai (the Northern school) sub-school of the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition. His contribution to the development of the doctrine of prapatti in the post-Rāmānuja time is evident in the *Rahasyatrayasāra* ("Essence of the Three Secret Mantras") and the *Nikṣeparakṣā* ("Defense on the Doctrine of Offering [Oneself to God]"), two of his most important philosophical and theological works. These works are fully dedicated to defending prapatti as an independent means to mokṣa.

Most scholars who investigate Vedāntadeśika's argument on the doctrine of prapatti have paid attention to the *Rahasyatrayasāra*, a commentary on the three mantras of the tradition written in hybrid Tamil-Sanskrit language, the "Maṇipravāḷa." However, the *Nikṣeparakṣā*, a Sanskrit philosophical defense on the doctrine of prapatti, remains under-researched. The *Nikṣeparakṣā* essentially argues that the Caramaśloka or verse 18.66 of the *Bhagavadgītā* -- which at the time of Vedāntadeśika was upheld as one of the three sacred traditional mantras -- presents prapatti as an independent means to mokṣa. Vedāntadeśika defended the position that the Caramaśloka teaches the doctrine of prapatti in order to justify the view, held by the Śrivaiṣṇava tradition, that the Caramaśloka (as well as the other two sacred mantras) are the teachings of the doctrine of prapatti. Moreover, it can be speculated that Vedāntadeśika may have aimed to use the Caramaśloka which is in a Vedāntic scripture, the *Bhagavadgītā* as a Vedāntic scriptural authority for this doctrine. However, it remains uncertain whether or not Vedāntadeśika was the initiator of these ideas. The *Nikṣeparakṣā* also provides a coherent system for the doctrine of prapatti, integrating various textual elements from both intra- and extra-traditional authorities.

In this study, then, I use Vedāntadeśika's *Nikṣeparakṣā* as the main source since it attentively accounts for the seeming absence of the doctrine of prapatti in Rāmānuja's works. Despite the fact that the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition explicitly classifies Rāmānuja's Gadyatraya as stotra literature (and therefore as a work which directly presents the doctrine of prapatti), Vedāntadeśika was compelled to focus more on the *Bhagavadgītābhāṣya* due to its emphasis on the doctrine of bhaktiyoga. This path eventually led him to defend the position that Rāmānuja taught prapatti as an independent means to mokṣa in the *Bhagavadgītābhāṣya*.

The most important part of the *Bhagavadgītābhāṣya* is Rāmānuja's commentary on the Caramaśloka. Post-Rāmānuja ācāryas paid attention to the commentary of the Caramaśloka because of its overall significance, but also because Rāmānuja offered two differing interpretations for this verse. The Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition as well as scholars suspect that one of these two differing interpretations presents prapatti as an alternative to bhaktiyoga. In this study, I pay attention only to Rāmānuja's second interpretation which is Vedāntadeśika's particular interest, as I illustrate in the following pages.

The second interpretation, in which Rāmānuja presents prapatti as an auxiliary to bhaktiyoga, was analyzed in detail in Vedāntadeśika's *Nikṣeparakṣā* to support - I argue - the teaching of aṅgi-prapatti. Of utmost interest is the fact that Vedāntadeśika's elaboration of Rāmānuja's second interpretation required his independent harmonization of Rāmānuja's incoherent statements regarding prapatti, as presented in both the *Bhagavadgītābhāṣya* and the *Gadyatraya*. Vedāntadeśika's harmonization of Rāmānuja's incoherent statements regarding prapatti is also evident in Vedāntadeśika's commentary on Rāmānuja's *Bhagavadgītābhāṣya* and the Gadyatraya: the

Tātparyacandrikā (“Illumination of the doctrine of devoting oneself to God”) and the *Gadyatrayabhāṣya* (“Commentary on the Three Proses”).

The analysis of Vedāntadeśika’s interpretation of Rāmānuja’s prapatti as presented in this study then shows that Rāmānuja’s works -- and especially his second interpretation of the Caramaśloka -- becomes necessary for Vedāntadeśika as a key authoritative element of his systematization of the doctrine of aṅgi-prapatti as elaborated in the *Nikṣeparakṣā*. Apart from the *Nikṣeparakṣā*, I also explore Vedāntadeśika’s understanding of Rāmānuja’s prapatti as illustrated in Vedāntadeśika’s *Tātparyacandrikā* and *Gadyatrayasārabhāṣya.*

Before moving further, it should be noted that throughout my study I distinguish the terms “prapatti,” “the doctrine of prapatti,” “aṅgi-prapatti,” and “the doctrine of aṅgi-prapatti.” I use the term “prapatti” to refer to prapatti as it exists in Rāmānuja’s works. This term, “prapatti,” suggests the state when prapatti is a spiritual concept and is not explicitly presented or theorized as an independent means to mokṣa. “The doctrine of prapatti” indicates the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition’s soteriological doctrine that holds prapatti as a means to mokṣa. This doctrine was supposedly formed after the time of Rāmānuja, and was further developed around the time of Vedāntadeśika. The term “aṅgi-prapatti” (independent prapatti) is then used within the context of Vedāntadeśika’s defense of prapatti as an independent means to mokṣa. In the *Nikṣeparakṣā*, Vedāntadeśika generally uses “prapatti” along with other synonyms such as śaraṇāgati, nyāsa(vidyā), (ātma)nikṣepa and so on to refer to an independent prapatti. He further uses the word “aṅgi-” to specify the independence of prapatti, in contrast to “aṅga-prapatti” which instead meant prapatti as an auxiliary to bhaktiyoga. Although Vedāntadeśika does not use “aṅgi”

together with “prapatti,” I have made the choice to consistently use “aṅgi-prapatti” in the meaning of independent prapatti in this study. My intention is to stress the distinction between prapatti as an independent means (aṅgi-prapatti) and prapatti as an auxiliary to bhaktiyoga (aṅga-prapatti). Finally, “the doctrine of aṅgi-prapatti” communicates the whole system of Vedāntadeśika’s aṅgi-prapatti which is constructed from various textual elements and supported by both intra- and extra-traditional authorities in the *Nikṣeparakṣā*. Vedāntadeśika’s systematized doctrine of aṅgi-prapatti in his *Nikṣeparakṣā* is one version of the Śrīvaiṣṇava doctrine of prapatti.

This thesis consists of three chapters. The first chapter focuses on Rāmānuja’s statements on prapatti as elaborated in in his two works. This chapter offers my analysis of Rāmānuja’s commentary on the Caramaśloka as well as providing a review of the scholarly literature examining Rāmānuja’s position on prapatti. This review mainly aims to address the question of whether or not Rāmānuja regarded prapatti as an independent means to mokṣa in addition to bhaktiyoga. In Chapter 2, I explain Vedāntadeśika’s attempt to argue that Rāmānuja taught the doctrine of aṅgi-prapatti in his second interpretation of the Caramaśloka. I also offer my analysis of the way Vedāntadeśika harmonized Rāmānuja’s incoherent statements regarding prapatti. Chapter 3 focuses on the way Vedāntadeśika synthesized textual authorities from the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās and the Mīmāṃsā tradition in his systematization of the doctrine of aṅgi-prapatti. Chapter 3 then shows that although the post-Rāmānuja ācārya Vedāntadeśika had a commitment to justify Rāmānuja’s teaching of the doctrine of prapatti, he extended the scope of authority he recognized to include other systems. Finally, the concluding chapter summarizes and pulls together the threads explored throughout the thesis to argue that

the study of Vedāntadeśika's interpretation of Rāmānuja's prapatti reflects how the post-Rāmānuja ācāryas of the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition validated the doctrine of prapatti by interpreting Rāmānuja's works as "prapatti-literature."

Chapter One

Rāmānuja's Prapatti[6]

In this chapter, I investigate Rāmānuja's position on prapatti. To achieve this goal I analyze two of his controversial works that mention prapatti, the *Bhagavadgītābhāṣya* (henceforth BGBh) and the *Gadyatraya* (henceforth Gadyas). The driving questions are as follows: What is prapatti according to Rāmānuja? What is the relation between prapatti and bhaktiyoga? And, above all, did Rāmānuja establish prapatti as an independent means to mokṣa? In order to answer these questions, I analyze English language scholarly literature written between 1934 and 2007 and critically addressing the topic of Rāmānuja's prapatti departing from these two works, which indeed have unique characteristics.

The BGBh is a detailed commentary on the *Bhagavadgītā* that follows Yāmuna's summary of the *Bhagavadgītā* (henceforth Gītā), the *Gītārthasaṃgraha* ("Summary of the meaning of the *Bhagavadgītā*").[7] It is characterized by scholars as illustrating Rāmānuja's devotional and sectarian perspectives.[8] The Gadyas are a part of the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition's stotra literature that shows the influence of the Āḻvārs' devotional hymns and were modeled on Yāmuna's *Stotraratna*.[9] Therefore, the authenticity of both works, which are seemingly different from the two philosophical-oriented works, has been questioned. Yet, the selected scholarly texts all convincingly argue for the authenticity of both works

[6] This chapter is an adaptation of my final paper for ASIAN 3344 *Introduction to Indian philosophy* course (Spring 2015) that has the same title as this chapter.
[7] Carman, *The Theology of Rāmānuja,* 60 and 216-217. For more information on Rāmānuja's indebtedness to Yāmuna's *Gītārthasaṃgraha,* see Van Buitenen, *Rāmānuja on the Bhagavadgītā*, 9-12.
[8] Ibid., 61-62.
[9] For more information on Yāmuna's *Stotraratna*, see Narasimhachary, *Contribution of Yāmuna,* 61-83. See also Narayanan, *The Way and the Goal*, 62-77.

and propose possible explanations for the seeming differences between these two texts and other philosophical works of Rāmānuja. They adopt different methodologies and present various positions on Rāmānuja's prapatti in the BGBh and the Gadyas.

As the most celebrated ācārya of the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition and the establisher of an important system of Vedānta philosophy, later to be known as *Viśiṣṭādvaita* (qualified non-dualism), Rāmānuja has received the most attention from scholars as well as the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition itself in relation to the debate on the validity of prapatti as an independent means to mokṣa. Rāmānuja's major philosophical works, the *Śrībhāṣya* and the *Vedārthasaṃgraha*, are of unquestioned authorship, and teach the doctrine of bhaktiyoga as a means to mokṣa.[10]

Post-Rāmānuja ācāryas who attempted to validate the doctrine of prapatti by using Rāmānuja as an authoritative figure, thus, turned to Rāmānuja's two less philosophically oriented works: the BGBh and the Gadyas.[11] However, in these two works, Rāmānuja's statements regarding prapatti seem to be both subtle and incoherent. Therefore, scholars who attempt to investigate Rāmānuja's position on prapatti pay attention to these two works in which Rāmānuja presents seemingly incoherent statements regarding prapatti.

This chapter is divided into two parts, each addressing one of the two works by Rāmānuja. The first part focuses on Rāmānuja's BGBh, examining scholarly literature

[10] For example in the *Śrībhāṣya* 1.1.1. and the *Vedārthasaṃgraha* 76. In these two works, Rāmānuja obviously aims to debunk Śaṅkara's Advaita position and provide new interpretations for the Upaniṣadic statements in order that they support his Viśiṣṭādvaita position. For more information on these works, see Carman, *The Theology of Rāmānuja,* 50-56. For other works of Rāmānuja, see ibid., 57-64.

[11] According to Raman, the Śrīvaiṣṇava provided two explanations for the absence of the teaching of the doctrine of prapatti in Rāmānuja's philosophical works: "One explanation advanced the silence is that Rāmānuja did not explicitly reveal this secret means to salvation in his Vedāntic works because these texts were written for twice-born males (*dvija*) who were, in any case, qualified for *bhaktiyoga*. The second explanation is that the Vedāntic works are exoteric works meant for the consumption of non-Śrīvaiṣṇavas and that the doctrine of *prapatti* is an esoteric one meant for members of the community" (Raman, *Self-Surrender,* 25).

dealing with Rāmānuja's prapatti in the BGBh in a chronological order. These works are: Kumarappa (1934), Anantharangachar (1967), Van Buitenen (1968), Sampatkumaran (1969), Carman (1974), Nayar (1988), Dhavamony (1994), and Raman (2007). For the studies on Rāmānuja's prapatti (excluding those of Nayar, Dhavamony, and Raman), I will give only a brief summary, partly drawn from Nayar's study on "The Concept of Prapatti in Ramanuja's Gītābhāṣya," since she has already presented a concise and critical review of these works.[12] Then, I will summarize Nayar's study which extensively analyzes Rāmānuja's comments on chapter 9 of the Gītā.[13] A brief review of Dhavamony's "Rāmānuja's Theology of Self-Surrender to God (*prapatti*)" will be presented next.[14] It should be noted that Rāmānuja's BGBh is not the only focus of her study; however, I will include the part regarding the BGBh in order to cover all the literature on this topic, complete to my survey. The last work of which I will provide a detailed summary is Raman's analysis of "Rāmānuja and *Prapatti.*"[15] This is the most recent and complete study on this topic. She focuses on Rāmānuja's comments on chapter 7 and 18 of the Gītā.

Bhagavadgītābhāṣya

I will begin this section with a brief review of scholarly literature on Rāmānuja's prapatti in the BGBh collected by Nayar. Kumarappa's *The Hindu Conception of the Deity as Culminating in Ramanuja* is the earliest study on this topic.[16] In his study, Kumarappa

[12] Nayar, "The Concept of Prapatti," 114-118.
[13] Nayar, "The Concept of Prapatti." 118-132.
[14] Dhavamony, "Ramanuja's Theology of Self-Surrender."
[15] Raman, *Self-Surrender,* 24-40.
[16] Nayar, "The Concept of Prapatti," 115. See Bharatan Kumarappa, *The Hindu Conception of the Deity as Culminating in Rāmānuja* (London: Luzac & Co. 1934).

proposes God's sole agency in granting mokṣa to all as an identification of prapatti. Kumarappa argues that Rāmānuja's position on prapatti is "ambiguous."[17] Kumarappa supports his argument with some passages from Rāmānuja's commentary of the Gītā which shows that "moksa would seem to be due to the 'sole agency' of God himself."[18] However, Kumarappa cites Rāmānuja's commentary on Gītā 18.66 to indicate that, according to Rāmānuja, God's agency alone is not sufficient for mokṣa.[19] Nayar criticizes Kumarappa's study due to the fact that "he merely quotes—and that often out of context—what he regards as the appropriate commentarial passages, providing us with virtually no analysis," and that "he ignores key passages dealing with this very question, his only evidence being the commentary on IX:32."[20]

In the section on prapatti in his *The Philosophy of Sādhana in Viśiṣṭādvaita,* Anantharangachar examines prapatti in Rāmānuja's major works and concludes that prapatti in the BGBh is a penultimate step to bhaktiyoga.[21] However, Anantharangachar suggests that "[although] the concept of prapatti as a direct means to mokṣa is not explicitly present in Ramanuja's GB, his commentary *in no way refutes* the concept."[22] Anantharangachar states that in Rāmānuja's commentary on Gītā 18.66, "Prapatti is prescribed here not as a substitute to Bhakti, but as an aid to it. So it is an Añga or part of Bhakti there."[23]

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[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid. This quotation is from Bharatan Kumarappa, *The Hindu Conception of the Deity as Culminating in Rāmānuja* (London: Luzac & Co. 1934), 309.
[19] See Bharatan Kumarappa, *The Hindu Conception of the Deity as Culminating in Rāmānuja* (London: Luzac & Co. 1934), 308-309.
[20] Nayar, " The Concept of Prapatti," 115.
[21] Anantharangachar, *The Philosophy of Sādhana,* 190-238.
[22] Nayar, " The Concept of Prapatti," 118. This quotation is from Anantharangachar, *The Philosophy of Sādhana,* 193.
[23] Anantharangachar, *The Philosophy of Sādhana,* 194.

Van Buitenen widens his study to include analysis of Gītā's verses in which some passages like *śaraṇaṃ gaccha* (go to refuge) are being used with the meaning of pra-√pad or "to take refuge in."[24] Van Buitenen argues that prapatti and God's grace are not sufficient for mokṣa. In addition, a man needs bhaktiyoga and personal efforts in order to reach God.[25] In his translation of Rāmānuja's BGBh, Sampatkumaran takes the same position as Anantharangachar that the BGBh does not make explicit the doctrine of prapatti as held by later tradition, but he asserts that prapatti is "hinted at" in Gītā 18.66.[26] Finally, Carman focuses only on Rāmānuja's two interpretations of Gītā 18.66.[27] Carman concludes that, from these two interpretations, prapatti is not stated as an alternative means to mokṣa:

> Śaraṇāgati or prapatti is here, not an alternative to bhakti, but its true meaning, though in devotional expressions where the emphasis is on the all-sufficiency of the Lord's action and the unworthiness of the devotee, bhakti, jñāna, and karma seem to fall into insignificance.[28]

What follows is a more detailed summary of the analysis of the BGBh from Nayar (1988), Dhavamony (1994), and Raman (2007). Instead of searching for the doctrine of prapatti in the later tradition, Nayar intends to examine the BGBh to see "whether or not the scope for a doctrine of prapatti exists."[29] Nayar suggests that this work shows the

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[24] Van Buitenen, *Rāmānuja on the Bhagavadgītā*, 24-28.
[25] Ibid., 28.
[26] Nayar, "The Concept of Prapatti," 118. See Ramanuja, *The Gitabhashya of Ramanuja*, trans. M. R. Sampatkumaran (Madras: Professor M. Rangacharya Memorial Trust, 1969).
[27] Nayar, "The Concept of Prapatti," 117.
[28] Carman, *The Theology of Rāmānuja,* 217.
[29] Nayar, "The Concept of Prapatti," 128. Before Nayar's analysis of the scope for a doctrine of prapatti, she criticizes previous studies on Rāmānuja's prapatti in the BGBh as follows:
"It appears that no very thorough study of the doctrine of prapatti in the Ramanuja's GB exists. Some scholars who have approached the topic have concentrated their entire analysis on XVIII:66 alone (Carman), while others have provided us with a few quotations only, giving little or no serious textual analysis (Kumarappa). Still others stick closely to the method of word analysis and hence fail to discern the nuances present in Ramanuja's thought (Van Buitenen). It is agreed that there is no clear and explicit

sectarian role of Rāmānuja.[30] Nayar argues that, in the BGBh, Rāmānuja "preserves *many* of the ideas central to the concept of prapatti (he preserves, in fact, the whole "mood" of prapatti) without making any explicit reference to the doctrine."[31] Nayar points out that the "scope" of the doctrine of prapatti is apparent at least in the BGBh, chapter 9, verses 26-34. This "scope," as Nayar defines it, has important implications for the doctrine of prapatti that are distinct from those of bhaktiyoga, including: the universality of eligibility (verse 9.29 and 32); the view of bhakti, expressed in forms of worship, as both the means and the goal (verse 9.26, 30 and 34); the expansion from Vedic offerings to secular offerings (verse 9.26, 27, 28 and 34) which signify a significant part of the devotee's intention (verse 9.20, 26 and 30); and, lastly, the mutual relationship between God and devotees (verse 9.26, 29 and 34).[32]

Finally, Nayar makes the same suggestion as Katherine Young in her analysis of the concept of arcā in Rāmānuja's BGBh that, in these verses of the BGBh, Rāmānuja attempted not only to allusively express the doctrine prapatti of his tradition but also to attract a "pan-Indian audience unfamiliar with the terminology particular to the Tamil tradition."[33] However, it should be noted that the characteristics of prapatti that Nayar uses for her analysis do not all correspond to the independent prapatti systematized by Vedāntadeśika as we will see in the following chapters.

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doctrine of prapatti in the bhasya; yet little attention has been given to the possiblility of Ramanuja's having created the scope for such a doctrine by his interpretation of certain key passages, as for example, those in Chapter 9" (ibid., 114).

[30] Ibid., 113-114.

[31] Ibid., 129.

[32] See details ibid., 121-128. Nayar also points out that it may be worth exploring these verses in the commentaries of Vedāntadeśika and other acāryas' commentaries (ibid., 119).

[33] Ibid., 129. See Katherine K. Young, "Beloved places (ukantarulinanilanṅkaḷ): The Correlation of Topography and Theology in the Śrīvaiṣṇava Tradition of South India" (PhD diss., McGill University, 1978), http://digitool.Library.McGill.CA/R/?func=dbin-jump-full&object_id=76308, 286.

Dhavamony does not limit her study only to the BGBh. Instead, she claims that Rāmānuja mentions prapatti in his other major works. Dhavamony focuses on the *Śrībhāṣya* (1.4.1 and 3.3.57) and the *Vedārthasaṃgraha* (78, 81, and 91), which, she claims, imply that prapatti is an alternative means to mokṣa.[34] Furthermore, Dhavamony pays attention to Rāmānuja's commentary on Gītā 18.66, which is "one of the most significant places where his idea of *prapatti* is explained."[35] Dhavamony points out that prapatti in the BGBh (like in verse 7.14, 14.26-27, and 18.66), is "a preparatory help to *bhaktiyoga*…it does not substitute *bhakti*."[36]

In Raman's analysis of Rāmānuja's prapatti in the BGBh, She focuses on chapter 7, which is introduced by Rāmānuja as well as Yāmuna "as dealing with śaranāgati/prapatti," and chapter 18, especially verse 18.66.[37] Raman argues that Rāmānuja "proposes a differentiated meaning of *prapatti*" that "has different consequences depending on the type of person and his intentionality in undertaking it."[38] Among these various meanings of prapatti, the most distinct kinds are, first, "jñāna-prapatti" or prapatti of the *jñānī*, the best devotee, that is equal to bhaktiyoga and, second, "non-jñānī prapatti" that serves as a precondition for bhaktiyoga.[39]

Raman develops her argument by relying on verse 7.14 to show that prapatti helps in casting off māyā and prepares the non-jñānī for undertaking upāsana/bhaktiyoga. The idea of prapatti as the penultimate step to bhaktiyoga is reaffirmed in verse 7.15. Then,

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[34] Dhavamony, "Ramanuja's Theology of Self-Surrender," 69-70.
[35] Ibid., 68.
[36] Ibid., 73.
[37] Raman argues that "where Yāmuna in the *Gītārthasamgraha* used the word *śaraṇāgati*, Rāmānuja uses the word *prapatti*, making the two words synonymous" (ibid., 27).
[38] Ibid., 33-34.
[39] Ibid., 40. Raman's suggestion accords with Van Buitenen's comment that the term "prapatti" that appears in the GB has more than one meaning and the predominant meaning is that prapatti is "a step prior to *bhaktiyoga*" (ibid., 26). See Van Buitenen, *Rāmānuja on the Bhagavadgītā*, 9-12.

in verse 7.19, the equation between prapatti and bhaktiyoga supports the idea of "jñāna-prapatti."[40] Also, in this verse, Krṣṇa-Vāsudeva is regarded by the devotee as both "the supreme goal and the means to it."[41]

After her analysis of chapter 7, Raman attends to the context of chapter 18 "where a person addressed is a devotee who seeks salvation - a mumukṣu." Raman proposes that the two different interpretations of Gītā 18.66 offered by Rāmānuja, in fact, also refer to the two kinds of prapatti. In the first interpretation, "Rāmānuja is framing it as an address by Krṣṇa-Vāsudeva to the jñānī, whose prapatti is the equivalent of bhaktiyoga." While "the second interpretation of the *śloka* seems to relate to the *prapatti* of the other type of *bhakta*-whom I shall call the non-jñānī-who is yet to commence bhaktiyoga and is unable to do so because of his sinfulness, his lack of purity."[42]

The studies on Rāmānuja's prapatti in the BGBh show that Rāmānuja does not explicitly state that prapatti can be used independently as a means to mokṣa. On the other hand, prapatti is considered as an auxiliary to bhaktiyoga, which is a means to mokṣa. Interestingly, these studies emphasize the importance of Rāmānuja's commentary on Gītā 18.66 in which he gives two interpretations.

Gītā 18.66 presents Kṛṣṇa's statement to Arjuna: "Having abandoned all dharmas, go to Me alone as refuge. I will free you from all sins. Do not grieve."[43] From my investigation of Rāmānuja's two interpretations of this verse, I argue that Rāmānuja does not propose "taking refuge in God" or prapatti as a means to mokṣa in place of bhaktiyoga.

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[40] Ibid., 32-34.
[41] Ibid., 30.
[42] Ibid., 37-38.
[43] Shastri, *The Bhagavad-Gītā*, 3: 400.
sarvadharmān parityajya māṃ ekaṃ śaraṇaṃ vraja l
ahaṃ tvā sarvapāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ ll

In the first interpretation, Rāmānuja clearly states that “all dharmas” refers to the three means to mokṣa taught in the Gītā - karmayoga, jñānayoga, and bhaktiyoga. Rāmānuja specifies that the abandonment of these three means to mokṣa should be limited to “the abandonment of result and agency,” not the abandonment of the performance of these three means. Rāmānuja further supports his view with passages from Gītā 18.4 18.9, and 18.11 that particularly emphasize the abandonment. Rāmānuja explains that “go to Me alone as refuge” points to the ascertainment that God is “the agent, the one to be worshipped, the goal, and the means.” Rāmānuja proposes that God is the one who removes “all sins” that are the obstacles of the attainment of Him or mokṣa:

> A person who is performing all dharmas in forms of karmayoga, jñānayoga, and bhaktiyoga, which are means to mokṣa, according to eligibility, with excessive love, as a way of worshipping Me, that person, having abandoned the result and their own agency in these actions, as already stated in the Gītā by Kṛṣṇa, think surely of Me alone as the agent, the one to be worshipped, the goal, and the means. This alone is the śāstric way to abandon dharmas, as is explained very clearly in the beginning of this chapter, beginning with: “Listen to my conclusion regarding the abandonment O Arjuna! Abandonment is declared as three-fold O tiger among men!” [*Bhagavadgītā* 18.4]; “Having abandoned the attachment and also result, that abandonment is regarded as virtuous;” [*Bhagavadgītā* 18.9] “Because it is not possible to abandon actions entirely for one who is in a body. But the one who abandons the result of action is called an ascetic. [*Bhagavadgītā* 18.11]. “I will free you from all sins” means “I will free you, existing in this way, from all sins, which have a form of doing what should not to be done and not doing what to be done, which are endless and are collected over a beginningless period of time and are obstacles to attainment of Me.” “Do not grieve” means “do not feel grief.”[44]

[44] Ibid., 411-412. karmayogajñānayogabhaktiyogarūpān sarvān dharmān paramaniḥśreyasasādhanabhūtān madārādhanatvenātimātraprītyā yathādhikāraṃ kurvāṇa evoktarītyā phalakarmakartṛtvādiparityāgena parityajya māmekameva kartāramārādhyaṃ prāpyamupāyaṃ cānusaṃdhatsva; eṣa eva dharmāṇāṃ śāstrīyaparityāga iti ‘niścayaṃ śṛṇu me tatra tyāge bharatasattama ! tyāgo hi puruṣavyāghra ! trividhaḥ saṃprakīrtitaḥ’ [18.4] ityārabhya ‘saṅgaṃ tyaktvā phalaṃ caiva sa tyāgaḥ sāttviko mataḥ’ [18.9] ‘na hi dehabhṛtā śakyaṃ tyaktuṃ karmāṇyaśeṣataḥ. yas tu karmaphalatyāgī sa tyāgīty abhidhīyate’ [18.11] ityadhyāyādau sudṛḍhamupapāditam. ‘ahaṃ tvā sarvapāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi’ evaṃ vartamānaṃ tvāṃ matprāptivirodhibhyo ´nādikālasaṃcitānantākṛtyakaraṇakṛtyākaraṇarūpebhyaḥ sarvapāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi; mā śucaḥ śokaṃ mā kṛthāḥ.

However, in the second interpretation, Rāmānuja interprets “all sins” as the obstacles to the beginning of bhaktiyoga which is presumably the means to mokṣa. More importantly, unlike in the first interpretation, Rāmānuja indicates that “all dharmas” means the expiations for those sins that are difficult to be performed and take long time to accomplish. Having realized his inability to perform these expiations in order to remove sins that are obstacles to the beginning of bhaktiyoga, Arjuna is grieving. Therefore, in order to remove the grief of Arjuna, God enjoins Arjuna to abandon these expiations and take refuge in Him as a form of expiation of these sins:

> Alternatively, because bhaktiyoga can be accomplished only by a person who is completely dear to God and free from all sins, and because of the infinity of sins which are obstacles to the beginning of that [bhaktiyoga], Arjuna grieves, seeing his own inability to begin bhaktiyoga due to the impossibility of getting beyond these sins by means of dharmas which consist of the form of this or that expiation for those sins and which are to be done in a limited time. Removing the grief of Arjuna who is grieving in this way, God said – “Having abandoned all dharmas, go to Me alone as refuge.” Endless acts of various sorts such as kṛcchra, cāndrāyaṇa, kūśmāṇḍa, vaiśvānara, vrātapati, pavitreṣṭi, trivṛt, and agniṣṭoma etc. are suitable for [removing] endless sins of various sorts piled up from beginningless period of time which are obstacles for the undertaking of bhaktiyoga, and take the form of expiations for these sins. Having abandoned all these dharmas which are difficult to be performed by you who have only limited time, for accomplishing the undertaking of bhaktiyoga, take refuge in Me who is the one to be resorted to for the whole world without considering any differences and supremely compassionate, an ocean of compassion for people who depend on Me alone. I will free you from all sins which are obstacles to undertaking bhaktiyoga whose nature already stated; do not grieve.[45]

[45] Ibid., 412-413. athavā sarvapāpavinirmuktātyantabhagavatpriyapuruṣanirvartyatvādbhaktiyogasya tadārambhavirodhipāpānāmānantyācca tatprāyaścittarūpairdharmaiḥ aparimitakālakṛtaisteṣāṃ dustaratayā ātmano bhaktiyogārambhānarhatāmālocya śocato ´rjunasya śokamapanudan śrībhagavānuvāca – ‘sarvadharmān parityajya māmekaṃ śaraṇaṃ vraja’ iti. bhaktiyogārambhavirodhyanādikālasaṃcitanānāvidhānantapāpānuguṇān tatprāyaścittarūpān kṛcchracāndrāyaṇakūśmāṇḍavaiśvānaravrātapatipavitreṣṭitrivṛdagniṣṭomādikān nānāvidhānanantāṃs tvayā parimitakālavartinā duranuṣṭhānānān sarvān dharmān parityajya, bhaktiyogārambhasiddhaye māmekaṃ paramakāruṇikamanālocitaviśeṣāśeṣalokaśaraṇyamāśritavātsalyajaladhiṃ śaraṇaṃ prapadyasva. ahaṃ tvā sarvapāpebhyo yathoditasvarūpabhaktyārambhavirodhibhyaḥ sarvebhyaḥ pāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi; mā śucaḥ.

As we can see, both interpretations culminate in bhaktiyoga as a means to mokṣa. In the first interpretation, Rāmānuja explains that karmayoga, jñānayoga, and bhaktiyoga are means to mokṣa and these are to be performed by abandoning the result of these means and notion that one is the agent. According to Rāmānuja, the taking refuge in God can be understood as the mental act of determining God as "the agent, the one to be worshipped, the goal, and the means." In the second interpretation, Rāmānuja explicitly states that prapatti is a form of expiation for the removal of sins that are the obstacles to the beginning of bhaktiyoga. This prapatti is offered by God in place of the expiations that are difficult for Arjuna to perform because of his limited time. Thus, it is obvious that Rāmānuja merely proposes prapatti as an aṅga or the auxiliary of bhaktiyoga, not a means to mokṣa.

Gadyatraya

This section focuses on Rāmānuja's Gadyas whose authenticity was questioned by the Vaṭakalai Pandit Agnihotram and was further advanced by Professor Robert Lester.[46] It consists of three parts: *Śaraṇāgati-*, *Śrīraṅga-*, and *Vaikuṇṭha-gadya*. However, the scholarly literature that I have collected here all defend their authenticity and classify these works of Rāmānuja in the genre of stotra literature, which is distinct from philosophical works of Rāmānuja. The scholarly literature that I have selected is as follows: Anantharangachar (1967), Carman (1974), Sampatkumaran (1975), Narayanan (1987), Dhavamony (1994), Oberhammer (2005), and Raman (2007). These studies present two different views on Rāmānuja's prapatti in the Gadyas. The first view indicates that Rāmānuja explicitly presents prapatti as an independent means to mokṣa in these

[46] See details Carman, *The Theology of Rāmānuja,* 298-300. See also Robert Lester, "Rāmānuja and Śrī-Vaiṣṇavism: The Concept of Prapatti or Śaraṇāgati." *History of Religion 5* (1996): 266-82, doi: 10.1086/46252.

works. The second view proposes that they still describe bhaktiyoga as a means to mokṣa, and prapatti is not developed as an alternative means.

Anantharangachar aims to defend the authenticity of the Gadyas on three grounds: the doctrinal unity of this work and other works of Rāmānuja; the fact that these works were commented by well-known ācāryas of the tradition, i.e. Sudarśana Sūri, Periavāccān Piḷḷai, and Vedāntadeśika; and the similar "style and content" of the introductory paragraphs of the Gadyas and the introduction of the BGBh.[47] Anantharangachar asserts that the Gadyas are "the crown and culmination of the expositions of Rāmānuja, by all sections of his followers" and present prapatti as a direct means, but other works of Rāmānuja define prapatti as an indirect means. Anantarangachar claims that, in the *Vaikuṇṭhagadya,* "Rāmānuja has definitely stated in this gadyam his firm conviction that Prapatti at the feet of the Lord is also the direct means for the attainment of the Supreme bliss of the eternal service of the Lord."[48]

In *The Theology of Rāmānuja*, Carman devotes chapter 17 to dealing with the question of the authenticity of the Gadyas.[49] From his analysis of Rāmānuja's Gadyas through the commentaries of later ācāryas, Carman proposes that the ideas presented in the Gadyas are different from the doctrine of prapatti as discussed in later commentaries.[50] He further indicates that the Gadyas present similar ideas as those in other undisputed works of Rāmānuja. However, Rāmānuja's use of "parabhakti, parajñāna, and paramabhakti" is unique and no explanation is provided of these terms.[51]

[47] Anantharangachar, *The Philosophy of Sādhana,* 193.
[48] Ibid., 195-196.
[49] Carman, *The Theology of Rāmānuja,* 212-237.
[50] Ibid., 220.
[51] Carman suggests that these terms may be familiar to the tradition as they "seem to describe especially the Āḻvārs' devotional experience: periods of intense and anguished longing for communion with God

Carman points out that the concept of service to God which is highlighted in the Gadyas is related to the concept of the soul's subordination to God (śeṣa-śeṣi-bhāva), which is the main theme of other works of Rāmānuja.[52] Ultimately, Carman argues that the Gadyas share the same message with other works of Rāmānuja that bhaktiyoga is the only means to mokṣa. In other words, Carman views the Gadyas as presenting the doctrine of bhaktiyoga in a way that seems to differ from the bhaktiyoga which is mentioned in other works because it is "considered from the standpoint of man's essential nature of subservience to and helplessness before God, and it is therefore not surprising that it is particularly emphasized in a stotra, that is a praise of God's glory and a confession of one's own unworthiness."[53]

However, Carman suggests that although Rāmānuja did not intend to establish the doctrine of prapatti in these works, his emphasis on the ideas of the Divine grace and the soul's realization of its subordination and dependence on God may contribute to the development of the doctrine of prapatti as it is understood in the later commentaries of the tradition.[54] Moreover, Carman points out that the *Śrīraṅgagadya*'s emphasis on service to God as the ultimate goal may also support the later development of the doctrine of "aṅgi-prapatti" that sees prapatti as an independent means to liberation and not as the precondition for bhaktiyoga:

> It is the *Śrīraṅgagadya* that most emphasizes service (kainkarya or dāsatā) to the Lord as the goal, and it is in this Gadya that the statements occur that

alternating with periods of enjoyment of the Divine fellowship. The state of continuous communion with the Lord comes only after the end of the earthly life" (ibid., 218).

[52] Ibid., 292.

[53] Ibid., 223-224. Carman explicitly states that Rāmānuja intends to write these works in a stotra style. Therefore, the Gadyas should be seen as followed the genre of stotra literature. He further suggests that Rāmānuja's decision to compose these hymns in prose instead of rhymes reflects "his insistence on literal precision" (ibid., 209).

[54] Ibid., 220.

> seem most explicitly to diverge from the views of Rāmānuja's other works and to support the later doctrine of *aṅgi-prapatti*, that prapatti is not just a branch (anga) of the tree of bhakti but itself the tree trunk which supports the limbs.[55]

Carman finally bases his conclusion of the authenticity of the Gadyas on the "unity" between their ideas and those of Rāmānuja's other works.[56]

Sampatkumaran's investigation of Rāmānuja's prapatti in the Gadyas is concerned with the question: Does Rāmānuja teach prapatti as an independent means to salvation,? or as is sometimes put, does he teach that God alone is the means and that even prapatti is brought about by him?[57] Sampatkumaran holds that "the basis of *prapatti*" is that God is the way and the goal.[58] He argues, "It is now clear that Rāmānuja refers to prapatti in those works [namely, the *Śrībhāṣya*, the *Bhagavadgītābhāṣya*, and the *Vedārthasaṃgraha*] of which his authorship has not been doubted… Rāmānuja appears to be dealing with prapatti as an element in bhakti-yoga."[59] On the other hand, "the *Śaraṇāgati-gadya* develops fully the concept of God being the sole means of salvation."[60]

Sampatkumaran further proposes that "what is explicitly stated at length in the gadya is implied or mentioned elsewhere in Rāmānuja's writings." The unique phrase of "parabhakti, parajñāna, and paramabhakti" is implied in Rāmānuja's commentary on Gītā 11.54 and 18.54-55. The Gadyas' "concept of eternal service in Heaven is also mentioned in the introduction" of Rāmānuja's BGBh.[61] Finally, Sampatkumaran claims that "in the

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[55] Ibid., 222.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Sampatkumaran, "Rāmānuja and 'Prapatti,'" 68.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid. See details ibid. 65-67.
[60] For Sampatkumaran's detailed summary of the *Śaraṇāgatigadya*, see ibid., 69.
[61] Ibid., 70.

gadyas he [Rāmānuja] speaks to his own followers."[62] In the Gadyas, prapatti or "the path of faith and self-surrender is, in his view, open to all, irrespective of caste or sex;" as a result, this work plays a role in establishing "his teaching universal."[63]

In *The Way and the Goal*, Narayanan argues for the continuity of the doctrine of prapatti which, she claims, was practiced by the ācāryas of the tradition. Narayanan strongly argues that "one should compare the *Gadyas* of Rāmānuja with *stotra* literature to understand their similarities and differences; it is fallacious to compare the devotional, confessional pieces with theological treatises and polemical writings."[64] Narayanan further proposes that the stotra literature of the tradition should be seen as a part of the Ubhaya-Vedānta as it was derived from the hymns of the Āḻvārs and, more importantly, "there is no basis for holding either the philosophical works or the stotras as the only source of information and considering the other literature as containing discrepant ideas."[65]

As we have seen, Narayanan, by setting the Gadyas within the stotra tradition of Śrīvaiṣṇava, explicitly states that in the Gadyas, Rāmānuja portrays his act of taking "refuge to the Lord on the basis of his 'helplessness' (akiñcanya) and meditates on the Lord as the only refuge by recalling the Lord's promises and the myths of redemption."[66] Narayanan concludes that bhaktiyoga as established in Rāmānuja's other works represents only one side of the *Ubhaya-Vedānta* (Dual-Vedānta) that relies on the philosophy of the Vedānta. However, it is the act of surrendering oneself to the Lord that

[62] Ibid., 72.
[63] Ibid., 74.
[64] Narayanan, *The Way and the Goal*, 91.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Ibid., 93.

these ācāryas of the tradition adopted in practice, as shown, for example, in Rāmānuja's declaration of his lack of qualifications for other practices other than prapatti. Narayanan writes:

> In theory, bhakti-yoga and śaraṇāgati are alternatives, but in practice they are not alternatives for these ācāryas at all: When Yāmuna, Rāmānuja, and Kūraṭṭāḻvāṉ surrender to the Lord, it is precisely because they do not see bhakti-yoga as a viable option for themselves. They regard themselves as lacking the qualifications and the adhikāra to practice any upāya other than surrender, and their perceived lack of qualification becomes, in fact, their qualification for that surrender.[67]

Narayanan seems to take the expression in the Gadyas as literally stated by Rāmānuja in the same way that the Āḻvārs and Yāmuna express their submission to God in their stotras. By focusing on the continuity of the stotra literature of the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition, Narayanan separates the Gadyas from the philosophical framework and the doctrine of bhaktiyoga as articulated by Rāmānuja in other writings. She proposes that various themes in the Gadyas follow the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās and the hymn of the Āḻvārs.

Dhavamony takes the same position as Narayanan that "the Gadyas clearly expound *prapatti* as a means (*upāya*) of God realization, independent of *bhakti.*"[68] According to Dhavamony's summary of the Gadyas, the *Śaraṇāgatigadya* illustrates the act of taking refuge with the Dvayamantra and the devotee's desire to attain the eternal service.[69] The *Śrīraṅgagadya* stresses that the devotee is "destitute of bhakti" and that God is the only refuge.[70] Dhavamony refers to the *Yatīndramatadīpikā* by Śrīnivāsa for an

[67] Ibid., 148.
[68] Dhavamony, "Ramanuja's Theology of Self-Surrender," 73.
[69] Ibid., 70-72.
[70] See details ibid., 72.

understanding of prapatti whose essence is the devotee's helplessness in performing other means to mokṣa like bhaktiyoga and lack of refuge other than God.[71]

Oberhammer includes Rāmānuja's Gadyas as one source among various materials that he uses in his study on taking shelter in or surrendering to God.[72] Oberhammer proposes that Rāmānuja's *Śaraṇāgatigadya* views prapatti as a spiritual attitude, not as an independent means to mokṣa as it existed in the later tradition.[73] Oberhammer also defends the Gadyas' authenticity due to the fact that they are quoted and commented on by post-Rāmānuja ācāryas as Meghanādārisūri, Sudarśanasūri, and Vedāntadeśika.[74] Interestingly, Oberhammer points out that, according to the Sudarśanasūri and Vedāntadeśika, the Gadyas are a commentary on the Dvayamantra, a sacred mantra of the tradition and not a recount of Rāmānuja's act of prapatti.[75] Oberhammer also suggests that Rāmānuja's Gadyas establishes the view that the Dvayamantra is an expression of prapatti.[76] However, it is not evident that Rāmānuja intends to establish prapatti as an independent means to mokṣa in this work.

Raman, in the chapter "Rāmānuja and *Prapatti*"*,* is also inclined towards the idea that the Gadyas follow the stotra pattern and, thus, should be seen as a part of the stotra literature, which has different styles and themes as framed by Yāmuna's *Stotraratna*.[77] Raman argues that the Gadyas show a "soteriology based upon *prapatti*" that is different

[71] Ibid., 72-73.
[72] I cite from Oberhammer, "On the Spiritual Praxis," a translation of Gerhard Oberhammer, *Zur spirituellen Praxis des Zufluchtnehmens bei Gott (Śaraṇāgatiḥ) vor Veṅkaṭanātha* (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. 2004).
[73] Oberhammer, "On the Spiritual Praxis," 140-141.
[74] Ibid., 141.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Ibid., 142.
[77] Raman, *Self-Surrender,* 41.

from the doctrine of prapatti of the later tradition.[78] Raman pays close attention to each gadya especially the *Śaraṇāgatigadya* in which she argues for "the earliest attempt at providing an alternative model of *bhakti* no longer linked to the *three*-yoga scheme and restricted to the males of the highest varṇas alone, as in the *GB.*"[79]

In the *Śaraṇāgatigadya*, she argues, the phrase of parabhakti, parajñāna, and paramabhakti that is connected to the jñānī is mentioned as a kind of bhaktiyoga.[80] In this case, this bhaktiyoga can be characterized as "jñāna-prapatti," which also appears in the BGBh. Moreover, a new version of non-jñānī prapatti emerges that Raman calls "mantra-prapatti."[81] This mantra-prapatti is an act of reciting the Dvaya-mantra that makes a non-jñānī become a jñānī and eligible for bhaktiyoga.[82]

Also, in the *Śrīraṅgagadya*, Raman contends that there are the two steps of submitting one's self to God followed by bhaktiyoga as can be seen in the BGBh.[83] Raman further states that the *Vaikuṇṭhagadya* shares the same idea with the former two gadyas that the vision of Nārāyaṇa in Vaikuṇṭha is to be obtained by *dhyānayoga*, which is equal to bhaktiyoga.[84] In summary, Raman proposes that the Gadyas introduce a new ritualized version of prapatti that specifically addresses those who are ineligible for practicing the different kind of bhaktiyoga in the BGBh which is specifically for a jñānī.[85] Raman points

[78] Ibid., 25.
[79] Ibid., 49.
[80] Raman argues that the obscure origin and definition of this phrase in the *Śaraṇāgatigadya* may be clarified if we read it in light of Nammāḷvār's *Tiruvāymoḷi* (ibid.).
[81] Ibid., 51.
[82] Ibid., 44-45.
[83] According to Raman, "the first stage is described as the contemplation (*anusamdhāna*) of the self as having as its sole essence subordination (*nityadāsyaikarasātmā*), where the word *dāsa* is used instead of *śeṣa*. The second stage is to experience the real nature of God, which characterizes the practice of *bhaktiyoga*" (ibid., 46).
[84] Ibid., 47.
[85] Ibid., 51-52.

out that “it was also recognized that Śrīvaiṣṇavism had to offer a soteriology that also took into account those who were incapable (through birth or otherwise) of arduous Vedic study and who were mired in sin.”[86] However, it is unclear if Rāmānuja intended to do so.[87] Moreover, these ideas of prapatti are still distinct from the doctrine of prapatti established later in the tradition.[88]

In confirming the authenticity of the Gadyas, Raman relies on the similarities in terminology and ideas between Rāmānuja’s Gadyas and the Āṟāyirappaṭi commentary of Piḷḷāṇ, Rāmānuja’s immediate successor.[89]

In summary, the scholarly literature dealing with Rāmānuja’s prapatti in the Gadyas all argues for their authenticity on the grounds of their essential similarity with Rāmānuja’s other works and later tradition’s acknowledgement of them. Carman, Sampatkumaran, and Raman note the Gadyas’ distinct poetic style, terminology (parabhakti, parajñāna, and paramabhakti), and concept of devotees’ helplessness as well as eternal service to God. These features make the Gadyas stand out from other works, which more or less aim to communicate Rāmānuja’s philosophical position and establish bhaktiyoga as a means to mokṣa. The Gadyas are generally seen as expressing Rāmānuja’s devotional attitude and portraying himself as a devotee. However, the different opinions from the scholarly literature point to Rāmānuja’s incoherent position on prapatti in the Gadyas.

The post-Rāmānuja Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition as well as some scholarly literature (like Narayanan), claim that Rāmānuja recounts his own act of prapatti in this work, written for the Śrīvaiṣṇava community who regard prapatti as a means to mokṣa. The studies from

[86] Ibid., 52.
[87] Ibid., 49.
[88] Ibid., 25.
[89] Ibid., 41.

Anantharangachar, Sampatkumaran, Narayanan, and Dhavamony indicate that, in this work, prapatti is explicitly taught by Rāmānuja as an independent means mokṣa, while this teaching is only implied in other works. On the other hand, Carman, Oberhammer, and Raman argue that, in the Gadyas, prapatti is still referred to as an auxiliary of bhaktiyoga.

Conclusion

I have shown how the scholarly literature deals with the topic of Rāmānuja's prapatti in the BGBh and the Gadyas and presents varying ideas. All the presented studies on Rāmānuja's prapatti in the BGBh agree that Rāmānuja did not explicitly offer an alternative path to mokṣa other than bhaktiyoga, which could be accomplished by prapatti. They mostly draw supporting evidence from passages in Rāmānuja's commentary on chapters 7, 9, and 18 of the Gītā and pay attention to Rāmānuja's two interpretations on Gītā 18.66 which were interpreted by post-Rāmānuja ācāryas as stating the independence of prapatti. From my analysis of Rāmānuja's commentary on Gītā 18.66, I argue that Rāmānuja still regarded prapatti as an auxiliary to bhaktiyoga. However, I agree with some studies that these two interpretations may contribute to the later development of independent prapatti.

On the other hand, in the Gadyas, it remains unsettled that Rāmānuja taught prapatti as an independent means to mokṣa instead of bhaktiyoga. Some studies suggest that, in the Gadyas, Rāmānuja intended to address his followers who accept the independence of prapatti. For this reason, Rāmānuja wrote this work to defend prapatti as an independent means or even recount his own act of prapatti in these works. However, all the studies make convincing arguments for their authenticity.

The scholarly literature as a whole suggests that prapatti, in Rāmānuja's BGBh and Gadyas, may have two distinct roles: an auxiliary for bhaktiyoga and an independent means to mokṣa, which is equal to bhaktiyoga. However, I have proposed that, even in the Gadyas, Rāmānuja may not see prapatti as a separate means.

Analysis of these studies shows that the debate over Rāmānuja's prapatti not only focuses on whether or not Rāmānuja accepted the doctrine of prapatti but also extends to the definition and characteristics of prapatti. The different arguments from the scholarly literature point to the contradiction in Rāmānuja's position on prapatti in the BGBh and the Gadyas. In other words, they suggest that Rāmānuja may not have a coherent concept of prapatti. The incoherence of Rāmānuja's prapatti in these two works has not only been recently noticed by contemporary scholars. As we'll see in the next chapter, it was problematic even for post-Rāmānuja ācāryas who tried to claim the continuity of the doctrine of prapatti in these two works of Rāmānuja. Vedāntadeśika was one of the post-Rāmānuja ācāryas who dealt with Rāmānuja's prapatti at great length. As we will see in the next chapter, Vedāntadeśika attentively tried to harmonize incoherent concepts of prapatti in the works of Rāmānuja.

Chapter Two

Vedāntadeśika's Harmonization of Rāmānuja's Prapatti

In this chapter, I concentrate on Vedāntadeśika's attempt to harmonize Rāmānuja's incoherent statements regarding prapatti and, most importantly, his claim that Rāmānuja taught prapatti as an independent means to mokṣa in the *Bhagavadgītābhāṣya* (henceforth BGBh) and the *Gadyatraya* (henceforth Gadyas). I have shown in the previous chapter (chapter 1) that Rāmānuja did not mention prapatti as a means to mokṣa in these two works. However, as a post-Rāmānuja ācārya, Vedāntadeśika was committed to defend the teaching of independent prapatti in the works of Rāmānuja, the most authoritative figure of the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition.

As stated, the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition regarded Rāmānuja's Gadyas as stotras that teach prapatti as a means to mokṣa. Vedāntadeśika, conforming to the traditional view on the Gadyas, explicitly commented on the Gadyas as the teaching of the doctrine of prapatti. However, the BGBh mostly presents bhaktiyoga as a means to mokṣa. For this reason, Vedāntadeśika had to attempt to convincingly demonstrate that Rāmānuja taught prapatti as an independent means to mokṣa in the BGBh.

Moreover, Vedāntadeśika, as one of Rāmānuja's followers, also attempted to argue that Rāmānuja believed that both bhaktiyoga and prapatti are means to mokṣa since Rāmānuja unambiguously presented bhaktiyoga as a means to mokṣa in his philosophical works and in most of the BGBh.

I thus investigate these attempts of Vedāntadeśika mainly from his discussion on the Rāmānuja's BGBh and Gadyas in the *Nikṣeparakṣā* (henceforth NR), *Tātparyacandrikā* (henceforth TPC), and *Gadyatrayasārabhāṣya* (henceforth GadyasBh).

Vedāntadeśika's works show his attempt to defend the teaching of aṅgi-prapatti and resolve the contradictions on prapatti in the BGBh and the Gadyas. Moreover, they provide a coherent explanation for Rāmānuja's statements regarding prapatti, bhaktiyoga, and bhakti in these two works. I argue that Vedāntadeśika's interpretation of Rāmānuja's commentary on the Gītā from the NR and some relevant parts from the TPC can be seen as an attempt to harmonize Rāmānuja's incoherent ideas of prapatti and its relation to bhaktiyoga. Vedāntadeśika's harmonization of Rāmānuja's prapatti is most evident in his detailed analysis of Rāmānuja's two interpretations of the Caramaśloka in the NR and the TPC.

This chapter follows four threads, each occupying one section: The opponent of aṅgi-prapatti in the Caramaśloka; Vedāntadeśika's argument that the Caramaśloka teaches aṅgi-prapatti; Vedāntadeśika's analysis of Rāmānuja's commentary on the Caramaśloka; and Vedāntadeśika's argument for the coherence of the teaching of aṅgi-prapatti in the BGBh and the Gadyas. The first and second threads are my analysis of the NR. The third thread draws on the NR and the TPC. The last thread focuses on the GadyasBh and the NR. It should be noted that I focus most extensively on the second and third threads. This choice is influenced by the fact these threads analyze Vedāntadeśika's discussion on Rāmānuja's commentary on chapters 7 and 18, as well as the Caramaśloka of the Gītā that are main concerns of the scholarly literature (see chapter 1).

The Opponent of Aṅgi-Prapatti in the Caramaśloka

As seen in the introduction, the Caramaśloka is the center of Vedāntadeśika's NR. In the NR, Vedāntadeśika essentially attempts to propose that the teachings of aṅgi-prapatti can be seen in authoritative passages, especially the Caramaśloka, which is regarded by the Śrīvaiṣṇavas as one of the three sacred mantras and an authoritative scripture in Vedāntic milieu. Vedāntadeśika also argues against the view that bhaktiyoga is the only means to mokṣa and that the greatest Śrīvaiṣṇava authority Rāmānuja only taught bhaktiyoga in his works. Satyavrata Singh explains that the NR "is meant for the enlightening the followers of Ramanuja in the doctrine of Prapatti. This is not for generating faith in the followers of other schools regarding this doctrine."[90]

The NR is divided into two parts. In the first part, Vedāntadeśika presents the view of a potential opponent who argues against his position through nine arguments as follows: 1) The absence of the nature of aṅgi-prapatti (svarūpa-anupapatti); 2) The absence of the definition of aṅgi-prapatti (lakṣaṇa-anupapatti); 3) The absence of the performance of aṅgi-prapatti (anuṣṭhāna-anupapatti); 4) The absence of any injunctions of aṅgi-prapatti (vidhi-anupapatti); 5) The justification of prohibition of aṅgi-prapatti (niṣedha-samarthana); 6) The justification of oneness between aṅgi-prapatti and bhaktiyoga (aikya-samarthana); 7) The justification of incapability to perform aṅgi-prapatti (aśakti-samarthana); 8) The justification of aṅgi-prapatti not being well-known in śāstras (akhyāti-samarthana); and 9) The justification of aṅgi-prapatti being contradictory to the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition (saṃpradāyavirodha-samarthana). In the second part, Vedāntadeśika in order rejects these nine arguments one after the other.

[90] Singh, *Vedānta Deśika*, 398.

In this section, I illustrate the opponent's important points regarding the Caramaśloka and Rāmānuja's commentary on the Caramaśloka in order to set the stage for the following section in which Vedāntadeśika responds to these points. The opponent's main position is to reject Vedāntadeśika's argument that the Caramaśloka teaches aṅgi-prapatti as a means to mokṣa.

The fact that the opponent begins the first argument of the NR with the Caramaśloka reveals the Caramaśloka's central role in the defense of aṅgi-prapatti. Having cited the Caramaśloka the opponent then firmly argues against Vedāntadeśika's claim that the Caramaśloka teaches aṅgi-prapatti. The opponent points out that the teaching of aṅgi-prapatti would contradict the rest of Rāmānuja's BGBh. According to the opponent, Rāmānuja's BGBh illustrates that bhaktiyoga is taught as the direct means to mokṣa in the Gītā and prapatti is mentioned as an auxiliary to bhaktiyoga or *aṅga-prapatti*. Importantly, the opponent argues against Vedāntadeśika's claim that Rāmānuja proposes in his second interpretation of the Caramaśloka that prapatti is an independent means to mokṣa. The opponent posts a striking question: In the BGBh, how can Rāmānuja contradict himself by teaching aṅgi-prapatti only in the Caramaśloka?[91] Thus, the opponent attempts to show that Rāmānuja mentions prapatti as an auxiliary of bhaktiyoga in his second interpretation of the Caramaśloka.

In the following paragraphs, we will see that the opponent focuses on chapter 18 of the Gītā, in which the Caramaśloka occurs, and that he also refers to chapter 7 of the Gītā, which mentions aṅga-prapatti. The opponent further analyzes Rāmānuja's second

[91] Vedāntadeśika, *Nikṣeparakṣā*, 17.

interpretation of the Caramaśloka to show that prapatti is mentioned as an auxiliary of bhaktiyoga.

In order to argue that the Caramaśloka teaches aṅga-prapatti, the opponent analyzes the verses preceding the Caramaśloka in chapter 18 of the Gītā to show that the teaching of aṅga-prapatti in the Caramaśloka is suitable to the context. According to the opponent, the Gītā teaches karma-, jñāna-, and bhaktiyoga, which are referred to as the secret (guhya), the more secret (guhyatara), and the most secret (guhyatama) respectively. The opponent explains that Gītā 18.63 is a summary of karmayoga and jñānayoga, which are the secret and the more secret.[92] Then, Gītā 18.64 makes known that the following verses (Gītā 18.65 and 18.66) indicate the summary of the most secret teaching of the Gītā or bhaktiyoga and its auxiliary.[93]

The opponent supports this argument by centering on the interpretation of the word "bhūyaḥ" in Gītā 18.64. The opponent proposes that, in Gītā 18.64, the word "bhūyaḥ," which can be naturally construed in the meaning of "again," suggests that Gītā 18.65 must reiterate bhaktiyoga, which is already taught as a means to mokṣa in Gītā 9.34.[94] For the

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[92] Shastri, *The Bhagavad-Gītā*, 3:395.

The knowledge which is more secret than the secret is stated to you by Me. Reflect wholly on it and, then, do as you wish.

iti te jñānam ākhyātaṃ guhyād guhyataraṃ mayā l
vimṛśyaitad aśeṣeṇa yathecchasi tathā kuru ll

Bhagavadgītā 18.63

[93] Ibid., 3:396.

Listen to the last word about the most secret of all secrets from Me again. I will tell this for your advantage because you are very dear to Me.

sarvaguhyatamaṃ bhūyaḥ śṛṇu me paramaṃ vacaḥ l
iṣṭo 'si me dṛḍham iti tato vakṣyāmi te hitam ll

Bhagavadgītā 18.64

[94] Ibid., 3:398.

Be one whose mind is fixed in Me, one who is devoted to Me, one who sacrifices to Me, bow down to Me. You will surely come to Me, I promise you because you are dear to Me.

manmanā bhava madbhakto madyājī māṃ namaskuru l
mām evaiṣyasi satyaṃ te pratijāne priyo 'si me ll

Bhagavadgītā 18.65

following, verse the Caramaśloka, the word “again” in Gītā 18.64 also suggests that this verse should reiterate aṅga-prapatti, which is already mentioned in chapter 7 of the Gītā. The opponent argues that it is suitable to the context that the summary of bhaktiyoga in Gītā 18.65 should be followed by the summary of aṅga-prapatti which is an auxiliary of bhaktiyoga:

> If Gītā 18.66 were stated immediately after Gītā 18.64, then it could be suspected of stating another means. However, in this case, due to the fact that there is a teaching of prapatti after having taught bhaktiyoga [in Gītā 18.65], this prapatti should be aṅga of bhaktiyoga which is explained before [for example, in chapter 7]. Therefore, after summing up bhaktiyoga, aṅga-prapatti is summed up.[95]

Therefore, by using the word “again” in Gītā 18.64 to cover both Gītā 18.65 and 18.66, the opponent forms a strong basis for arguing that the Caramaśloka provides the summary of aṅga-prapatti succeeded from the summary of bhaktiyoga in Gītā 18.65. The opponent concludes:

> Therefore, it is established that prapatti, stated previously, for the purpose of that [bhaktiyoga] only, is enjoined here too as consisting of a summary for the purpose of extracting the essence.[96]

Ibid., 2:196.

Be one whose mind is fixed in Me, one who is devoted to Me, one who sacrifices to Me, bow down to Me.
Having controlled yourself, you whose a final aim is Me will come to Me.

manmanā bhava madbhakto madyājī māṃ namaskuru ll
mām evaiṣyasi yuktvaivam ātmānaṃ matparāyaṇaḥ l

Bhagavadgītā 9.34

[95] Vedāntadeśika, *Nikṣeparakṣā*, 12. yadi sarvaguhyatamaṃ bhūyaḥ ityādiślokasya samanantaram eva “sarvadharmān parityajya” ity ādikam uktaṃ syāt, tadā āśaṅkyetāpy upāyāntaratvam. atra tu bhaktiyogam upadiśyaivānantaraṃ prapatter upadeśāt [prākprāyaścittatayā]prākprapañcitā tadaṅgabhūteyaṃ prapattis tadupasaṃhārānantaram upasaṃhriyata iti pratīyate.

[96] Ibid., 13. tataś ca tadarthaiva prāguktā prapattir atrāpy aṅgeṣu sāraniṣkarṣārtham upasaṃhārātmanā vidhīyata iti siddham.

In the discussion on prapatti in chapter 7 of the Gītā, the opponent first defends the view that prapatti in this chapter is mentioned as an auxiliary to bhaktiyoga or aṅga-prapatti. Moreover, the opponent indicates that aṅga-prapatti can be used to refer to bhaktiyoga to which aṅga-prapatti leads. According to the opponent, Gītā 7.15-7.16 and 7.20-7.21 show that there is no differences between the words that represent bhaktiyoga and aṅga-prapatti. Therefore, aṅga-prapatti and bhaktiyoga can be used synonymously.

The opponent explains that Gītā 7.15 that illustrates four types of people who do not perform bhaktiyoga to God uses the word “bhajante” (they worship), which generally refers to bhaktiyoga. However, Gītā 7.16 that is the ongoing illustration of four types of people who do bhaktiyoga to God chooses the word “prapadyante” (they take refuge), which generally suggests aṅga-prapatti, to refer to bhaktiyoga. Therefore, the words that suggest bhaktiyoga and aṅga-prapatti are used in a parallel manner.[97] Similarly, Gītā 7.20 and 7.21 that are a continuing discussion of people who do bhaktiyoga to other gods use the words expressing bhaktiyoga and prapatti synonymously.[98]

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[97] Shastri, *The Bhagavad-Gītā*, 2:34-35.

The evil-doers who are fools, low, whose wisdoms are taken away by māyā, relying on their demonic nature, not take refuge in Me.

na māṃ duṣkṛtino mūḍhāḥ prapadyante narādhamāḥ l
māyayāpahṛtajñānā āsuraṃ bhāvam āśritāḥ ll

Bhagavadgītā 7.15

O Arjuna! Four types of good actors worship Me: The afflicted, the seeker of wisdom, the seeker of wealth, and the wise one.

caturvidhā bhajante māṃ janāḥ sukṛtino 'rjuna! l
ārto jijñāsur arthārthī jñānī ca bharatarṣabha! ll

Bhagavadgītā 7.16

[98] Ibid., 2:45.

People whose wisdom taken away by various desires take refuge in other gods. Having resorting to this or that restriction, they are limited by their own nature.

kāmais tais tair hṛtajñānāḥ prapadyante 'nyadevatāḥ l
taṃ taṃ niyamamāsthāya prakṛtyā niyatāḥ svayā ll

Bhagavadgītā 7.20

Rāmānuja's second interpretation of the Caramaśloka is the main concern of the opponent in arguing against aṅgi-prapatti. The opponent argues that, in the second interpretation, Rāmānuja clearly views prapatti as an expiation for all sins, which are the obstacles of the beginning of bhaktiyoga.[99] Prapatti in the second interpretation of the Caramaśloka is an auxiliary of bhaktiyoga or aṅga-prapatti. Aṅga-prapatti is mentioned earlier in Gītā 7.14 as being used for the crossing of māyā:

> Even prapatti which is for the purpose of crossing māyā as stated in Gītā 7.14 is determined by Rāmānuja as being for the purpose of bhakti and this is accepted by you. Gītā 18.66 is also given as an answer in the same way.[100]

Thus, the opponent literally construes Rāmānuja's second interpretation as presenting aṅga-prapatti which can be used as a form of expiation in the same way that I have analyzed Rāmānuja's interpretations (see chapter 1). This particular expiation is for people who are incapable of other expiations for the beginning of bhaktiyoga:

> People who know the two interpretation of this verse [Gītā 18.66] in the BGBh [explain in this way]: If there is a conformity to the natural meaning of this phrase, "I will free you from all sins," then it is intent on a particular injunction of expiation handed down in place of the other expiations stated all over the place for people who are incapable of performing them.[101]

Ibid., 2:47.

[For] any devoted man who wishes to worship any whatever body with faith,
I grant an immovable faith.
yo yo yāṃ yāṃ tanuṃ bhaktaḥ śraddhayārcitum icchati |
tasya tasyācalāṃ śraddhāṃ tām eva vidadhāmy aham ||
Bhagavadgītā 7.21

[99] Vedāntadeśika, *Nikṣeparakṣā*, 12.

[100] Ibid. "mām eva ye prapadyante" ity ādyuktamāyātaraṇārthaprapadanam api bhaktyarthatayaiva bhāṣyakārair nirṇītam; anujñātaṃ ca bhavadbhiḥ. ata eva "sarvadharmān parityajye" tyādikam api dattottaram.

[101] Ibid. "sarvapāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmī" ty etatsvārasyānusāre tu tattatpratipadoktaprāyaścittapratyāmnāyatayā tadaśaktānāṃ prāyaścittaviśeṣavidhiparam iti bhāṣyasthayojanādvayavidaḥ.

The opponent further proposes that the abandonment part of the Caramaśloka that says, “Having abandon all dharmas…,” should not be understood as communicating the abandonment of karma-, jñāna-, and bhaktiyoga which are considered as “dharmas” or means to mokṣa taught in the Gītā. On the contrary, the abandonment of dharmas in the Caramaśloka should refer to the abandonment of worship of other gods.[102] In other words, the abandonment part suggests that a person who performs these three yogas should devote oneself to God, or Viṣṇu, exclusively. According to the opponent, this interpretation of the abandonment part is supported by the next part of the Caramaśloka: “Go to Me alone as refuge,” that enjoins the exclusive worship of God.[103]

Vedāntadeśika’s Argument that the Caramaśloka Teaches Aṅgi-Prapatti

In this section, I analyze Vedāntadeśika’s response to the opponent’s arguments regarding the context of the Caramaśloka, prapatti in chapter 7 of the Gītā, and Rāmānuja’s second interpretation of the Caramaśloka.

In the NR, Vedāntadeśika mainly argues that the Caramaśloka is a teaching of aṅgi-prapatti. Vedāntadeśika supports this argument by relying on the most respected ācārya of the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition, Rāmānuja. According to Vedāntadeśika, Rāmānuja’s second interpretation of the Caramaśloka in the BGBh proposes prapatti as an alternative means to mokṣa in addition to bhaktiyoga.

As we have seen in the previous section, the question that arises from Vedāntadeśika’s argument is why Rāmānuja decides to teach aṅgi-prapatti only in his second interpretation of the Caramaśloka but makes a lucid discussion on bhaktiyoga

[102] Ibid., 13.
[103] Ibid.

and aṅga-prapatti in the rest of his commentary on the Gītā. Vedāntadeśika's main response to this question is that, in the BGBh, prapatti means both aṅga- and aṅgi-prapatti and Rāmānuja refers to either of them depending on the context:

> There is no contradiction merely due to the statement of aṅga-prapatti in works such as the BGBh since [prapatti] is connected to both forms [aṅga- and aṅgi-prapatti]. It is possible that prapatti, by being connected with both forms, refers to either one [of two forms of prapatti], which is useful in the context.[104]

Vedāntadeśika further argues that although Rāmānuja teaches aṅga-prapatti in his commentary on most passages of the Gītā, "it is not stated anywhere that there is no independent prapatti."[105] In other words, Rāmānuja's emphasis on the teaching of bhaktiyoga as a means to mokṣa in most of the BGBh does not contradict the teaching of aṅgi-prapatti in the second interpretation of the Caramaśloka.

First, in response to the opponent's position that the Caramaśloka communicates a summary of aṅga-prapatti, which is suitable in the context, Vedāntadeśika offers two explanations of Gītā 18.63-18.65. In the first explanation, Vedāntadeśika argues that Gītā 18.63 is a summary of the three yogas (karma-, jñāna-, and bhaktiyoga), which are offered as means to mokṣa for Arjuna. However, Arjuna is still grieving since he is incapable of these three yogas. For this reason, Kṛṣṇa has to introduce aṅgi-prapatti as a new means to mokṣa for Arjuna in the following verses:

> Having seen the grief of Arjuna, grieving because he hears the means of mokṣa which is difficult and takes a very long time to attain, The Lord

[104] Ibid., 36. tathā hi – na tāvat bhāṣyādiṣv aṅgaprapattivacanamātrād vaiparītyam, ubhayākārayogitvena prakaraṇopayuktānyatarābhidhānopapatteḥ.
[105] Ibid. "na ca svātantryaṃ nāstīti kvacid uktam."

> Vāsudeva teaches another means meant for a person who is capable of that means and needs the attainment of result without delay.[106]

Vedāntadeśika agrees with the opponent's interpretation of the word "bhūyaḥ" as "again." However, Vedāntadeśika points out that the word "bhūyaḥ" in the meaning of "again" "intends on a mere repetition of the hearing," but it does not limit that the content of the repetition of the hearing has to be the same.[107] Therefore, Gītā 18.65 and 18.66 that follow Gītā 18.64 can introduce a new content.

Then, Vedāntadeśika moves on to Gītā 18.65 which the opponent interprets as a summary of characteristics of a person who performs bhaktiyoga as a means to mokṣa. Vedāntadeśika defends the view that Gītā 18.65 illustrates characteristics that a person should have in order to perform aṅgi-prapatti, which will be taught in the next verse (the Caramaśloka). These characteristics are as follows: be someone who contemplates on God in all actions; be someone who performs rituals in order to worship God; be someone who sacrifices to God alone; and be someone who bows down to God with speech, mind, and body.[108]

In the second explanation, Vedāntadeśika proposes that Gītā 18.64-18.65 illustrates bhaktiyoga, which is the most essential means to mokṣa among the three yogas. According to Vedāntadeśika, having heard about bhaktiyoga, Arjuna is still grieving because he cannot attain mokṣa by means of bhaktiyoga because it is difficult and takes a long time to accomplish. Thus, Kṛṣṇa pacifies Arjuna by teaching him aṅgi-

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[106] Ibid., 31. arjunasya viṣādam ālokya sa bhagavān vāsudevaś cirakālasādhyaduṣkarāpavargopāyaśravaṇena śocato 'syāvilambitaphalaprāptisāpekṣatatsādhanasamarthapuruṣaviṣayam upāyāntaram.
[107] Ibid. "tatra bhūyaśśabdaḥ śravaṇāvṛttimātraparaḥ."
[108] Ibid.

prapatti, which is easier than bhaktiyoga, in the next verse (the Caramaśloka).[109] These two explanations all lead to Vedāntadeśika's main position that the Caramaśloka teaches aṅgi-prapatti as a means to mokṣa.

For the opponent's argument on prapatti in chapter 7 of the Gītā, Vedāntadeśika agrees with the opponent that prapatti in chapter 7 refers to aṅga-prapatti and aṅga-prapatti can be used in a meaning of bhaktiyoga. Vedāntadeśika explains that, in chapter 7, prapatti refers to aṅga-prapatti; therefore, it can be used figuratively to indicate bhaktiyoga. However, Vedāntadeśika argues that the literal meaning of prapatti is aṅgi-prapatti as seen in the Caramaśloka. Moreover, the fact that prapatti can figuratively point to bhaktiyoga as can be seen in some verses from chapter 7 does not mean that prapatti should always be restrictively construed in the meaning of bhaktiyoga. His response implies that although in other places of the Gītā prapatti is used in the meaning of bhaktiyoga, it still contains its literal meaning of aṅgi-prapatti. Importantly, there is no contradiction if prapatti is used to represent aṅgi-prapatti in the Caramaśloka:

> The word "prapatti", even though it has a separate meaning according to its definition, nevertheless is not separated very far from its aṅgi, therefore it is possible to use this word in place of that, since there is possibility of using the word in the place of bhakti by figurative indication that does not abandon its own meaning.[110]

In Vedāntadeśika's argument on the tradition, he focuses on establishing aṅgi-prapatti in Rāmānuja's second interpretation of the Caramaśloka. Vedāntadeśika points out that since Rāmānuja offers two interpretations of the Caramaśloka, Rāmānuja must

[109] Ibid.
[110] Ibid., 35. prapadanaśabdasya lakṣaṇato bhinnārthasyāpy aṅginānatidūraviprakarṣāt ajahallakṣaṇayā tatsthāne prayogopapatteḥ.

prefer one or the other. In Rāmānuja's second interpretation, Vedāntadeśika argues that aṅgi-prapatti is offered as an alternative means to mokṣa in place of bhaktiyoga.[111] Vedāntadeśika explains that aṅgi-prapatti should be the real message of the Gītā since "prapatti's being an independent means, which is concealed as something supremely secret, manifests itself" only in the Caramaśloka.[112]

Vedāntadeśika further argues that Rāmānuja offers aṅgi-prapatti as an alternative means to mokṣa in his second interpretation and that aṅgi-prapatti is preferred to bhaktiyoga since it is the easier means. Vedāntadeśika elaborates:

> Aṅgi-prapatti, in the second interpretation, since it is made optional with the means of bhakti[yoga], which are more difficult, have different degrees, and are endless, by having a common principle which is stated explicitly, is also made an optional alternative with bhakti itself. From the implication, this [aṅgi-prapatti] is what is said in the BGBh deep down.[113]

In the argument on injunction of aṅgi-prapatti, Vedāntadeśika suggests that, in accordance with Rāmānuja's BGBh, the Caramaśloka should be understood as follows:

> This is the thing to be performed here which is established by the reflection upon all injunctions [in the entire Gītā]. [Arjuna] having seen his own lack of other means for attaining his desired result without delay, thus sinks with great grief. A person, having abandoned other means for the establishment of that result, which are difficult to do for him who has little power, and having produced great faith, which lasts until he attains the result and cannot be agitated even by God Himself, by greatness of reflection on a special helping factors such as connection, good conduct, etc., with respect to The Supreme One, who is qualified by a class of qualities which are suitable for giving the result—[the great faith being] that He will give what is needed by mere asking once—…the person is introducing, in place of the

[111] Ibid., 36.
[112] Ibid. "atirahasyatayā gopitaṃ prapattisvātantryaṃ svayam evonmajjatīti."
[113] Ibid. dvitīyāyāṃ tu yojanāyāṃ bhaktisādhanair gurutarair mithas tāratamyavadbhiḥ anantair vikalpyamānā prapattiḥ kaṇṭhoktasamānanyāyatayā muktisādhanabhūtayā bhaktyāpi vikalpyeteti arthato gabhīram abhāṣyata.

other means, this protector preceded by the declaration of his having no other means and having nothing.[114]

Here, Vedāntadeśika characterizes aṅgi-prapatti as seeking protection from God, who is the Protector, and makes clear that aṅgi-prapatti can be accomplished by only a single request. This aṅgi-prapatti requires the person's great faith in God and incapability of other means to mokṣa, as in case of Arjuna who is incapable of performing the difficult means like bhaktiyoga. In the next section, we will see that Vedāntadeśika also provides an analysis of each important phrase in the Caramaśloka by commenting on Rāmānuja's two interpretations of this verse.

Vedāntadeśika's Analysis of Rāmānuja's Commentary on the Caramaśloka

This section concentrates on Vedāntadeśika's elaborate analysis of Rāmānuja's commentary on the Caramaśloka from the NR and the TPC. I further note the understated discrepancies between the NR's discussion on BGBh 18.66 and TPC 18.66. In the NR, Vedāntadeśika has a goal to establish aṅgi-prapatti in the Caramaśloka and Vedāntadeśika justifies his position by claiming that Rāmānuja teaches aṅgi-prapatti in the second interpretation of the Caramaśloka and mentions prapatti in the form of an auxiliary of bhaktiyoga in other places of the BGBh. However, in the TPC, Vedāntadeśika conforms to Rāmānuja's interpretation of prapatti as a form of expiation. I propose that these discrepancies obviously indicate Vedāntadeśika's attempt in the NR to argue for

[114] Ibid., 32. ayam atra sarvavidhiparāmarśasiddho 'nuṣṭheyārthaḥ. avilambitābhimataphalasiddhau svasyopāyāntaraśūnyatām ālocya mahatā śokenāvasīdan puruṣas tatphalasiddhyartham alpaśakteḥ svasya duṣkarāṇy upāyāntarāṇi parityajya tatphalapradānocitaguṇagaṇaviśiṣṭe parasmin sakṛtprārthanāmātreṇāpekṣitaṃ dāsyatīti saṃbandhaśīlasahakāriviśeṣādiparāmarśātiśayena mahāntaṃ tāvat phalalābham īśvareṇāpy akṣobhaṇīyaṃ viśvāsam upajanayya…
ākiñcanyānanyagatitvaprakāśanapūrvakaṃ goptāram evopāya[āntara]sthāne niveśayan…

the teaching of aṅgi-prapatti in Rāmānuja's second interpretation of the Caramaśloka and harmonize Rāmānuja's commentary on the Caramaśloka.

The most controversial phrase in the Caramaśloka is "having abandoned all dharmas," for which Rāmānuja suggests two different interpretations as can be seen in the first chapter. In the NR, Vedāntadeśika's interpretation of this phrase is obviously different from Rāmānuja's two interpretations of this phrase. "All dharmas," according to Vedāntadeśika, cannot be interpreted in a literal sense of all dharmas or "duties" according to *varṇāśrama*; otherwise, it would be contradicted to the teaching of acting for the welfare of the world which should be done for the attainment of mokṣa (as in Gītā 3.20 and 3.25).[115] Vedāntadeśika analyzes that the pronoun "all" in this case should refer to the dharmas mentioned close to it, i.e., the three yogas (as in Gītā 18.83-85) which can also be called "dharmas." Vedāntadeśika specifies that the word "dharma" "could include even direct means [to mokṣa]" as can be seen in Rāmānuja's second interpretation.[116]

For the meaning of "having abandoned," Vedāntadeśika proposes that it makes known that the condition of eligibility for a person who wants to perform aṅgi-prapatti is the abandonment of other means to mokṣa, since performing other means would be contradictory to performing aṅgi-prapatti:

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[115] Shastri, *The Bhagavad-Gītā*, 1:310.

The kings such as Janaka etc. maintained perfection only by action.
Having considered the welfare of the world, you should act.
karmaṇaiva hi saṃsiddhim āsthitā janakādayaḥ l
lokasaṅgraham evāpi saṃpaśyan kartum arhasi ll
Bhagavadgītā 3.20

Ibid., 1:318.

Arjuna! Unwise people are attached to actions when they act.
The wise one should act without being attached in this way wishing to achieve the welfare of the world.
saktāḥ karmaṇy avidvāṃso yathā kurvanti bhārata! l
kuryād vidvāṃs tathāsaktaś cikīrṣur lokasaṃgraham ll
Bhagavadgītā 3.25

[116] Ibid., 36.

> There is denial of other means only for people who want to act with respect to that very means [prapatti] … In the case of other means to mokṣa, there is an abandonment of different means to mokṣa because of independence (each one works by itself) but for prapatti, because of being contradictory—The injunction is useful because it makes this known [that doing other means to mokṣa would be contradictory to prapatti].[117]

Therefore, in the NR, Vedāntadeśika construes "having abandoned all dharmas" as expressing the abandonment of karma-, jñāna-, and bhaktiyoga. These yogas are the means to mokṣa which are taught before aṅgi-prapatti is offered as an alternative means in the Caramaśloka and they are referred to by the pronoun "all." The abandonment of these means is necessary for performing aṅgi-prapatti which cannot be combined with other means to mokṣa.

Unlike what we have seen in the NR, in the TPC, Vedāntadeśika does not explicitly state that Rāmānuja interprets this "having abandoned all dharmas" phrase as indicating the abandonment of the three yogas which are the means to mokṣa. More importantly, from my analysis of Vedāntadeśika's TPC on the Caramaśloka, Vedāntadeśika does not mention that Rāmānuja teaches aṅgi-prapatti as an alternative means to mokṣa in place of bhaktiyoga in Rāmānuja's second interpretation as Vedāntadeśika mainly argues in the NR. In Vedāntadeśika's commentary on Rāmānuja's second interpretation of the Caramaśloka, he closely follows Rāmānuja's interpretation that "dharmas" indicate other forms of expiation that are difficult to be accomplished by Arjuna (see chapter 1).

In the TPC, Vedāntadeśika argues that, after having delineated the essence of the three yogas, Rāmānuja presents in the Caramaśloka "the cessation of undesirable things which are obstacles of the attainment of what is desired [mokṣa]" mentioned in Gītā

[117] Ibid., 19. etasminn evopāye vicikī[avatitī]rṣatām eva tanniṣedhāt... vidyāntareṣu taditaravidyātyāgo nairapekṣyāt, iha tu viruddhatvād iti jñāpanena saprayojanatvāt.

18.65.[118] For the abandonment part, Vedāntadeśika explains that Rāmānuja offers two interpretations of this phrase. According to Vedāntadeśika, in the first interpretation, Rāmānuja limits the meaning of abandonment into a specific kind of abandonment.[119] This specific abandonment does not enjoin Arjuna to stop performing the three yogas referred to as "all dharmas" in this phrase. On the other hand, it points to the abandonment of certain thoughts as follows:

> The agency in oneself; other beings like Indra who should be worshipped [besides God]; other goals like heaven etc. which are different from both [the attainment of yourself and God]; and other means which are different all these things [i.e. God who is the agent, the one to be worshipped, and the goal.[120]

In other words, Rāmānuja proposes that Arjuna, in performing the three yogas as the means to mokṣa, is required to contemplate that God alone is the agent, the one to be worshipped, the goal, and the means.

In Vedāntadeśika's commentary on Rāmānuja's second interpretation of the Caramaśloka, Vedāntadeśika implies that this second interpretation is preferred by Rāmānuja: [Rāmānuja] is not pleased with the previously stated meaning [of the abandonment part]. Therefore, [Rāmānuja] explains another meaning in which the meaning of the word "abandon" is natural."[121]

Vedāntadeśika argues that, according to Rāmānuja's second interpretation of the Caramaśloka, Arjuna is enjoined to abandon the expiations for the removal of sins that

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[118] Shastri, *The Bhagavad-Gītā*, 3:411. "iṣṭaprāpteḥ pratibandhakībhūtāniṣṭānāṃ nivṛtti." For Gītā 18.65, see footnote 5.
[119] Ibid.
[120] Ibid. svātmani kartṛtvaṃ, tato 'nyasminn indrādāvupāsyatvaṃ, tadubhayānyasmin svargādau prāpyatvaṃ, tebhyo vyatirikte karmaṇi upāyatvaṃ ca.
[121] Ibid., 412. Arthāntarārucer ucitaṃ svārasikatyāgaśabdārtham arthāntaramāha.

are difficult to be performed by Arjuna who cannot wait to begin bhaktiyoga. Therefore, prapatti to God is offered as an alternative expiation which is easier and can be done within a limited time.

Vedāntadeśika explains that Rāmānuja defines “all dharmas” as the expiations that are difficult to perform and take many births to accomplish. In the BGBh, Rāmānuja gives a list of examples of these expiations and ends the list with the word “such as.” Vedāntadeśika explains that Rāmānuja’s list of the expiations includes karmayoga, which refers to all forms of expiatory rituals, and jñānayoga, which can also function as an expiation:

> The word “such as” covers other things that are both been explained previously and have not been stated by the verses such as Gītā 4.25 and are explained as internal divisions of karmayoga. In the same way, jñānayoga is incorporated by the word “such as” since jñānayoga also has already been explained as the removal of sins that are obstacles of the beginning of bhaktiyoga.[122]

Vedāntadeśika proposes that, following Rāmānuja, these expiations should be literally abandoned.

Interestingly, in Vedāntadeśika’s commentary on Rāmānuja’s second interpretation of the abandonment part, Vedāntadeśika does not state that bhaktiyoga should also be abandoned along with karmayoga and jñānayoga.[123] Moreover, Vedāntadeśika, conforming to Rāmānuja, asserts that the removal of all sins is for the purpose of the beginning of bhaktiyoga which is taught, for example, in Gītā 18.65 as the

[122] Ibid. ādiśabdena karmayogāvāntarabhedatayā ‘daivamevāpare yajñam’ [4.25] ityādibhiḥ prākprapañcitānām anuraktānāṃ ca grahaṇam. evaṃ jñānayogo ‘pyādiśabdena saṅgṛhītaḥ, tasyāpi bhaktiyogārambhavirodhipāpanibarhaṇatvena prāgeva prapañcanāt.
[123] Ibid.

means to mokṣa. The goal of removing all sins in order to begin bhaktiyoga is supported by Vedāntadeśika's construing the word "all sins," in the phrase "I will free you from all sins," in the meaning of "sins which are a cause of grief because they are obstacles to the undertaking of bhaktiyoga, since it is bhaktiyoga that is addressed in this previous verse [Gītā 18.65]."[124]

The significant point of Vedāntadeśika's commentary on Rāmānuja's second interpretation of the Caramaśloka is that Vedāntadeśika obviously agrees with the way Rāmānuja construes prapatti as an alternative expiation for Arjuna who is incapable of performing other expiations. Vedāntadeśika states that "prapatti to God alone would be the expiation of everything or for everything" and it requires the abandonment of other forms of expiations.[125] According to Vedāntadeśika, a person who performs prapatti to God as an expiation has to abandon dharmas that are contradictory to the exclusivity to God. However, a person still has to perform dharmas according to the *varṇāśrama*.[126]

Vedāntadeśika's summary of Rāmānuja's second interpretation affirms that Vedāntadeśika views prapatti, in Rāmānuja's second interpretation, as an alternative expiation in place of other expiations like karmayoga and jñānayoga which are more difficult and take a long time:

> You [Arjuna] can accomplish the removal of all sins by one easy act without delay [prapatti]. For this reason, do not have any grief caused by incapacity of accomplishing worthiness for the undertaking of bhaktiyoga now by reason of the expiations that destroy sins one at a time, that take a long time to work and are hard to do and endless.[127]

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[124] Ibid. "'manmanā bhava madbhaktaḥ' [18.65] iti pūrvaśloke bhaktiyogasya prakṛtatvāt tadārambhavirodhitvena śokanimittapāpaviṣayo 'tra sarvapāpaśabdaḥ".
[125] Ibid., 413. "tataś ca bhagavatprapadanam ekam eva sarvaprāyaścittaṃ."
[126] Ibid.
[127] Ibid. ekena sukareṇāvilambenāśeṣapāpanivṛttisiddher anantair duṣkarair vilambyakāribhiḥ pratyekapāpanibarhaṇair idānīṃ bhaktiyogārambhārhatāsampādanasyāśakyatānimittaśokaṃ mā kṛthāḥ…

As we have seen, there are discrepancies between Vedāntadeśika's commentaries on Rāmānuja's second interpretation of the Caramaśloka in the NR and in the TPC. In the NR, Vedāntadeśika explicitly argues that Rāmānuja offers aṅgi-prapatti as an alternative means to mokṣa and suggests the abandonment of other means including bhaktiyoga. On the other hand, in the TPC, Vedāntadeśika conforms to Rāmānuja by defining prapatti as a form of expiation which is a substitute for other difficult and time-consuming expiations such as karmayoga and jñānayoga. Vedāntadeśika agrees with Rāmānuja that the Caramaśloka teaches prapatti as a means to remove sins for the beginning of bhaktiyoga, but not a means to mokṣa by itself. More importantly, from my investigation of Vedāntadeśika's TPC 18.66, Vedāntadeśika does not explicitly claim that prapatti is an independent means to mokṣa. Even in the commentary on Rāmānuja's second interpretation, Vedāntadeśika interprets prapatti as an auxiliary of bhaktiyoga which is the means to mokṣa.

It can be speculated that Vedāntadeśika cannot explicitly propose aṅgi-prapatti as an alternative means to mokṣa in place of bhaktiyoga as he claims in the NR since Rāmānuja makes it clear in his second interpretation that the Caramaśloka focuses on the beginning of bhaktiyoga which is a means to mokṣa. However, Vedāntadeśika's statement at the end of TPC 18.66 suggests that prapatti in the form of expiations - as can be seen in the Caramaśloka - is only one example how prapatti functions:

> This prapatti to God which is well-known in Bhāgavata texts etc. as the means of all desired things is shown in a particular example in the form of the removal of sins which are obstacles to the beginning of bhaktiyoga which is stated in the context.[128]

[128] Ibid. evaṃ sakalābhimatasādhanatayā bhagavacchāstrādiṣu prasiddhaṃ bhagavatprapadanam iha prakṛtabhaktiyogārambhavirodhipāpanibarhaṇarūpodāharaṇaviśeṣe pradarśitam.

This statement suggests that prapatti can also be used as a means to mokṣa or aṅgi-prapatti that Vedāntadeśika attentively defends in his NR. With this conclusion, Vedāntadeśika is able to avoid the contradiction in his statements regarding Rāmānuja's position on prapatti in the second interpretation of the Caramaśloka in the NR and the TPC. However, the discrepancies in Vedāntadeśika's defense on aṅgi-prapatti in the NR and his conforming commentary on Rāmānuja's BGBh 18.66 in the TPC are distinct and worth further investigation.

For the next phrase that says, "Go to me alone as refuge," Vedāntadeśika, in the TPC, comments that, instead of using the same verb, Rāmānuja explains the act of going to refuge with the verb "to surrender." Vedāntadeśika further elaborates that the verb "to surrender" "is conventionally associated with a particular kind of wisdom namely the determination preceded by a great faith [that God will protect]."[129] According to Vedāntadeśika, "the word 'Me alone' is used as a counterpart to what is mentioned by the word "all" [as in "all dharmas"].[130] In other words, it informs that Arjuna should surrender or perform prapatti to God alone and abandon all other dharmas besides God. Moreover, Vedāntadeśika points out that Rāmānuja construes the word "refuge" as consisting of the four qualities of God as the agent, the one to be worshipped, the goal, and the means.[131] Vedāntadeśika also explains that prapatti to God alone requires the abandonment of other means which are contradictory to the exclusive nature of prapatti.[132] As for the next

[129] Ibid. "mahāviśvāsapūrvakaviśiṣṭādhyavasāyalakṣaṇabuddhiviśeṣanirūḍhapadena vyācaṣṭe."
[130] Ibid. "sarvaśabdanirdiṣṭapratyanīkatayā vā 'mām ekam' ityekaśabdaḥ."
[131] Ibid., 411.
[132] Ibid., 412-413. See also Vedāntadeśika, *Nikṣeparakṣā*, 19-20.

phrase “I will free you from all sins,” Vedāntadeśika interprets “all sins” in the meaning of all sins that are contradicted to the attainment of God.[133]

The analysis of the last phrase “do not grieve,” also plays an important role in Vedāntadeśika’s commentary on Rāmānuja’s interpretations of the Caramaśloka. In the NR, Vedāntadeśika proposes that this grief does not point to the grief “caused by the killing his relatives which is understood in the beginning [of the Gītā].”[134] On the contrary, it refers to the grief from the desire for mokṣa as previously seen in Gītā 16.5.[135] In the TPC, Vedāntadeśika indicates that this grief should be caused “by either difficulty of means which are to be practiced with respect without interruption for a long time or the delay of the result.”[136] In the TPC, Vedāntadeśika illustrates the meaning of this phrase as follows:

> ...and here “do not grieve” this cannot be for the purpose of ruling out grief rooted in affection which arose in the first condition [killing his relatives]. That has already been completely wiped away. Therefore, just as in Gītā 16.5, we should say that “do not grieve” is for the purpose of removing grief conditioned by the thing stated just before [mokṣa]. Thus, it should be the same here [Gītā 18.66]. When the means is been shown by the Omniscient God, the kṣatriya Arjuna, who is the best among righteous people and has a subtle mind, cannot grieve because he is ignorant or because he is unworthy or because he does not understand the main point. The doubt about the result also has been completely uprooted by the previous verse [Gītā 18.65].”[137]

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[133] Vedāntadeśika, *Nikṣeparakṣā,* 36.
[134] Ibid., 20 “upakramāvagatabandhuvadhanimittaśoka.”
[135] Ibid.
[136] Shastri, *The Bhagavad-Gītā*, 3:412. “ataḥ pariśeṣād dīrghakālanairantaryādarasevanīyopāyadauṣkaryāt phalavilambād vā śoko ’yaṃ sambhaved iti.”
[137] Ibid. apicātra ‘mā sucaḥ’ ity etan na prathamottpannāsthānasnehādimūlaśokapratikṣepārthaṃ, tasya pūrvam eva niśśeṣakṣālitatvāt; ato yathā ‘mā śucaḥ sampadaṃ daivīmabhijāto ‘si [5l16] ity atrāvyavahitaprastutopādhikaśokāpanodanārthatvaṃ, tathā ‘trāpīti yuktam. na tu sūkṣmadhiyaḥ kṣatriyasya dhārmikāgresarasyārjunasya sarvajñapradarśiteṣūpāyeṣv ajñānād anarhatvāt pradhānāṃśānișcayād vā śoko ‘yam. phalasaṃśayo ‘pi ‘mām evaiṣyasi’ ityādinā niśśeṣanirmūlitaḥ.

Vedāntadeśika's Argument for the Coherence Between the BGBh and the Gadyas

We have seen in the first chapter that the secondary literature presents varying positions regarding Rāmānuja's prapatti in the Gadyas. Some studies incline to the view that Rāmānuja teaches aṅgi-prapatti in the Gadyas; while some still consider bhaktiyoga as the main teaching of the Gadyas and prapatti as a penultimate step to bhaktiyoga, but not an independent means by itself. The Gadyas' distinctive features that lead to the doubt about its authenticity are its poetic style, the unique terminology of parabhakti, parajñāna, and paramabhakti, and the stress on devotee's helplessness and eternal service to God.

According to the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition, this work recounts the conversation between Rāmānuja and the Lord Raṅganātha at the Śrīraṅgam temple during his act of prapatti to the Lord.[138] In the time of Vedāntadeśika, this work was considered a commentary on the Dvayamantra, one of the three sacred mantras of the tradition. The fact that Vedāntadeśika wrote a commentary on the Gadyas titled the *Gadyatrayasārabhāṣya* (GadyasBh) is used by some scholars as an evidence to prove Rāmānuja's authorship of this work. From Vedāntadeśika's commentary on the Gadyas, it does not appear to me that he has any doubts regarding its authenticity. The main point that concerns Vedāntadeśika is the fact that there is a noticeable distinction between the BGBh and the Gadyas as some modern scholarly literature has pointed out (see chapter 1).[139]

This section focuses on Vedāntadeśika's attempt to resolve the differences between the two works and, more importantly, defend Rāmānuja's teaching of aṅgi-

[138] Raman, *Self-Surrender*, 42 and Narayanan, *The Way and the Goal*, 92.
[139] For a critical comparison of Rāmānuja's BGBh and Gadyas regarding prapatti, see Raman, *Self-Surrender*, 47-51.

prapatti as the means to mokṣa in his Gadyas. Vedāntadeśika's position on Rāmānuja's prapatti in the Gadyas from his NR and GadyasBh accordingly argue that Rāmānuja clearly presents prapatti as an independent means in the Gadyas. Moreover, Vedāntadeśika attempts to defend the view that bhakti in the Gadyas is used in a non-technical sense as an auxiliary of prapatti.

Vedāntadeśika explains that the Gadyas present Rāmānuja's teaching of his own act of aṅgi-prapatti, which he referred to as "offering," by means of the Dvayamantra and this work is intended to address his own followers. Vedāntadeśika introduces the Gadyas, in the beginning of the *Śaraṇāgatigadyabhāṣya*, that, "here, Rāmānuja properly reveals a particular means to mokṣa called 'offering' (nyāsa), practiced by himself by means of Dvayamantra which is recorded in the tradition of true ācāryas, with a desire to bring back life to his own companions."[140] Moreover, Vedāntadeśika shares the view of the tradition that the Gadyas are a commentary on the Dvayamantra as he affirms, at the end of the introductory section, that "the better [Śrīvaiṣṇava] tradition [considers] that this whole Gadya is a commentary on the Dvayamantra."[141]

In the *Śaraṇāgatigadyabhāṣya*, Vedāntadeśika also provides an explanation for the controversial phrase of parabhakti, parajñāna, and paramabhakti, claiming that these three terms indicate the experience of God as follows:

> Here **parabhakti**… is the thought that consists of a desire to directly perceive God more and more. **Parajñāna** is the act of directly perceiving Him. **Paramabhakti** is a desire to perceive God continuously when He has been directly perceived. The experience, which is one and continuous, is the direct perception itself as something very agreeable, for people who are

[140] Swamy, *Gadyatrayam*, 2. "atra bhagavān bhāṣyakāraḥ sadācāryasampradāyāgatadvayavacanena svayamanuṣṭhitaṃ nyāsākhyavidyāviśeṣaṃ svānubandhisañjijīvayiṣayā yathāvatprakāśayan…"
[141] Ibid., 3. ataḥ kṛtsnam idaṃ gadyaṃ dvayavivaraṇam iti sādhīyān sampradāyaḥ.

> eternally liberated, but is broken up into stages by dividing into forms like parabhakti, parajñāna, and paramabhakti by the division of moments.[142]

Vedāntadeśika's explanation suggests that the terms: parabhakti, parajñāna, and paramabhakti, do not denote means to mokṣa. Moreover, the word "bhakti" in these terms does not point to bhaktiyoga. Then, Vedāntadeśika argues that prapatti, as mentioned in the Gadyas, cannot be aṅga-prapatti. Vedāntadeśika further inserts an elaborate section on the establishment of aṅgi-prapatti as an independent means to mokṣa, defending that aṅgi-prapatti as a means to mokṣa can be seen in scriptures (śruti, smṛti, and Pāñcarātra Saṃhitā).[143]

Vedāntadeśika begins his commentary on the *Śrīraṅgagadya* by stating that the *Śrīraṅgagadya* reiterates Rāmānuja's recounting of his performing of aṅgi-prapatti by means of the Dvayamantra. Accordingly, this text also emphasizes supporting elements in performing aṅgi-prapatti like Rāmānuja's condition of being nothing etc.:

> Although the Dvayamantra is fully explained in the *Śaraṇāgatigadya* by Rāmānuja who is devoted to the investigation of the meaning of the Dvayamantra, it [the Dvayamantra] is explained again briefly by means of revealing his own performance (preceded by the elaboration of his being nothing etc.) to the students who think that [the Dvayamantra] should be listened to in many ways.[144]

In the last gadya, the *Vaikuṇṭhagadya*, Vedāntadeśika's main task is to account for the opening verse in which Rāmānuja praises Yāmuna's *Gītārthasaṃgraha*: "Having

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[142] Ibid., 18. atra **parabhaktiḥ** uttarottarasākṣātkārecchātmikā dhīḥ sā ca 'yā prītiḥ' (vi.pu.1-19-20) ityādiṣv iva viṣayasvabhāvajā. **parajñānam** – uttarottarasākṣātkāraḥ. anukūlatamatvena sākṣātkṛte nirantarānububhūṣā **paramabhaktiḥ**. anubhavas tv iha parabhaktitvādyākārabhedaiś ca vikalpyate.
[143] Ibid., 18-20.
[144] Ibid., 89. atra dvayārthānusaṃdhānarasikena bhagavatā bhāṣyakāreṇa bṛhadgadye vyākhyātam api dvayam, 'bahudhā śrotavyam,' iti manyamānebhyaḥ śiṣyebhyaḥ punar apy ākiṃcanyādiprapañcanapūrvakasvānuṣṭhānaprakāśanaprakriyayaiva saṃkṣepeṇa vyākriyate.

dived into the ācārya Yāmuna's ocean of ambrosia according to my understanding, I brought forth the gem called bhaktiyoga and I put it on display."[145] This verse of Rāmānuja seems to contradict to Vedāntadeśika's argument that the aṅgi-prapatti as the main teaching of the whole Gadyas since it suggests that the message of the *Vaikuṇṭhagadya* is bhaktiyoga. For this reason, Vedāntadeśika proposes that "the word bhaktiyoga here is intent on the contemplation of God as an end in itself," not as a means to mokṣa as explicitly taught in the BGBh.[146] Vedāntadeśika further points out that bhaktiyoga cannot be considered as the means to mokṣa in the Gadyas; otherwise, it would be contradictory to the following statement in which prapatti is clearly presented as the only means to the attainment of God: "For me who is thinking that, even if I try for a thousand ten millions of kalpas, there is no means for attaining this other than prapatti to His two lotus fee[t."][147]

As can be seen, in Vedāntadeśika's commentary on the Gadyas, he firmly proposes aṅgi-prapatti as the means to mokṣa taught and practiced by Rāmānuja himself. Vedāntadeśika also resolves ambiguous statements which are opposed to his argument especially the use of bhaktiyoga in this work. Similarly, in the NR, Vedāntadeśika argues that prapatti is undoubtedly proposed as an independent means. Vedāntadeśika supports his argument with the statement in the *Śaraṇāgatigadya*: "At the time when your body falls, you will be enlightened by My compassion alone."[148] According to Vedāntadeśika,

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[145] Ibid., 105.
yāmunāryasudhāmbhodhim avagāhya yathāmati l
ādāya bhaktiyogākhyaṃ ratnaṃ sandarśayāmy aham ll
[146] Ibid. "ihāsau bhaktiyogaśabdaḥ svayaṃprayojanabhagavadanusaṃdhānaparaḥ."
[147] Ibid. tatprāpye ca tatpādāmbujadvayaprapatteranyanna me kalpakoṭisahasreṇāpi sādhanam astīti manvānaḥ.
[148] Vedāntadeśika, *Nikṣeparakṣā*, 36. "śarīrapātasamaye tu kevalaṃ madīyayaiva dayayātiprabuddhaḥ." This quotation is from The Śaraṇāgatigadya (Swamy, *Gadyatrayam*, 81-82).

this statement affirms that prapatti leads to the enlightenment or mokṣa; therefore, it must be an independent means by itself and not an auxiliary of bhaktiyoga or aṅga-prapatti.

Then, Vedāntadeśika accounts for the noticeable distinction regarding the role of aṅgi-prapatti in the BGBh and the Gadyas. Vedāntadeśika raises a potential contradiction that the teaching of aṅgi-prapatti is prominent in the Gadyas, but, in the BGBh, it is proportionally much less than bhaktiyoga. In response, Vedāntadeśika explains that aṅgi-prapatti does not receive much attention in Rāmānuja's BGBh except in Rāmānuja's second interpretation of the Caramaśloka because the BGBh aims to address Arjuna who is eligible for performing a difficult means like bhaktiyoga.[149]

Moreover, Vedāntadeśika continues to argue that the word "bhakti" mentioned in the Gadyas does not necessarily refer to bhaktiyoga which is a means to mokṣa, as seen in the BGBh, but it can be used in a meaning of a result of aṅgi-prapatti. Vedāntadeśika rejects the view that the word "bhakti" in the Gadyas has a meaning of bhaktiyoga which is a means to mokṣa because he attempts to defend the view that the Gadyas are devoted to the teaching of aṅgi-prapatti.

First, Vedāntadeśika illustrates that the word "bhakti" can be used to indicate either a means to mokṣa (bhaktiyoga) or a result of aṅgi-prapatti. For example, the word "bhakti" in "paramabhakti" from the phrase: parabhakti, parajñāna, and paramabhakti, is "common to a result and a means, [therefore] it does not take either side."[150]

Vedāntadeśika further applies this principle that the word "bhakti" can be used to refer to either a means or a result to the use of the word "bhakti" in the statement, "give

[149] Ibid.
[150] Ibid., 37. phalopāyasādhāraṇyān nānyatarapakṣapāti.

me bhakti" (bhaktim api prayaccha) from Yāmuna's *Stotraratna* 54.[151] Vedāntadeśika suggests that "bhakti" which is asked for by the person in this statement should be understood as bhakti "that has a form of pleasure by its own nature, and because of the excellence of its object [i.e. God]; therefore, here it [bhakti] is a result [of aṅgi-prapatti]."[152]

Vedāntadeśika further explains that the request for bhakti in this statement does not contradict the exclusive nature of aṅgi-prapatti since bhakti in this statement is not a means to mokṣa. According to Vedāntadeśika, this bhakti which is a result of aṅgi-prapatti has the forms of non-fear and friendliness of God:

> Nevertheless, asking for bhakti is not contradictory to having no other means [of aṅgi-prapatti] because it consists of asking for non-fear and the friendliness of God. According to the Gadyas, the request for bhakti too enters into that as a form of the best of what is obtained as a goal.[153]

Interestingly, apart from defining bhakti as a result of aṅgi-prapatti, Vedāntadeśika also innovatively proposes that the word "bhakti" in the Gadyas can be characterized as an auxiliary of aṅgi-prapatti. According to Vedāntadeśika, this bhakti which is an auxiliary of aṅgi-prapatti can be understood in its literal meaning as a devotion to God. This bhakti or devotion helps prapannas maintain a great faith in God. Although prapannas should perform aṅgi-prapatti only once, they are required to have a great faith to God uninterruptedly for as long as they live:

> For bhakti that belongs to prapannas, there is an entrance into the state of being a means by being a cause of an uninterruptedness of [aṅgi-] prapatti.

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[151] For Yāmuna's *Stotraratna* 54, see Chettaloor V. Srivatsankacharyar, *Srimad Vedanta Desika's Chatusslokibhashyam, Sthothraratnabhashyam, and Gadyatrayabhashyam* (Madras: Sri Vedanta Desika Seventh Centenary Trust. 1969), 104.

[152] Ibid. bhakteś cātra phalatvaṃ svarūpatas sukharūpatvāt; tac ca viṣayavaiśiṣṭyāt.

[153] Ibid., tathāpi na bhaktiprārthanasyānanyatāvirodhitvam, bhagavadānukūlyābhayādiprārthanātmakatvāt, gadyoktes tasyaiva ca kāṣṭhāprāptasya niḥśreyasarūpatvena tadanupraveśāt…

> And it should not be stated that, when [aṅgi-] prapatti is a means which is to be done once, what is the use of uninterruptedness? Because [aṅgi-] prapatti needs an absence of obstacles [of great faith] in order to function.[154]

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have explicated Vedāntadeśika's attempt to establish aṅgi-prapatti as an independent means to mokṣa in Rāmānuja's BGBh and Gadyas, which are different from his other philosophical works. I have investigated Vedāntadeśika's defense of Rāmānuja's teaching of aṅgi-prapatti in Vedāntadeśika's NR, TPC, and GadyasBh.

In the NR, Vedāntadeśika accepts that Rāmānuja mainly proposes bhaktiyoga as a means to mokṣa and mentions aṅga-prapatti as an auxiliary of bhaktiyoga as can be seen in chapter 7. However, Vedāntadeśika asserts that Rāmānuja taught aṅgi-prapatti as an alternative means in the second interpretation of the Caramaśloka. On the other hand, in the TPC, Vedāntadeśika, in accord with Rāmānuja, only views prapatti as a form of expiation which helps activate the beginning of bhaktiyoga. Therefore, in this case, prapatti can only be seen as aṅga-prapatti which does not directly lead to mokṣa. Vedāntadeśika, however, hints that prapatti in the form of expiation only represents one function of prapatti. For this reason, the view of prapatti as an expiation in the TPC does not contradict his argument for Rāmānuja's aṅgi-prapatti in the NR. In the GadyasBh, Vedāntadeśika clearly holds the traditional view that Rāmānuja's Gadyas has aṅgi-prapatti as the main teaching.[155]

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[154] Ibid. prapannagatāyā bhakteḥ prapattyavicchedahetutvena tadanupraveśāt. na ca sakṛtkṛtasyopāyatve kim avicchedeneti vācyam. tasya svakāryakaraṇe bādhābhāvasyāpekṣitatvāt.

[155] In the *Rahasyatrayasāra*, Vedāntadeśika elaborates his argument that prapatti can function as both an expiation and a means to mokṣa by itself:
"The idea that *prapatti* will destroy the obstacles to the *upāyas* for attainment (namely sins) is conveyed (by Sri Ramanuja) in his *Gītā Bhāshya* in his second interpretation (of the *sloka*). In the *Gadya*, he has declared that *prapatti* will help to get rid of the hindrances to the attainment of Bhagavan. It does not means that, in those two places, Sri Ramanuja expresses one of these two ideas in disregard of the

However, Vedāntadeśika, who is well-known as a faithful follower of Rāmānuja, did not only attempt to establish aṅgi-prapatti in Rāmānuja's works as seen in his conclusion in the NR's argument on the tradition that there is no contradiction in the statement of Rāmānuja with respect to aṅgi-prapatti. More importantly, Vedāntadeśika aimed to harmonize Rāmānuja's statements regarding prapatti and bhaktiyoga by providing a coherent system of aṅga- and aṅgi-prapatti as well as the relation between these two kinds of prapatti and bhaktiyoga.

According to Vedāntadeśika, both bhaktiyoga and aṅgi-prapatti are authorized by Rāmānuja as means to mokṣa. Vedāntadeśika argues that, in the BGBh, Rāmānuja mainly taught bhaktiyoga, which has aṅga-prapatti as its auxiliary. However, Rāmānuja prefers aṅgi-prapatti, which is presumably an easier means. Therefore, Rāmānuja proposes aṅgi-prapatti as an alternative means in addition to bhaktiyoga. On the other hand, in the Gadyas, Rāmānuja only concerns himself with the teaching of aṅgi-prapatti to people in the tradition. In the Gadyas, the word "bhakti" does not signify bhaktiyoga, but it is used in a non-technical meaning as either devotion to God or the result of aṅgi-prapatti. Therefore, according to Vedāntadeśika, bhakti and prapatti can refer to both a means and an auxiliary of that means. As can be seen in the BGBh, aṅga-prapatti is used to remove the obstacles for the beginning of bhaktiyoga, similarly, in the Gadyas, bhakti helps motivate the performing of aṅgi-prapatti.

This chapter has shown Vedāntadeśika's attempt to justify his doctrine of aṅgi-prapatti in the Caramaśloka by relying on the Śrīvaiṣṇava's intra-traditional authorities such as Rāmānuja. In the previous chapter (chapter 1), we have seen that Rāmānuja did

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other. Both passages illustrate the potency of this *upāya* (*prapatti*) which can secure all desired ends" (Sri Vedantadesika, *Srimad Rahasyatrayasara*, 515).

not have a coherent concept of prapatti, however, it should have become evident in this chapter that Vedāntadeśika did not seek to impartially examine Rāmānuja's position on prapatti. It is clear that Vedāntadeśika was committed to defending the fact that Rāmānuja taught prapatti as an independent means to mokṣa, hence one separate from bhaktiyoga in the BGBh and the Gadyas. Vedāntadeśika thus intended to establish his doctrine of aṅgi-prapatti on these premises, generating a coherent system of aṅga-prapatti, aṅgi-prapatti, and bhaktiyoga by harmonizing Rāmānuja's statements regarding prapatti in Rāmānuja's major works. In the next chapter, I will illustrate how, apart from harmonizing the statements of Rāmānuja, Vedāntadeśika further synthesized supporting textual elements from the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās and the Mīmāṃsā tradition in order to systematize his doctrine of aṅgi-prapatti.

Chapter Three

Vedāntadeśika's Synthesization of the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās and Mīmāṃsā Vedic Principles of Interpretation

In the previous chapter, we have seen Vedāntadeśika's attempt to use Rāmānuja's works – and especially his second interpretation of the Caramaśloka -- as an intra-traditional authority validating the doctrine of aṅgi-prapatti. However, Vedāntadeśika did not regard Rāmānuja as the only authority for this doctrine. In this chapter, I show that Vedāntadeśika also reached out to other authoritative sources from different traditions in order to construct a unified authority for the doctrine of aṅgi-prapatti.

Vedāntadeśika is generally regarded by scholars as "a synthesizer figure" of the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition.[156] Elisa Freschi, in her forthcoming "Śrī Vaiṣṇavism: The making of a theology," delineates Vedāntadeśika's "main philosophical outlines" as consisting of "the Vedāntic viewpoint, the emphasis on Pūrva Mīmāṃsā, the incorporation of the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās, [and] the incorporation of the Āḻvārs' theology."[157] This chapter focuses on Vedāntadeśika's synthesization of authoritative texts from the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās and the Mīmāṃsā tradition in his defense of aṅgi-prapatti in the *Nikṣeparakṣā* (henceforth NR).

The Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās are scriptures of the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition and they became an important source in defending the independence of prapatti in the post-Rāmānuja period, as I illustrate in the following sections. Therefore, Vedāntadeśika's synthesization of the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās reflects both the influence that Vedāntadeśika

[156] Freschi, "Śrī Vaiṣṇavism," forthcoming.
[157] Ibid.

received from the tradition and his conformity to the tradition regarding the doctrine of prapatti. On the other hand, Vedāntadeśika's incorporation of the Śrīvaiṣṇavas' rival Mīmāṃsā tradition in the defense on the doctrine of prapatti was innovative and, thus, evidently shows Vedāntadeśika's original contribution to the validation of this doctrine. I argue that, in developing a unified authority for his doctrine of aṅgi-prapatti, Vedāntadeśika relied on the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās as a scriptural source of content and Mīmāṃsā principles of Vedic interpretation as an interpretative theory. I divide this chapter into two sections: The Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās and Mīmāṃsā principles of Vedic interpretation.

The Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās

In this section, first, I briefly explain the defenses given by Yāmuna, Rāmānuja, and Vedāntadeśika of the scriptural authority of the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās in order to show the importance of the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās in the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition. Then I illustrate the vital role of the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās in the *Prapannapārijāta* written by Vedāntadeśika's teacher, Vātsya Varadaguru (12th century CE). In this work appears the earliest attempt to develop prapatti as an independent means to mokṣa by using the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās as authoritative texts. The next part analyzes Vedāntadeśika's use of the Pāñcarātra Sāṃhitās in the NR. I propose that Vedāntadeśika follows the earlier commitments of the tradition by treating the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās as an authoritative source of content for his doctrine of aṅgi-prapatti.

The Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās: The Śrīvaiṣṇavas' Scriptures

The Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās (8th to 14th centuries) are the anonymously authored texts devoted to the Pāñcarātra tradition that worships Viṣṇu as the Supreme God. These texts focus on topics such as cosmology, God, mantras, and rituals. According to the Pāñcarātra tradition, the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās were regarded as the revelation of Viṣṇu. These texts are disregarded by the Vedic orthodox tradition because they were originally presented by the Pāñcarātra tradition as non-Vedic.[158]

However, the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition regards the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās as scriptural texts within Vedic orthodoxy. Many ācāryas of the tradition defend the scriptural authority of the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās in their works. These works were written to mainly address "other rival Brahmanical schools" who disregard the authority of the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās.[159] The first ācārya who wrote a specific work in order to defend the authority of the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās was Yāmuna. In his *Āgamapramāṇya*, Yāmuna argues for "the acceptance of the Pañcarātra scriptures, and the social and ritual practices they enjoin, as a legitimate part of Vedic culture, partaking of the same mantle of Vedic authority as the *smṛtis*."[160]

On the other hand, Rāmānuja does not pay much attention to the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās. Rāmānuja only argues for the scriptural authority of the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās in his commentary on the Brahmasūtra (2.2.42-45).[161] However, the fact that Rāmānuja

[158] See more Marion Rastelli, "Pāñcarātra." In *Brill's Encyclopedia of Hinduism,* edited by Jacobsen, Knut A., Helene Basu, Angelika Malinar, and Vasudha Narayanan. Vol. 3, 444-466. Leiden: Brill, 2011.
[159] Mumme, "Pāñcarātra Texts," 107.
[160] McCrea, "Does God Have Free Will," forthcoming.
[161] Ibid.

mentions the Pāñcarātra doctrines in his philosophical and devotional works suggests that Rāmānuja is familiar with the Pāñcarātra tradition.[162]

According to Kumar, Yāmuna "was familiar with *Īśvara Saṃhitā, Parama Saṃhitā, Śāṇḍilya Saṃhita, Sanatkumāra Saṃhitā, Indrarātra Saṃhitā* and *Padmodbhava Saṃhitā*. On the other hand, Rāmānuja only mentioned *Sāttvata, Pauṣkara and Parama Saṃhitās*.[163]

Vedāntadeśika, like Yāmuna, devotes one work, the *Pāñcarātrarakṣā*, to defending the authority of the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās.[164] Kumar argues that "the Pañcarātra ritual tradition was fundamental to Veṅkaṭanātha's [alias Vedāntadeśika's] theological interpretation of the tradition."[165] Freschi also proposes that "Pāñcarātra is part of his [Vedāntadeśika's] philosophical (and not only devotional or ritual) scenario."[166] In the NR, Vedāntadeśika not only defends the scriptural authority of the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās, but Vedāntadeśika also regards the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās as an authoritative source for the content of aṅgi-prapatti. I propose that Vedāntadeśika's decision to rely on the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās may be influenced by the *Prapannapārijāta* of Vātsya Varadaguru who is traditionally recorded as Vedāntadeśika's direct ācārya.

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[162] See Kumar, "The Understanding of Śrī-Lakṣmī," 221-223 and Carman, *The Theology of Rāmānuja*, 240-244.
[163] Kumar, "The Understanding of Śrī-Lakṣmī," 21.
[164] Kumar points out that the *Pāñcarātrarakṣā* concerns three important aspects:
"1) *pañcakālakriyas* (the five daily rituals); 2) *prapatti/śaraṇāgati* as the basic attitude to performing the daily rituals since the rituals are considered as *nityakaiṅkarya*; and 3) *Arcāvatāra* (image incarnation) as the focus of all the daily rituals including meditation (*yoga*)" (ibid., 179-180).
[165] Ibid., 180. See details in the section on "Veṅkaṭanātha's Defense of the Pāñcarātra" ibid., 175-181.
[166] Freschi, "Śrī Vaiṣṇavism," forthcoming.

Vātsya Varadaguru's *Prapannapārijāta*

The *Prapannapārijāta* displays the first attempt to defend independent prapatti supported by the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās. According to Oberhammer's study titled "On the Spiritual Praxis of Taking Shelter in God till Veṅkaṭanātha," Vātsya Varadaguru's *Prapannapārijāta* represents perhaps the earliest decision to separate prapatti from bhaktiyoga.[167] This decision may be derived from Vātsya Varadaguru's attempt to harmonize two incoherent forms of prapatti from the works Vātsya Varadaguru's predecessors: Rāmānuja and Nārāyaṇārya (13th century CE). In Rāmānuja's *Śaraṇāgatigadya,* Rāmānuja refers to prapatti in a spiritual sense but he does not regard this prapatti as an independent means to mokṣa.[168] On the other hand, Nārāyaṇārya, in his *Nītimālā* proposes that prapatti is an alternative means to mokṣa, other than bhaktiyoga and it is not reserved for the upper three varṇas.[169] In other words, this second prapatti is an independent means to mokṣa for people who are not eligible for bhaktiyoga.[170]

In the *Prapannapārijāta*, Vātsya Varadaguru references *Rāmāyaṇa* 6.12.13-20 from the episode in which Vibhīṣaṇa surrenders to Rāma in order to classify these two types of prapatti.[171] According to Vātsya Varadaguru, the first prapatti of Rāmānuja should

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[167] Based on Oberhammer, "On the Spiritual Praxis," a translation of Gerhard Oberhammer, *Zur spirituellen Praxis des Zufluchtnehmens bei Gott (Śaraṇāgatiḥ) vor Veṅkaṭanātha* (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. 2004).
[168] See details Gerhard Oberhammer, *Zur spirituellen Praxis des Zufluchtnehmens bei Gott (Śaraṇāgatiḥ) vor Veṅkaṭanātha* (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. 2004), 141-176. For the *Rāmāyaṇa* passages, see Krishnacharya, *Srimad Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa*, 74.
[169] See ibid., 47-48. For more details, see ibid., 38-51. For the passages in the *Nītimālā*, see Nārāyaṇarya, *Nītimālā*. Edited with introduction and notes by R. Ramanujachari, and K. Srinivasacharya (Annamalai: Sanskrit Department, Annamalai University. 1940), 67-68.
[170] See Oberhammer, "On the Spiritual Praxis," 142-146.
[171] See Gerhard Oberhammer, *Zur spirituellen Praxis des Zufluchtnehmens bei Gott (Śaraṇāgatiḥ) vor Veṅkaṭanātha* (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. 2004), 101-102. For *Rāmāyaṇa* passages, see Krishnacharya, *Srimad Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa*, 39-40.

be understood as the prapatti of the "self content one" (dṛptaḥ); while the second prapatti of Nārāyaṇārya is equal to the prapatti of the "miserable one" (ārtaḥ).[172] Another innovative feature of Vātsya Varadaguru's *Prapannapārijāta* is the decision to use the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās as the authoritative source for his defense of the independence of prapatti. In this work, various Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās are mentioned, including the *Lakṣmītantra* (henceforth LT). Although this text is mentioned for the first time in this work, it is his most predominant scriptural source.[173]

In the *Prapanna Pārijāta*, Vātsya Varadaguru interprets "the doctrine of asceticism" from the Taitirīya Āraṇyaka 10.63.19ff as an "internalized sacrifice." Innovatively, Vātsya Varadaguru further connects this interpretation of the "internalized sacrifice" to prapatti.[174] Vātsya Varadaguru identifies this internalized act of prapatti with the "offering of one's own self" (ātmanikṣepa) as described in LT 17.74.[175] Moreover, Vātsya Varadaguru provides a long quotation from the LT, chapter 17, in order to define the nature of this independent prapatti, and he frequently mentions various other passages from the LT to support his arguments.[176]

Apart from the LT, another Pāñcarātra Saṃhitā that plays a role in Vātsya Varadaguru's *Prapannapārijāta* is the *Ahirbudhnyasaṃhitā* (henceforth ABH). It has been proposed that the LT and the ABH were composed sometime from the ninth to the

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[172] Oberhammer, "On the Spiritual Praxis," 146. See details Gerhard Oberhammer, *Zur spirituellen Praxis des Zufluchtnehmens bei Gott (Śaraṇāgatiḥ) vor Veṅkaṭanātha* (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. 2004), 88. For the discussion on the *Prapanna Pārijāta*, see Varadācārya, *Prapanna Pārijāta,* 14-15 and 66-67 (English translation) and 12 and 58 (in Sanskrit).
[173] Kumar, "The Understanding of Śrī-Lakṣmī," xix. According to Kumar, the first reference of LT is in the *Prapannapārijāta* of Vātsya Varadaguru.
[174] Oberhammer, "The Influence of Orthodox Vaiṣṇavism," 48.
[175] Ibid., 145.
[176] See for example, Varadācārya, *Prapanna Pārijāta,* 11-16 (English translation) and 9-13 (in Sanskrit); 36-37 (English translation) and 28-29 (in Sanskrit); and, 45-52 (English translation) and 39-46 (in Sanskrit).

thirteenth century CE, and in the eighth century CE, respectively.[177] Patricia Mumme, in her study on "Pāñcarātra texts in The Teṉkalai-Vaṭakalai Dispute," offers an insightful observation on the relation between these two Pañcarātra Saṃhitās and the Śrīvaiṣṇava doctrine of independent prapatti:

> It is clear that in some Pāñcarātra texts, *prapatti* or *śaraṇāgati* is clearly defined and taught as a path to *mokṣa* distinct from *bhaktiyoga*, and the viewpoint later Śrīvaiṣṇavism taught is articulated: that all other paths to *mokṣa* boil down to these two. However, the dates of the Pāñcarātra texts (or portions thereof) which teach this doctrine, the ABH ch. 37 and the LT ch. 17, are equally unclear, and cannot shed much light on when this doctrine arose. It seems likely that the doctrine of *prapatti* or *śaraṇāgati* as a separate *upāya* to *mokṣa* emerged concomitantly in the Śrīvaiṣṇava and Pāñcarātra traditions, indicating that the keepers of these two traditions were closely associated in the centuries between Yāmuna (c. 1050?) and Periyavāccāṉ Piḷḷai and Vātsya Varadācārya (c. 1225).[178]

As Mumme states, although these two Pāñcarātra Saṃhitā texts explicitly teach prapatti as an independent means to mokṣa, they do not clearly point us to the origin of the concept of the independence of prapatti. However, they undoubtedly play an important role in Vedāntadeśika's systematization of the doctrine of aṅgi-prapatti. In addition to the LT and the ABH, Vedāntadeśika also frequently refers to the *Sātyakitantra* (henceforth SK), which is also quoted in Vātsya Varadaguru's *Prapannapārijāta*.[179]

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[177] Kumar, "The Understanding of Śrī-Lakṣmī," 22.

[178] Mumme, "Pāñcarātra Texts," 110. In her study, Mumme aims to compare the Teṉkalai and Vaṭakalai interpretations of some important passages from these two chapters in these two Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās. She has explored the way Vedāntadeśika employed these two Pāñcarātra in his defense of aṅgi-prapatti in his Rahasyatrayasāra. Mumme concludes, "Vedāntadeśika's view of *prapatti* is slightly more consistent with the view of *prapatti* that comes through in a casual reading of the Pāñcarātra texts themselves, where *prapatti* is taught as an *upāya* like many others" (ibid., 124). Moreover, Mumme indicates that "Vedāntadeśika's interpretation of *prapatti*, though not at odds with what is said in Ahirbudhnyasaṃhitā, is more compatible with, and indebted to, that seen in the Lakṣmītantra" (ibid., 112).

[179] The SK is a lost text. For quotations of the SK in the *Prapanna Pārijāta*, see Varadācārya. *Prapanna Pārijāta,* 17, 54, and 56 (in Sanskrit). Apart from these Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās, Vedāntadeśika also refers to the Śrīsāttvatantra (see Vedāntadeśika, *Nikṣeparakṣā,* 16, 29, 37, and 38). It may be suspected that the Śrīsāttvatantra and the Sātyakitantra are alternate names for the same text, since sātvata/sāttvata and sātyaki refer to the same character in the *Mahābhārata*. See Soren Sorensen, Pratāpachandra Rāya, Elof

Vedāntadeśika's use of the Pāñcarātra Sāṃhitās in the NR

In the NR, Vedāntadeśika mainly uses the LT, the ABH, and the SK as scriptural supports in defending the validity of aṅgi-prapatti. Vedāntadeśika, in his argument on the oneness of bhaktiyoga and aṅgi-prapatti, offers the defense that, in the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās such as the SK, the ABH, and the LT, prapatti is presented as being separate from bhaktiyoga.[180] Importantly, Vedāntadeśika also relies on these three Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās in order to define the characteristics of aṅgi-prapatti.

In order to use the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās to support his position, Vedāntadeśika first defends the authority of the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās and then validates the teachings of aṅgi-prapatti in these texts as we will see in the following sections.

Vedāntadeśika defends the authority of the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās by arguing that these texts are as authoritative as the Vedas, the most authoritative texts in orthodox traditions. Vedāntadeśika classifies the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās as "a condensation of the Vedas" (nigamasaṃgraha).[181] Vedāntadeśika further argues that if the statements from the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās are contradictory to the statements from the Vedas, the conflicting statements from these two sources should be regarded as optional.[182] Vedāntadeśika models this argument on the Mīmāṃsā principle that two conflicting statements from the Vedas can be seen as options.[183] Therefore, Vedāntadeśika suggests that the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās are on par with the Vedas.

Olesen, Dines Andersen, and Pratāpacandra Rāya, eds., *An Index to the Names in the Mahābhārata with Short Explanations and a Concordance to the Bombay and Calcutta Editions and P.C. Roy's Translation* (Delhi: M. Banarsidass, 1963), 626 (for sātvata) and 629 (for sātyaki).

[180] Vedāntadeśika, *Nikṣeparakṣā*, 34.

[181] Vedāntadeśika, *Nikṣeparakṣā*, 30.

[182] Ibid.

[183] For more information on Mīmāṃsā principle of options, see Edgerton, *Mīmāṃsānyāyaprakāśa*, 149-150 and 170-174.

Having argued for the authority of the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās, Vedāntadeśika, then, justifies the authority of Pāñcarātra statements regarding aṅgi-prapatti by claiming that Pāñcarātra statements regarding aṅgi-prapatti can also be found in Vedic source such as the *Mahānārāyaṇa Upaṇiṣad*. Vedāntadeśika supports his position with ABH 37.37, "Among these austerities, abandonment is heard separately from tapas" and ABH 37.23, "This great Upaniṣad is the most secret of the gods."[184] These passages from chapter 37 of the ABH repeat almost word for word *Mahānārāyaṇa Upaṇiṣad* 538 and 540 respectively.[185] According to Vedāntadeśika, since the passages in the *Mahānārāyaṇa Upaṇiṣad* are found in chapter 37 of the ABH that deals with the act of *nyāsavidyā* ("offering oneself to God"), which is synonymous to aṅgi-prapatti, the *Mahānārāyaṇa Upaṇiṣad* should similarly communicate nyāsavidyā.[186]

Having relied on the LT, the SK, and the ABH, Vedāntadeśika points to three characteristics of aṅgi-prapatti: first, aṅgi-prapatti is a means to mokṣa that has to be performed exclusively; aṅgi-prapatti can be used as an expiation; finally, aṅgi-prapatti consists of six components.

First, Vedāntadeśika uses a passage from the SK to support the exclusivity of aṅgi-prapatti as a means to mokṣa. Vedāntadeśika argues that aṅgi-prapatti is offered to people who are ineligible to pursue mokṣa through other means. Thus, attaining mokṣa by other means would be contradictory to performing aṅgi-prapatti. Vedāntadeśika cites

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[184] Vedāntadeśika, *Nikṣeparakṣā*, 29. teṣāṃ tu tapasāṃ nyāsam atiriktaṃ tapaḥ śrutam [ABH 37.37], idaṃ mahopaniṣadaṃ devānāṃ guhyam uttamam [ABH 37.23] iti. It should be noted that ABH 37.23 quoted in the NR is slightly different from the one found in Rāmānujācārya, *Ahirbudhnya-Saṃhitā,* 356: etanmahopaniṣadaṃ devānāṃ guhyamuttamam. For ABH 37.37, see ibid., 358.
[185] tasmān nyāsam eṣāṃ tapasām atiriktam āhuḥ (Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad 538).
oṃ ity ātmānaṃ yuñjīta etad vai mahopaniṣadam devānāṃ guhyam (Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad 540).
See Jean Varenne, ed., *La Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad* (Paris: Édition E. de Boccard, 136).
[186] Vedāntadeśika, Nikṣeparakṣā, 29.

the passage in the SK, chapter on prapatti, which deals particularly with people who are ineligible to attain mokṣa through other means. This passage says:

> O Lord, the great action that causes them to attain you which is good for souls which are falling down is said by you whose self is under the influence of compassion.
>
> Many mantras such as the one consisting of eight syllables [Tirumantra] are learnt.
>
> One, who is sacrificing with these actions and chanting continuously these mantras, obtains You who are the puruṣa and Supreme Person.
>
> O You, ocean of compassion, these actions, being seen,
>
> Are difficult and their nature is difficult to understand one piece at a time.
>
> Life goes to decay by this stated path for a person chanting these mantras one at a time.
>
> Therefore, by the action which is done only once and by mantra which is chanted only once, man would be happy and successful.
>
> Say this action and this mantra. You are one whose heart is dripping with compassion.
>
> The Lord said-
>
> O One who has lotus-seat, what you have said is true.
>
> The actions are impossible and the performance of mantras according to śāstra is not possible.
>
> This is the action with which one offers such that, as soon as it is done, a man obtains Me and will become My Self.[187]

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[187] Vedāntadeśika, *Nikṣeparakṣā*, 19.

bhagavan hitam ākhyātam ātmanāṃ patatām adhaḥ |
tvatprāpakaṃ mahat karma kāruṇyavivaśātmanā ||
adhītā bahavo mantrāḥ śrīmadaṣṭākṣarādikāḥ |
ebhiḥ karmabhir ījānas tān mantrān satataṃ japan ||
tvām āpnoty eva puruṣaḥ puruṣaṃ puruṣottamam ||
etāny ālocyamānāni karmāṇi karuṇākara |
durvijñeyasvarūpāṇi duṣkarāṇi vibhāgaśaḥ ||
mantrāṃś caikaikakaśas tāvaj japamānasya mādhava |
uktenaiva ca mārgeṇa gacchaty āyur apakṣayam ||
tasmāt sakṛtkṛtenaiva karmaṇā yena mānavaḥ |
sakṛjjaptena mantreṇa kṛtakṛtyaḥ sukhī bhavet ||
tad brūhi karma tan mantraṃ dayārdrahṛdayo hy asi ||
śrībhagavān uvāca -
satyam uktam aśakyāni karmāṇi kamalāsana |
mantrāṇāṃ ca yathāśāstram anuṣṭhānaṃ na śakyate ||
ijyate yena tat karma kṛtamātreṇa karmaṇā |
mām āpnoti naro brahman mamātmā ca bhaviṣyati ||

Sātyakitantra, verses cannot be identified.

Vedāntadeśika explains that this passage communicates that aṅgi-prapatti is being offered as a means to mokṣa in place of other means. Aṅgi-prapatti is preferred since it is an easy means and it can be used to attain mokṣa by being done only once. On the other hand, other means like actions or mantras are difficult to be accomplished. Thus, this passage suggests that aṅgi-prapatti is a substitute for other means to mokṣa.

Apart from being a means to mokṣa, Vedāntadeśika cites a long passage from the LT in which aṅgi-prapatti is also mentioned as an expiation for previous sins:

> A person, relying on this religious practice, should submit to Lord of the world, Viṣṇu.
> The meaning of śāstra is [that this aṅgi-prapatti] done merely once may liberate that person.
> When there is a combination with the means of approaching and means of taking away, the person lacks this religious practice.
> If you are overwhelmed by sins, one should do an expiation at once.
> The expiation here is you choose the refuge again.
> If you accept [the other] means as means, that [expiation] is just the same.[188]

Then Vedāntadeśika elaborates, turning to chapter 17 of the LT, that aṅgi-prapatti is described as "the middle path between means of approching (upāya) and means of deviation (apāya)," and it consists of six components:

> Means of approaching and means of taking away from something which are śāstric have been made by Me.
> Means of approaching which are enjoined [to do], means of taking away which are prohibited.
> Means of taking away lead a person who follows them down.
> Means of approaching lead a person who follows them up.

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[188] Vedāntadeśika, *Nikṣeparakṣā*, 22.
asyāṃ sthito jagannāthaṃ prapadyeta janārdanam |
sakṛd eva hi śāstrārthaḥ kṛto ´yaṃ tārayen naram ||
upāyāpāyasaṃyoge niṣṭhayā hīyate ´nayā |
apāyasaṃplave sadyaḥ prāyaścittaṃ samācaret ||
prāyaścittir iyaṃ sātra yat punaḥ śaraṇaṃ vrajet |
upāyānām upāyatvasvīkāre ´py etad eva hi ||
This quotation is from LT 17.91-17.94 (Krishnamacharya, *Lakṣmī-Tantra,* 59).

Abandoning means of approaching and means of taking away and established on a middle course,
Having attained Me as refuge, one obtains Me alone in the end.
Hear this six-fold means from Me, O Goddess of lotus!
Will to help other beings; the avoidance of harm to other beings;
The faith that God will protect one who asks; choosing God as the protector;
The offering of oneself; [and] wretchedness: This is six-fold śaraṇāgati.
Having gone to Me alone as refuge, one whose grief, fear, and fatigue are gone.
Without understanding anything, without hoping for anything, without a thing of his own, without a sense of himself.
Having gone to Me alone as refuge, he may cross the ocean of cycle of births.
People who are engaged in true actions and are pure knowers of śaṃkhya and yoga are not worth
Even a tiniest piece of a person who has resorted to refuge.[189]

The six components are described in detail as follows:

"Will to help other beings" is stated as being helpful to all beings.
From the determination that I am staying inside all beings,
He should practice helpfulness to all beings as to Me.
And for that very reason, one should "avoid doing harm to other beings."
"Wretchedness" is abandoning pride born from virtuous conduct and learning
Because of incompletion of all the actions and inabilities for all actions.
Because [there is] no accomplishment of eligibility because of decay of place, time, and quality.

[189] Vedāntadeśika, *Nikṣeparakṣā,* 21.
upāyāś cāpy apāyāś ca śāstrīyā nirmitā mayā |
vihitā ya upāyās te niṣiddhāś cetare matāḥ ||
adho nayanty apāyās taṃ ya enānanuvartate |
ūrdhvaṃ nayanty upāyās taṃ ya enānanuvartate ||
upāyāpāyasaṃtyāgī madhyamāṃ vṛttim āsthitaḥ |
mām ekaṃ śaraṇaṃ prāpya mām evānte samaśnute ||
ṣaḍaṅgaṃ tam upāyaṃ ca śṛṇu me padmasaṃbhave |
ānukūlyasya saṃkalpaḥ prātikūlyasya varjanam ||
rakṣiṣyatīti viśvāso goptṛtvavaraṇaṃ tathā |
ātmanikṣepakārpaṇye ṣaḍvidhā śaraṇāgatiḥ ||
evaṃ māṃ śaraṇaṃ prāpya vītaśokabhayaklamaḥ |
nirārambho nirāśīś ca nirmamo nirahaṃkṛtiḥ ||
mām eva śaraṇaṃ prāpya taret saṃsārasāgaram |
satkarmaniratāḥ śuddhāḥ sāṃkhyayogavidas tathā ||
nārhanti śaraṇasthasya kalāṃ koṭitamīm api || iti ||
This quotation is from LT 17.53-17.63 (Krishnamacharya, *Lakṣmī-Tantra,* 57).

Means of approaching are not accomplished and means of taking away are many.

This abandonment of pride in this way, is pitiableness, which is called "wretchedness,"

Because of capability, being easy to attain because Viṣṇu is joined with compassion,

Because of connection between Lord and the thing to be commanded and because this is not the first time,

There is firm faith that He will protect us who ask.

That is "faith." O Indra! This belief destroys all evil deeds.

Although He is compassionate, clearly capable, the master of all beings.

He may not protect if he is not asked; therefore there is the thought that one must ask Him:

'Be my protector.' This is remembered as "choosing God as the protector.

Disconnection from ownership in a result on the part of a person who is being protected by Him,

Which ends in offering [oneself] to Kṛṣṇa that is called "the offering of oneself."[190]

Vedāntadeśika also uses these six components in the LT in order to make a clear distinction between aṅgi-prapatti and the means to mokṣa as interpreted by the Advaitins, the Śrīvaiṣṇavas' rival school. At the beginning of his argument on the nature of aṅgi-prapatti, Vedāntadeśika proposes that aṅgi-prapatti is an awareness consisting of six

[190] Ibid.

ānukūlyam iti proktaṃ sarvabhūtānukūlatā |
antaḥ sthitāhaṃ sarveṣāṃ bhāvānām iti niścayāt ||
mayīva sarvabhūteṣu hy ānukūlyaṃ samācaret |
tathaiva prātikūlyaṃ ca bhūteṣu parivarjayet ||
tyāgo garvasya kārpaṇyaṃ śrutaśīlādijanmanaḥ |
aṅgasāmagryasaṃpatter aśakteś cāpi karmaṇām ||
adhikārasya cāsiddher deśakālaguṇakṣayāt |
upāyā naiva sidhyanti hy apāyabahulās tathā ||
iti yā garvahānis tad dainyaṃ kārpaṇyam ucyate |
śakteḥ sūpasadatvāc ca kṛpāyogāc ca śārṅgiṇaḥ ||
īśeśitavyasaṃbandhād anidaṃprathamād api |
rakṣiṣyaty anukūlān na iti yā sudṛḍhā matiḥ ||
sa viśvāso bhavec chakra sarvaduṣkṛtanāśanaḥ |
karuṇāvān api vyaktaṃ śaktaḥ svāmy api dehinām ||
aprārthito na gopāyed iti tatprārthanāmatiḥ |
gopāyitā bhavety evaṃ goptṛtvavaraṇaṃ smṛtam ||
tena saṃrakṣyamāṇasya phale svāmy aviyuktatā |
keśavārpaṇaparyantā hy ātmanikṣepa ucyate ||

This quotation is from LT 17.66-17.74 (Krishnamacharya, *Lakṣmī-Tantra,* 57-58).

mental components which are produced by various causes. It can be speculated that Vedāntadeśika makes this position in order to distinguish aṅgi-prapatti from knowledge produced only from the śāstras that is the means to mokṣa of the Advaitins. According to the Advaitins, knowledge which is acquired by reading the śāstras and meditating on important passages such as "you are that" (tat tvam asi) is the only means to mokṣa.[191] Therefore, if aṅgi-prapatti is said to be an awareness brought about only by understanding the śāstras, it would be similar to the means to mokṣa of the Advaitins. Thus, Vedāntadeśika argues that aṅgi-prapatti, with the six components as seen in chapter 17 of the LT can be derived from sources other than the śāstras as well:

First, the "will to help other beings" (ānukūlyasaṃkalpa) has mental support as a cause like other forms of will. Second, "the avoidance of harm to other beings" (prātikūlyavarjana) can also be categorized as mind-supported since it culminates in will. Third, "the faith that God will protect one who asks" (rakṣiṣyatīti viśvāsa) is primarily based on the śāstras, but it later takes a form of a memory that reminds a person to have faith in God according to śāstras. Fourth, "choosing God as one's protector" (goptṛtva varaṇa), which is equal to asking for protection, is also mentally caused as can be seen in the case of a weak person who is afraid of something and asks for protection from a strong person. Fifth, "the offering of oneself" (ātmanikṣepa) is explained in LT 17.74 as "disconnection from ownership in a result on the part of a person who is being protected by Him, which ends in the offering [oneself] to Kṛṣṇa."[192] Vedāntadeśika elaborates that this offering

[191] Flood, *An Introduction to Hinduism,* 242. See more background of Advaita Vedānta ibid. 239-243.
[192] Krishnamacharya, *Lakṣmī-Tantra,* 58.
tena saṃrakṣyamāṇasya phale svāmyaviyuktatā |
keśavārpaṇaparyantā hy ātmanikṣepa ucyate ||
This quotation is from LT 17.74 (Krishnamacharya, *Lakṣmī-Tantra,* 58).

consists of a thought that one should totally devote the ownership and the burden of protection of oneself to God who is the only protector. This complete subordination to God can be compared with a person's acceptance of becoming "a servant" (dāsya) and it is caused by the desire of a person who lacks any other means to mokṣa.[193] Finally, Vedāntadeśika provides several explanations for the last component, "wretchedness" (kārpaṇya). According to Vedāntadeśika, this wretchedness can refer to a person who loses other means like bhaktiyoga. There are various causes of this loss which are made known in the śāstras. Alternatively, this wretchedness may point to a person who does not know any other means to mokṣa apart from aṅgi-prapatti. In this case, the non-perception of other means can be caused by an absence of any way to learn the knowledge of other means (pramāṇa).[194] Vedāntadeśika concludes that these six causal factors indicate that aṅgi-prapatti has additional causes other than knowledge from the śāstras.[195]

Moreover, Vedāntadeśika affirms his position that aṅgi-prapatti has six components by identifying aṅgi-prapatti with six-fold namas ("bowing"), as discussed in chapter 52 of the ABH. This namas is explained to be the quality of general beings who have to bow down to God who is the superior. It consists of six-components that are parallel to the six components in chapter 17 of the LT. The interesting feature of the list of these six components in the ABH, chapter 52, verses 12-23, is the presence and description of contradictions to these six components as follows:

[193] Vedāntadeśika, *Nikṣeparakṣā*, 17.
[194] See details ibid., 17-18.
[195] Ibid., 18.

Having stated namas by speech, body, and mind,
That namas is said to be complete. Anything other than that is said to be less.

This would be a completion, listen to the completeness of aṅga.
[The offering of oneself (ātmanikṣepa)]
This is my eternal accomplishment that I bow down

Toward the Supreme Person. For me, there is no accomplishment other than this.
This is said to be the best component. Desire of result is contradictory to this.

[Wretchedness (kārpaṇya)]

Because of weakness which is natural, increase of beginingless traces,
[and] being surrounded by stain, there is a prevention of the act of seeing God

That is wretchedness. Know that as the second component of this sort.
Thinking of your own independence is said to be the contradiction of that.

[The faith that God will protect one who asks (rakṣiṣyatīti viśvāsa)]

Since He has superiority, this God is compassionate to all beings.
He has the one thought of grace always- This is the third [component].

"He is indifferent," "He gives result according to actions." These thoughts
kill the third [component] which, indeed, consists of eternal faith.

[Choosing God as the protector (goptṛtva varaṇa)]

Since He is capable in this way, He should be my protection.
With this thought, there is the determination of God's capability to be a protector.

This is said to be the fourth component. The harming of that
Arises from imagining that He is indifferent, either by nature or because He does not have appropriate virtues.

[The avoidance of harm to other beings (prātikūlyavarjana)]

The action of oneself towards one master is an avoidance of harm,
Which is the fifth component and it is equal to avoiding the opposition to His order.

Practice of what is not śāstric is said to be the opposition of that.

[Will to help other beings (ānukūlyasaṃkalpa)]

"All beings moving and unmoving are the body of God.

Helpfulness to those beings should be done by me."
This determination is the sixth component. The contradiction of this is a rejection [of that].[196]

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[196] Ibid., 24.

vācā nama iti procya manasā vapuṣā ca yat |
tannamaḥ pūrṇam uddiṣṭamato ´nyan nyūnam ucyate ||
iyaṃ karaṇapūrtiḥ syād aṅgapūrtim imāṃ śṛṇu |
śāśvatī mama saṃsiddhir iyaṃ prahvībhavāmi yat ||

In his argument on the definition of aṅgi-prapatti, Vedāntadeśika continues to discuss the six components of aṅgi-prapatti. Vedāntadeśika argues that, among these six components, the offering of oneself (ātmanikṣepa) is the aṅgi or the predominant one. This argument is based on a statement in the LT 17.75 that says "nyāsa (offering) which is synonymous with nikṣepa, joined with five components, is called tyāga and also śaraṇāgati."[197]

Vedāntadeśika further supports his position on the predominance of the offering of oneself with a dialogue from the SK: "How should he go to you as refuge, what kind of śaraṇāgati?... One should offer oneself to Me with this mantra."[198] Vedāntadeśika indicates that this passage shows "the predominance of offering [oneself] preceded by a teaching of a particular mantra which should be done once."[199] However, Vedāntadeśika

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puruṣaṃ param uddiśya na me siddhir ito ´nyathā |
ity aṅgam uditaṃ śreṣṭhaṃ phalepsā tadvirodhinī ||
anādivāsanārohād anaiśvaryāt svabhāvajāt |
malāvakuṇṭhitatvāc ca dṛkkriyāvihatir hi yā ||
tat kārpaṇyaṃ tadudbodho dvitīyaṃ hy aṅgam īdṛśam |
svasvātantryāvabodhaś ca tadvirodha udīryate ||
paratve sati devo ´yaṃ bhūtānām anukampanaḥ |
anugrahaikadhīr nityam ity etat tu tṛtīyakam ||
upekṣako yathākarma phaladāyīti yā matiḥ |
viśvāsātmakam etat tu tṛtīyaṃ hanti vai sadā ||
evaṃbhūto ´pi śaktaḥ san mattrāṇaṃ bhavituṃ kṣamaḥ |
iti buddhyāsya devasya goptṛśaktinirūpaṇam ||
caturtham aṅgam uddiṣṭam amuṣya vyāhatiḥ svataḥ |
udāsīno guṇābhāvād ity utprekṣānimittajā ||
svasya svāmini vṛttir yā prātikūlyavivarjanam |
tadaṅgaṃ pañcamaṃ proktam ājñāvyāghātavarjanam ||
aśāstrīyopasevā tu tadvyāghāta udīryate |
carācarāṇi bhūtāni sarvāṇi bhagavadvapuḥ ||
atas tadānukūlyaṃ me kāryam ity eva niścayaḥ |
ṣaṣṭham aṅgaṃ samuddiṣṭaṃ tadvighāto nirākṛtiḥ ||
This quotation is from ABH 52.12-52.23 (Rāmānujācārya, *Ahirbudhnya-Saṃhitā,* 541-543).

[197] Ibid., 28.
nikṣepāparaparyāyo nyāsaḥ pañcāṅgasaṃyutaḥ |
saṃnyāsas tyāgaḥ ity uktaḥ śaraṇāgatir ity api ||
This quotation is from LT 17.75 (Krishnamacharya, *Lakṣmī-Tantra,* 58).

[198] Ibid. "kathaṃ tvāṃ śaraṇaṃ gacchet kīdṛśī śaraṇāgati... anenaiva tu mantreṇa svātmānaṃ mayi nikṣiped."

[199] Ibid. "sakṛjjaptavyamantraviśeṣopadeśapūrvakaṃ nikṣepasya prādhānyam adarśayat."

does not clearly explain the relation between this predominant offering of oneself and other five components. According to Vedāntadeśika, it is not necessary to signify the predominant one because these six components should be performed altogether.[200]

In this section, I have investigated the way Vedāntadeśika synthesizes the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās in his defense of aṅgi-prapatti in the NR. Vedāntadeśika regards the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās as authoritative scriptures and, more importantly, as a significant source in his defense of aṅgi-prapatti. This recognition of the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās as a scriptural source for the independence of prapatti seems to have originated in Vātsya Varadaguru's *Prapannapārijāta*. The Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās that play an important role in the NR are the LT, the ABH, and the SK. According to Vātsya Varadaguru and Vedāntadeśika, these Pāñcarātra texts directly teach prapatti as an independent means to mokṣa. Therefore, these Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās show that prapatti is an independent means, distinct from bhaktiyoga.

However, the fact that Vedāntadeśika mainly quotes from chapter 17 of the LT, chapters 37 and 52 of the ABH, and one chapter on prapatti from the SK, signifies that these Saṃhitās are not entirely devoted to the teaching of prapatti.

To sum up, in the arguments on the nature and definition of aṅgi-prapatti, Vedāntadeśika consistently quotes large passages from these three Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās as evidence. First, Vedāntadeśika argues that aṅgi-prapatti is a means to mokṣa that has to be performed exclusively. Then, Vedāntadeśika cites the SK to show that aṅgi-prapatti can also be performed as an expiation. Finally, Vedāntadeśika brings

[200] Ibid.

in six components of śaranāgati from the LT chapter 17 and namas from the ABH chapter 52 in order to argue that aṅgi-prapatti is six-fold and is equal to the offering of oneself.

Although Vedāntadeśika does not mention the influence of Vātsya Varadaguru in the NR, it can be speculated that Vedāntadeśika's definition of aṅgi-prapatti is derived from Vātsya Varadaguru who first defined prapatti as the offering of oneself. Vedāntadeśika also uses the passage from the LT as the main source for his description of aṅgi-prapatti as is also similar to the justification offered by Vātsya Varadaguru in his *Prapannapārijāta*. However, unlike Vātsya Varadaguru who brings in large quotations from various Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās without dealing with them at any great length, Vedāntadeśika regards the passages that he quotes from these Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās as an integral part of the authoritative textual tradition. For this reason, it can be said that Vedāntadeśika makes an attempt to integrate the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās into his systematization of aṅgi-prapatti. As we will see in the next section, apart from following the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition's scriptures, the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās, Vedāntadeśika also introduces another authority from the Mīmāṃsā tradition to support his doctrine of aṅgi-prapatti.

Mīmāṃsā Principles of Vedic Interpretation

In this second section, I investigate the way Vedāntadeśika synthesizes Mīmāṃsā principles of Vedic interpretation in the NR. I argue that Vedāntadeśika employs these Mīmāṃsā principles of Vedic interpretation as an interpretative theory in defending aṅgi-prapatti. First, I provide a brief background of the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition's relation to the Mīmāṃsā tradition. Before I proceed to my analysis, I concisely explain the main principles of Mīmāṃsā's Vedic interpretation that are relevant to the analysis. Then, I

analyze two important points which Vedāntadeśika makes by explicitly referring to Mīmāṃsā principles of Vedic interpretation in his discussion. These two points are the analysis of the Caramaśloka and the implication of aṅgi-prapatti injunctions in smṛti sources.

The Śrīvaiṣṇava Tradition's Relation to the Mīmāṃsā Tradition

Mīmāṃsā is the earliest philosophical school devoted to the development of Vedic interpretative and ritual theory. It mainly deals with the earlier part of the Vedas, which consists of the Brāhmaṇas and the Saṃhitā. Therefore, it is generally known as the "Pūrva Mīmāṃsā" (prior investigation). The main texts of this school are the *Mīmāṃsāsūtra* of Jaimini (c. 200 BC?), which is the oldest text of this school, the *Śābarabhāṣya* of Śabara (c. 400 AD), the commentary on Jaimini's sūtra, and commentaries on Śabara's work by Kumārilabhaṭṭa and Prabhākara, who founded two main sub-schools called Bhāṭṭa and Prabhākara.[201] The tenets of Mīmāṃsā are the eternality of the Vedas and of language, the authority of the Vedas in enjoining rituals, and the nonexistence of God.[202]

Mīmāṃsā first appeared as a rival school to the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition, as the Mīmāṃsā directly denied the scriptural authority of the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās which are respected as scriptures in the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition. In the *Āgamapramāṇya*, Yāmuna argues against the position staked out earlier by Kumārila, who objects to the scriptural authority of the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās and disregards the rituals which are mentioned in

[201] McCrea, "Mīmāṃsā and the Teleology of Language," 55-56.
[202] See more McCrea, "Mīmāṃsā," 643-656.

these texts.[203] For Rāmānuja, Freschi proposes that "[Rāmānuja] comes closer to the Pūrva Mīmāṃsā" because Rāmānuja seems to agree with the Mīmāṃsakas' view on the importance of the Brāhmaṇa part of the Vedas. Rāmānuja proposes in his *Śrībhāṣya* that "not only the Brāhmaṇā part of the Vedas needs to be studied, but that its study is a part of the same teaching as the Vedānta."[204]

Vedāntadeśika distinctively exploits Mīmāṃsā in his development of the Śrīvaiṣṇava's philosophical system. Vedāntadeśika's intense association with the Mīmāṃsā school is clear. First, in his works such as the *Seśvaramīmāṃsā*, he reinterprets Mīmāṃsā atheist texts in order to argue for the existence of an essence of God, an argument earlier developed by Rāmānuja. Second, his doctrinal defenses and textual analysis incorporates Mīmāṃsā principles of Vedic interpretation, as can be seen in his defense of aṅgi-prapatti in the NR.[205]

Main Mīmāṃsā Principles of Vedic Interpretation

The Mīmāṃsakas are principally concerned with the interpretation of Vedic statements. According to Mīmāṃsā, Vedic statements can be classified into five categories: injunctions (vidhi), formulas (mantras), names of rituals (nāmadheya), prohibitions (niṣedha), and explanatory-passages (arthavāda).[206] From my analysis, Vedāntadeśika pays attention mostly to injunctions and explanatory-passages.

Injunctions enjoin people to perform rituals as prescribed by the Vedas.[207] Rituals can be classified into three kinds: obligatory ritual (nityakarma), which can cause bad

[203] McCrea, "Does God Have Free Will," forthcoming.
[204] Freschi, "Śrī Vaiṣṇavism," forthcoming.
[205] See more Freschi, "Free Will," forthcoming.
[206] See Edgerton, *Mīmāṁsānyāyaprakāśa*, 8.
[207] Cush, *Encyclopedia of Hinduism,* 956. See types of injunctions ibid., 346.

deeds (pāpa) if not performed, but does not produce any good deeds (puṇya); ritual which is performed according to the occasion (naimittikakarma); and ritual which is performed according to one's desires (kāmyakarma).[208] On the other hand, the function of the explanatory-passages' function is to "eulogize certain elements of the sacrifice."[209] However, although explanatory-passages do not enjoin new rituals, they can be used to infer that there must be injunctions of rituals somewhere in each text.

Another important Mīmāṃsā interpretative principle that should be mentioned here is the principle of "the splitting of the sentence" (vākyabheda). According to this principle, any Vedic sentence requires a functional unity and a sentence that "serves multiple injunctive functions will be vitiated by the flaw of vākya-bheda ("splitting of the sentence"), and hence must be rejected as untenable."[210] In other words, "any given injunction can contain only a single injunction directed toward a single result."[211]

For example, take the Vedic sentence: "One who desires sovereignty should sacrifice with *vājapeya*" (*Mīmāṃsāsūtra* 1.4.6-8). If this sentence is understood as enjoining two separate injunctions: "One who desires sovereignty should sacrifice" and "One should sacrifice by means of *vājapeya*," there would be a split of the sentence. In order to avoid this, "vājapeya" should be interpreted as "the proper name of a sacrifice, rather than to designate a particular sacrificial material." Therefore, this sentence can be rephrased as "One should bring sovereignty into being by means of the sacrifice [named] Vājapeya."[212]

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[208] Ibid.
[209] McCrea, "Mīmāṃsā," 649.
[210] McCrea, "Mīmāṃsā and the Teleology of Language," 55-56. See more details in section on "Sentential Coherence and the Splitting of Sentences" (ibid., 70-87).
[211] Ibid., 74.
[212] Ibid., 73. For more details on the interpretation of this sentence, see ibid., 70-74.

However, some sentences might not be interpreted easily as communicating just a single injunction and a single result. In that case, in order to avoid the splitting of the sentence, those sentences should be interpreted as a "qualified injunction" (viśiṣṭa-vidhi) or a "reiteration" (anuvāda). A qualified-injunction enjoins the primary action along with other subordinate elements like in the injunction, "One purchase the *soma* with a red, pink-eyed, one year-old [cow]" (*Mīmāṃsāsūtra* 6.1.12). In this injunction, the purchase of the *soma* is primarily enjoined and it is qualified by the cow which is a substance used in the sacrifice. The red color and other qualifying elements can be taken as the qualities of the cow. Therefore, there is only one main injunction which is the purchase of the *soma*; while, the cow and its qualities are subordinate to the primary injunction.[213]

Reiteration indicates "an already enjoined sacrifice, made in order to enjoin a subordinate element in connection with it."[214] For example, the injunction in the Jyotiṣṭoma sacrifice, "One wipes the spoon with a woolen strainer" (*Mīmāṃsāsūtra* 6.1.13-15). In order to avoid the splitting of this injunction, it cannot be interpreted as enjoining two things: the act of wiping and the singleness of the spoon that should be wiped in this sacrifice. According to the Mīmāṃsakas, the act of the wiping should be the only thing enjoined in this injunction and the spoon(s) must be understood as a reiteration. The spoons are argued to be enjoined in other sentences as an instrument in the sacrifice. They are mentioned again in this sentence "for the purposes of enjoining the subordinate act of wiping in connection with them." For this reason, the singleness of the spoon in this

[213] McCrea, "Mīmāṃsā," 648. For more discussion on this sentence, see McCrea, "Mīmāṃsā and the Teleology of Language," 76-81.
[214] Ibid., 648.

injunction should also be disregarded and the act of wiping must be applied to all the spoons used in this sacrifice.[215]

The Analysis of the Caramaśloka

In this section, I show that Vedāntadeśika distinctively incorporates Mīmāṃsā principles of Vedic interpretation in order to argue that the Caramaśloka is an injunction of aṅgi-prapatti. The incorporation of Mīmāṃsā principles is evident in his discussion of the abandonment part of the Caramaśloka.[216]

The opponent in this discussion essentially attempts to invalidate Vedāntadeśika's argument that the Caramaśloka is an injunction of aṅgi-prapatti by arguing that it is impossible to make sense of the abandonment part of the Caramaśloka. Thus, the Caramaśloka as a whole must be invalid. The opponent explains that the abandonment part can be understood neither as an injunction nor a reiteration.

First, the opponent argues that the abandonment part cannot be interpreted as an injunction. According to the opponent, if the abandonment is understood in a literal sense as enjoining a person to abandon all dharmas, it would be invalid because it enjoins an act that is impossible for a person to perform. The opponent supports this position by offering several illustrations that show that it is impossible to abandon all dharmas completely. The opponent also rejects the alternative interpretation of the abandonment part as enjoining the abandonment of the result of dharmas. The opponent cites the Mīmāṃsā principle: "In command, there is no other meaning of the word," in order to argue that an injunction should be literally construed.[217] Thus, the abandonment part

[215] Ibid., 649. See McCrea, "Mīmāṃsā and the Teleology of Language," 81-87.
[216] Vedāntadeśika, *Nikṣeparakṣā*, 4.
[217] Ibid. "na vidhau paraḥ śabdārthaḥ."

cannot be interpreted as enjoining the abandonment of things other than all the dharmas, the literal meaning of the statement in this part of the Caramaśloka.

Moreover, the opponent proposes that if this abandonment is interpreted as an injunction, then the Caramaśloka would enjoin two things: the abandonment of all dharmas and the performance of aṅgi-prapatti, which is further enjoined in the following part, “go to Me alone as refuge”. As a result, the Caramaśloka would succumb into the flaw of the splitting of the sentence and, thus, it would become invalid. The opponent cites the Mīmāṃsā principle that says: “If unity of the sentence is possible, then the splitting of the sentence is not desired,”[218] in order to show that the Mīmāṃsākas consider the splitting of the sentence as a flaw.

The opponent also rejects the possibility that the splitting of the sentence can be resolved by stating that the abandonment of all dharmas is the only injunction in the Caramaśloka. However, in that case, there cannot be an injunction of aṅgi-prapatti in other parts of the Caramaśloka since each sentence can contain only one injunction.

Second, the opponent argues that the abandonment cannot be understood as a reiteration. According to the opponent, if the abandonment part reiterates that a person who has abandoned all dharmas is eligible to perform aṅgi-prapatti, this abandonment would be classified as the occasion (nimitta) for that person to perform aṅgi-prapatti. This view is supported by the Mīmāṃsā principle, “If abandonment is reiterated here due to the impossibility of any other way [of interpreting the term], it would become occasion

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This quotation is paraphrased from *Mīmāṃsāsūtra* 1.2.29 (Jaimini, *Mīmāmsādarśanam with Śabarabhāṣya of Śabara and Tantravārtika of Kumārilabhaṭṭa*, ed. K. V. Abhyankar and G.A. Joshi. Vol. 1. Trivandrum: Ānandāśrama, 1974), 141.

[218] Ibid. “saṃbhavaty ekavākyatve vākyabhedas tu neṣyate.”
This quotation is from *Mīmāṃsāślokavārtika* 1.4.9 (Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, *Mīmāṃsāślokavārtika*, ed. By Rāmasāstri Tailanga. Benares: Vidya Vilas Press, 1899), 135.

(nimitta) for the action, like such things as eating garlic, but not subordinate part of the action."[219] In this case, the abandonment of all dharmas would be considered a sin that creates an opportunity for a person to perform aṅgi-prapatti as an expiation for that sin. Therefore, when the abandonment is interpreted as a reiteration of a person's eligibility, aṅgi-prapatti cannot be seen as a means to mokṣa because it can only be an expiation for the sin caused by the abandonment of all dharmas.[220]

The opponent further rejects the alternative view that this abandonment part may reiterate that a person who is not capable of bhaktiyoga like Arjuna should perform aṅgi-prapatti. The opponent points out that there is nothing indicating that this abandonment part should figuratively imply such an incapability.

Here, we turn to Vedāntadeśika's rejection of the opponent's argument that the abandonment part cannot be understood as either an injunction or a reiteration. Vedāntadeśika first responds to the opponent's view that if the abandonment part is interpreted as an injunction, the Caramaśloka would succumb to the flaw of the splitting of the sentence. Vedāntadeśika argues that the splitting of the sentence can be resolved if the abandonment part is enjoined as being subordinate to the main injunction, that is the performance of aṅgi-prapatti. Vedāntadeśika relies on Mīmāṃsā principle of a qualified injunction in order to support this argument.

Vedāntadeśika explains that, following the principle of a qualified injunction, the Caramaśloka can be interpreted as enjoining the performance of aṅgi-prapatti which is

[219] Ibid. "parityāgo ´nūdyamānaś cātra gatyantarāsaṃbhavāt laśunabhakṣaṇādivannimittatāṃ gāheta, na punaraṅgatām." Cf. Śabara's Mīmāṃsāsūtrabhāṣya 6.2.19 (Jaimini, *Mīmāmsādarśanam with Śabarabhāṣya of Śabara and Tantravārtika of Kumārilabhaṭṭa*, ed. K. V. Abhyankar and G.A. Joshi. Vol. 4. Trivandrum: Ānandāśrama, 1974), 1399-1400.
[220] Ibid, 4-5.

qualified by the abandonment of all dharmas. In this case, the performance of aṅgi-prapatti would be primarily enjoined and the abandonment part is enjoined as being subordinate to that main injunction. As a result, there would be no splitting of the Caramaśloka since this sentence enjoins only one main thing: the performance of aṅgi-prapatti. Vedāntadeśika asserts,

> There is no fault of splitting the sentence if there is an acceptance of a qualified injunction. Even if a qualified injunction should be accepted only when there is no alternative [way to interpret the sentence], nevertheless, here too, there is no alternative, so this [qualified injunction] should be accepted.[221]

Then, Vedāntadeśika proposes that the abandonment part can be alternatively interpreted as reiterating that a person is eligible for aṅgi-prapatti because of his or her sorrow from realizing the hopelessness of other means to mokṣa:

> …what is being reiterated is a person who is entered by sorrow caused by hopelessness of other means which are difficult to do for the attainment of particular result that is intended. This is determined from the implication of these two quotes [“all dharmas” (sarvadharmān) and “do not grieve” (mā śucaḥ)]. Moreover, it is possible that there is intense of strength of grief for someone who is unable to tolerate delay and whose ability is limited with respect to approved means which are impeded by hundreds of obstacles and can only be attained after a long time and are very difficult. The person who is eligible for this [aṅgi-prapatti] is someone qualified by that [sorrow]; all this makes sense.[222]

[221] Ibid., 18. viśiṣṭavidhisvīkāre ca na vākyabhedadoṣaḥ. yady api cāsau gatyabhāvaviṣayaḥ; tathāpi atrāpi yadi gatyantarābhāvaḥ syāt tadāsau svīkārya eva...

[222] Ibid., 19-20.
...abhimataphalavieṣalābheduṣkarasādhanāntaranairāśyanimittaśokāviṣṭasyānūdyamānatvāt. etac ca “sarvadharmān parityajya, ” “mā śucaḥ” ity anayoḥ sāmarthyād avasīyate. saṃbhavati ca duṣkaratareṣu cirakālasādhyeṣu pratibandhakaśatanirantareṣu abhimatopāyeṣu parimitaśakter vilambākṣamasya ca tīvraḥ śokavegaḥ; tadviśiṣṭaś cātrādhikārīti na kiṃcid apahīnam.

In this case, Vedāntadeśika suggests that "all dharmas" in the abandonment part should not be understood as literally conveying "all dharmas." On the other hand, "all dharmas" should be limited to dharmas whose purpose is to offer a means to mokṣa. Vedāntadeśika proposes:

> The word "all dharmas" here refers to the totality of dharmas which are intended as means for a particular nearby result [mokṣa] as mentioned in the context. [This is supported] by [this Mīmāṃsā] principle, "Totality is what is made relevant" Mīmāṃsāsūtra 1.2.16).[223]

The Implication of the Aṅgi-prapatti Injunction in Smṛti Sources

Apart from arguing for an injunction of aṅgi-prapatti in the Caramaśloka, Vedāntadeśika also attempts to establish injunctions of aṅgi-prapatti in different passages from both śruti and smṛti in order to defend the idea that there are not only injunctions to perform bhaktiyoga in these authoritative passages. As we will see, Vedāntadeśika makes use of Mīmāṃsā principles in order to justify implied injunctions in smṛti passages.

In his discussion of *smṛti*, Vedāntadeśika is devoted to asserting the presence of injunctions of aṅgi-prapatti in passages from the *Rāmāyaṇa*, a highly respected smṛti text of the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition, and purāṇas, which are also classified as smṛti. Vedāntadeśika chooses the episode in which Vibhīṣaṇa surrenders to Rāma to represent the smṛti source of an aṅgi-prapatti injunction.[224] Rāma's statement is the key passage of this episode: "For someone who surrenders to Me even once and for someone who begs

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[223] Ibid., 20. sarvaśabdo ´py atra "sarvatvam ādhikārikam iti nyāyena saṃnihitaphalaviśeṣasādhanatayābhimataprastutadharmasāmastyaparaḥ.
For *Mīmāṃsāsūtra* 1.2.16, see Jaimini, *Mīmāmsādarśanam with Śabarabhāṣya of Śabara and Tantravārtika of Kumārilabhaṭṭa*, ed. K. V. Abhyankar and G.A. Joshi. Vol. 1 (Trivandrum: Ānandāśrama, 1974), 129.

[224] For detailed story, see section 2.9 Vibhīṣaṇa's surrender in Ajay K. Rao. *Re-Figuring the Rāmāyaṇa as Theology: A History of Reception in Premodern India* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge. 2015), 56-61.

"I am yours," I give safety for all beings. This is my promise."[225] Vedāntadeśika argues that this statement expresses not only the promise of God to grant mokṣa to prapannas but, more importantly, an injunction of aṅgi-prapatti.

Vedāntadeśika starts his argument by accounting for the opponent's defense that, following the Mīmāṃsā principle of ritual injunctions, an injunction for aṅgi-prapatti should be: "One who desires the attainment of safety should surrender to Me."[226] Vedāntadeśika argues that although Rāma's statement in the Vibhīṣaṇa episode does not have the injunctive form that the Mīmāṃsā principle of ritual injunctions suggests it ought to have, it still implies an injunction by explaining a particular quality of Rāma:

> In this statement, there is no injunction of prapatti. However, although this statement is intent on the explanation of a particular quality of Rāma, its purpose is to [state that] "One who wants to attain safety should surrender to Me [Rāma]". Therefore, there is the establishment of prapatti by stating that [Rāma] is worthy of being surrendered to by the postulation of a statement of particular qualities…[227]

Thus, the quality of Rāma as someone who should be surrendered to indicates that people who want mokṣa should surrender to Him in the same way that they surrender to God. The implication is that Rāma will surely save those who surrender to Him in the same way that He saves Vibhīṣaṇa.[228]

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[225] Vedāntadeśika, *Nikṣeparakṣā*, 11.
sakṛd eva prapannāya tavāsmīti ca yācate |
abhayaṃ sarvabhūtebhyo dadāmy etadvrataṃ mama ||
Rāmāyaṇa 6.18.33.
See Krishnacharya, *Srimad Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa,* 74.

[226] Ibid. "abhayaprāptikāmo māṃ prapadyeteti." According to Mīmāṃsā ritual theory, a typical vedic injunction is, "One who desires heaven should sacrifice with the Jyotiṣṭoma" (jyotiṣṭomena svargakāmo yajeta). See details McCrea, "Mīmāṃsā and the Teleology of Language," 66.

[227] Ibid., 30. atrāpi prapadanavidhyabhāve ´pi, abhayaprāptikāmo māṃ prapadyeteti vākyatātparyasya siddhatvāt, rāmaguṇaviśeṣapratipādanaparatve ´pi vākyasya guṇaviśeṣaśrutyarthāpattyaiva prapadanīyatvasiddhyā prapattisiddheḥ…

[228] Ibid.

Vedāntadeśika further applies the Mīmāṃsā interpretative principle of the splitting of the sentence to his interpretation of Rāma's statement about Vibhīṣaṇa. In his discussion on the interpretation of the word "sarvabhūtebhya," Vedāntadeśika takes sides in the debate about whether this word should be interpreted as "for all beings" or as "from all beings." Vedāntadeśika defends the interpretation "for all beings" as more suitable to the whole meaning of the statement. According to Vedāntadeśika, Rāma's statement should be understood as follows: "For someone who seeks refuge in Me even once and for someone who begs 'I am yours,' I give safety *for all beings*."[229] He reasons that this interpretation should be favored because it functionally serves the purpose of the whole statement, which should communicate that God will save *all beings*. As a result, anyone who wants to be saved by Him is eligible to perform aṅgi-prapatti, or to surrender to Him.

Vedāntadeśika then further raises a potential problem. If "sarvabhūtebhya" is interpreted as "for all beings," this statement might then enjoin two things: "I [Rāma] give safety for a prapanna [who is Vibhīṣaṇa in the context]" and "I give safety to all beings." As a result, it would succumb to the flaw of the splitting of the sentence.[230]

In order to resolve the problem, Vedāntadeśika explains that "I (Rāma) give safety for a prapanna" should be understood as a reiteration of the injunction of aṅgi-prapatti for a prapanna which is already enjoined in other places in the text. Thus, "I (Rāma) give safety to all beings" is being enjoined in this statement. Therefore, the injunction of aṅgi-prapatti in Rāma's statement should apply to all beings and it conveys that all beings are eligible to perform aṅgi-prapatti in order to be protected by God.[231]

[229] In Sanskrit, the *-bhyaḥ* ending can indicate either the dative or the ablative case.
[230] Ibid., 31.
[231] See details ibid.

After defending the injunction of aṅgi-prapatti in Rāma's statement, Vedāntadeśika continues to argue against the opponent's view that there is no injunction of aṅgi-prapatti in passages like *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* 11.12.14-15 and *Garuda Purāṇa* 1.219.37:

> Therefore, you, Uddhava, having abandoned the injunction and prohibition;
> Activity and cessation of activity; and what is heard and what has already been heard.
> Go to me alone as refuge, I who am the self of all beings.
> By means of becoming the soul of all, you will attain a state of not being afraid of anything.
> People, who lacks a means of meditation, resort to You as refuge.
> Having passed beyond death, they go to the place of Viṣṇu.[232]

The opponent proposes that these passages are only explanatory-passages regarding śaraṇāgati (alias aṅgi-prapatti) and, thus, do not enjoin injunctions of aṅgi-prapatti.[233] However, Vedāntadeśika explains that, according to the Mīmāṃsā principle, an explanatory-passage implies the existence of an injunction in the text by stating the result

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[232] Ibid. 13.

tasmāt tvam uddhavotsṛjya codanāṃ praticodanām |
pravṛttiṃ ca nivṛttiṃ ca śrotavyaṃ śrutam eva ca ||
mām ekam eva śaraṇam ātmānaṃ sarvadehinām |
yāhi sarvātmabhāvena yāsyasi hy akutobhayam || iti

Bhāgavata Purāṇa 11.12.14-15

See Rāmamūrtiśāstrī Paurāṇika, *Śrīmadbhāgavata-mahāpurāṇam.* Vol. 2 (Varanasi: Śrīpaurāṇika Kāryālayaḥ, 1989), 443-444. It should be noted that the passages quoted in the NR are slightly different from the passages found in the cited *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* that read:

tasmāttvamuddhavosṛjya codanāṃ praticodanām l
pravṛttaṃ ca novṛttaṃ ca śrotavyaṃ śrutameva ca ll 14 ll
māmekameva śaraṇamātmānaṃ sarvadehinām l
yāhi sarvātmabhāvena mayā syā hyakutobhayaḥ ll 15 ll

śaraṇaṃ tvāṃ prapannā ye dhyānayogavivarjitāḥ |
te ´pi mṛtyum atikramya yānti tadvaiṣṇavaṃ padam || iti

Garuda Purāṇa 1.219.37

See Ramshankar Bhattacharya, *Garuḍa Purāṇa of Maharṣi Vedavyāsa* (Varanasi: The Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1964), 276. It should be noted that the passage quoted in the NR uses "tvāṃ" in place of "taṃ" in the passage found in *Garuḍa Purāṇa* 1.219.37:

śaraṇaṃ taṃ prapannā ye dhyānayogavivarjitāḥ l
te 'pi mṛtyumatikramya yānti tadvaiṣṇavaṃ padam ll

[233] Ibid.

of that injunction. Therefore, although these passages are explanatory-passages that eulogize śaraṇāgati, they can be used to postulate injunctions:

> As for what you said, that here it is only an explanatory-passage of śaraṇāgati--- This may be so, or may not. Nevertheless, there is an establishment of an injunction of that [śaraṇāgati] just by that [explanatory-passage] because [there is] a perception [that śaraṇāgati] will produce the result [from that explanatory-passage]. Otherwise, there will be the problem that the explanatory-passage would be useless. [An explanatory-passage implies that there must be an injunction of śaraṇāgati].[234]

In summary, Vedāntadeśika innovatively brings in Mīmāṃsā principles of Vedic interpretation in his defense of aṅgi-prapatti injunctions. These basic yet powerful Mīmāṃsā principles enable Vedāntadeśika to effectively argue that the Caramaśloka and the passages from the smṛti sources are injunctions of aṅgi-prapatti. In the discussion on the Caramaśloka, the opponent uses the Mīmāṃsā principle of the splitting of the sentence to attack the invalidity of the Caramaśloka as an injunction of aṅgi-prapatti. Vedāntadeśika argues that, in order to resolve the splitting of the sentence, the Caramaśloka should be interpreted as a qualified injunction that enjoins aṅgi-prapatti as a means to mokṣa qualified by the abandonment of other means to mokṣa apart from aṅgi-prapatti. Alternatively, the abandonment part of the Caramaśloka can be classified as a reiteration of a description of which people who are eligible for aṅgi-prapatti.

Moreover, Vedāntadeśika applies Mīmāṃsā principles to his interpretation of the passages from the smṛti sources. It can be postulated that the passages he mentions should be regarded as authoritative passages on aṅgi-prapatti for the Śrīvaiṣṇava

[234] Ibid., 32. atra śaraṇāgatyarthavādamātratvam iti; tat tathāstu mā vā; tathāpi phalakaraṇadarśanāt tenaiva tadvidhisiddhiḥ. anyathā tadarthavādasyaivātra niṣprayojanatvaprasaṅgaḥ.

tradition. Therefore, Vedāntadeśika makes an attempt to argue that these passages imply injunctions of aṅgi-prapatti by exploiting Mīmāṃsā interpretative principles.

Conclusion

This chapter focuses on the way Vedāntadeśika synthesized the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās and Mīmāṃsā principles of Vedic interpretation in his NR. Vedāntadeśika relies on the authority of the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās and Mīmāṃsā principles in order to assert the nature, definition, and injunctions of aṅgi-prapatti. In the first section, I argued that Vedāntadeśika employs the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās as a scriptural authority for the content of aṅgi-prapatti, as the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās had been regarded as scriptures in the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition since the times of Yāmuna and Rāmānuja.

However, these texts came to be used as an authoritative source to justify the independence of prapatti for the first time in the *Prapannapārijāta* of Vātsya Varadaguru. Moreover, in that work, he makes the first attempt to separate prapatti from bhaktiyoga and argues that prapatti is an independent means for mokṣa. Vedāntadeśika, following Vātsya Varadaguru, defends the independence of prapatti and uses the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās to support his position. Vedāntadeśika brings in the LT, the ABH, and the SK mainly in his discussions on the nature and the definition of aṅgi-prapatti. Having relied on these Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās, Vedāntadeśika argues that aṅgi-prapatti consists of six components and can be understood as the offering of oneself to God.

In the second section, I concentrate on the way Vedāntadeśika incorporates Mīmāṃsā principles of Vedic interpretation in his analysis of important passages. Although Mīmāṃsā principles deal with the interpretation of Vedic passages, some basic principles are applicable to the analysis of sentences in general. Vedāntadeśika's

incorporation of Mīmāṃsā principles such as injunctions, reiterations, explanatory-passages, and the splitting of the sentence is evident in his analysis of the Caramaśloka and the smṛti passages. In essence, Vedāntadeśika argues that, according to these Mīmāṃsā principles, the Caramaśloka and the passages from the smṛti source contain aṅgi-prapatti injunctions.

This chapter has thus illustrated how Vedāntadeśika both followed the traditional scripture and introduced textual authority from different traditions in order to defend his doctrine of aṅgi-prapatti. Vedāntadeśika relied on the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās, which are the scriptural sources handed down in the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition, and also brought in extra-traditional authority from the Mīmāṃsā tradition. Although these two textual traditions make use of different authoritative texts, Vedāntadeśika regarded them as a single authoritative basis for his doctrine of aṅgi-prapatti and, thus, synthesized these two textual traditions into his own systematized doctrine of aṅgi-prapatti.

Conclusion

This thesis has explored the work of Vedāntadeśika, a Post-Rāmānuja ācārya, with a focus on his interpretation of Rāmānuja's prapatti. This was aimed at showing how, in order to defend the doctrine of aṅgi-prapatti, in his *Nikṣeparakṣā* Vedāntadeśika interpreted Rāmānuja's "aṅga-prapatti" -- as expressed in his second interpretation of the Caramaśloka -- into a teaching of aṅgi-prapatti.

I built this study on a three-pronged analysis: first I investigated the scholarly literature addressing Rāmānuja's controversial position on prapatti in the BGBh and the Gadyas (Chapter 1); second, I analyzed Vedāntadeśika's attempt to harmonize contradictions regarding prapatti in Rāmānuja's works (Chapter 2); and third, I investigated the way Vedāntadeśika systematized his doctrine of aṅgi-prapatti by synthesizing textual elements originated in other systems (Chapter 3).

The doctrine of aṅgi-prapatti was invented after the times of Rāmānuja. Rāmānuja mentioned prapatti in his BGBh and the Gadyas. However, in the first chapter, I show that the contradicting opinions from the scholarly literature dealing with Rāmānuja's position on prapatti in these two works suggest that Rāmānuja may not have a coherent concept of prapatti. In my opinion, the works of Rāmānuja only present prapatti as an auxiliary to bhaktiyoga which is the means to mokṣa. In the post-Rāmānuja period, prapatti came to be regarded as an independent means to mokṣa. The decision to separate prapatti from bhaktiyoga can be seen for the first time in *Prapannapārijāta* of Vātsya Varadaguru, Vedāntadeśika's ācārya. Vedāntadeśika's *Nikṣeparakṣā*, the first full-scale philosophical defense on aṅgi-prapatti, displays an attentive attempt to systematize the doctrine of aṅgi-

prapatti and provides scriptural authority for this doctrine. It can be speculated that Vedāntadeśika's defense of the independence of prapatti may be influenced by the *Prapannapārijāta*. In the *Nikṣeparakṣā*, Vedāntadeśika ultimately aims to argue that an injunction of aṅgi-prapatti can be found in the Caramaśloka, which is a Vedāntic scripture and one of the three sacred mantras of the tradition. Vedāntadeśika integrates various authoritative texts in order to support this goal and systematize his doctrine of aṅgi-prapatti.

As seen in Chapter 2, Vedāntadeśika relied on Rāmānuja, arguably the most revered ācārya, as an intra-traditional authoritative figure. Vedāntadeśika sought to harmonize Rāmānuja's incoherent statements about prapatti and argue that Rāmānuja taught aṅgi-prapatti in both the BGBh and the Gadyas. Rāmānuja's Gadyas is generally seen by the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition as teaching aṅgi-prapatti. However, the BGBh mainly presents bhaktiyoga as a means to mokṣa and, from my investigation, does not offer prapatti as an independent means to mokṣa in addition to bhaktiyoga. Vedāntadeśika dealt with this challenge on the BGBh by arguing that Rāmānuja taught aṅgi-prapatti in his second interpretation of the Caramaśloka. Apart from defending his position on the independence of prapatti, Vedāntadeśika also tried to conform to Rāmānuja's teaching of bhaktiyoga as a means to mokṣa by initiating a coherent system that accounts for the relation between aṅgi-prapatti and bhaktiyoga. Therefore, by means of harmonizing Rāmānuja's incoherent statements on prapatti, Vedāntadeśika managed to remain "a faithful follower" of Rāmānuja, resolve the contradictions in Rāmānuja's statements, and claim that, following Rāmānuja's second interpretation of the Caramaśloka, the Caramaśloka is a teaching of aṅgi-prapatti.

In Chapter 3, I show that Vedāntadeśika's aṅgi-prapatti is based on synthesized textual elements from different systems. Vedāntadeśika, presumably following his teacher, Vātsya Varadaguru, relied on the traditional scripture like Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās as an authoritative source for the content of aṅgi-prapatti. Vedāntadeśika also introduced extra-traditional authority like Mīmāṃsā principles in order to support his interpreting important passages especially the Caramaśloka as aṅgi-prapatti injunctions. These textual elements were synthesized into Vedāntadeśika's systematized doctrine of aṅgi-prapatti and were presented as a unified authoritative basis for this doctrine.

This study as a whole shows the way post-Rāmānuja ācāryas, represented by Vedāntadeśika, dealt with Rāmānuja's incoherent concepts of prapatti and, importantly, his unstated teaching of independent prapatti. In the *Nikṣeparakṣā*, Vedāntadeśika's ultimate goal is to defend prapatti as an independent means to mokṣa or "aṅgi-prapatti." Vedāntadeśika was also committed to argue for an injunction of aṅgi-prapatti in the Caramaśloka in order to provide a scriptural authority for this doctrine. The harmonization of Rāmānuja's statements regarding prapatti reflects Vedāntadeśika's attempt to conform to intra-traditional authority. However, Vedāntadeśika also introduced extra-traditional authority and synthesized authoritative texts from different systems in order to construct a single authoritative basis for the doctrine of aṅgi-prapatti. The understanding of Vedāntadeśika's interpretation of Rāmānuja's prapatti ultimately points to the importance of interpretative process in the doctrinal development of aṅgi-prapatti. It also reveals Vedāntadeśika's intellectual contribution to the validation and the systematization of this doctrine.

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