Agamas
AND
South Indian Vaisnavism

By
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FOREWORD

It is an honour to be assigned the task of welcoming and introducing this massive work by the renowned scholar, Dr. V. Varadacharya. He has been working on this theme for decades with admirable thoroughness and the present publication embodies his lectures under the noble Trust in Honour of the memory of the great savant, Prof. M. Rangacharya. The Trust was brought into existence by the highly accomplished and venerated son of the professor, the late lamented Prof. M. R. Sampatkumaran. The book is being brought out by the devoted and worthy cousin of the professor, Sri M. C. Krishnan. The book does promote the lofty goals of the Trust in a conspicuous measure.

About the book itself, considering its vast scope, patient scholarship and meticulous documentation, it is hardly possible to pronounce a just and adequate estimate. Luckily, such is not the function of a foreword. The author starts with the giddy and dim heights of the Vedic religion and advances methodically to the delineation of recent Hindu philosophy and religion, which are dominated by the Agamas. The Recent Hinduism is Agamic in character, whether it be Sakta, Saiva or Vaisnava. Not that the hoary heritage of the Vedas, Upanishads, the Epics, Puranas and Smritis is discarded, but it is subsumed and concretized in the living traditions of practical Hinduism. Our author takes the treatment to further particularization and brings up to South Indian Vaisnavism.

The treatment is neatly introduced with a clear formulation of the subject-matter. The validity of the Agamas was sometimes questioned in the orthodox Hindu tradition itself and hence the question of their validity is considered critically
and exhaustively in the context of the Vedic tradition. The dimensions of the Agamas, their classification and the principal schools of the Agamic religion receive their due consideration. This discussion arrives naturally at the second focal point of the work, the Vaisnava Agamas. Their two-fold tradition, the Vaikhanasa and the Pancaratra, is taken up in all the required completeness. We are given a full map of the Pancaratra texts. How the spirit and doctrines of this Vaisnava agamic tradition penetrated Vaisnava literature in general is shown in great detail. The living Hinduism of recent times centres round worship. The principles and techniques of worship in private and in temples receive ample description, not excluding the art and science of the construction and maintenance of temples and the icons to be adored in them. How this conception and practice of religion deeply entered into the actual life of the people in all aspects is brought out in the concluding chapters.

The book, one may say, errs in its abundance. But it welds the bewildering mass of data into an integrated design. All the old sources and all the writings on the Agamas by modern writers are noticed and judiciously put to use. By far this is the weightiest modern treatment of the Agamas. While thanking the publishers, we are to hope for the right reception to this altogether solid contribution.

S. S. RAGHAVACHAR

Mysore 31—12—'81

Professor and Head of the Department of Philosophy (Retd), University of Mysore.
The following pages contain an account of the origin, growth and development of the Agamas with special reference to the Vaisnava kind. They are written after a deep study of the original texts of the Vaikhanasa and Pancaratra.

Interest was aroused in me for a study of the Vaisnava Agamas, when I went through Otto Schrader’s Introduction to the Pancaratra and Ahirbudhnyasamhita and the Sanskrit introduction to the Lakshmitantra edition of the Adyar Library written by my revered father Pandit V. Krishnamacharya. These two are the only invaluable and authoritative sources for the proper understanding of the Vaisnava Agamas.

While making a progressive study of the Vaisnava Agamas, I received a call from late Prof. M. R. Sampatkumaran to deliver three lectures at Triplicane under the auspices of Prof M Rangacharya Memorial Trust on Agamas and South Indian Vaisnavism. Accordingly the lectures were delivered by me.

Soon after, late Prof. M. R. Sampatkumaran suggested to me to prepare a work on the topic of the lectures delivered. I agreed and began preparing to gather more information and details on this subject. Late Prof. M. R. Sampatkumaran asked me frequently to clarify certain problems which are necessarily to be solved and settled satisfactorily. This was really a hard task, since I could find neither a scholar who could be of help to me for suggesting the means to serve this end nor any standard work, but for the two works (the latter is only an introduction) which inspired me for this study of the Agamas. I did not lose heart but managed to have
the matters cleared with the help of these two works and the standard samhitas of the Vaikhanasa and Pancaratra. Therefore the credit should go to late Prof. M. R. Sampatkumaran for much of the contents and their treatment in this work.

While writing on this topic, certain matters crop up demanding solutions that could have a veracity like that of the already settled issues. With the available evidences no solution could be arrived at. The evidences could only be studied and conclusions be drawn for the time being, allowing subsequent alteration when more acceptable and satisfactory evidences become available.

To start with, mention must be made of the nature of beginnings of systems and schools such as Music, Dance, Drama, Grammar, Arthasastra, Silpa, Puranas, Kalpasutras and others. Eminent sages have their names associated with these, sometimes the same name occurring for more than one branch or school. The sages could have been related to each other as master and pupil or indebted mutually or bearing mutual influence. So the schools are taken to be interrelated and interdependent too in some respect. When the idea of the whole could have thus prevailed, it is not proper to treat one system as fully derived from another, unless there is direct evidence in support of it. The question of Sakta agama alone to have been the precursor of other kinds of Agamas should therefore be treated as idle. Equally baseless should be the reason that agama should have had its home in India or outside India. With our limited knowledge of the situations in the remote periods, it is too early to be dogmatic for suggesting a period or periods for the origin of the Agamas.

Suggestions have been made by some writers that the Agamas are antivedic and should have risen under the impact of the waves of life of the aborigines of India. It is to be
observed here that borrowing, whether, linguistic, religious or cultural, is always from those who are spiritually and morally superior or politically dominant in power: minor impacts could have been there on the cultured class coming from the tribes but wholesale concept of the Agama way of worship could not have emanated from the tribes: the Agamas must therefore be treated as supplementary to the Vedas.

Ever since the Agama mode of life and worship came into vogue, there were host of writers on the Smrtis and Puranas to denounce it as unauthoritative and anti-Vedic. However, the Agama mode has come to stay stabilised and getting intertwined with the Vedic practices. The reference to the linga in the Taittiriyaranyaka 10. 43-47 should be taken to point to the prevalence of offering worship to the symbol (pratika) which is as valid as Yantra representing a stage prior to the evolution of idol (pratima)

Then there are the compositions of the Alvars. There are shrines whose glory is sung by them and recorded in the Nalayiradivvaprabandham. There are also the Agama texts. Among these, the temples should been in existence for a long period before 7th century A.D. when the Alvars sang their glory. The structures in most of these huge shrines, which were built following the sculptural and Agamic directions, should be placed at a period later than the Alvars. Whether these temples were built according to the Agama directions cannot be proved with any degree of certainty. The shrines at Paramesvaravinnagaram, Tirukkottiyur, Kudalur, Srirangam and others reveal through their structures, that they bear the Agamic influences. This cannot be said of other shrines Besides, the two important and well known shrines at Srirangam and Tirumalai have their vimanas named Pranavakara and Anandanilaya. Neither the Silpasatra nor the Agama texts envisage the erection of the vimana of these kinds. It must be therefore, be taken that the
Agama texts were not as ancient as the compositions of the Alvars and that even when they became composed, they did not have their full impact on temple constructions.

It is equally unsound to agree with the idea that the Vedas do not contain reference to female deities who became introduced later into the epics. The Taittiriyasamhita (1-8-6-1) refers to Siva as Ambikapati. The name Ambika occurs as, the name of the deity. That like Siva, she could not have received worship in the form of idol is another point.

The Vaikhnasa system is more ancient than Pancaratra. Yet, the texts which are now available under the authorship of these are not in a language suggestive of an ancient kind. They must be placed thus in the period about 6th or 7th century A.D.

Regarding Pancaratra texts, the ancient ones do not contain reference to temples or idols there. They contain much useful material regarding Jnana, Cosmology, Vyuha, Yantra, Mantra and Yaga. The order among the texts may not be fixed as a text, supposed to be earlier mentions the text claimed to be later. Yet, Jayakhya, Laksmitantra, Ahirbudhnyasamhita, Paramasamhita, Pauskara and Sattvata can be taken at present as having been composed in this order.

Concepts and theories of Visistadvaita on the philosophical sphere impressed the Vaisnava community to a very high degree. Temple worship has been, however, very popular. The result of this has been that the later texts on the Agamas ignored to a great extent the value of Jnana and Yoga padas and paid much attention to the treatment of Kriya and Carya aspects, as temple construction and worship of the idols found much favour with the people.
With all the rich and ancient background of the Agamas, it is strange to note that both the Vaisnava Agamas are in vogue and practised only in South India, with few exceptions in some places in North India. The Vaikhanasa is less known in the North than the Pancaratra. The reason must be found in the far more numerous Visnu shrines situated in South India celebrating as glorified by the Alvars.

These observations made above have validity only for the present. Deeper study of each of the Vaisnava Agama text, when undertaken will throw much light on many of these issues requiring modification and alteration for the concepts and theories now held as belonging to this Agama tradition. I have the feeling that whatever is necessary is not left out in this work. At most, this work could be treated as source book for further study to be undertaken on the subject.

It is sad that Prof. M. R. Sampatkumaran is no more to see this work released. I could not forget his repeated utterances of encouragement and support for completing this work. I should thank also Sri M. C. Krishnan, the publisher for his painstaking efforts to see the work through the press.

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Pondicherry.

February, 1982.
The printing of this book, *Agamas and South Indian Vaiśṇavism*, had almost been completed when a cruel fate intervened and snatched away Prof. M. R. Sampatkumaran. It is amidst the gloom of his demise that I am compelled to write this note.

Three lectures on this subject were delivered during February 1974 by Dr. V. Varadachari, currently of Institut Francaise D'Indologie, Pondicherry, under the auspices of Prof. M. Rangacharya Memorial Trust (endowed by his dutiful son, the late Prof M. R. Sampatkumaran). The revision of these lectures for being printed and the necessary time required for editing and printing carefully a book of this bulk accounts for the long delay in bringing it out.

The scope of this work and its approach to the subject has been briefly, yet very succinctly, explained by Prof. S. S. Raghavachar in his foreword. The authenticity of the Agamas has been questioned from about the beginning of the Christian era. The objection is based only on one point viz., worship of God based on the supposed non-Vedic character of the Agamas which recommend strongly the worship of particular deities in an exclusive manner. Idol worship marks the Agamic mode of worshipping God. The objections against the validity of the Agamas have been refuted by Yāmuna in his great work *Āgama Prāmāṇya* and Rāmānuja has made good use of the Agama texts in his exposition of the philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita.

The Agamas glorify several deities and there appear to have been certain Agamas of the nāstika kind too. In course of time only the Śākta, Śaiva and Vaiśṇava Agamas survived and the rest became extinct. In this book Dr. V. Varadachari has ably dealt elaborately on various Agama texts and has devoted detailed attention and emphasis, particularly on Vaiśṇava
Āgamas and the nature of worship in Vaiśnavaite temples and their effect on the religious life of the devotees of Viṣṇu in South India. The width and the depth of scholarship called for in making such a study of the subject may very well be judged from the works listed out in the Index. Dr. V. Varadachari has done more than real service in bringing into focus the Āgama literature which had not so far been dealt with in a scientific manner.

Readers may be aware that this Trust has been, in its own humble way, making significant contributions to the study and propagation of the philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita, and the present publication, the fifth in the series, is in fulfilment of a commitment made in 1977 at the time of publishing the earlier work, Sri Ramanuja’s Philosophy and Religion by Dr. P. B. Vidyarthi.

It remains for me to express my thanks to Dr. V. Raghavan and Sri C. S. Parthasarathy Iyengar (both of them are no longer with us) and Prof. A. N. Parasuram who presided on the three days of the lectures and conducted the proceedings. I am greatly indebted to Prof. S. S. Raghavachar, who, in spite of failing health had been good enough to write the foreword in his inimitable style. The Triplicane Cultural Academy associated itself with the lectures and the authorities of Sri Yadugiri Yatiraja Mutt, Triplicane, Madras, kindly allowed the use of their hall for the lectures. I am under obligations to all who helped in the printing of this book and to Sri M. A. Thirumalachari and Sri A. Thanigachalam in particular. I cannot sufficiently express my thanks to Sri M. N. Parthasarathy, M.A., Secretary, Sri Ramanuja Vedanta Centre, Madras, for his assistance in getting this book ready.

February, 1982.

M. C. KRISHNAN.
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Agamas and South Indian Vaisnavism

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTORY

The Vedas represent the earliest extant literature in the world. They are four, under the names of Rgveda, Yajurveda, Sāmaveda and Atharvaveda. They record many aspects of the life of the people of ancient India whose religious beliefs and aspirations left an indelible mark on their social life. Indeed, the religious and social aspects became inextricably mixed up with each other. But it must not be forgotten that the Vedas deal primarily with the religious beliefs and practices of ancient India.

Whether the Vedas are regarded as eternal as Hindu tradition believes, or as composed by a number of authors at different periods and then codified, it must be admitted that the concept of the Deity must have been an article of faith long before the ancient Indians felt any urge to offer worship. There was also the realization that man has to depend on the Deity for protection from danger and distress and for a secure and happy life. To evoke response from a deity when a person offered his prayer to gain any particular objective, or to offer thanksgiving for the fulfilment of the prayer, an offering of what that person had with him was made. Usually, the offering was made in the sacred fire which was believed to convey it to the deity concerned. The prayers are recorded in the Rgveda and the ways and means of the offerings to be made are treated in the Yajurveda. The Sāmaveda helped in chanting those prayers so as to attract the Deity. As for the Atharvaveda, it provided the people with the means to protect themselves against enemies and evil forces.

ASV—1
The Indian community in the earliest period does not seem to be very different from our society today in the attitude to life and in basic feelings and aspirations. The sufferings endured by the people from time to time were then regarded as the effects of past deeds. Thus there is a reference to the sense of guilt.

It was considered that sufferings could be overcome by the grace of the deity. Hatred, disease and distress afflicted them. God was looked upon as a physician whose presence was warranted after by the sufferers in order that they might get medicines. God's good-will was sought after and appeals were made for this purpose. Long life, co-operation among people and with God, prosperity, valor, sons and good food are the characters desires frequently expressed in the prayers offered to the deities.

The ancient Indians were quite aware of the nature of the deities. They practised meditation on the god. It was claimed that the deity as he who the meditator fixed his thinking faculties appeared before him. This created a sound reflex in the meditator. The ecstasy which the meditator then felt gave rise to a musical setting to this sound reflex. This came to be known as 'mantra'. It contained a picture of the deity in the language known to the meditator. The mantra had several phases like praises, invocations, directions, deliberations, newenings, questions and answer.

1. RV VII 6 3–5
2. Ibid VII 66 2
3. Ibid VII 63 2, 3
4. Ibid II 33 4; VII. 7, 1–2
5. Ibid II 33 6
6. Ibid II 33 4
7. Ibid I 89 2, SY VII 17; RV I 11 2, II 33 1, 14, IV. 50 11,
   SV Purvapuru V 6 6,
8. RV I 1, 1
9. SV I. 1,
10. TS VI 6 1 2,
11. RV X 129 5,
12. SY XXIII 18.
13. Ibid XXIII 61.
INTRODUCTORY

3

others. God then became identical with the mantra. Many deities appeared thus to the same or various meditators and thus many mantras came into existence. Those mantras which were of the nature of praise were also called ṛks. Some of these mantras were used with or without change when set to music and sung and when making offerings to the deities concerned. The meditator is thus a seer of the mantra (mantradrastṛ) and not its author. Those who have realized this are known as the pīyas for the particular mantras. Hence some sages are considered as the pīyas for some ṛks.

The word ‘mantra’ is considered to have been connected with the faculty of thinking which is the sense of the root ‘man’ or ‘matri’. When the ṛks occur in the Vedā texts for employment in sacred rites, they no longer have the denotation of the faculty of thinking. Besides, certain passages which convey senses other than thinking, are also called mantras. So, it is held that whichever passage is specifically mentioned in the Vedā texts as mantra must be named as such.

Regarding the concept of God and the characteristic features of deities in the Rgveda, the scholars of the West contend that the religion of the Rgveda represents that of a primitive society marked by the “spontaneous emotional reactions of wonder, awe and fear evoked in man by natural phenomena such as the wind, the sun and the moon. Impressed by these powerful and inexplicable forces of Nature, primitive man reacted with emotional attitudes and behaviour to which”

15 For the definition of ṛk, Sāman and Yajus, see Jaimini’s Purvamāṁsā Sūtras, II 1 35-37.

16 The root ‘matri’ has the sense of ‘secret talk’ (gupta-paribbā-γa). It seems that the word ‘mantra’ must have been derived from this root. The seer (mantradrastṛ) who received the mantra was the only person who had received it and none else. He alone had the sound reflex and the sense of the root ‘matri’ is applicable here.

17 Vide Sāyana’s Upodghāta to his Rgvedabāṣya (p. 35)
the name ‘religion’ is given. Personification of the supernatural and the anthropomorphic concepts of Nature are also held to have given rise to the idea of God in primitive society. Some scholars are of opinion that the Vedic culture was influenced by magic acts, fertility rites and other primitive manifestations of religion. The performance of these was intended to stimulate or propitiate the powers of Nature and so was considered as an obligatory duty. A study of primitive culture is thus quite essential for understanding Vedic culture.

These findings of the Western scholars could be accepted, if the Rgveda contains any evidence to support them. A society which is called primitive is distinguished from a civilized one and, on this ground, is held to be inferior to the latter. In order to avoid this kind of attitude towards that society, the word ‘preliterate’ is often used by modern writers.

Certainly, the society and culture as depicted in the Rgveda are not primitive. There are certain features which belong only to primitive society and none of them are traceable in the Rgveda. There is nothing like the ‘mana’ of the Polynesians, the ‘manito’ of the North Americans, tyrannical practices characterized by cruelty and rough behavior, head-hunting for achieving a greater status, tattoo, taboos and totemism. These are negative pieces of evidence to prove that the religion of the Vedas is not primitive.

On the other hand, there are substantial pieces of evidence to show that society in the Vedic period was civilized. Family life is well depicted with people striving for and living a happy

and prosperous life.  The ideal of a rāstra was quite familiar to the people of that period.  Homes, gatherings, garments and the use of horses and chariots are frequently referred to, suggesting an advanced and developed society on the material plane. Words like cāru, sumangalīḥ, saubhogatva and others bring out the aesthetic sense of that society. Fine poetry, with attractive similes, points to the literary excellence of the Rgveda.

Culturally, the standard of the Rgveda marks a well advanced stage of society. Acts of worship and prayer, accompanied by offerings, convey the friendly attitude of the people towards the deities. The relation between a devotee and his god as described reveals reciprocal affection and familiarity between them. This can be compared only to the relation which is noticed in the cult of bhakti of later days. Lastly, lofty ideals of culture are suggested in the prayers offered by the people. All these show that the culture and religion of the Vedas were well advanced and so could not have belonged to a primitive society.

Supernaturalism is an important element of religion. It is a belief that there is a reality over and above the forces of Nature. This reality is acknowledged by both preliterate and civilized societies. So the worship of this reality as manifested in Nature cannot be treated as worship of Nature or anthropomorphism or personification of natural phenomena. Neither the cosmic experience nor the awe and fear evoked in man by natural phenomena could be taken as having given rise to the

21 RV. X, 34, 85
22 Ibid. IV 42.1; X 125
23 Ibid. X 168
24 Ibid. I 34 5, III 8 2, X 65 33.
25 Ibid. I 85 7, I 113, I 10; III. 8. 9; 39.1, IV. 51.8, 583, V 11 6, 6 64, X 71 2
26 Ibid. III 59 3, VI 54 4, VII 71 6, VIII. 48 9
27 Ibid. VI 52, 5, X, 37, 7; SY. XL, 16; Bry. Up, I, 2, 28.
origin of religion. Faith in the deity as governing the moral order must be taken as accounting for its rise.

Even if we concede that magic arts could have been responsible for the rise of culture and religion in a primitive society, it has no relevance for Vedic culture. The Rgveda does not have any direct reference to such acts. Whatever references are there, suggestive of such practices in the Rgveda, and, more so, in the Taiturveda, may be deemed as survivals from a hoary past. The Atharvaveda does contain many references to them. It would be reasonable to take the major portion of the Atharva-veda as compiled long before the Rgveda, but on this account it would not be proper to trace the origin of religion to magic.

Not only were the ancient people aware of the concept of the deity, but they had also knowledge of the distinct traits of several gods. Indra is depicted as a warrior, Agni and Brhaspati as priests and Rudra and Avisins as physicians. Some deities are depicted as passing through the air in their chariots drawn by steeds. Their limbs and ornaments are frequently referred to as dazzling. They are offered seats made of sacred grass, and served with milk, butter, grain and flesh of sheep and other animals. The soma juice is frequently stated to be an offering to deities.

Such descriptions show that a particular god was conceived in the manner in which he presented himself to the seers and that each deity had some definite features with which he was identified. Sometimes, while a particular deity is glorified, another deity is also brought in and extolled together with the

30. *Ibid* I. 85. 6, V. 11. 2,
31. *Ibid.* II. 33. 5, II. 35. 12, III. 59. 1, IV. 50, 6, 10, VII. 63, 5,
This is taken by the Orientalists as a feature of Vedic deities whose "figures are indefinite in outline and deficient in individuality". However, it is difficult to agree with this view. Rudra is referred to as 'Kapardin', which word means one who has matted hair. He is depicted as having the bow, Pinaka, in the hand. The word, 'pratimā', occurs in the sense of the form of the god who is to receive the oblation. It is not therefore proper to hold that the deities of the Vedas did not have definite forms at all and much more inaccurate is it to treat the Vedic deities as lacking in individuality. The deities must have appeared before the seers with their distinct features which were identifiable to them and which were described by them in expressions with which they were quite familiar.

Though the gods appeared before sages through mantras and were depicted by them, they went out of sight afterwards. When the sacrifice was required to be performed in honour of a deity, the singers of the riks had to invoke that deity. The rik which was already available, had to be recited and chanted. The scat of grass was already prepared for the god to arrive there and occupy it. This is enough proof to hold that the

33 RV IV 57 10, 11 where Indra is jointly mentioned with Bhaşpati, VII 63 3, 5, 6 for Mitra, Varuna and Savitṛ, cf I 35, 1, 7, II 33 2, V 83 6, 6.54, VI 49 3, 4, VII 61, VIII 29.
34 Vedic Reader for Students Introduction, p xix
35 RV. I 114.1, 5, VI. 55 2, VII 83 8; IX 67 11
36 SY III 61, XVI 51, TS I 8 6.2, Cf SY XVI 7 where he is referred to as blue-necked.
37 RV IX 130 3 The word occurs here in the sense of the deity. A question is put as to who the deity is. Sāyaṇa explains the word thus, ḍevaḥ haviṣpattyogitvena miyate nirmiyate iti pratimā. The answer for this is contained in the next hymn where the deity is mentioned as Savitṛ. This does not convey the sense of the idol and, as such, the word 'pratimā' cannot be taken here to convey that sense.
38 RV. II 33 5; VII. 71 2, 3, 4.
39 Ibid. I 85.7, V. 11.2.
Vedic seers were aware of the possession of physical forms by the gods. Yet the Vedas do not contain a specific description of the person of the deity. This is clear from the role that Agni played in sacrifices. Agni is considered as the bearer of oblations to the gods, which means that the gods did not appear in person to receive the offerings. This made the Mîmâṃsā schools of thought argue that a god is only mantra and there is no god apart from it.\textsuperscript{40} Supreme significance came to be attached to the scrupulous attention to be paid to the uttering of mantras without the least inaccuracy.\textsuperscript{41}

While the concept of divinity was developing on these lines, there must have been growing another tendency to evolve a different concept of the deity, of course basing it on the teachings of the Vedas.\textsuperscript{42} The hotr, adhvaryu, udgâty and brahman, who were all connected with the performance of a Vedic ritual, were perhaps the only persons who were content with the identification of mantras with the gods. Perhaps, those who assisted them also held the same view. Others who were Brahmins, Kṣatriyas and Vaiṣyas, and did not have actual participation in such performances, might have remained content with this concept of God. The Vedântins, however, refuted it, admitting physical forms for the deities.\textsuperscript{43}

Long before the development of the Itihāsas and Purāṇae there must have been an intense yearning on the part of the people to visualise the one supreme God in person. God however would not present Himself to one and all for the mere

\textsuperscript{40} Cultural Heritage of India, Vol III, p 166

\textsuperscript{41} Vide Pāṇiniyaśīkṣā 52, where the dangers of mispronouncing words in respect of syllables or accentuation are affirmed, citing the example of the disaster to the sacrificer who misplaced the accents in pronouncing the word, “Indraśatru”.

\textsuperscript{42} Chând. Up. IV. 16. 2.

\textsuperscript{43} This is discussed in the Devatādīkaraṇa of the Brahmasūtras, I. 3. 25-29. See also Yāśka’s Nirukta, VII, 6, 7.
asking, and so the followers of the *Vedic* tradition must have been seriously considering a way to attain their cherished objective.

Again, though gods and men appear to be friendly according to the *Vedic* tenets, there is no direct evidence in them to prove that man had an intense longing to visualize the one Supreme God. That is, the doctrine of *bhakti* does not appear to have developed then. Those who performed the sacrifices had only the awareness of their dependence on the gods for protection and security. They and those also who did not actually participate in the ritualistic performances, should have had the concept of a Supreme God and even might have developed a strong desire to see Him in person. It is this intense liking that ripened later into *bhakti*.

Besides, there were Sudras who formed the majority of the population. There were also women who represented nearly half the people. Both these were not qualified for the study of the *Vedas* and for that reason had no competence to have the fitness to perform the rituals. They were not however, living in the dark. In a way, they should have known what God is. Belonging to the same community, they must have had abiding faith in what the sacrificers believed. It must be no surprise if they, too, along with the men of the twice-born castes, cherished a deep longing to visualize God.

It is to satisfy the yearnings of these that the *Agamas* were brought into being. The word 'ṣāgama' suggests that they came later than the *Vedas* 44. They are held to be intrinsically valid for the following reasons. First, they are based on what the *Vedas* teach. What is adumbrated in the *Vedas* receives an elaborate exposition in the *Agamas*. Secondly, the promulgators of the

44. This may also indicate that they were brought from a different place since 'a' means motion towards a particular place from a different one.
Agamas are either the gods themselves or sages of great credibility who were steeped in the Vedic tradition. Further, the Agamas contain references to the Vedas and enjoin the adoption of Vedic mantras.

The word 'āgama' is derived from the root, 'gam', with the preposition 'ā'. The sense of this root, which means 'to go', may also be 'moving (mentally) towards an object which is to be gained'. In this sense, the word conveys the same meaning as the word 'veda'. Besides, as the preposition 'ā' gives this root the sense of motion in the reverse direction, the word 'āgama' can be taken to imply the handing down of knowledge from teacher to pupil, and thus to denote traditional (sampradāya) knowledge. Then the word 'āgama' can be taken to mean what the Agamas stand for.

The Agamas are also known as Tantras. The word 'tantra' is derived in two ways. According to one view it is from the root, 'tan', to spread, with the upādī suffix, 'śtran'. Hence some scholars suggest that 'tantra' means the spreading out of the cosmic energy in the person who practises it. Others take it in the sense of a system which elaborates the knowledge evidently acquired from the Vedas. To vindicate the validity of their system, the writers on Tantra seek to split the word as 'tan' and 'tra' (spreading and saving), so as to mean that Tantra gives an exposition of the matters taken up in the system and also saves the aspirants who follow it from bondage.

45 Vide Sarvdhātubhyah śtran (498)
46 This sense is based on the root 'tan' to spread, which must be with reference to something centred in a particular place. The system of Tantra believes that the universal energy is latent in the individual. He has to practise yoga and enable his energy to issue forth from his body.
47 Shakti and Shakta, p 17.
48 Vide तनोति विपुलान्तरीतु तन्त्रमन्त्रसमसमिन्तानं।
वाण च कुरुते यस्सात्तचारमित्यस्मिन्धीयते॥
(Kānikāgama, Tantrāntara Pañāla)
word is also traced to the root 'tatri' which means sustaining or lending support, and hence can be taken in the sense of offering an exposition. Yet others take it to mean understanding.

The word, 'tantra', occurs in the sense of a ṣāstra, as evidenced by the titles of works like Saṅhitam Tantra Tantravārttika and others. It has acquired a specific sense in this literature. It does not mean any śāstra, but only the Tantrika system.

An attempt is also sought to be made to specify the purposes served by the Agama and Tantra. The Agama provides the aspirant with knowledge and Tantra saves him from bondage.

\textit{Prāgalāmata quoted in Tantras: Studies in their Religion and Literature, p 2.}

However, the two names have come to signify the same system whose validity is held to be on a par with the Vedas, Saṅhitas and Purāṇas. It is held that the Agamas have special importance and validity in the Kaliyuga.

\textit{Kulārṇavāntantra}

\textbf{49} Tatri is taken here as the basis.


\textbf{51} Vide - -Kāśikāvatī on the Asādhyāya (VII. 2 9) Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra (XV 3) uses the word in this sense. Cf

\textit{Nyāyabhaṣya, I. 1. 28}

\textbf{52} For a fairly long list of matters dealt with in Tantras, see the Šabdakalpadruma, p 185 and Vācaspatya, pp 616-618 and for the Āgama, Šabdakalpadruma, pp. 584-6 and Vācaspatya, pp. 3223-3227.
The Agamas have an independent development of theory and practice and should be taken as a system of philosophy and religion based on the Vedas. The theoretical side represents a continuation of the results of philosophical enquiries which the Vedas deal with. The controversies and discussions which mark these enquiries are left out in the Agamas. Greater attention is paid here to the cultural discipline which is sought to be inculcated through practical religion.

The matters which the Agamas treat of could be brought under four heads, namely, jñāna, kriyā, and caryā, which stand respectively for the knowledge, yogic practices for the realisation of the Ultimate Reality, preparation of materials and their collection for the worship of the religious practices.

The Samhitā and Brāhmaṇa portions of the Vedas could be taken to form a unit containing a rich development of the concept of God who is to be worshipped through the performance of sacrifices. The various hymns of the Rgveda were evolved at different periods in praise of the deities and found ritualistic use in portions of the Tajurveda and Sāmaveda which had relevance to the propitiation of particular deities through sacrifices in which particular hymns were to be recited. The explanatory portions of the particular rituals, which had relevance, are found in the Brāhmaṇas forming an integral part of those Vedic hymns that were employed for the purpose. It is only later that Vyāsa edited the mass of Vedic literature into the four Vedas, and the corresponding Sanhitā, Brāhmaṇa, Aranyaka and Upaniṣad portions.

The hymns of the Rgveda were classified by Vyāsa in a particular order, taking into account the importance of the roles of the deities in the hymns. The first hymn which is in praise of Agni, was not composed at first and so was not the earliest. Any offering which is made to any god is to be made only in the sacred fire, and so Agni is extolled in this hymn
which Vyāsa placed at the beginning for that purpose. The concept of any deity cannot therefore be taken to represent an earlier or later stage simply on the ground whether or not he is extolled in the so called nuclear portion of the Rgveda. In fact, which the nuclear portion is and which it is not, cannot be now discussed and decided, for the present classification was made by Vyāsa long after the Vedas were compiled.

Two major aspects of the concept of the deity emerge when the hymns of the Rgveda and others are given a thorough study. One is that all deities are not different and distinct from one another, but represent several forms of a single Divine Being. It is because of this aspect that the features revealed in the depiction of some deities overlap. All the deities are real. The monothestic tendency prevailed in the Vedic literature as such. To represent the Vedic religion as polytheism or henotheism is only to ignore this main aspect of the concept of the Deity. The Aranyakas and Upanisads contain speculations and discussions on this concept. The second aspect is that God is the soul of the mobile and immobile worlds, representing the embodied living beings and inert matter respectively. These two aspects became the foundations of theism as developed in the different schools of Hindu religion.

There grew up a literature, during the period of the development of sacred literature represented in the Brāhmanas which took the shape of narratives, anecdotes and epics. This was concerned with a critical enquiry into the nature, activities and relative positions of the various gods. The concept of a single divine Being was subjected to serious elucidation,

54. Vide: एक आत्मा बहुधा स्तुत्यते | अन्या देवता: प्रत्यज्ञानि भवति
Nirukta, VII 4.
resulting in the identification of this B.ing. Agni and Indra were, of course, the chief deities in the Ràved c hymns. Yet, Vânu and Rudra did not have insignificant positions, as imagined by foreign scholars. It may be admitted that they were not favoured as against Agni, Indra and Varuna. The hymns addressed to these two contain what could be taken to be suggestive of the intimate relationship of the people with them. The narratives and episodes did not underrmine the prominence of Agni and Varuna r Indra, but were in favour of the exclusive worship of Vishnu or Rudra.

The Agamas presuppose this aspect of the development of the concept of God. Other deities are not treated as unreal. They are not, however, as eminent as Vishnu or Rudra. In fact, they are of secondary significance, and are generally treated as forming parts of the retinue of Vishnu or Rudra. The Agamas arose in this way and their emphasis on the personal nature of God marked them out. They became class fixed, according to the deity exclusively glorified in each.

A god treated as supreme cannot be conceived of as a mere Absolute, nor as one who is to be propitiated for a definite purpose like obtaining rains, security from enemies or the elements of Nature, or prosperity of a particular kind. For these purposes, the worship of particular deities is commended, but this does not by any means lend support to any pre-eminent position for these deities. As a result of the development of the worship of the principal deities as recorded in the epics, Purânas and other ancient literature, the Agamas evolved the cult of a single deity to the exclusion of all others. He came to be looked upon as pre-eminent in the sense that he not only overshadowed the greatness and might of other gods, but also had enough power to fulfill the aspirations of his worshippers. This trend is already noticed in some of the Purânas, like the Vishnu, Bhagavata, Skanda and others.

Whether Vishnu or Rudra is admitted to be the pre-eminent God, it is necessary to recognize Him as endowed with
enormous potentialities and capacities to keep every thing under His control, to create the world and maintain it, affording protection and security to created beings. The Āgamas therefore conceive of God as powerful (śakta). The power (śakti) which God possesses is not external to Him, for in that case His relationship to and control over it will have to be explained, which may lead to the undesirable admission of power (śakti) being independent of God. For this reason, the Āgamas recognize God as never dissociated from power. This power is not inert like primordial matter (prakṛti); in which case, it should occupy a very subordinate position in relation to God. Hence the Āgamas describe this power (śakti) as animate. The feminine gender of the word, ‘śakti’, suggests that this should be a goddess ever associated with God as His consort. As such, this goddess is named differently as Lakṣmi, Durgā, Māyā and others. The Godhead therefore is a two-in-one reality. Except for the Sṛisūkta55 and later portions of the Mahānārayaniya Upanisad,56 the Vedic literature does not conceive of the co-presence of a female principle along with Brahman or Īsvara. Those Upaniṣads57 which subscribe to the concept the female principle as constituting the Ultimate Reality, are held to be of later origin. This concept is also indicated or elaborated in the Purāṇas and Itihāsas. In this respect, the Āgamas maintain their own concept and tradition, not shared by ancient Vedic tradition.

Admission of a Supreme Deity is closely connected with problems like God’s relations to the world in respect of its

55 This forms part of the Khila of the Rgveda. The word, ‘Khila’, shows that it did not form part of the Rgveda in the recension that is now available. Evidently, Vyāsa did not include it. It could have been in some other recension which has now disappeared, and so it has a loose existence. But on this ground, it cannot be treated as a later production.

56 Mahānārayaniya Upanisad, 10

57. They are Sitopāpisad, Annapūrṇopanisad, Devyupanisad, Saubhāgyalakṣmyupanisad and Sarasvatīrahasyopanisad,
origin, maintenance and destruction. The Vedic texts contain conundrums, questions and answers on the source of the world and cosmology. Various theories, which have sprung later in the periods when systems of thought developed, are traceable to these sources. The Itihāsas, particularly the Mahābhārata, and the Purāṇas have their own versions of cosmology. In some of these, Brahmā Viṣṇu and Rudra are regarded as respectively in charge of the creation, maintenance and destruction of the world.

The attitude of the Āgamas to various cosmology differs from the concepts that are gathered from the aforesaid sources. On principle, the Āgamas agree with the evolution theory of the Sāṁkhya system, but there is much divergence from the Sāṁkhya theory.

The concept of a two-in-one Divinity does not permit the Āgamas to allot a place in their cosmology for other deities on a footing equal to that of the Divinity exclusively glorified in any particular Āgama. Either one of the same Divinity attends to all the cosmic functions or carries them out through the agency of other gods. This is treated also in some of the Purāṇas.

69 RV I. 164; VIII 29.

69 Mr. X 81. 4, S Y XII. 45-52, XXIII 9, T Br III 9 5 4; S Br. XII. 2 6 12; Chānd. Up. I 9. 6, 23

60 M Bh II 43, XII 18-347

61. VP I. 5, 6, 7, 8; Br II. 5, III 10, 23

62. The Supreme Being is venerated Hari. He is said to assume the forms of Brahmā Viṣṇu and Rudra for carrying on the war of creation, maintenance and destruction. Viṣṇu V P I 2 61 63 65 67 70. Therefore, the three deities Brahmā Viṣṇu and Rudra, are so known as having their respective functions.

63. Vide —

स्वर्गशिलोहितस्वाभावान जगतो यो जगत्वः" (V P I 2 4)

Cf. Ibid. I 2 7; Brahmā assumes the form of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Siva for this purpose. Ibid I 2 63. Cf. Ibid I 2 70.

Vide: गन्तौ नौ विश्वेः तो प्रवद्वकोणाये स्मृतोः।

तदाद्विश्वः तत्रौ छ पूव्यः वर्धकोः (Mbh. XII. 350. 19)

INTRODUCTORY

Since God and S'akti are non-dual, there cannot be anything that could exist outside this Reality. If anything exists, it can only be an emanation of the Reality. To account for the existence of the world, the Agamas give three cosmological accounts. Each one has a definite purpose to serve.

The first account mentions three types of creation, namely, pure (śuddha) mixed (miśra) and impure (asuddha). The pure type is represented by the emanations of S'akti which are intended to give relief to the selves in bondage. The mixed one corresponds to the traditional kind which is described in the Purānas and according to which Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra have their roles to play in the world to be created. The impure type is akin to the evolution of Prakṛti, more or less based on the teachings of the Sānkhya system. S'akti is present in every created product in some form or other.

The second account divides creation into six stages through which it passes. Each stage is called a sheath (kośa). The first is S'aktikośa in which S'akti manifests itself, but remains in its transcendental form. Māyakośa is the second, which represents the beginning of the material creation. The Prasūti-kōśa is the third in which S'akti gives rise to deities with the help of the three guṇas. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra get their consorts during the fourth stage called Prakṛtikośa. Brahmāndakośa is the name given to the fifth stage, which represents the evolution of the Sānkhya categories. The bodies of all animate beings represent the last stage called Jivakōśa.

64. The Satkāryavāda which forms the basis of the creation theory requires to be justified while explaining the emanations of various forms from the Ultimate Reality which is pure unsullied with the three guṇas of Prakṛti. This is possible only by admitting certain divisions in creation as pure, impure and mixed.

65 These are different from the five kośas of the Vedantins: ānand, prāpa, manas, vijñāna and ānanda.

ASV—3
The third cosmological account details sonic creation which passes through six stages called varṇa, kalā, tattva, mantra, pada and bhuvana. The first stage is represented by absolute sound (satadbrahman) which has four stages of polarization under the names of Parā, Paśyanti, Vāskhari and Madhyama. Kalā has five aspects, namely, Nivrūti, Pratiṣṭhā, Vidyā, Sānti and Śāntyatītā. ‘Tattva’ refers to the classification of sounds and of the created beings. The mantra stage can be termed as linguistic occultism. This begins from the letters which are called mātrikas (a word which means ‘mother’) forming the source of all words. The pada stage marks four levels of consciousness.

66. This is concerned with the creation of sound from Brahmā and its development through stages.

67. Vide:

70. A fifth stage called Turyātīta is admitted as denoting its suprajāta state of existence which manifests fully the soul’s majesty and splendour. Vide LT (Translation) p 130, fn.; LT XXIV. 31; LI 11.

See also Sīvāgrāvyogāntaraśāyana’s Śāivaparibhāṣā, pp 63 64.

Some Upaniṣads describe the person in this state. Vide Nārada-parivrājaka Upaniṣad Turyātītāvadhūta Upaniṣad and Saṁnyāsa Upaniṣad. It is however doubtful whether the contents of these have any direct bearing on the passage in LT. cited above.

Cf. Itivarapratyabhijnāvīmerīṃ, Āgāmādhikāra, II. pp. 18-20.
namely, *jāgrat* (waking stage), *svapna* (dream), *sūṣupti* (deep sleep) and *turiya* (transcendental state). The last one, *bhuvana*, consists of the material creation. Among these, *varṇa* and *mantra* have a direct bearing on sound and its creation. The other four are related to general cosmology. This account of creation seeks to indicate that the physical world, which is made up of the material nature and sonic nature, arises out of the Absolute Reality, identified with Absolute Sound. Another name for this theory of creation is *adhvan* and the six courses are called *saḍ adhvānoḥ*.

While the above account of the third theory of creation is concerned with an admixture of sonic and material creation and therefore is objective, there is another kind of evolution represented purely by sound. The first or primordial stage is represented by the Ultimate Reality (*paraṁ tattvam*) and is in the form of sentience. When this Reality entertains a will to create, it manifests itself as *Sakti*. It is also called *Māyā* and the root-cause (*kāraṇabindu*). This shows that *Sakti* is non-different from the Supreme Reality. The next stage in the evolution is the formation of *Nāda* which is indistinct sound possessing light. From the *Nada* emanates the supreme *Bindu* (*Para*), which represents the primary stage of creation. Out of this evolve the lower *Bindu* and *Bija*. From the lower *Bindu* a lower kind of *Nāda* is produced, representing the creation of the sound of the letters; and the *Bija* is the source for the *tattvas* of the material world.

These two accounts of the third kind of creation have a significant meaning. Other systems of thought hold sound to

11. Vide

**Śaṅkucintāmānaḥ**

कल्याण्यं नभवति लक्ष्मीं परमेश्वरार्द्र।

भास्करस्वाता नान्दे नान्दमिन्द्रसुधर्वः॥

परशाररक्षयः साध्रातु विघाली भिघाते पुजः॥

विन्दुनादं बीजमिति तस्य सेषः समीरिता॥

Śāradātilaka, I.7, 8.
have sprung from ākāśa, ahanākāra, vāyu and other sources. This
does not explain the important role which mantras play in wor-
ship nor show how God could be taken as existing in mantras. A
better exposition is therefore attempted by the Agamas, which
seek to trace the origin and development of mantras from the
Ultimate Reality.

The individual self (jīva) is represented by the sixth kosa
called jīva-kosa. It is therefore part of Absolute Reality Śakti
manifests itself in several kinds of evolutions which are insentient
and sentient, the latter being represented by the selves. The
selves are admitted to be karma-ridden, and the evolution of
Śakti is only to help them in freeing themselves from bondage.

Liberation consists in the self obtaining proper enlighten-
ment about the essence of the Supreme Reality. In other
words, the self has to realize that it is part of Śakti which is not dif-
ferent from God. The schools of Agamas have different interpre-
tations of the nature of liberation which is based on this
concept of the self being a part of and emanation from Śakti.
The self merges into Śakti and so has no existence apart from
God.72 Others hold that, being sentient, the self even then
has individuality, with transcendental existence. 73

The self gets to this stage through enlightenment acquired
by divine grace which is called Śaktipāta 74 a word indicative of
the role played here by Śakti. Karma, jñāna and yoga are the
means to win the grace of the Divine.

The yoga section of the Agamas discusses the methods which
a self has to adopt to know the real nature of the Ultimate
Reality. They are based on the Yogā-sūtras of Patanjali. The

72. This is quite appropriate, inasmuch as the self issues out of the
sentient form of Śakti.

73. Same as under 70.

74. Alighting of grace is called Śaktipāta, a name given in the
Pancavīra, Śaivism and Śāktaism. See The World as Power, p. 212.
A
gamas recognize that, within the human body, there are six cakras (or circles) with the names of Mulādhara, Svādhisthāna, Maṇiḍhūra, Anāhata, Viśuddha, and Ājñā, placed one above the other, the first one being placed below the navel, and the last at the top of the head. All of them are said to be in the form of lotuses. There are several ducts (nādis) inside the body among which an arterial duct is called Suṣumnā and is held to be the most important. Īdā is another important duct to its right, while Piṅgala runs to its left. The Suṣumnā duct connects the Mulādhāra with the Ājñā. The jīvaśakti lies coiled like a serpent in the Mulādhāra.

The self has to adopt yogic practices to arouse this sleeping Śakti which is called Kuṇḍalini and make it rise up through the duct of Suṣumnā, pass through the ‘circles’, and ultimately reach the Brahmārandhra, the middle cavity at the top of Suṣumnā. At this stage, the self would merge with the Supreme Śakti and have a direct experience of bliss. In order to adopt this method, the self has to practise various postures (āsanas) and carry out breath-control (prāṇāyāma). The Īdā and Piṅgala ducts play a prominent role in prāṇāyāma. The method of yoga as recommended in the Agamas envisages a self which acquires the knowledge of reality to find the Absolute in himself, since God is not absent from anywhere and is not distinct from Śakti. The aspirant is therefore required to have experience within himself and, as such, this concept has appeal only to a limited number who could adopt yogic practices.

The next section is called Kriyāpāda, which is concerned with the making of images, construction of temples and installation of the images there. The gods are represented in the Vedas as displaying or possessing distinct features so as to be definitely

75 Ibid, p. 113 They may be plexuses or centres of the involuntary nervous system. They are described as focal points of power in the body of men which are only partially open. (Studies in the 'Tantras' and the 'Veda', p. 79.)
Identified and distinguished. Certain features displayed by some gods were held in common by more than one deity. This led to the formation of the concept of 'all-deities' (ātivedanaḥ) and to the evolution of a monotheistic tendency making the gods as subordinate in position to a Supreme God whose various manifestations they were taken to represent.

It is hard for an aspirant to have concentration on the features of a god who is not present before him whenever he requires. The need therefore arose to evolve a concept which would admit of the form of the particular god who is to be meditated upon. God has been conceived of by the Vedic seers as all-pervading (saroavyāpin) and also transcendental. Another principle which is involved in the concept of God-head is that He is also immanent. These aspects have made it possible for evolving a new concept according to which God, who is infinite and beyond all kinds of temporal, spiritual and objective limitations, and who, for that reason, could not be described and depicted accurately with the instruments of measurement and evaluation that are finite, becomes accessible to man by taking a physical body in the shape of an idol. Along with the idol, there also came into existence the mystic diagrams drawn to specific scales on metals or other materials with the letters of the mantra relating to the particular deity being set in specified spots.

This concept of admitting a finitized form for the Infinite Supreme Being is based on two assumptions. God can make

76. RV. III. 29

77. Vide:

अत्तर्वहीनः तरसवे ब्याध्य नारायण: स्थिनः ।

Narāyana Upaniṣad. XIII. 3.

अन्यतिष्ठताः शाश्वतः ।

(RV. X. 90. 1)

78. Śvetāmbara Upaniṣad. VI. 11.
Himself manifest at any time at His own will. The manifested form is as much God's as the unmanifested one is. God presents Himself in this form for the sake of His devotee, and so God's presence in the idol cannot be questioned. Secondly, God's immanence, when it is displayed in the idol, cannot also be explained away. Therefore, the finitized form of God as idol must be taken to have been known to Indians from very ancient times on the authority of the Agamas.

The various deities were worshipped by the Vedic seers by making offerings of ghee, butter and other materials in the sacred fire, whenever specific desires were needed to be fulfilled. The worshipper was well aware that his particular desire would be granted if a particular deity was worshipped. The relationship between the worshipper and the deity was based merely on this understanding. People who used to know this and realized it, must have felt in course of time that there existed between them and the particular deity an intimate relation which was drawing them both close to each other. This gave rise to the feeling of dependence on the god, which developed into one of affection. Affection gradually resulted in the rise of devotion in man for the god. Man could not then live aloof from that deity. He desired to offer his oblations to that deity in the fire. It is not unnatural then that he should have desired to see his god before him. A devotee should, indeed, expect to perceive his god in a form which his finite senses could easily comprehend. The form with which the god presented himself to his devotee, must have been cherished as his essential form. Those who had visions like these of the same god would not have allowed that attractive figure to go away from their sight. They were not sure of having it again, if it vanished from their presence. Naturally, they should have taken steps to shape, out of any material they had, whether mud, stone or metal, a figure that would represent that form in the idol carved out by them. So it is the devotion of the worshipper that has brought about the concept of the idol and idol worship.
The seer who used to feel that his transactions with a deity whom he worshipped by making offerings into the sacred fire were ended after that act of worship was completed, did not any longer ponder over the identity of that deity, as there was no need thereafter for continuing the worship. When that deity was represented in an idol, the deity was always there before the worshipper, attracting his mind and senses. Emotions surged into his mind, taking the forms of gratitude for the favours received and attraction to the beauty of the person of the deity. The mind was enraptured with the ravishing beauty of the god. The worshipper could no longer allow himself to forget that form or ignore the presence of the deity there.

The idol is God Himself. Awareness that God is supreme, possessing countless qualities, powerful, amiable and easy of access to the worshipper, gives rise to affection and passionate longing for God. Naturally, the worshipper would erect a place for keeping the idol, decorate that place and see that nothing affects its sanctity. This is the starting point for the rise of the section called Kriyāpāda in the Agamas.

Steeped in the Vedic traditions, the seers could not ignore the significance of the Vedic mantras which, on being repeated by them, brought forth the deity before them. The mantras were therefore used for all purposes connected with the worship of the idol.

The feeling of attachment for an object fills the human heart and arouses there a desire to keep that object well-secured in a safe place. When that feeling is enlivened by the spirit of devotion, attempts are made by the owner of that object to beautify it and enshrine it in a place that is also embellished with all artistic designs in consonance with the beauty of the object. Every possible attempt is made to adopt all devices for the main purpose of providing that object with a charming environment. It is in this sense that Hindu iconography, sculpture, painting and architecture are said to have had a divine origin. These fine arts were primarily intended for God.
The selection of the proper site for the erection of the temple, excavating it, preparation of the bricks, raising of the basement and other preliminaries are dealt with in detail in the Kṣiyāpāda. Choice of stones, erection of pillars, building the halls and construction of the temples are then described. The temple is treated as Puruṣa, the humanized Supreme Being. The cosmos is conceived to be present abstractly and also in conception. So, the temple is constructed with specific numbers of halls, courtyards and other structures, with all the deities represented there in the form of images and specified places. This explains why the sanctum sanctorum is called ‘garbhagrha’. The size of the towers, the storeys in the towers and the temple structure should be uniform, but in proportion to the size of the chief idol to be enshrined in the temples. Rules are given for the selection of stone, wood or metal for making the idols. After the idols are carved, an initial ceremony called adhvāsa is to be performed. Then the eyes are carved for the idol followed by an elaborate process of installation. After this, the idols become sanctified and fit for worship. Methods of offering daily worship to the deity are then treated. Vedic mantras are to be recited while attending to all this work.

Similarly, every person is required to offer worship to God in his residence. The procedural details for this purpose are also contained in this section of the Agamas. The idol, the sālagrāma, the liṅga and the mystic diagram are required to be worshipped in the house in accordance with the aptitude, capacity and economic conditions of the worshipper.

The fourth section which is called Caryāpāda prescribes the rules for carrying out the daily routine of the aspirant and for attending to the worship of God in temples and houses and conducting general, private and public festivals. Most of the texts of the Agamas contain a more detailed exposition of this

79 For a treatment of this, see M. A. Dhaky: ‘Prāśāda as cosmos’ in Brahmavidyā, XXX, pts. 3 & 4.
section than others, indicating the ulterior purpose of the Āgamas. This section lays stress on the practical side of their teachings.

The worship of God is to be conducted through mantras, which are constituted of letters or rather, syllabic sounds. These represent the power of God. Each letter has a deity. An aspirant has to choose the letters which get moulded into the form of a mantra and use it for worshipping his deity. Any set of letters or any word is not a mantra. The letters have to be such as to form a word which could become a mantra. Each letter in that mantra reveals only an aspect of God who is to be represented by it. Only when the whole mantra gets formed, the full form of God would become available there. This is like a particular formation of letters which, becoming a word, would convey meaning. Mantra manifests God and thus stands for God whose presence is felt there. Mantras and deity become one and the same. The letters of the mantra become the yintra of God. So mantra’s yintra or an id. of God. The yintra or Idol cannot therefore be a mere piece of stone or metal. To produce this manifestation of the deity in the yintra or idol, the mantra must be intoned in the most accurate way prescribed in the Āgamas in respect of both sound and rhythm. Any attempt to render it in another language would reduce it to the status of a mere word, possessing simply physical properties. Such translated words may have the status of prayers, but mantras alone have the power to compel the deity to appear before the aspirant.

The letters, which form mantras, are called maṭrkās, as they form the basis of words. They are classified under different heads. A pedestal for them (maṭrkāpīṭha) is required to be prepared with specific dimensions and a diagram is to be drawn to take the shape of a lotus. There are specific rules to draw the forms of the letters in the petals in accordance with the mantra of the deity to be worshipped.

The characteristic feature of the mantra is consciousness and is said to be of four parts, namely, bija, piṅḍa, sāmyjñā and pada. The bija may contain either one or two vowels coupled with a consonant. It constitutes the essential part of the particular deity's mantra. The praṇava, hrim, srim, aṁś, kliṅga and such others illustrate the bija. The consonants, inserted between the bija and the remaining part, constitute the piṅḍa. Vowels also are sometimes connected with it: in represents this Sāmyjñā is the name of the particular deity addressed in the mantra in association with the words, nāmas and praṇava, e.g., 'namo Viṣṇava'. A combination of verbal utterance with nominal concepts of a laudatory nature gives rise to the pada section, e.g., 'sahasra-vālāya'. All these four parts together constitute a complete mantra and each of these is held to be as efficacious as a mantra. Such words as svāhā, vaśaṭ and phaṭ are used at the end of certain mantras, conveying the offering.

Mantras of two kinds are employed in the Agamic practices, namely, vaidika and tāntiśka. The vaidika mantras are taken

81 All the four are essential. If one of them is not available, then the mantra becomes of the middle kind. If none of them is there, then the mantra is called inferior. Vide LT. XXII. 38, 39.

See also LT. translation p. 115.


82. Vide:

क्रमानुसारसंते नमस्काराविक क्रस्वेदं।
तथा फलाफलसन्धाने नमस्कारं सकीर्तित:।
संप्रातै त्वमित्रतिनां त्वाख्यातकारसुवीरेन इति।
आप्यायने तु भव वैपर्व लर्न्ते क्रमेऽक्रमेऽ॥
ब्रह्मायं ब्रह्मा वत्तीदेवे हुऽष्ठार्थनकर्मै।
हुःफुह्हारं ओ निःहितमन्योन्यिते ब्रह्मे ब्रह्मे॥
तर्त्यं वत्तीदे व तेजसोपदेशविवद्वः।
अन्ते सप्तवांविश्व नमस्कारपदेशः इति॥

Śrī Kṛṣṇa Śarvaśastra (Sks. Brahma, Xi 9-14; Is. XV, 146-149 a.)
from the four Vedas, according as circumstances demand. There are also tāntrika mantras, and some which represent an admixture of both. The tāntrika mantras are required on two grounds. One is that every deity, which forms part of the retinue of the principal deity, requires a specific mantra for worship, and a Vedic mantra is not always available for the purpose. Secondly, they provide those who are not qualified to study the Vedas with mantras which they could readily use; e.g., Om hūm hūdyā astra hūm phat; Om hūm aṁ kirtiyu namāḥ; sadoditānandavigrāhaya hūm klim svāhā. The Vedic mantras are adapted for tāntrik purposes. For instance, there are Gayatri mantras for several deities on the model of the Śāvitrī mantra. The Rgvedic mantra ‘Svasti na Indro Vyadhaśravatḥ’ (1.89.6), is adapted as ‘hūm hūm svasti naḥ Katyāyani Āparagā’. These mantras have to be repeated (as japa) in order to attain success (siddhi).

Those who adopt the tāntrika mode of worship are required to undergo initiation (dikṣā) under a preceptor who is well up in the subject. The qualifications are prescribed for the pupil and the preceptor. Initiation (dikṣā) is not simply giving lectures or guiding the apprentice in doing a piece of work, but transference of the supreme power which resides in his body into the body of the pupil.

There are several items to be gone through while offering worship of God. Worship of God is of two kinds namely, internal (antaryāga) and external (bāhya yāga). The servant is required to look inward and find God there. The entire procedure of worship as practised internally is to be gone through and, after the inner worship is over, external worship is to be undertaken.

83. Vide : Narāyana Upaniṣad, 5, 6, 7, 20.
85. Shakti and Shakti, p. 311.
The first step to be adopted before actually beginning the inner or subjective mode of worship is the purification of the elements in the body of the aspirant (bhūtaśuddhi). This consists in imagining the earthy element of the body being absorbed into the subtle element characterised by smell (gandha-tanmātrā); which is to be merged in water, which in its turn in the subtle element characterised by taste (rasa-tanmātrā) and so on till the body gets into the mind, that into life and that into matter. Matter is to be absorbed in the Supreme Being. In the reverse order, a new body is gradually imagined to be created, a body which is made up of pure sattva, so as to be free from the impurities which arise on account of the rajas and tamas of matter. This new body then gets fit for worshipping God.

The human body, which is made up of matter, is regarded as impure. The ancient texts tend to depict the body as reprehensible. The question that would generally be raised in the context is as to how the perfect idol or diagram of God, sanctified by the utterance of mantras, can be touched by the impure hand of man and offered worship. There is no answer to this question in any ancient work except what is suggested in the Āgamas. By this process of bhūta-śuddhi, an aspirant is made to imagine that he gets rid of his impure body and obtains a pure frame with which he could offer worship to God. This at once suggests that the body which has become perfect and flawless through this mental process is fully qualified and competent to offer worship. Hence the Āgamas have gone beyond the Vedas in suggesting that the human body is not so detestable as it is held to be. One should rather attach value and respect to the body which acquires the unique privilege in

86 Vācaspatya, pp 463-47; Shakti and Shakti, pp 287-289; The World as Power, pp 152-3. Īsānājīva-gurudēvapāddhāti, Part III 97-99. Mantras are contained in the Subāla Upaniṣad, II.

87. Vide, VP I 1 7-62a, VI. 7. 17-18. Bh. VII. 2, 42; VII. 15. 41-46; XI. 8, 33; XI. 20, 18.
this life for handling the idol or diagram and offering worship to it directly.

After carrying out bhutasuddhi, the aspirant should imagine that he offers worship to GΩd within himself, passing through all the stages of worship and using the materials which are also imagined to have been procured there for the purpose. This mental worship enables the aspirant to feel happy that GΩd within him has been worshipped by him and helps him in preparing himself for the external mode of worship.

Apart from collecting the widely used materials of worship such as the vessels, bell and others, the Āgamas insist on certain preliminaries to be gone through before the actual act of worship is begun.

Among them, the mandala88 is a pictorial representation of the descent of the Supreme Reality on earth at the spot where GΩd is to be worshipped. This takes the form of drawing certain figures on the ground. The figures generally take the form of a lotus with a specific number of petals. Each figure has particular spots assigned for various deities with the chief deity taking its place in the centre. In general, a mandala can be used for any deity. With an artistic background, the mandala is treated as the place to be worshipped. This is generally used on occasions when pavitradropana, initiation and other rites are undertaken.

Tantra89 plays a prominent part in the Āgamas. The word, "yantra", which is derived from the root "yam" meaning "to restrain", conveys the sense that the yantra is capable of subduing lust, anger and other impurities which affect the self. In

88. The mandala is not a mere piece of decorative imagery for a ritual. It furnishes a powerful material basis for the operation of subtle forces within and without. Vid Studies in the Tantras and the Veda, pp. 69-73.
89. Shakti and Shakti, pp. 22-8.
restrains the self from falling a victim to vice and fixes its attention on the deity. Generally, it takes the shape of a diagram drawn on paper, engraved on metals or cut on crystals and stones. *Yantras* vary in design according to the deities they represent and whose *mantras* have their syllables written or carved there in specific places. The *yantra* is said to be the body of the deity which is *mantra* itself.

**Vide:**

यन्त्रां मन्त्रधर्मं प्रोक्त मन्त्राशशा देवतेव हि ।

देहालमन्नोपः भैरो यन्त्रदेवतयोस्तथा ॥

(Cited in *Sabdakalpadruma*, Pt. IV. p. 13.)

While *maṇḍalas* could be used for any deity, the *yantra* is concerned only with a particular deity. All *yantras* have a common edging called *bhūpura*, which is a quadrangular figure with four doors on each side. These doors are intended to isolate the *yantra* from the outside world. The worshipper meditates upon God and arouses Him within himself. He then transfers Him to the *yantra* which becomes His body. The *yantra* is then no longer gross matter. It becomes fit to be worshipped. This transference of God into the *yantra* is stated to be *Prāṇapratīṣṭha*,90 as the deity is infused with life there.

The *yantra* becomes thus the concrete presence of the deity. The syllables of the *mantra* of the deity are still there, representing the deity. Meditation, repetition of the *mantra* and the act of worship are all done with reference to the *yantra*. Though concretized, the deity is not visualized in the *yantra* by all the aspirants. Hence this principle of the *yantra* is extended in its application to the idol of God which represents Him in physical form, acceptable and attractive to the eyes and minds of the aspirants. The idol, made of stone, wood, minerals, or metals, does not have the syllables of the *mantra* carved on it.

90. Vide; *The Tantras: Studies in their Religion and Literature*, p. 90.
Sometimes, however, the idol may be installed on a yantra specifically prepared for the purpose.

Nyāsa 91 is a practice enjoined by the Āgamas. Sounds have particular deities. They are also located in the human body. The sound, presided over by a particular deity, must be identified with the one present in the body. This is done by touching that part of the body where it is located with the tip of a particular finger in the right hand and its palm. This is called Nyāsa. While doing this, the mantra of the particular deity must be uttered. Thereby, the body of the aspirant is considered to get filled up with the life of the deity. This Nyāsa is called mantranyāsa, which makes the aspirant acquire fitness to worship that deity. It is a mental process which removes the obstacles which lie in the path of offering worship to the deity. When it is done on one hand with another, it is called Hastanyāsa or Karanyāsa.

This is to be followed by doing it on the body, when it is called Aṅganyāsa. The latter is said to be of five kinds 92 the limbs on which nyāsa is to be done being hādaya, śikhā, śras, astra and kavaca. When this is to be done on the yantra and idol, they are held to possess these limbs. The aspirant who spiritualizes his body by Nyāsa, infuses the potency of the mantra into the idol on which he performs Nyāsa. He must spiritualize the limbs of the idol and the interior of the idol also; the Nyāsa is thus both external (bahir) and internal (antras). Nyāsa is also done with a view to create a new potency in the idol. It is of three kinds, saṁhāranyāsa, sṛṣṭinyāsa and sthitynāsa. 93 Nyāsa is required to be done on almost all

91. Ibid p 80; Shakti and Shakta, pp 289-293.
92 Vācaspatya, p 4173.
93 Several aspects of infusing potency with reference to the mantras and the parts of the body where it is to be done, as also having it in the reverse way, are dealt with in great detail Vīda SKS. Brahma IX. 12-69. Cf. Itiṣṇaśavagurudāvapaddhati, Part II. pp. 58-60.
occasions and whenever a fresh act of worship is to be undertaken. 94

In every part of the act of worship, mudrās 95 is required to be displayed by the aspirant. Mudrā is a symbolic hand pose with the fingers assuming particular positions. This plays a very important role along with nyāsa in acts of worship. Being a symbol, it is intended to convey a feeling about or refer to a situation or a condition in which the person adopting it is placed.

Writing which includes painting gestures which convey the intention of those who display them and articulate speech have been, from a very ancient period of human history, the means which men have adopted for communicating with one another. Among these, speech in the form of articulate expression is most widely used, while writing comes next in importance. Gestures, unaccompanied by words, do convey sense. Yet, speech is seldom unaccompanied by gestures in the form of movements of head and hands with fingers and changes in facial expression which include those of eyes and lips. Quite often, these physical movements give strength to speech.

It is therefore natural that both in practical life and in artistic presentations such as dance, the poses with the physical limbs should play a dominant role. The same principle is applicable to the employment of mudrās in worship. Varada, abhīya-hasta, udyāyamudrā and other kinds of mudrās are found to be shown by icons and painted and sculptured figures, adding much to their communicative effectiveness. Similarly, the aspirant is enjoined to employ the mudrās, while performing worship.

94. Invariably, this is to be done on the body of the pupil by the preceptor during dikṣa. When it is done from head to foot, it is syūtinyāsa; from navel to heart, it is sthitinyāsa, and from foot to head, it is samhārinyāsa.

Cf. Sanskrit-Shāstra, p. 737 where the Vāyavīyasamhitā is cited.

95 Shakti and Shakta, pp. 286-7.

45V——5
The word, 'mudrā', is derived from the root, 'mud', meaning ‘to rejoice’, and the root 'rā' meaning ‘to give’. The word then is taken to mean ‘giving delight’ evinced only to the deity before whom this is displayed. To emphasize that the display of mudrā is obligatory, attempts have been made to explain the connotation of this word. Two purposes are indicated through this connotation. One is that what is undesirable could be dispelled by this display. Sins get removed, defects disappear and malicious spirits are cleared away, smoothing the path of worship for the aspirants. The second purpose is that the desires of the aspirants get fulfilled through this display.

Mudrās are numerous, as several feelings and situations have to be represented. Some texts of the Agamas and such which describe how several mudrās are to be formed and displayed. They have to be displayed in accordance with the mantras that are recited.

Vide

Pra. anc. hydava, p. 88; S. rs LIII 83, Sabdrakalo-drüna III p 745

Cf Mahesvaradanda's commentary or M narth. niñijars, p 131

97. Is XXIV 2, Pars. XIV 1; Pās. IV. 22 Iṣānātṛāgurudevaparidhati, I pp. 72-74.

Vide

Takmānteṇāt mābhāyāna mābhāmaṁśāvadhānī
Sabadrakalpadruma, III p. 745, Suprabhedagama, IX

The mudrā is also explained as offering resorting to the self through the body. It is also said to afford relief for the self from adverse planetary influences and to destroy sins. The former is in pratrdyā or mud and the latter by drā. Vide - Tantrasura cited on p 79 of the Sūras tatrāntamāḷa

Vide KS K.1 II; Is XXIV, JS VIII, Pars XIV; P s IV 22. Śāradatilaka, XXIII.

Cf Smyticanrikā, I, pp. 146-148.
Worshipping the deity involves sixteen kinds of ceremonial practices (upacāra) which are Āvāhana, Šhapana, Śanvīdhāna, Śinivrodhana, Aṣagunthana, Dhenamudrā Arghya, Pāṭya, Ācami-nīya Puspadāna, Dhūpa, D.pā, Nāvedya, Pāṭya Ṣaparāmarpāna and Ārāṭrika. Sometimes, the first ten alone are taken up for enumeration. All these are classified according to the five elements out of which they could have sprung.

On occasions, the idol or yantra is to be given a ceremonial bath, the preparations for which are to be made on an elaborate scale. There are varieties of the bath. Minute details are given for selecting the right type of flows and of plucking them. The prepared food to be offered to the deity is called khaṣu. The nature of the grains and other ingredients of the preparation is dealt with according to the quantity required for the offering.

The Agama texts generally have the words, ‘ṣaṁhitā’, ‘ṣaṁhitā’, and others at the end of their names Mrgendrī śaṁhitā, M.ṣaṁhitā yantra Lakṣmītantra, etc. This shows that the Agama texts came into being after the Vedic traditions became abidant, and also that they are all based on the Vedic exis. However, these details do not belong exclusively to any one creed or religion. Apart from Hinduism, the Buddhist religion too had ṭaṅṭrika aspects.

A difficulty arises in the absence of acceptable evidence, in settling the identity of some of these concepts. Ever since foreign scholars began handling Indological subjects, particularly Hindu traditions, their tendency has been to deny outright

100 Shakti and Shakta, p 233.
101 VK p 416, SA LH Narayana: Tantrasamuccaya, Part II pp 375-442 Suprabhedagama, XV.
102 Śāradātilaka, p 157.
Indigenous origin to any concept that has been outstanding in its excellence or attractiveness. Either the Greek tradition or Buddhistic developments have been cited as having served as the foundations for or as having inspired the Hindu concepts to grow and develop. This could be conceived, had there been available any evidence of a Buddhist nature in favour of such views. However, such evidence is yet to be found. On the other hand, whatever is available to the contrary is summarily dismissed as of no consequence. Therefore, the question of Greek influence is yet to be settled on surer grounds.

As regards the Buddhist influence, what developments after the Buddha's demise has been attributed to his preachings which are yet not available in the form of specific books. If the Buddha had not preached against the Vedic tradition, then no concept could be attributed to him as exclusively Buddhistic. If he had preached against Brahminism (a term coined by the Western Orientalists with a view to create mutual distrust and lack of respect among the Indian communities and thereby to decry the indigenous character of Hindu religion), he, the tantric practices, which sprang among the Buddhists of later days, could only be exotic to Buddhism. They must have been taken by the Buddhists from others.

It is also suggested that the original inhabitants of India, who had no progressive and civilized notions of life, should have been following these practices. The founders of Tantrism saw in them much that was needed to inspire the creation of a new cult. The Vedic source for the rise of the Agamas is thus sought to be denied.

This theory requires critical consideration. It presupposes that enlightened men came from outside to India where there were already the natives who were inferior to them in all respects. This presupposition is based on ignorance and prejudice. No society has ever consisted of members having the same standards of culture, education and other equipment.
This must apply also to the people who lived in ancient India. This society did not certainly migrate into India from without. Practices of the people should have varied, and the different practices could have reacted on one another. Certain of them might have been taken up by a section which did not have them before. These practices have been there ever since the enlightened section of people had their own way of religious and secular life fully organized. The foreign or tribal origin of the Agamas does not therefore merit acceptance. The sources for the Agamas must therefore be admitted to have been varied but Indian, permitting the votaries of the various cults to draw out whatever they required. Besides mutual influence, exotic impact cannot be totally denied.

The Himalayan regions where Kailāsa is situated, are said to have been the home of the Sāvīa Agamas. Some think that it is from Bengal the Agamas spread to Assam, Nepal, Tibet and China. Assam is the natal home according to some others. It would be prudent to avoid taking sides on his problem, until evidence becomes available. That the tantric practices have been largely prevalent in certain areas cannot help in determining their original home. The extent of foreign influence cannot also be decided, even if it were to be proved that there was such influence on the development of the Agamas, for the Indian tradition depicts what is borrowed from others so as to be in harmony with its character. The result has been the loss of individuality of the borrowed features, when there are any.

The date of the Agamas poses another problem. The evidence will have to be found in works, both Vedic and Agamic. The system of the Agamas must have taken its rise in the remote past and undergone development gradually and not at any

104 The Tantras: Studies in their Religion and Philosophy, p. 6.
105 Winternitz: Indian Literature, 1. p 592, fn. 4.
106 Ibid.
uniform pace. Long after its full development, the system would be recorded in works. The concept of worshipping the deity in a concrete form could have been evolved even when the mantra portions were accommodated to form sections of Vedic ritual in the Yajurveda, Sāmaveda and their Brāhmaṇas. It is absurd to believe that those who had a yearning to visualize God waited and waited for centuries to witness the end of the era of the Vedic rituals and the production of Vedic literature. The Agamic concepts must have been developing along with the ritualistic literature, but certainly a long time after the mantra as became powerful in the hands of the sages to invoke the presence of the gods.

Sages like Atri, Kāśyapa, Marīti, Markandeya, ŚUNAKT, ŚANIKUNĀRA and others were intimately connected with the development of the Vedic ritual and the philosophical disciplines. Their mantras are also associated with the concepts of the Agamic tradition and with some works on the Agamas. An ancient date even for the evolution of these concepts is not acceptable to the Orientalists who have pronounced predictions for placing the at a very late date, having the earlier periods to be marked by mental stagnation and lack of inspiration. But the Kalpasūtras refer to a few important sages associated with some of the Agamic concepts.

It is said that the Agamas must have risen after the Vedic period, but this does not make clear even the probable date. In this context, it is necessary to understand what the expression, 'Vedic period,' means. The Orientalists divide Sanskrit literature into Vedic, epic and classical periods. The epic period is said to have begun after the close of the period of the

107 Bhavatīrīta's commentary on Jaimini's Śravaṇastra mentions Śandilya, up 224; Bṛhadāyana's Śravaṇastra mentions Atri, 16 6 and Bṛgu 2 16, Triṇambīkṛṣṇastra refers to Bhāgū, 25 5 0 69, Atri 81, 24, 8-10, K-piśīdha, 20 14 2, K-śivas 13 1 5, and Bhāra hāvyās, 24, 6 18 and 7 3-10.
Vedas which include the Samhitas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas and Upanisads and also the Vedangas. The classical period commenced after the epics were composed. Those who are guided by this opinion of the Orientalists, forget that Vedic texts contain narratives, episodes and other epic-like formations. Likewise, the language and contents of the epics have much of the classical features. So, it is to be realized that these periods overlap one another.

The Vedas continue to be recited down to the present day. The rituals are still performed, though not on such a large scale as in the distant past. The Vedic passages have been analysed, interpreted and expounded by eminent authorities like Yāka, Skandavāmin, Śaṅkara, Bhattachārjya and others, all of whom did not live in the so-called Vedic period. The spirit of the Vedas is still glowing, and this itself is a mark of the Vedic atmosphere which prevails even today. Kaśyapa is supposed by modern scholars to have lived at some time between the 1st century B.C. and 5th century A.D., and to him goes the credit for the composition of the following śloka

\[
\text{Abhyānasākuntalā, IV. 7}
\]

108 For manona of akhyāna, see ŚBr. I 3.4.3 2, Āsvalayana Ārauta Sūtra, X 6, for 'purāṇa', see ŚBr. I. 5.6.8; Chand. Up. III 4 1, 2, VII. I 2, 4, II 1

109 Thī, Jōla is composed in an admixture of two kinds of Tristubh] namely Vātīrmi and Śālinitī.
The arād form is stated to have been introduced by the sages for worship at the beginning of the Tretāyuga 110

Vide:-

शे० जी० रुपेण पुरेषु पुरोहिताम्

स्त्रेषु मनोवं राजस्वारतस्मेव चर्टे

नस्तानू पांकू हि पुरो यावानाम् यथेष्टे ॥

हृदी नेत्रं नयो नृपाभवानार्मतः नृण।

वैनाहितु हरेचना किषयिन कुर्यि: कुर्या ॥

नतस्तचिया हरिः के चारु संक्षेप न नयं कां।

उःसत उस्तास्याय नाःशं श्रुतिः पुराणिप्रमु ॥

(87 VII 14. 33b-40.)

The Rāmāyaṇa refers to the temple of Vāsū by the word, 'सर तान' 111 and 'हरेरका' of girls through the words 'देवगाँ' 112 and 'स्थाना' 113 These could be taken to refer to particular places where shrines were built for the worship of deities. It is not the holy fire-pit (homakunda) of the ritualists where the offerings were made for the deities. However, there is no mention of the idol or any symbol in these cases. Anyway, a specific structure (agāri) was erected to worship the deity (deva). The word, 'स्थाना', in another passage, 114 should also point to the same structures.

The Viṣṇupurīṇa 115 contains unmistakable evidence to the vyūha doctrine of the Pāñcarātra. The Mahabhārata refers to

116 Arca is mentioned as one of the seven places where worship could be offered. Vide -Rājovītāna 112 29 7, Bh XI 27 9 Eight kinds of images are enumerated: Ibid XI 77 12.

111 R II. 8 4


113 Ibid III 12 17-21.

114 Ibid For a detailed treatment, see 'Rāmāyaṇa and Temples' in BBRAS, XXIII, p. 242.
idols in temples 116 and to the Pañcarātra doctrines 117 The Harivamśa 118 refers to the temple of Indrāni where the goddess was worshipped by Rukmini. The Bhāgavata refers to the vyūha doctrine of the Pañcarātra, 119 the arca form, 120 worship, temples 121 and tāntrik initiation 122 Many Purāṇas contain glorification of the holy places where temples are described 123

All this evidence could not be summarily dismissed as baseless. The glorification of the holy places could have been included in the Purāṇas at different periods, but long before such accounts were composed, the temples should have been in existence, though not in their present form. The Bhāgavata refers to some holy places like the river Gaṅgā, Kuruksetra, Naimśī and others. In the same context, the places where the idols of Viṣnu are enshrined are glorified and shown as specially suitable for worship 124

A passage cited above from the Rāmāyana mentions also the names of deities other than Viṣnu, indicating that they also

115 VP. V 18 58
116 Vide
देवता प्रतिमा चेव कमलित च हस्तित च।
वमस्ति हिंदिरे चास्ये स्वविहित प्रतिश्च च॥

Mbh VI 2 26
117 Mbh XII 342-359
118 Harivamśa, II 59 33, 34
119 Bh X 16 45, X 40 21
120 Ibid X 53 44-50, X 84 11
121 Ibid X 53 39-49, X 79 12-15
122 Ibid XI 4 47-55, XI 11 37, XI. 27
123 The Vāmana, Skanda Mārkandeya, Varāha, Brahma and Padma Purāṇas glorify Trumalai, the Saura glorifies temples of Śiva, the Brahmāṇḍa treats of Kaśī and Ahobilā, the Skanda glorifies Badarikāśrama and so on. A reference may be made here to TA (X 43-47) which deals with the worship of Śivalīnga.
124 Bh. X 79
△sv—6
received worship in particular places. The passage in the
Mahabharata makes a general reference to the gods, which shows
that deities other than Viṣṇu had their idols in temples for
worship. The Purāṇas contain references to the temples of
these gods. All this indicates that idol worship, as enjoined in
the Āgamas, must have been very ancient. The structures to
house these deities could have sprung up later, of which alone
the Purāṇas have references and descriptions.

It must not be surprising, if references in the Rāmāyana
to the various spots in hermitages for many deities should turn
out to be Āgamic without any tinge of the use of
yantras and tāntrika mantras. The vyūha doctrine of the Pāñcarātra
refers to the names of Kṛṣṇa and the members of His family.
This may be a later addition made at the end of the Dvāparayuga.
Or, those names, which should have been in vogue long before
that period, could have been given to the members in the family
of Kṛṣṇa, just like the name ‘Vāsudeva’. Anyway, the Mahā-
bhārata which must have taken a specific shape by 3000 B.C. 125
should justify this date as the lowermost limit for the
prevalence of the Agamic doctrines

125. V. Varadachari:
महाभारतकालिनिणयः सांख्यः IV, 1-14.
CHAPTER II

VALIDITY OF THE 'AGAMAS'

The authenticity of the Agamas has been questioned from about the beginning of the Christian era. There was objection to their validity in a general way and also to that of particular kinds of Agamas. The whole objection is based only on one point, namely, worship of God.

These who raise this objection, rest their arguments on the supposed non-Vedic character of the Agamas. The word 'non-Vedic' means that which is not Vedic, not based on what the Vedas stand for. By 'Vedic' the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas are meant. These are concerned with the performance of the rituals enjoined in the Kalpaśūtras in accordance with the procedures recommended therein on the basis of the Brāhmanas. They do not uphold the exclusive worship of any single deity. On the other hand, the rituals have different deities to be worshipped according to the nature of the rites. It is sacrilegious to offer worship to a deity in any ritual in which he is not to receive worship, in the place of another who is to receive it. The Agamas which recommend strongly the worship of particular deities in an exclusive manner, go against the Vedic concept of deities. Again, the Agamas miss the Vedic concept of God. Idol worship marks the Agamic mode of adoring God. The Vedas nowhere refer to the distinct concrete form of God, nor do they speak of adoring that form. God is transcendental and also immanent, and so could not be comprehended by anyone as having a finitized form. There is nothing in the world which can represent God, for whatever exists is neither transcendental, nor subtle enough to be immanent. Hence it is a sacrilege to conceive the idol or any other form as God.
Secondly, in order to get qualified for performing the worship in the sacred fire, one must have investiture with the sacred thread (upanayana). And offering worship in the fire is the only mode of worship according to Vedic religion. The members of the first three castes alone are eligible to have upanayana. Contrary to this practice, the Agamas have allowed the Sudras and women also to take part in offering worship to the deity. The qualification for this is initiation (dikṣā). This is necessary for all and becomes the second qualification for the twice-born. There is no second initiation or special dikṣā sanctioned by the Vedas, and so the Agamas have no validity as regards the worship of God.

Thirdly, the Agamas prescribe tāntrika mantras for adoption in worship, so that they can be used by all, irrespective of their having had upanayana. This is criticised as an anti-Vedic practice that proves the Agamas to be invalid.

Fourthly, the ceremony of installation (pratiṣṭhā) of an idol or any figure is unwarranted according to the Vedic rules of the rituals. There is invocation (āvāhana) and dismissal (visarjana) for a deity in Vedic ritual. The same cannot become applicable to idols in which the deities are ever present after installation. To add to non-Vedic practices, the Agamas prescribe the performance of such things as mudrā and nyāsa as part of the act of worship. These too have no Vedic sanction and, besides, are meaningless.

Fifthly and lastly, the Agamas enjoin the practice of certain cruel rites such as māraṇa uccāṣaṇa, nasikaraṇa, ākāraṇa sānti-karma, paustikakarma, vidveṣaṇa and others. These are calculated and intended to do harm to others. A system which does not promote justice and good deeds and encourages, by enjoining, such acts as corrupt the mind of the performers, does not deserve to be followed. There are also other detestable practices such as drinking wine, eating flesh, taking fish,
gestures and sexual intercourse. Five important detestable practices are set out below:

शाक्तास्तु मद्य मांसं तथा मत्स्यो मुद्रा मेघुनमेव च।
पञ्जतस्थविद्यं प्रोक्तं देवि निर्वक्षिणवेचे।
मकारपश्चकं देवि देवानामपि दुर्लभम्।

Guptaśādhanetra, VII.

It is also argued that the origin of the Agamas is to be solely traced to the practices of primitive tribes. Those who base their rituals on Vedic authority, would not accept the Agamas as valid, not to speak of following the practices laid down in them. The life of the primitives is not governed by law or custom, nor based on ethical standards. Head-hunting vindictive pursuits and gruesome practices characterize the life of primitive peoples. The Agamas, it is asserted, took their rise among them or at least arose under the strong influence of their practices and so cannot be held as valid.

The objections noted above lose ground, when it is remembered that the Agamas are very near the Vedas, rather based on the Vedas. They cite the Vedas for authority and so cannot be treated as non-Vedic or anti-Vedic. What is treated in the Vedas need not be treated in other texts. New concepts and theories could have been evolved as a result of Vedic influence, and they do not, on that account, become non-Vedic. The whole of the Veda, the Smṛti texts, the conduct of those who know the Vedas, the conduct of the good and the satisfaction of the self become the sources of dharma. All these cannot be declared to be invalid, because they are not treated or mentioned in the Vedas. The Mimāṃsa school seeks to defend the Vedic authority for certain practices which do not have direct Vedic sanction, but are dealt with only in the Smṛti.
texts. In such cases, the source of these practices is inferred to be some passage of the *Vedas.*

Similarly, the monotheism of the *Āgamas* is a concept derived from Vedic sources. The *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* makes an emphatic statement that, among gods, Agni is the lowest and Viṣṇu the highest. It is evident from this that Viṣṇu, being at the head of the divine beings, must have been held then as not only the Supreme Deity but also as one who is preferred to others for worship. This concept was developed in the *Āgamas* which is a proof to show that they are not non-Vedic. For the same reason, idol worship, as enjoined in the *Āgamas,* needs to be treated as a religious act which is a logical extension of the monotheistic tendency. This is enough to concede that idol worship is not non-Vedic. According to the *Varivasyārahasya,* the *Āgamas* are Smṛti texts and are to be treated as supplements to the *Upanisads.*

Secondly, it is true that the *Āgamas* enjoin a special initiation (*dikṣā-viṣeṣa*) as conferring a qualification for performing worship. It becomes an additional qualification for those who have *upanayana.* Such specific initiation is not non-Vedic, but is a Vedic practice, as it is enjoined also for performing certain sacrifices. Here the agent who is already qualified to perform the ritual by virtue of having had *upanayana,* is required to undergo a special initiation. Thus the special initiation is not confined to the *Āgamas* alone.


128. Vide:

भिन्नयां देवानामङ्गमो देवता विष्णु: परमस्तन्तराण सब्ज

अन्या देवता: ।

A Br. I. 1. 1.


Thirdly, although the study of the Vedas is prohibited for Sudras, there are some references which uphold their participation in the performance of sacrifices. The following passage occurs in the Āpastamba Śrautāsūtras (I 19 9) —

इविष्कृतेदर्शिति ब्राह्मणस्य, इविष्कृत्वागाधिपति राजपुरस्य, 
इविष्कृताधिवेशि वैत्यस्य, इविष्कृताधाबवेशि शूद्रस्य ।

Here the Sudra is described as one preparing the havis or offering it in the same way as the members of the other three castes, though the verb differs in calling the offerer of oblation from each caste. The hunter and architect are known to have been allowed to perform the sacrifice 131. The wheelwright is asked to ignite the holy fires 132. These persons are lower than the Sudras in the social scale, 133 but they are permitted to take

131 विषादस्थपति याज्येत् । ।
(Kātyāyana Śrautāsūtra XXII 11. 11)

The wheelwright is permitted to have upanayana in the rainy season । (Āpastamba Śrauta-sūtra, V 3 18)

विषादस्थपति याज्येत् ।
(Satyāśātha Śrauta-sūtra, III 1)

Vide ।
स्थलस्थितिनिधारूः स्याच्चउद्लाभमयात् ।
सिद्धदशीनांश ।
(Mīmāṃsā-sūtras, VI 1 51, 52)

132 रथकारोज्जग्निवासि ।

The agni to be used here must be of the laukika kind (Bhāttadīpike on ibid.)

वास्तुमयः रौद्रं च निर्विितः । पतया निषादस्थपति याज्येत् ।
तत्त्वातिष्कृताधिवेशि विवां संपाय धनिको निषादोः
रौद्रवांगं कुर्यात् ।
(Jairnirīya-nyāyamāla on ibid.) ।

133 Vide ।

बैद्यायां क्षत्रियाधुतपचो माहिष्यः ।
शूद्रायां बैद्याधुतपचा करिणी ॥
(Yājñavalkya-sūtra, I. 95)

माहिष्येण करिण्यां तु रथकारः प्रजायते ।
निषादः शूद्रकन्यायां स पारशु बल्यते ॥ ।

MS. (X, 8).
an active part in the performance of the ritual. In order to make
them get fully qualified on particular occasions, they are allowed
to study and repeat the particular mantras when these rites are
to be performed. The same principle must apply to the Sudras
and women for performing worship. The Agamas do not permit
them to utter the Vedic mantras, but have evolved new mantras
on the model of the Vedic ones. These are tantrika mantras,
which not only these who are not qualified for Vedic study,
but also others are asked to utilise. The Vedic mantras also have
to be used by the twice-born. The tantrika mantras are created
for use in certain practices which do not have Vedic mantras.
Thus the Agamas are more liberal in allowing the act of initiation
(dikṣā) to all, and thus answers the second objection. Provision
in the form of tantrika mantras which is thus made, silences
the third objection.

Fourthly, the objection may be made to stand on the
strength of a passage which declares that worship in the fire is
for the Brahmins, that in the heart for those who could perform
yoga, that in the idol for the unlearned and that in all these three
for those who view the world impartially. This may be
admitted, but a comment is required here. Absence of the
spirit of devotion which characterizes the culture of the Vedas,
need not actually mean rejection of the idol. Even those whose
outlook in life is characterized by detachment require a con-
crete form for worship. The question of the aspirant being
unlearned or otherwise is immaterial. Worship of the idol is
discussed in the Agamas and recommended by great sages like
Sanatkumāra, Bharadvāja, Atri, Kāśyapa and others who were
the staunch followers of the Vedas. They could not be regarded
as wanting in wisdom in preaching idol worship to various audi-
ences who were also, like them, following the practices laid

134. Vide

भग्ने तिर्द्धि विप्राणां इद्रि तिर्द्धि योगिनाम् ।
प्रतिमास्वमबुद्धानां सर्वं त्वमद्विनामोऽक्

vid. dr. s. r. s. m.
down in Vedic texts. Idol worship, which the Āgamas recommend, should be looked upon as deriving its authority from the Vedic practices themselves, though the Vedic texts may not make a direct recommendation to that effect. The Āgamas enjoin also worship of gods in fire and meditation through yoga and, as such, could not be taken to go against Vedic authority.

Any figure made out of any material cannot receive worship. The presence of the deity will have to be infused into the idol, for which purpose Vedic mantras are primarily employed. This ritual cannot be called non-Vedic. For the purpose of ensuring the installation of the immanent God in the idol or yantra, pratisthā is required to be done. Mantra, nyāsa, bhūtaśuddhi and mudrā are quite necessary to offer worship to God who has taken His abode in a finitized form.

Mantras are classified into bija, pinda, saṁjñā and nāda. This has full relevance to practical utility, as they require to be changed according to the deity whose adoration is to be undertaken. This is not meddling with Vedic mantras. A change in mantra involves the introduction of alterations in the case-suffixes, number and other parts of the words occurring in the Vedas, so as to suit those mantras for application in the particular contexts. This is sanctioned in the Mīmāṃsā.

Vide:

प्राकृतस्थानपतिपद्रायथान्तरकार्यत: ।
ऊहः प्रयोगो विभूत उद्यमानतयोद्विति: ॥

(Jaiminiya-nyāyamālā, IX. 1. 1).

Such a change has the sanction of the grammarians also.

Vide:

रक्षोद्धागमलध्वसन्देहा: प्रयोजनम् ॥

(Kātyāyana's Vārttika, cited by Patañjali in the Paspaśāhnikā of his Mahābhāṣya.)

ASV—7
A change in the Vaidika mantra is permitted on this principle. For instance, the passage, ‘Agnaye justam nirvāpāmi’ which is to be used while offering cooked cakes to Agni (āgneya cāru) must change into ‘Śīryāya justam nirvāpāmi’ when the cake is to be offered to the sun. Such a change is necessitated, even according to Vedic texts, as the deities to whom the offerings are to be made are many and mantras are not available for each offering to be made to each one of those deities. Though each deity has a mantra, it is required to be changed according as the occasion demands. Though the Agamas intend to enjoin the exclusive worship of a particular deity, other deities are not fully dropped out from the purview of the ritual or worship. These deities form part of the retinue of the principal deity. Hence mantras are required to worship them. Thus tāṇtrika mantras arose on the foundation of the Vaidika mantras. On this account, they do not lose their validity.

The syllables or letters in a Vaidika mantra have a deity presiding over each of them. Similarly, each letter in the alphabetical system has a deity. The word, ‘bījākṣara’, means the foundational part of a mantra. This is not peculiar to the Agamas alone. The Vedic texts contain many of them, from which the Agamas have developed their own list. The syllable hīṁ is used in the Vedic texts.

135 jaumīta-nyāyāmāla, II 1 9
136 RV III 62 10.
137 Vide:

श्रुतिः स्त्रिविधा बंडकी तात्त्विकी चैति ।

(Kullūkā on MS II 1 )

138. ABr. II 3 6 , II. 5 5
139. Ibid. VII. 3. 6 ; Gopatha Brāhmaṇa, X, 1 24 ,
    Athreya āraṇyaka. VII 8 , Chand, Up. I. 1 1.
    Aśvalayanam Āryasvattra, IV 8 34.
140 Pranava, hṛim, īrīṁ, aīṁ, kliṁ and others are bījākṣaras.
of such syllabic sounds must be taken as indicative of the pro-Vedic character of the Agamas.

Similarly, nyāsa is a practice which may be traced to Vedic texts. Karanyāsa and āṅgulinyāsa form part of many of the daily religious practices like the adoration of samdhya. Either the nyāsa must be traced to a Vedic source to defend this daily practice or practices of samdhya must be traced to Agamic sources.

The drawing of mandalas and the worship of yantras could also be traced to Vedic sources. Likewise, mudrā which is gesture conveying one's intentions, is traceable to the Satapatha-brāhmaṇa.

Lastly, the Agamas are condemned for enjoining cruel practices. It is true that they do so. They do not stop there. They recommend the slaying of the enemy. The Vedas also are not free from rituals for such purposes. If such practices are claimed to be not cruel on the ground that they are enjoined by the Vedas, it is not possible to justify the expiatory rites (prāvanaścīta) which are to be performed to get freed from their evil results. The Vedas also recommend certain practices for malevolent sorcery (abhucāra), slaying and enchanting.

142 ŚBr VII 5 2 1?, Aitareya Aranyaka, III 2 1 2, III 2 5 2.
143 ŚBr I 1 18, VI 1 1 6, XI 7 1, Kauśikasūtra LXXVI 21. The lotuslike drawings of cakras are described in AV X 2 32, 34.
144 Vide ŚBr III 1 3 25.
145. ŚBr III 9 1, 7, V 5 4, 1, XII 7 2, 3 Cf RV, X 127 1.
146. Āpastamba Dharmasūtras, I 9 26, 27.
147 SY 7 3, Vide TA IV 27.
others. The *Vedas* also are not free from sensual practices. Since many of these practices are traceable to the Vedic texts and the rest could be explained as having arisen under the influence of the Vedic rituals, there is no need to look to primitive society as the source for all these practices.

The authority of the *Āgamas* is strongly upheld by Jayantabhaṭṭa, who flourished under King Saṅkaravarman of Kashmir (883–902 A.D.). He is the author of the *Nyāyamañjarī*, a treatise on the *Nyāya* system and the *Āgamādhambarā*, an allegorical play. In the former, he divides *Āgamas* into two kinds, one opposed to *Vedas* and the other not opposed to them. The *Āgamas* of the Buddhists and others are opposed to the *Vedas* and so are invalid. Others are not opposed to the *Vedas*, but enjoin practices which are substituted for the Vedic practices. Being an exponent of the *Nyāya* system which believes *Vedas* to be the composition of God, the author admits the *Āgamas* as valid, as they are also the compositions of God. People who have been following ways of life based on Vedic authority, also follow *Āgamic* practices. That these practices are opposed to Vedic practices is not a strong ground for rejecting the authority of the *Āgamas*. The scheme of the *pramāṇas* and the aim in life (*puruṣārtha*) to be attained are common to all the *Āgamas* and, as such, their validity does not suffer because of the mutual references contradicting each other's practices. If injury (*himsā*) is enjoined in the *Āgamas*, the same is found in the *Vedas* also, and so both are equally valid. All *Āgamas* are based on the *Vedas*. It is possible to trace, through inference, the authority for certain practices which are not based on Vedic and *Āgamic* sources.

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149. *TBr.* II, 3.1.10.


Cf. Aitareya Ṛdrāṇyaka, II, 3.7.3

The *Agamādāmbara* is a play in four acts presenting some schools of thought which prevailed in Kashmir during the 9th century. The opinions of the various schools, both āstika and nāstika, are presented by their adherents. Jayanta’s attitude towards them is one of tolerance. There were the Saiva and Vaisnava schools also. The author and his patron are shown as taking action against those sects or *Agamas* which carried out or enjoined corrupt practices like those of the Nālambaras, Baudhās, Jainas, and the extreme Saivas. The Saivas who were following desirable practices and the Vaisnavas who adopted the *Pāñcarātra* way of life are declared to be leading virtuous lives, though they favoured Agamic authority, ignoring the direct dictates of the *Vedas*. The traditions of these schools which, following the *Agamas*, have been uninterruptedly continuing, were adopted by the enlightened people, and so the *Agamas* are declared as authoritative. Whichever deity the *Agamas* glorify, they are valid, since they are the compositions of a divine being. The spirit of tolerance breathes in the following *sloka* which declares that many could be the courses or approaches to attain Reality.

The analogy of many door-ways leading to the interior of a mansion is suggested in another stanza:

That the *Agamas* do not contradict one another is stated in:

That the *Agamas* do not contradict one another is stated in:

152 Refer to ‘A New Play of the 10th Century, the *Agamādāmbara* of Bhatā Jayanta of Kashmir’, printed in the *Samskṛta Ranga Annual III*
On the other hand, the *Kurma Purāṇa* condems several religious schools for their practices. *Kāpāla, Nālula Vāma, Bhairava, Pūrṇa, Paścima Pāñcarātra* and *Pāṣupata* are mentioned in this connection. It is true that some of these schools were adopting reprehensible and disgusting practices. The question of their going against Vedic authority is not the main concern. As Layanta pointed out, they were objectionable to good taste. The practices enjoined by the Saiva and Vaiṣṇava Agamas were free from them. They were perhaps included in the condemnation as they followed a different cosmology and theology not traceable to the *Vedas*. The passage in the *Kurma Purāṇa* should have meant only this; and while listing the non-Vedic schools, the Saiva and Vaiṣṇava schools were also clubbed along with them. In the light of the evidence and reasoning given already in defence of the validity of the Agamas, this adverse criticism should be understood to relate only to anti-Vedic schools for their enjoining objectionable practices or for their lack of implicit subservience to Vedic authority.

The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, on the contrary, recommends the Āgamic mode of worship which is referred to by the other name "tāntrika". One should take to the injunctions of the *Vedas* to become free from the results of *karma*. He who would tear away the knot of the heart must worship Kṛṣṇa according to the rules laid down in the *Tantras*. He has to receive the grace from the preceptor and guidance from him to pursue the Āgamic course. He must adore the Supreme Deity in a form which is to his liking. Bhūtaśuddhi and dedication of himself to God should follow next.

153 Vide

कापालं नाकुलं वामं श्रेष्ठ पूर्वपश्चिमम्।
Pāṇcika sthana pāṣupatāḥ tvāyādy ati...।

(Kurma Purāṇa, II. 16. 18.)
Elsewhere, both the Veda and Tantra are stated as being followed for adoring the Lord

\[
\text{Vide:} \\
\text{देवोकेत्य मुहूर्त गुरू निःव्याप्तिर्मीमिते। नैश्चय्य छन्दों सिद्धि सेधनायां फलंतु:।} \\
\text{य आशु हृदयदर्शिन्य निःशिरोऽप्रमाणनः। बिधिनोपचरेवं तन्त्रोत्कृते च केशवम्।} \\
\text{वल्लभायुगः आचार्याचेन सन्दिग्धितागमः। महापुरुषमेव वर्णमूलमितया आत्मानः।} \\
\text{शुचिः समुखमासीन: प्राणसंगमनानाविन्म्। पिण्डं विशेष्यं संयासकतृतस्य सिद्धिद्रुम्।} \\
(\text{Bh XI. 3 46-49})
\]

Those who denounce the authority of the Agamas may refuse to accept this testimony on the ground that the Bhāgavata is of late origin. In that case, the evidence of the Kūrma Purāṇa must also be discountenanced. The difficulty lies in ascertaining the probable periods when the Purānas as a whole or any of them in particular was compiled.154 It must, however, be

154 Abhinavagupta (C. 1000 A.D.) cites passages from the Bhāgavata (XI 20 17), mentioning the portion as ekādaśa-skandha in his Gītārthasāṅgāraha, the commentary on the Bhagavadgītā, (XIV 8) This shows that at a period before the tenth century, it was held to be authoritative.
admitted that there were accretions to the originally compiled texts from time to time, but even here the dates when such additions were made are not known. The two Purāṇas noted above make specific references to the Āgamas and the mode of worship based on them. This makes it clear that the Āgamas were at least available when the Purāṇas, like the two above mentioned, were getting finalised. Therefore, the validity of the Āgamas is a settled fact, and it must be said that the way of life which the Hindus lead at present is chiefly guided by Āgamic precepts and Vedic authority.
CHAPTER III

CLASSIFICATION OF AGAMAS

The Agamas advocate the adoration of particular deities to the exclusion of others who form part of the retinue of the principal deity. More than one deity enjoys the privilege of such prominence. The Vaishnava, Sakta, Saiva, Ganapatya, Svayambhuva and Candra are most well known kinds glorifying particular deities. The Pasupata, Kalamukha, Cina and Jaina are also held to be types of Agamas. The Saura also is added to the list. Of these, Pasupata and Kalamukha are to be brought under Saiva, and Cina and Jaina are of the nastika kind. Visnu, Sakti (standing for the female principle identified with Durga or Parvati), Siva, Ganapati (Vinayaka), Brahma, Candra and Surya are the principal deities glorified. In course of time, all of them have become extinct, except those of the Sakta, Saiva and Vaishnava varieties.

Among modern scholars who have been making an intensive study of the Agamas, there is a tendency to treat the Sakta Agamas as the earliest among the Tantras and as influencing the development of other Agamas, though not their origin. While arriving at this conclusion, the role played by Sakti in the other Agamas is stressed. All the three Agamas, Sakta, Saiva and Vaishnava, agree that Sakti plays a prominent role. While Sakti is the prominent deity in the Sakta Agamas, the other two recognize Sakti as never dissociated from Siva or Visnu. The question is one of the position occupied by Sakti. Whether she has an independent or dependent status, the fact remains that she has to play a significant role. To arrive at this conclusion, there is no need to look upon the dependent nature of Sakti as derived from her status. Every Vedic deity is looked
upon as possessing power, which is ever with that deity. This concept is inherited by the Saiva and Vaisnava Agamas. This does not mean that the Saktta Agama should have been the earliest in origin. Mutual influences should have been there. All the Agamas must have had a common source, but their development need not have not been uniform in point of time.

The Saktta system believes in the all-embracing potency and supremacy of Sakti, treated as a female principle Sakti is considered as a goddess and hence this Agama is called also as the Devi Agama. It is held that Sakti worship was introduced from Persia. Others believe it to have risen in Bengal and spread to Assam, N. P., Tibet and China. Sakti is God in mother-form. In her static, transcendent aspect, she is of the same nature as Siva. Siva is unchanging consciousness and Sakti is its changing power. The self is one with the transcendent spirit. Mind and body are the manifestations of Supreme Power. Thus the philosophy of the Saktta Agamas is advaitic. The self must realise this through discipline, which is at first external through material forms and symbols, and later through yoga when Sakti is unfolded and awakened.

The worshipper has all the objects of enjoyment before him, but is not disturbed by them. These objects are mantra, māmsa, madya, mudrā and maithuna. Though this could be said to be characteristic of Saktta worship, certain texts offer substitutes. As a result of this mode of worship, the position of women has gained importance.

155 For a discussion on this by P C Bagchi, see The Cultural Heritage of India, Vol IV, pp 224-225
156 Philip Rawson, The Art of Tantra, p. 15
157 The Paramānanda school does this. Vide, The Tantras Studies in their Origin and Literature, pp 40-41
The texts of this Agama speak of the system as delivered by Devi, listened to by Siva and approved by Vāsudeva (i.e., Kṛṣṇa treated as the brother of Devi). Sometimes, Devi listens to the discourse of Siva. The derivation of the word 'Agama', is therefore given as rising (ā) from Siva or Devi, reaching Devi or Siva (ga) and approved (ma or mata) by Vāsudeva. They are classified as daksina based on the Vedas, Smṛtis and Purāṇas vāma, relying on the Vedas and Tantras, and uttara, having the authority of the Vedas and the utterances of the preceptor. The texts which are called Agamas are seventyseven in number, five called as Subhagama, sixtyfour as Kaula and eight as Miśra. The Agamas of the daksina variety declare that Tantra is part of Veda which is vidyā and Kaula is the philosophy. Those who do not observe the rites of the Vedic kind are disqualified for the Śaṅkta cult.

Important works on the Śaṅkta system are the encyclopaedic Prapañcasaṅkara attributed to Śaṅkaraśārya, Laksmanadeśika's Śāradātilaka, Bhāskaraśārya's Varvasthīrasaṅgata, Lalitā-sahasranāma-bhāṣya, Kṛṣṇānanda Agama Vagiśa's Tantrasāra, Pūrṇānandahamsaparivṛṭkā's Sṛṣṭitvacintāmani and others. Lakṣmidhara's (1497–1539) commentary on the Saundaryalahari contains valuable information on the cult of Śakti.

The Śaiva Agamas hold that Śiva is the Supreme Deity ever associated with Śakti, identified with Devi or Pārvati. Several schools are mentioned as coming under this head. They are

158 Vide

प्रागानं पञचवक्रां गतं च निरर्द्धानं।
मतं च वासुदेर्दश्य च तस्मादागममुच्चते ॥

Pingalāmata cited ibid p 2.

159 Prānatosani, 70; Mahānirvānatantra, I 18 19; Mahārudrayāmala, I 15, II 2

160 Paśupatīsūtras, I 23 14; Śūkṣma-tantra, III. 26
Saiva, Pāśupata, Kārunikasiddhānta and Kāpālika. Kalamukha replaces the third one in another list. Th. Virāgama, one of the texts, enumerates Saṁānyāśava, Pūrvaśatva, Miśraśava and Suddhaśava. Vāma, Pāśupata, Soma, Lāṅgala, Bhairava, Kāpāla and Nākula are the schools enumerated elsewhere. Perhaps Lāṅgala and Nākula represent the Nākuliśapaśupata. The acceptable classification falls under three heads, namely, Pāśupata, Siddhānta or Saivaśiddhānta, and Pratyabhijñā.

Lakulī (105–30 A.D.) is said to have taught the Paśupatisūtras to his pupils. These were commented on by Kauṇḍinya (c.600 A.D.) Patti jīva, yoga, niyama and duḥkānta are the principles standing respectively for the Lord, self, meditation, discipline and mokṣa respectively. Sadyojāta, Vāmadeva, Aghora, Tatpurusa and Iṣāna are the five mantras taught by Lakulī. Prāṇava is to be meditated upon. Immediate union (śāyuja) with Śiva is the goal. It is wrong to assume that the rules of caste and orders are not observed, for the Śūdras and women are excluded from initiation according to this system.

The Saivaśiddhānta admits three sections in its Agamas. They are Vidya, Kriyā and Yoga. The first is concerned with Patti, paśu and pāsa. 'Patti' is Paramaśiva having the five activities of creation, maintenance, dissolution, giving mokṣa and obscuration: He is the instrumental cause of the world. The paśu is the self which is atomic in size, while pāsa is power which is impurity. Karma, māyā and restraint. The second section deals

161 Bhāmati on Śaṅkara’s Brahmasūtrabhāṣya, II 2 37
162 Śrābhāṣya, II 2 35
163 XI D 5502.
164 See Viramitrodāya, I 22
165 Paśupatisūtras with Kauṇḍinya’s Bhāṣya, pp 78-79.
with mantra, japa, homa, diksa and other such matters. The third section deals with thirtysix tattvas and the siddhis. The self is real and ever-conscious luminosity. Everything is the manifestation of Paramasiva. The school is advaitic in its outlook.

The Agamas are twentyeight, brought under the four heads of Kāmika, Kārana, Suprabheda and Vāthula. It is held that all these Agamas issued forth from the five faces of Śiva (i.e., Sadyojāta, Vāma, Aghora, Īśāna and Tatpurusa). Among them the Vira and Vāthula kinds are the most important. The worship of Śivalinga is the means of realizing the Ultimate Reality.

In Tamil Nadu, this Siddhānta has had a rich development through the Tirumantiram of Tirumūlar. Māyakandadeva of the 13th century composed the Śivajñānabodhasūtra, a counterpart of the Brahmasūtras. It preaches that one should meditate on the self being identical with Śiva. It has a Sanskrit commentary by Śivāgrayogin of the 13th century in the Śivajñānabhāṣya.

Śrīkaṇṭhasivācārya (c 1400 A.D) wrote the Brahmatīmāmsā, a commentary on the Brahmasūtras upholding the Viśeṣādvaita aspect of Vedānta and propounding that Śiva with Śakti is the Supreme Being. On this commentary was written the Śivārkamanidīpikā, a super-commentary by Appayyadikṣita.

The other sects of Saivism such as Pāṣupata, Lākula, Kālāmukha etc. lost their independent existence, having merged in a way and giving rise to Viṣeṣādvaita or Viśvaśaivism which spread in Andhra and Karnātaka regions. The founder was Reṇukācārya. The Brahmasūtras were commented on by Śrīkara-paṇḍītārādhya in the Śrīkarabhāṣya. The Vedas and Saiva

166 He flourished in the 13th century A.D
167 His date is fixed between 1300 and 1400, A.D
Vide Hayavadana Rao Introduction to Śrīkarabhaṣya, p. 3
Agamas are treated as authorising practices such as wearing the rudrākṣa, Śivalinga and others Śiva is held to reside in six places (satsthala) namely, the five senses and the mind. He must be visualized in them. Every act must be surrendered to Him.

Śaivism in Kashmir accepts ninety-two Agamas which were held to be based on Dvaita, Advaita and Dvaitadvaita. The Dvaita and Dvaitadvaita became amalgamated into a single group called Siddhānta. These Agamas preached sixty-four systems of Śiva cults of which Trika is one. Tantric domination was marked in Trika. What exactly this name denotes is not clear. The Trika has three sub-groups called Pratyabhijñāsāstra, Āgamasāstra and Spandaisāstra. The Pratyabhijñāsāstra represents the philosophical aspect of Trika. The Āgamasāstra deals with the ātmanika practices of Śaivism. The Spandaisāstra deals with the Śaiva doctrines as formulated in Agamas, amplifying the fundamental principles dealt with in them. This division recognized Anavopāya also called Kriyopāya, Šaktopāya, and Śāmabhavopāya as the means to be blessed with divine grace which is called Šaktipāta. The first is concerned with the observance of the rituals, the second which is also called Jñānopāya with the activities of the mind, and the last with meditation on Śivatattva. The Siddhānta and the second and third subgroups of the Trika were more concerned with the ritualistic aspects of the Agamas, though the philosophical aspect was not left out. The Pratyabhijñāsāstra gives predominance to the philosophical aspect, leaving the Āgamic and ritualistic aspects in the background.

The Ultimate Reality in the system is Mahēśvara who has two aspects, namely prakāśa and nirmāśa, which stand respectively for universal consciousness and physical activity. Prakāśa

168 Abhinavagupta A Historical and Philosophical Study, p 170
169 Introduction to 'Pratyabhijñāhdaya', p 17; Śivadrīti, IV 118-120
is pure luminosity and *spanda* is vibration, that is, activity. Maheśvara has self-dependent power which evolves the variegated world of Nature, having *prakāśa* as the substratum for manifestations and *vimarśa* as the process of manifestation going on in this substratum. This manifestation is called *ābhāsa* which is real. The subject and object of knowledge are both manifestations of the Supreme Being, Maheśvara. The phenomenon of knowledge is like the rise of two waves of the sea of universal consciousness. One of these has the capacity to reflect and the other is free from it. The former represents the self and the latter inert matter. On account of nescience, the self feels bound and considers itself to be a separate entity. Final release consists in the recognition by the self that it is identical with Maheśvara. This is called *Pratyabhijñā* and hence the name of this subgroup of *Trika*.

The manifested world is analysed into thirty-six *tattvas* which the *Siddhānta* admits.

The concepts of *Ānavopāya* and *Saktopāya* explain that *jñāna* and *karma* together constitute the means for getting this recognition. *Karma*, enjoined in the *Vedas*, is to be done without expecting rewards for it. The *Agama* and *Spanda* aspects of *Trika* are not completely left out in the *Pratyabhijñā* system.

*Pratyabhijñā* is not actually the name of a Kashmir school of *Saivism*, but only of an aspect of the *Trika* school.

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170 Vide

171 Vide Abhinavagupta *Bhagavadgītārthasangraha*, on III 4.

172 Ibid XVIII 2.
The Śaiva Āgamas were given a monistic interpretation by Tryambaka (c. 400 A.D.); the Śivadāsti of Somānanda (850 A.D.) gives for the first time a systematic exposition of the system. He was therefore the founder of the school. His son and pupil, Utpaladeva, composed the Pratyabhijñā sūtra and the Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-kārikā with his own glosses thereon. The greatest contributor was Abhinavagupta (c. 1050 A.D.) His Tantrāloka is encyclopaedic in range, dealing with all the schools of Kashmir Saivism. He commented upon Utpaladeva and many Śaiva Āgamas and wrote glosses on what others had written on them. The Mālinīvijayavārttika, Parātrimśikā-vaṛtta, and Paramārthasāra could be mentioned in this connection.

The place for Śakti is thus prominent in the Śaṅkta Āgamas only. Its importance in others is in subordination to God. It plays an important role in Kashmir Saivism. The Śaivasiddhānta in South India has received a powerful impact from the concept of Śakti in the Śaṅkta Āgamas, as a result of which Pārvatī has gained prominence along with Śiva and bears several names.

The Vaisnava Āgamas glorify Viṣṇu as the Supreme Being to the exclusion of other deities. They treat the Ultimate Reality as not mere Viṣṇu but Viṣṇu with Śrī. While there are several names for Viṣṇu, the use of the word ‘Vaisnava’ as an epithet for these Āgamas shows that they must be closely related to the Vedas where He is mentioned primarily by this name.

Most modern scholars in India and abroad hold that both Viṣṇu and Rudra occupy subordinate positions in the Vedas and that Vaisnavism as a religion arose later than Saivism. 173 This view requires careful examination.

The Vedas (particularly Rgveda) have gained their present form through the efforts of Kṛṣṇadvaipāyana who acquired the

173 Vide B K, Goswami ‘Bhakti’ cult in Ancient India: Introduction, p XVII
The need to arrange the Vedas, under the direction of his father, Parāśara, must have been felt because all the Vedas during that period must have been mixed up so that the clear distinction of each Veda could not be made. So Vyāsa was asked to arrange them in order. He picked out the ṛks and prepared the Rgveda and similarly the other Vedas, Brāhmanas and other portions, following some principles. Certainly, the arrangement of the hymns was not made in the chronological order or with reference to the superiority of one deity over another. It is therefore futile to attempt to find out which ṛks were composed earlier and which later. Equally hard is it to determine whether Rudra or Viṣṇu, Savitṛ or Varunā was the earliest deity adored by the ancient seers of India. So the question of the relative prominence of any deity in the Rgveda cannot be answered. Viṣṇu and Rudra could have been held in high regard then. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, it is not proper to assume that some deities were prominent in the Rgveda and lost their position later to Viṣṇu and Rudra who thus emerged into pre-eminence after having occupied subordinate positions earlier.

Again, Sūrya, Varuṇa, Yāma and others are still objects of worship, though not with as much veneration as Viṣṇu and Rudra. It is not possible to pick out the specific traits of the deities from the Rgveda, since all of them have hymns addressed to them and are offered oblations in the sacred fire. Yet, a close, comparative study of the few hymns addressed to Viṣṇu and Rudra would show that people depended more on these deities.

174 Vide

विविधास बैद्र्यन् यस्मात् स्मायास इति स्वूतः ।

MBh Adi.84-130,

175 VP III 3 4

176 नतस्स्य ऋच उद्ध्युत्य ऋषिवेद खतवाहु सुनिः ।

वज्जुविश्व यज्ञवेदं लामवेदं च लामसिः ॥

VP III. 4. 13.

ASV—9
for their security and well-being than on others. While Visṇu offered protection to the people providing them with the means for happy living, Rudra was looked upon as a terrible deity ready to award punishment to wrong doers. Naturally, the sages prayed to Rudra for pardon and for gifts enabling them to lead a prosperous life with kith and kin. This explanation could be offered to justify the continued primacy which Visṇu and Rudra have been enjoying.

While studying the nature of Vaisnavism, it becomes necessary to take into account the development of the Visṇu cult in the source books. Apart from the Vedas, there are the epics, the Purāṇas and other such works. The difficulty of getting evidence to determine the antiquity of the cult is immense, since the dates of these source-books are yet to be fixed with a fair degree of accuracy. The tradition of the Hindus, however, fixes the periods of these sources at a very ancient date. Modern researchers find these dates unacceptable. However, it must be admitted that dates as arrived at by modern research also have their own limitations as regards accuracy. The date of the compilation of the Mahābhārata may not be far later than the beginning of the Kaliyuga, when the war described in the epic was fought. This date is fixed at 3102 B.C. The Rāmāyana which is cited and whose author is mentioned in the Mahābhārata must be more ancient and definitely before the beginning of the Kaliyuga. The Purāṇas are held to be the compositions of Vyāsa, the author of the Mahābhārata, and so are to be placed about the beginning of the Kaliyuga. The Bhagavadgītā forms part of the Mahābhārata.

177 RV, I 154
178 Ibid II, 33.
179 See under fn 125
180 Mbh Droṇa, c XLIII 85, 88
181 Ibid 85
At the same time, it is necessary to take into account the accretions, losses, changes and interpolations which have entered into these texts from time to time. The *Mahābhārata* is said to have been available in its present form from about the beginning of the Christian era. This, however, does not prove that further changes did not take place after this period. It can only be said that by the beginning of the Christian era the two epics were available more or less in their present forms and known by their present names. The same must be said of the *Bhagavadgītā* and the Purāṇas. Curiously enough, the Purāṇas have undergone several changes which make it difficult to identify their genuine portions. The *Viṣṇupurāṇa* is mentioned as a Vaiṣṇava text in the Tamil classic, *Manimekhalai*, which is to be placed much earlier than 6th century A.D., when Buddhism flourished unhindered at Kāñci before the renaissance of Saivism and Vaiṣṇavism there under the patronage of the Pallava rulers. This Purāṇa must have become well known before the Tamil epic was written. It will not be wrong to place it two centuries at least before 4th century A.D., when the *Manimekhalai* was written.

The *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* presents a problem regarding its date. Its contents are undoubtedly very old. The spirit of devotion to God permeates it. But the text is not mentioned by Śaṅkara (8th century A.D.) and Rāmānuja (1017-1137 A.D.) This, however, is only negative evidence. The *Viṣṇupurāṇa* was then available to serve the purpose of *upābrahmana*, and the other Purāṇas, because their contents were more or less the same,

182 Weber *Indian Literature*, p 188
183 *Kadai-vannan purānem, Manimekhalai*, XXVII. 98
184 Vide  
उपब्रह्मनां नाम विदितसङकल्पविद्वारायणां स्वयोगमहिमसाधारणकृत-  
ब्रह्मधिशाः वाक्यस्वास्थागतविद्वाक्याधिकीकरणाम्।
might have been ignored. The Bhagavata can therefore be placed along with the Viṣṇupurāṇa. It must however be understood that the Bhagavata\textsuperscript{185} contains references to certain occurrences which the Mahābhārata treats.

There were four currents of thought on Godhead, all of which were promoting salient and dominant traits which later on came to be identified as displayed by Viṣṇu. These were about Viṣṇu, Nārāyaṇa, Bhagavān and Vāsudeva, the theistic character of which could be traced to different sources. Viṣṇu is already a Vedic deity. Nārāyaṇa gets glorified in the Mahābhārata, Viṣṇupurāṇa and Bhāgavata. Vāsudeva is prominent in the Viṣṇupurāṇa. Omnipresence, omnipotence, readiness to come down to sufferers, offering them relief from their misery, displaying miracles to convince them of His greatness and willingness to forgive the sinners and even those who offend Him are some of the features of the Deity who is widely mentioned in the sources listed above. These traits have made it possible to regard all the four names as standing for one Deity, so that the specific features and concepts found associated with each in the respective sources came to be attributed to that one Deity. The fusion of these currents has already taken place in the source books, which must be looked upon as records of the concepts when they took a definite shape.

The Vedas do not refer to any of these names except Viṣṇu and perhaps to Nārāyaṇa. The maṅgalāśloka,\textsuperscript{186} the Nārāyaṇiya section\textsuperscript{187} and other passages in the Mahābhārata refer to

\textsuperscript{185} Bh VII. 1 44, also see in. 154.

\textsuperscript{186} नारायण नमस्कृत्य वरं चैव तरोत्तमम्।
वेषरी तरस्वतीं ध्यायते ततो जयमुदीर्घेन्

\textsuperscript{187} Mbh. Śānti. CCCLIII–CCCLX.
the name ‘Narayana’. Bhishma refers to Krsna as Brahman,188 Narayana,189 Visnu190 and Vasudeva 191 The universal form (visvarupa) which Krsna displayed to Arjuna is referred to as the form of Visnu in the Anugita192 of the Mahabhārata. Yudhishthira calls Krsna as Bhagavān 193 Markandeya refers to having been informed by the Deity whom he noticed during the cosmic deluge that He was Narayana 194

Though Krsna does not openly speak of Himself as Brahman in the Gitā, the expressions used have an Upaniṣadic tinge and suggest that He is Brahman 195 He is identical with Visnu196 and is Hari.197 He is the best among souls, Purusottama,198 an appellation that could apply only to Brahman. He is identical with Vasudeva 199 The word, ‘Narayana’, does not occur, nor is Kṛṣṇa identified with Bhagavān, though the speeches of Kṛṣṇa are introduced by the words, “‘Srī Bhagavānuvāca’”

Visnu is identified in the Visnupurāṇa with Brahman,200 Hari,201 Bhagavān202 and Vasudeva 203 The Bhāgavata

188. Ibid Bhishma LXV 54 56
189 Ibid Bhishma 50
190 Ibid Bhishma 63
191 Ibid Bhishma 67
192 Ibid Asvamedhika, LV 3 6
193 Ibid Śānti XLIV 17
194 Ibid Vana, CXXII 4, 5.
195 Bh G IV 13, 24, 25 V 25
196 Ibid XI 21
197 Ibid XI 9
198 Ibid VIII 1, X 15
199 Ibid X. 37.
200 VP I, 22 61-63.
201 Ibid I 22 63
202 Ibid VI 6, 69, 79.
203 Ibid VI 5, 75, 80, 82.
identifies Krsna with Bhagavān,204 Nārāyaṇa,205 Hari206 and Visṇu 207 Nārāyaṇa is identified with Visnu208 in the Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra (c. 500 B.C.)

The principal role assigned to Visṇu in ancient texts like the Vedas, is one of helping suffering humanity. He is a protector of people in general, of the embryos and of conception in particular, this marks His effort as mainly intended to save beings and objects that have come into existence. Welfare of the people thus attracts His attention,212 for which alone He descends down to earth taking up a form of utmost purity unsullied by the defects of Prakṛti.213 His divine descents are many, and the gods too cannot visualize Him except in these forms.214 All gods are under His control, and so He is the greatest among them. Yet He gets associated with Indra to help him in his undertakings.215 There is nothing which is not pervaded by Him and it can be said that He is everything. The universe is His body.218

204 Bh XII 12 3
205 Ibid X 14 14, XII 12 3
206 Ibid XII 12 3
207 Ibid X 1 65, X 45 44
208 Baudhāyana Dharma Sūtra, II 5 24
209 Ś Br I 2 5, XIV I 15
210 RV VII 36 9
211 Ibid VII 36 9, X 41 81
212 Ibid VII 100 4
213 Varāha Purāṇa LXXV 44, 45
214 Vide

भवतो यत्सरं तस्वं तद्र जानाति किंचनः ।
अवतारेष्व यद्पं तदर्चिन्ति दिवीक्षा: ॥

VP. I 4, 17.

215 RV, I 154 6, VI 69
216 Ibid. I, 154 6, IV, 18, 11, VI. 69, VI. 120, 28.
VALIDITY OF THE AGAMAS

He took three strides217 for the well-being of the world and provided those who were attached to Him with accommodation in distant lands like Uru and Ksiti218 (that appear to be located in Mesopotamia). This act, along with rescuing the world from a cosmic deluge, has won unique fame for His descents as Varāha219 and Vāmana 220.

He is ever associated with Śrī, though the Vedic hymns as such do not have a reference to this association.221 This association continues even during divine descents.222

He Himself creates the world 223 and, pervading it as its inner controller,224 protects it from insecurity. The sacred rites are identified with Him who is also the only receiver of the offerings made there 225.

The arcā form of worship, which seems to be not known in the Vedas, became known in the epics 226 and, more so, in the Purānas227 and particularly, the Viṣṇu and the Bhāgavata

217 RV I 154 1 S
218 Ibid VII 100 4
219 Ibid I 61 7, II 7 1, V 77 10 TS II 1 3 1, Bh, I 3 7
220 RV I 154 Vāmana should be considered along with Trivikrama Bh I 3 19
221 The Śrīsūkta which forms part of the Rgveda Khila glorifies Śrī 'Khila' is explained as follows

क्रिया याम कर्मवासनास्मातुपेतु चित्तवर्गी काष्ठोपेतु यचनक्षयं ममधागमविनिधत्वे तस्य सर्वस्येक्तोरसिद्धिवाने प्रकृतिरूपेन सिद्धतवं !

Unmattānanda on Śrī Sūkta Charudeva Sāstrī Felicitation Volume, (p 572)
222 VP I 9 142-146,
223 Ibid I 1 31
224 Br U III 7 3-23
225 Ś Br I 4 1 3 cf Bh G V 29
226 See under fn. 116
227 VP VI 5.86; Bh, XI, 3, 49, 27. 12.
among them, recommend strongly the path of devotion\textsuperscript{228} in preference to those of \textit{jñāna} and \textit{karma}. \textit{Karma}, itself, becomes something different from what it is in the Vedic texts. The act of worship,\textsuperscript{229} rendering service to the Lord\textsuperscript{230} and His men\textsuperscript{231} and offering whatever on, has\textsuperscript{232} and also the acts of devotion, together with the results expected of them,\textsuperscript{233} at the feet of the Lord, have been made part of \textit{karma Stotras} composed in languages like Prākrit\textsuperscript{234} are allowed to be used, a feature proclaiming the democratic approach of \textit{Vaiṣṇavism}. The Lord is pleased with any kind of offering, however insignificant it may\textsuperscript{235} be, and He proclaims that His devotee will never perish\textsuperscript{236}

The temples in which the worship of the Lord in \textit{arcā} is conducted are mostly situated in South India. Each ancient temple of \textit{Vaiṣṇu} has its greatness (\textit{sthalamāhātmya}) recorded in the \textit{Purāṇas}\textsuperscript{237} Hoary antiquity is claimed for most of them

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\textsuperscript{228} VP III 14 30, Bh XI 11 25
\textsuperscript{229} Vide
\textsuperscript{230} Bh III 29 11 19, XI, 29
\textsuperscript{231} Mbh Aśvamedhika, XVI 23, \textit{Jitante Stotra}, I 15
\textsuperscript{232} Bh X 81 2-4
\textsuperscript{233} \textit{Ibid} VII 6 26 XI 3 28 VP III 8, 6 19
\textsuperscript{234} \textit{Ibid} XI 27 45 See \textit{Bu} IX 12 for a democratic approach
\textsuperscript{235} Bh G IX 26,
\textsuperscript{236} \textit{Ibid} VI 40, IX 31
\textsuperscript{237} The \textit{Saura Purāṇa} refers to temples of Śiva. \textit{Veṅkaṭādri} is referred to in the \textit{Vāmanā}, \textit{Skanda}, Mārkaṇḍeya, \textit{Varaha}, \textit{Brāhma} and \textit{Pādma Purāṇas} The \textit{Brahmāṇḍa} refers to Ahobilam and Kañci
Whether this can be upheld or not, it is not irrational to recognize the contribution made by such accounts in the Purāṇas

A reference to some of these shrines is found in Tamil classical texts such as Silappadikāram,²³⁸ and Pattipādāl²³⁹ and others. Other such works include Akanānūru,²⁴⁰ Puranānūru,²⁴¹ and Kalittokai²⁴² They describe Visnu graphically, depicting Him to be the foremost, and contain allusions to the divine descent²⁴³ of the Lord

The above-mentioned aspects of Vaisnavism are dealt with in the Vaisnava Agamas. There could have been mutual indebtedness between them and the epics and Purāṇas which are found to make use of certain doctrines forming the fundamental principles treated in the Agamas. In the long history of the development of Hindu culture which is of an all-embracing character, the various branches of knowledge could not have risen in isolation nor undergone development and flourished without influencing one another.

The Vaisnava Agamas reveal certain peculiar traits. Firstly, the Supreme Reality is Visnu with Śrī and they are inseparably associated with each other²⁴⁴ Secondly, other deities are held to form part of the retinue of Visnu. Thirdly, the ārca form of worship gets detailed treatment which includes the

²³⁸ Tiruvarangam, I. 10 156, Tirumalai, ibid I 6 1-30, both, ibid II 11 38, 51
²³⁹ Tirumālirućiocolai, ibid XV 11. 1, 14
²⁴⁰ Shrines of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, 59, 175
²⁴¹ Shrines of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, 56, 58
²⁴² Shrines of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, 26, 105.
²⁴³ Silappadikāram, XVII
²⁴⁴ LT. II. 15, XVI. 31. Ahs XLVIII. 229.
ASV—10
erection of temples and conducting private and public festivals. Lastly, they enjoin the worship of God in the household.  

The Vaiṣṇava Āgamas are of two kinds, namely, Pāṇcarātra and Vaikhānasa. The former is more liberal in its outlook and practice than the latter. Tāntrika practices have exerted a very deep influence on the Pāṇcarātra, while the Vaikhānasa is free from it. Naturally, tāntrika mantras have no role to play in the Vaikhānasa Āgama.

The Vaikhānasa Āgama perhaps arose earlier than the Pāṇcarātra on account of its pure Vedic links. The following passage indicates this conclusion:

```plaintext
वैखानसं श्रीशास्त्रं प्राहुरेकायनामिथम्।
शास्त्रेणायनायोगानाचित्रेष्व हरी पुरां॥
लवं श्रीहरिसारिध्यं गता वै जीवकोट्यः॥
न स्वयं नापि तरको न जन्ममरणे तथा॥
श्रीशास्त्रस्वेत रक्षार्थं पूजनार्थं तथापदि॥
पारशुरार्जं शुनमीह्य शाखं बैष्यभुत्तमम्॥

S.A. LXV 117-119
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It is said that Vaikhānasa is Sṛiśāstra (or a holy śāstra) called 'Ekāyana'. When Hari was worshipped in olden times in accordance with the system called Vaikhānasa, all the groups (or crores) of living beings attained the presence of Hari. There was (then) no paradise nor hell, and no birth and death. The Lord uttered the best Vaiṣṇava system, Pāṇcarātra, to safeguard the holy system and also for (preserving the mode of) worship during danger.

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245 Paus 32, Pās. III 32, SA 81, KA. 15

Vide

प्रतिसं विग्रहं शाख्यत्सवेषां श्रेष्ठसे तु वै।

Paus XXXVI - 414 a
Here the word, ‘Sriṣṭra’, may be taken to mean ‘a holy system’ or ‘a system in which Sri is dealt with’. In the former case, ‘Sri’ is only an honorific and in the latter, it indicates that the system is intended to glorify Sri. The word, ‘ekāyana’, means the only one or unique path for salvation. This is the Ekāyana system mentioned in the Čhāndogya Upanisad as a subject of study among others. This is said to be the name of a recension of the Veda which is now lost. The following passage is said to convey what this recension stood for.

According to this passage, a person becomes immortal here by knowing Him to be thus, that is, as depicted above in the Purusasūkta. The word ‘veda’ is to be taken in the sense of worship (upāsana)247. As it is said here that there is no other way available to get mokṣa, this method, namely, the worship of Visnu called ‘Purusa’, is to be adopted.

In the passage cited above from the Vaikhānaṇa Agama, it is evident that worship of the Lord takes the worshipper to Him. It is not, however, stated there that all the selves had obtained mokṣa, but only that they had gone near Hari (Śrīhariśāṉmīdaya). This means that they, if they had not really obtained mokṣa, or other selves who were still waiting to be sent to the mortal world to have the experiences of the results of their past deeds, would be coming down to earth. By then, the Śrīṣṭra might be lost, and so the Pāñcarātra was brought into being. The latter is declared to be the best Vaisnava system and intended to be

246 Chu VII 1 2, 4, VII 2 1
247 Vide वेदनुपासनस्य स्यात् द्विप्रेये अववानात्। (Vīkyakāra’s passage cited in the Śrībhāṣya, p. 53.)
safeguard the Vaikhänasa system. The word ‘prāha’ must indicate that Pañcarātra was uttered by Hari.

The word, ‘ekāyana’, in the passage cited above, presents a difficulty. The Pañcarātra and not the Vaikhänasa is believed to be based on the Ekāyana which is also called Rahasyāmnāya. 248 The references to this in many texts 249 are not easy to reconcile with the sense of the passage cited above from the Vaikhänasa Āgama. However, this statement is a good piece of evidence for the Pañcarātra being closely allied to it.

There is again a reference 250 in the Pañcarattra tradition to the offering of the effigy of a beast made of flour (pistapāsa) in the sacrifice where an animal is to be slain and offered. A similar rite, with the name, Visnuyāga, 251 is referred to in the Vaikhänasa Āgama. It is not clear whether it originally formed part of the Pañcarātra tradition or was adopted mainly on grounds of kindness to animals. Anyway, this sacrifice lends support to believing that both Āgamas have the same tradition, though the ritual is enjoined as a means of expiation in the Vaikhänasa.

There is also another way of explaining the above passage. The Ekāyana recension must have been the basic foundation for the development of the concept of absolute devotion (paramaskāntītwā). The Vaikhänasa must have developed out of this recension and, in this respect, has to be regarded as akin to the Pañcarātra. The latter had a specific development with provision made for the yantras and tāṇtrika mantras which are absent in the former. The two do not have much divergence in the main concepts of Vaisnavism. An Upaniṣad called Sitopanisad alludes

248 SS I. 16
249 Vide — IS XX 289, IS. I 18, 19, 40.
250 Mbh Śanti. CCCLV.
251 JK, 99,
to Vaikhānasa (and not Vikhanasa), a sage who is an exponent of such important doctrines as those relating to the three powers, icchā, jñāna and kriyā, and others, which are treated only in the Pāñcarātra system. This work, though perhaps relatively late, seeks to show the sage Vikhanasa as associated with the Pāñcarātra system. An approach on the basis of this reference may justify the passage in the Samūrtārcanādikaraṇa. Yet the frequent references to the Pāñcarātra as based on the Ekāyana recension cannot be easily explained away.

The following verses from the Pāñcarātra Āgama lend support to the concept of absolute devotion of the Vaikhānasa:

विष्णु भेकानसाख्या ये ते सकासस्त्रमुख्ये एकान्तिनस्तु सत्त्वस्य देहान्त्त नाय्याजिनि।
कर्तव्यमिति देवेद यंस्यजन्ते फले विना।
प्राणनुवन्ति च देहान्ते वासुदेवान्त्रमण्डज॥

Paus XXXVI 260b-262a.

That the Vaikhānasas do not worship any other deity and worship Viṣṇu out of a sense of duty and without expecting any results, makes it clear that they must be following the Ekāyana recension.

The Bhāgavata contains a reference to Vikhanas having prayed to the Lord for descending down to the earth and to the descent of the Lord in the family of the Sāttvatas.

252 Vide —Śītopaniśad Translation by Alain Damelou, Brahmavidyā XIX, parts 1-4, pp 321-327
253 SA, LXV 117-119
254 Same as 249
255 Paus reads 'ekāyanaśākyā' instead of 'vaikhānasākhyā'. It is not clear whether this citation as noted in SA, Introduction, p. xxii, is really taken from an authentic text of Paus.
The word, ‘Vikhanas’, must be taken to mean Brahma who made a request to the Lord for the divine descent on earth. Vallabhācārya, the founder of the Suddhādvasta system of Vedānta, takes this word to mean Vikhanas, the sage and founder of the Vaikhānasa system. This interpretation would support the sense of the passage cited above in the Samūtaracanādhikarana. Then the Pāncarātra system must be admitted to have sprung long after the Vaikhānasa. Yet the problem remains unsolved. Brahma is mentioned in the Visnupurāṇa and Bhāgavata as having approached the Lord and made a request to Him to descend on earth. The word ‘Vikhanas’ means Brahma besides the sage with that name. The expression, ‘vīśvaguptaye’, means ‘for protecting the universe’. This protection, as far as the descent of Kṛṣṇa is concerned, was desired by the gods to be effected through lightening the burden on earth. The Pāncarātra doctrines receive exposition through the Lord, but the main purpose served by His descent is fulfilled only through the removal of the evil forces, and so this achievement, which is in consonance with the request made of Him by Brahma, should be considered as of primary significance. In fact, all the divine descents of the Lord have served this main purpose. It is not therefore appropriate to take the passage as being in favour of bringing the sage Vikhanas into the picture. Ingenuity, however, plays the chief role in these interpretations, the context, however, does not support them.

256. VP V 1 54-58, Bh X 1, 20 The interpretation of the word ‘Vikhanas’ as meaning the sage Vikhanas and found in the Introduction, p XVIII, of SA, is wrong.

257. Vallabha on Bh X. 31 4b

258. VP, V, 1, 14, 28, Bh, X, 31, 4b.
CHAPTER IV

VAIKHANASA ÂGAMA

The Vaskhânasa Ágama describes the method of worshipping Viśnu and prescribes the way of life for those who adopt the Vaikhanasa-sūtra. This is based upon the Vedic sources and derives support, for the doctrines which it preaches, solely from Vedic texts. The worship of Viśnu in the arcā form is stressed.

The word, 'Vaikhānasa', is very old, occurring in the early literature of Sanskrit. It signifies the vānaprasthāśrama which a student who had completed the study of the Vādas could take up even without getting married. The sage, Saubhārti, who entered into the householder’s life to be happy with a family, though he used to practise meditation, renounced it and entered into the vānaprastha order and followed the way of life prescribed in the Vaskhānasa mode and became a recluse. Here the word, 'vaikhānasa', is used in the sense of duties to be

259 Vide VP III 10 15

260 Vide

नाथात्तुदिविन वैभानस्निप्पायमशेषक्षियाकलाप निप्पाय
खणितसकलाप: परिप्रकमनोटिरात्मनथगीन समारोपाय
मिष्ठुरंभवत्।

Ibid IV 2 130

Here the word 'vaikhānasa' is only the name of a class of hermits. Cf Bh. III. 12 43. Prthu took to this way of life and practised penance as approved by the hermits (vaikhānasas), Ibid, IV, 23. 4.
performed by a "vänaprastha" (who is referred to by the word "vaikhānasa"). Kālidāsa refers to this order of life in the Abhijñānaśākuntala 281. The commentator, Śrīnivāsaśārya (Vaikhānasa) refers to the Vaikhānasaurāta mentioned here as a hard observance of those who practise penance 282. Here, it must be taken to mean an act of penance and austerity (strāmanakadharma). Anyway, the word, "vaikhānasa", in the above contexts, does not appear to stand for the follower of the Vaikhānasa Āgama.

The word has been explained as ‘belonging to or following Vikhanas, a sage who “dug” within himself and meditated upon God’

Vide

खित्वा चार्मपत्तमां यमंदिगणस्त्रिका: धाताधेश ेशासीदिक्षणसो विभु: ॥
S A Introduction P XIX

281. Vide

That some women remained unmarried and spent their life as hermits is indicated here

282. Vide

Cf.

 пуष्पमूलपत्तेषापि केवलेकेवलेकेसदा: ॥
कारपक्षे: स्वयं शीलेवत्सानसमते स्थिता: ॥

MS VII, 12.
Here the root ‘khan’ means to dig, to go deep into, and is to be taken to lay bare what lies hidden (gūḍhārthaprakāśana). He moved among the birds

_Vide_

खननं तत्र मीमांसा इति चूर्तं परतः परातु ।
विशेषेण खनेनमात्रा भावनामुनिन्स्तं ॥
नाशा खनसो लोकं स बासीद्धजजयेऽ ॥

_Ibid._

The name of the sage occurs as ‘Vikhanāḥ’ ‘Vikhanas’, and ‘Vaikhanasa.’ He is considered to be Brahma in his divine descent.  

Three passages from the _Vedas_ are cited to support the achievement of the sage Vikhanas, as an exponent of the Viṣṇu cult —

1. _प्रवः पावनमन्धलो विघ्नयते।_
_सहैं शूराय विज्ञाते चार्चेऽ० ॥_

_RV I. 155 1._

“Acquire the food of Soma which belongs to you. Offer worship to the great warrior and to Viṣṇu who desire to receive praises from you.” The great warrior is Indra. In his _Vimānārcanaḥalpa_, Marici cites this and remarks:

_तस्माद्भिष्मवर्चनसैव द्रिजाः द्रिजः कर्तव्यसिति विघ्नयते।_

This means that only Viṣṇu is to be offered worship every day:

2. _वैघानसते पूर्वै इह साम भवति।_
_ऊधे द्वाराये सप्तमेश्शि।_  

263 _Vide_ विघ्नानस्व विरिष्क्ष्ययः। _Vaiṣṇava Nighantu_  
264 _RV I 155_, VI 69, VII 99,  
265 _VK_ p, 503.  
266. Introduction to _VK_, p. 2  
_ASV—II_
"There is here an old Sāman with the name Vaikhānasa. This is to be used on the seventh day of the ten-day sacrifice." The Rgvedic hymn,  

नकिंए कर्मणा नशावः । 267

had its first half set to the Sāma mode of chanting by Vaikhānasa and the latter half by Puruhaśman. 268 The word, 'Vaikhānasa', may mean 'by Vikhanas' or 'a pupil or follower of Vikhanas'.

3. पवस्वस्ते वेञ्ञानला पवस्वते । 269

"The Vaikhānasa purify the already pure person." The pure person is Viṣṇu. To purify Him, one has to offer worship to Him. His worship is enjoined here. This is referred to in the Bhaddevatā (II 29):

पुनाति यदृच्छ विष्णुमेवचति: पार्थिवोऽथ स।  
वेञ्ञानस्मिपिपिस्तेन पवमान इति स्लुः:॥

The passages cited above convey that Vikhanas was an ancient sage who was a devout worship of Viṣṇu. He belonged to the Aukheya division of the Taittirīya recension of the Kṛṣṇa-yajurveda. 270 He was quite familiar with the Sāma chants, as

267 RV VIII 70 3 The meaning is No one can kill him who worships Indra

268 Vide Bhaskara's Bhāṣya on Sāmavedāryapradyota, iii 2. 1.

269

पवस्वस्ते वेञ्ञानस्य पवस्वोऽदिशतचे: वेञ्ञानसार्थेर्वता:।  

V K Introduction p 2.

There are several ṛks in RV 9 all addressed to Soma and not to Vaikhānasa. The passage cited is perhaps lost. The support, however, in favour of Vaikhānasa, is available from the Bhaddevatā cited below

270. Caranavyāha, p 28
evidenced above. The exponents of the *Vaikhānasa* systems declare that they follow the *Vaikhānasa* recension.

**Vide:**

बेदानां व्यसनादन्तर्वर्गः प्रारूपं मिलितं तु यत्।

नां तु बेदानसीं शाखामिति विज्ञाविदा विदुः।

*S A. Introduction P. XIX*

This is not correct. Perhaps the name, ‘Aukheya,’ came to be forgotten when that recension came to be called after Vikhanas who become a celebrated figure through his contribution to Vedic rituals. This is evident from the following passage:

वेदेन बेदार्श विज्ञाय डोकातुग्रहकाम्यः।

प्रणीतं सुज्ञामोक्षयं तस्मै बिघनसे नमः।

Commentary on the *Vaikhānasa·Srutasūtra*.

The followers of Vikhanas are stated to be dear to Indra and regarded as the seers of *mantras*. They are acceptable for guidance not only for the hermits in their conduct, but also for worshipping Visnu.

271 *Tandya Brāhmaṇa*, XIV 5 7

272 **Vide**.

बेदानाः केन शतसञ्ज्ञयां का मन्त्रहः।

*Sāmavedhāna Brāhmaṇa*, I, 17.

273 **Vide**

बेदेन बेदानसे सूचे यो धर्मी: परिकीर्तितः।

सबैसस धर्मीःसुवर्णः नाल कायां विचारणां।

वानप्रस्थाततस्तलवें व द्रिजासनं च सुविनः।

तस्मात्विभिष्यणात्तस्मृता बेदानसास्तु तें।

यस्मात्विभास्तन्तस्थः भववाचविष्णुद्रवः।

यस्मिनो गीते यस्मान लघुसुन्तरोऽधमं तु तत्।

*V. K. Introduction, p. 4.*
Vikhanas himself is the author of Dharma, Gṛhya and Srauta Sūtras which he claimed to have compiled under guidance and instruction from Viṣṇu. He is identified with Brahmā who is credited with the authorship of the Sūtras. Besides the ceremonial aspect, these Kalpaśūtras enjoin the worship of Viṣṇu. The directions given here for the worship are stated to be in consonance with the contents of the Vedas.

The Tāṇḍya Brāhmaṇa, Jaimitiya Brāhmaṇa, Ārṣeya Brāhmaṇa and Tattvārthya Āraṇyaka mention the name, Vaikhanasa, for reference. The Dharmasūtras of Baudhāyana, the Gṛhyasūtras of Agnivesa and Baudhāyana and the Srautasūtras of Baudhāyana and Hiranyakesin mention the name Vaikhanas for reference. The Dharmaśūtras of Baudhāyana, the Gṛhyasūtras of Agnivesa and Baudhāyana and the Srautasūtras of Baudhāyana and Hiranyakesin mention the name Vaikhanas for reference.

274 आदिकाले नु भगवान् विष्णु नु विष्णुरु मुनि: ।
यजु: शाखाणुनारेण चके सूर्य महतरम् ।
वर्णाधिमाचार्यतं भौतिसारंसंमितम् ।

Ibid pp 3, 4

275 Vide विष्णु नु विष्णुरु मुनि: ।

Ibid. p 3.

276 See under 273

277 Vide सर्वेवत्रकारास्त्पो यश्च बिःणुपूज्याविपथभेदः ।

VK p 480.

278 Tāṇḍya Brāhmaṇa, XIV, 9 29
279 Jaimitiya Brāhmaṇa, I, 9 3
280 Ārṣeya Brāhmaṇa, I 82
281 TA XXIII, 3
282 Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra, II 6 16
283, Agnivesa Gṛhyasūtra, II 6. 5.
284 Baudhāyana Gṛhyasūtra, II 9 17
285, Baudhāyana Śrautasūtra, XVI 24 3
286, Hiranyakesi Śrautasūtra, XIX, 3, 14.
cite Vikhanas as authority for their ritualistic practice in certain contexts.

Vikhanas had nine pupils according to the following sūkha of Bhṛgu. 287

काष्यपोद्विग्रहीतिचित्र वसिष्ठोद्वेगितालयादं।
पुत्रस्य पुत्रहृदयं काष्यप नवसंख्यकाः।
पते विखनस: शिष्या: छोकानुप्रहितारिण।

Among these Kāśyapa, Atri, Marici and Bhṛgu are known to have composed their own Āgama texts. The works of others have not come down to us. Whether they wrote at all is also not known. Another point to be noted here is that there is no independent Samhitā with the authorship of Vikhanas. Perhaps, Vikhanas taught in general the conduct of man and his mode of life in regard to dharma, grhya and śrauta aspects and laid stress on the need to attend to the duties concerning these with implicit faith in Viṣṇu. He could have directed his pupils to write only on the practical aspects of Vaiṣṇavism in the light of his own teachings. They too must have undertaken their work accordingly. Hence, the Vaikhānasa Āgamas do not treat exhaustively the Cāryāpāda which is dealt with in the Vaikhānasa Kalpasūtras by Vikhanas himself.

The validity of the Vaikhānasa Āgama is questioned in some quarters. The objection here is based on two grounds. The first raises the question of the validity of the Vaikhānasa Kalpa-sūtras. These sūtras, it is urged, cannot be valid nor their author

287. Vide

ततो भगवताकाः षुष्णा ताच्छवश्चक्ष्यकान्ध्वायपामासः
तथा साज्जोपाध्यानिसर्वंश:।

VK. Introduction, p. 6

Then the verses cited above, naming the disciples of Vikhanas, follow.
acceptable, because they are not adopted by any one outside this group. The second criticism is based on the vocation of those who adopt them. The priest who attends to the worship of the idol according to the Vaikhana-sūtras, must be considered to live upon the earnings through this. The Vaikhana Āgama has not prescribed any vocation other than attending to the worship of the Deity for those who follow these sūtras. Such priests are called devalakas and, along with others whose practices are similar, they have received severe condemnation. They are stigmatised as not being Brahmins. They are compared to Cândalas.

Vide,

\[
\text{देवकोशोपजीवी यस्य देवलक उच्चये।} \\
\text{लग्यर्थं पुजयेघ्यं तीव्रिण वर्षिणि यो द्रिजः।} \\
\text{स वै देवलको नाम सर्वकर्मणु गर्हितः॥} \\
\text{(cited in the Āgamapramāṇya, p 8)}
\]

\[
\text{अचालुकाः देवलका: कल्पदेवलका: गणभोगदेवलका} \\
\text{भागवतवृत्तिर्मृत्त नृत्यः। वलं उपनिद्धिणं इति॥} \\ 
\text{cited Ibid pp. 8-9.}
\]

\[
\text{आद्वायका देवलका नक्षत्रग्रामवाजका:।} \\
\text{पले उपनिद्धिणं इति॥} \\
\text{Mbh Sānti XXVIII 74}
\]

These objection cannot stand. The Vaikhana Kalpasūtras are valid like the other kalpasūtras, such as those of Āśvalāyana, Āpastamba and others. They are valid, as they do not go against the Vedas and they make use of only the mantras of the

288 The word ‘devalaka’ is thus derived, देवं देवर्व लाति। one who takes away what belongs to God. Identity of the kinds of ‘devalakas’ cited by Yāmuna and in Mbh Śānti. XXVIII 74 is hard to be arrived at. See Āgameprāmāṇya, notes by Van Buiten, p 125 under 34, 35 Cf. Smrticandrika, II p, 396 where Devala’s view is cited about the ‘devalaka’ as a despicable person: also see Aparīṭka, pp. 450, 823
Vedas for any rite whatsoever. That they do not adopt any other kalpasūtras is not merely a meaningless contention, but also speaks highly of their original and superior position among kalpasūtras. The sūtras of Āpastamba, Gautama, Yama, Manu, Śaṅkha, Likhita, Hārīta, Vasistha and others adopt the sūtras of Viṅgas for the reception and preservation of the sacred fire (kunda), while performing Paundrika and other sacrifices. Viṣṇu alone is to be worshipped according to these sūtras, which therefore should be considered as sattvika. They prescribe their rules in accordance with the duties of castes and orders in life. The Viṅgas Agamas must not therefore be denied validity, merely because they deal with matters according to the Viṅgas Kalpasūtras.

Those who have been adopting these sūtras to guide their religious practices, have been studying the Vedas through the generations and gone through all the secular and religious purificatory rites (samskāra) enjoined therein. They have been following the rules prescribed for castes and orders in life. They are diligent in doing the duties prescribed for them. They are Brahmins devoted only to God. Therefore, they are not inferior to any other group of the Hindu community.

Those who follow the Viṅgas Agama the texts of which are composed by Kāśyapa, Atri and others, are required, by virtue of following the Viṅgas Kalpasūtra, to perform worship to God in arcā form. This work is not prompted by the need to earn their living. On the other hand, they would become degraded, if they do not discharge this duty. So the definition of ‘devalaka’ does not apply to them.

Kāśyapa, Atri and other authors of the Vaikhānasa texts are as authoritative as Manu, Nārada and others whose Smritis are wholly valid. That these are not included within the well known subjects of learning\(^2\) (vidyāsthāna) is no argument, since their number (fourteen) only implies that some more could be added to this list. All that enlightened and good people believe in could not be traced to this list, and something not found there could not alone be condemned.\(^2\)

Other Dharmaśāstra texts do not expatiate on the celebration of festivals, but the Vaikhānasa Āgamas have an elaborate treatment of them. This is no reason to declare the latter’s invalidity. Like some Dharmaśāstra texts,\(^2\) the Vaikhānasa Sūtras recognize the worship of God. Both just indicate the mode of worship. Or this is based the detailed treatment of this subject in the Vaikhānasa Āgamas. The elaboration is not

\(^{280}\) Vidē

\[\text{पुराणविज्ञानारूपमानविनाशस्त्रायमरेण्यमिनतः।}\\ \text{वेदाः स्थानानि विवाहां धर्मस्य च चतुर्दशी।}\\ \text{Yajñavaalkya-smṛti, I, 3}\\ \]

Eighteen of them are thus enumerated:—

\[\text{अष्टानि वेदांश्च वितरो मीनांविज्ञानवितस्तरः।}\\ \text{पुराणं धर्मशास्त्रं च विधात्तोत्तर्मद्विः।}\\ \text{आयुर्वेदो धनुर्येदो गान्तव्येश्वरे ते ज्ञयः।}\\ \text{अर्थशास्त्रं चतुर्थ तु विधात्तोत्तड्यसौ।}\\ \text{VP III 6, 28, 29}\\ \]

\(^{291}\) It will not be inappropriate to treat the epics (itihāsa) like the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyaṇa as forming part of a separate vidyāsthāna

\(^{292}\). Agnivesagṛhyasūtra, pp 71-73

\[\text{Cf. ब्राह्मणमयश्च संस्कृतिभूत्स्व ज्ञानमिश्रवं}\\ \text{अर्थशास्त्रं हिन्दूस्मृतियुपदेशः प्रयतो भवेत्।}\\ \text{Smṛtisvamukta-phala, Āhnikakanda, II, p. 384.}\\ \]
therefore lacking in authority and the Agamas do not cease to be valid because of this.

Finally, it must be said that the Mahabharata mentions both the Vaikhānasa and the Pāñcarātra as equally valid.

Vide...

The Vaikhānasa Agama is ancient, as it is mostly free from the influence of the āṇtrik practices. The Vaisnavadharma-parvan in the Aśvamedhi-parvan of the Mahābhārata, where this is mentioned, is not admitted by modern scholars to be earlier to the nuclear portion of the epic. Anyway, the cult of Vaikhanaṣa must be as old as Pāñcarātra. The account of the Pāñcarātra doctrine is put into the mouth of Bhīṣma whose discourses are contained in the Sāнтipersvan of the epic. Bhīṣma died before the beginning of Kaliyuga (3101 B.C.), and so the doctrines of the Vaikhānasa and Pāñcarātra are as old as the date of the epic which is fixed about 3000 B.C. when it was narrated to Janamejaya by Vyāsa’s pupil, Vaiśampāyana.

That this Agama was also known as ‘Bhāgavata’ is evident from the references which the commentators on the Kalpa.

293 Mbh Aśvamedha, CIV 84-89
294 Mbh Sānti, CCCXLII-CCCLX
295 VK Introduction p.3 It is, however, inappropriate to take, as the editor has done in this Introduction, the word ‘Bhāgavata’ occurring in the Āgama-prāmāṇya (p.1) in the sense of Vikhanas. It is of interest to note that he who takes to the worship of Viṣṇu was known as ‘Bhāgavata’. Vide — Bhāsamsāhitā CX 19 The name also denotes according to Atri (384) any one who is unfit for any work and so takes to the worship of a deity (including Śiva and others). Vide —

बैद्वैतिकानां पदन्ति शाखां शाखेः इत्यादिः पुराणपाठः ।
पुराणांिः इतिर्ज्ञो भवन्ति भग्नास्ततो भागवता भवन्ति ||

ASV—12
sūtras make, identifying the sūtras of the Bhāgavatas as those composed by Vikhanas.

Banā, describing Divākaramitra, the Buddhist monk, in the Harṣacarita, says:

... नेष्यां तत्र तद्धे नानादेशीयः .. विटपञ्चायात्यु निपण्ड-लतामूलानि निषेधमाणि: ... भागवते वैणिधि: ... औपनिधूर्वदर-कारणकेः: पौराणिकः: .. पाँचराजिकैर-श्रृ ... स्वानन्द स्वानन्द सिद्धान्तानु श्रुण्ड्रिकृ उपादयकृ ... शिष्यतां प्रतिपख दूरादेव बेधमानेन दिववार्तिकमेद्याशैतिल ।


It is here said that the Buddhist monk was attended by a number of people who became his disciples. They were the followers of various systems of faith and thought. Here the words, ‘bhāgavata,’ ‘aupanṣada,’ ‘aśvarakārānaka,’ ‘paurāṇika’ and ‘pāñcarātrika’ occur to mean respectively the devotees of Viṣṇu, followers of the Upanisads, the Nyāyikas, preachers of the Purāṇas and the followers of the Pāñcarātra system. Those who followed the Upanisads, Nyāya system and Purāṇas could be taken to have faith in Viṣṇu and other deities as well. The devotees of Viṣṇu and the followers of the Pāñcarātra system are exclusively attached to Viṣṇu. The word ‘Bhagavān’ denotes primarily Viṣṇu and no other deity, and the words ‘Pāñcarātrikā’ and ‘Bhagavata’ must be taken to mean two groups of

296 Vide

चाचको भगवच्छस्तस्याध्याध्यायात्मनः ।

VP VI. 5 69 b.

एष्मेष महानन्दस्त्रो मैत्रेय भगवानिति ।
परमभूतभूतस्य बाह्यदेवस्य नान्यः ॥
तत्पञ्चश्च पद्धतोऽष्ट्रो इति परिभाषामन्वितः ।
शब्दातृत्वं नोपचार्यं तबन्य ईयुपचारः ॥

Ibid. VI. 5. 76, 77.
devotees of Viṣṇu. Hence the Bhāgavatas must be different from the followers of the Pāñcarātra. They should be the worshippers of the Lord described as ‘Bhagavān’ in the Viṣṇupurāṇa and Bhagavadgītā. Or they may be the Vaikhanasas. This identification requires stronger evidence. If it is admitted, the Vaikhanasa system may be taken to have been in vogue at the beginning of the 7th century A.D.

The Avantisundari of Daṇḍin (c. 675 A.D.) refers to the worship of the Vaikhanasa kind in the following passage:

वृत्ते विविधविधानविविधे विषोऽस्थानस्थापितेऽ
प्रज्वलत्तु प्रदीपेऽ

This gives the latter half of the seventh century as a period during which the rites according to the system of Vikhanas were being observed 297

The Vaikhanasa Agamas are mainly concerned with worship of the Lord in a concrete form. To that end are detailed the selection of a site, building of the temple, choosing materials like wood and stone, production of the idols of various kinds, their installation, method of worship, private and public festivals, and expiation for the sins of omission and commission. Apart from Viṣṇu, other deities like Rudra, Siva, Devī, Vināyaka, Śaṅmukha, Sūrya etc., are required to be worshipped.298 The reason given for the worship of Rudra is interesting—

अथवरथनायायुधेशायां जयवीर्यायायो राजसगुणा खदशक्या
प्रसिद्धिनि उपरुपतवालुद्रश्य | भो नगयोदित्व हर्ष पूजयः |

JK. XVII.

297 Vide ‘Avantisundari, p. 158,
298. KA, V., SA. V.; VK. XX,
Many other ways are available for offering worship to God like Pāñcarātra, Yoga and others. Yet, the Vaikhāna mode is said to be the best and most pleasing to God. In this connection, the following passage is of significance:

विख्यातये पूर्व: विष्णुता समुद्रितम् ।
वैक्षिण्डतेन सुनिता लोकानुरक्षकारिणा ॥
अस्मिन्स्येदुयो हि विशिष्टद्वैतपूजनम् ।

SA. XXXI. 58, 59 a.

The expression, ‘viṣistādvaita-pūjana’, must be taken to be the way of worshipping God in accordance with the doctrines of the Viṣistādvaita system. The word, ‘viṣistādvaita’, came to be used to refer to the system of Vedānta expounded by Rāmānuja only during the 13th century. This passage must have been added to the Atrisāṁhitā after this period. Yet, one cannot miss the desire behind this addition to the text. It is to harmonise the mode of worship taught by Viṣhāṇas with the doctrines of the Viṣistādvaita system.

Regarding the installation of the Idols and the need to worship, a question is generally raised. The Lord is everywhere. Why should there be invocation (avāhana) and dismissal (visarjana) of the Deity? The answer is given thus in the Vaikhānasā Agama. The Lord is all-pervasive. Invocation means inviting Him through mantras and requesting Him to be in one particular place to receive worship. Otherwise, even gods

299 Vide

यत्रेत्यते तद्भवानवलमीरितम् ।
नस्साहैथान्सान्त्रेष्प्रभुति पूर्वंजास्मानम् ॥

KA XXXVI. 26 b-27 a.

300 Sudarśanasūrya was the earliest writer to use the word, in the Śrutapradipikā. Vide Śrībhāṣya with ten commentaries, Madras edn. p 958 Vedārtha-sangraha-tātparyadipikā, Brindavana edn. p 46. Cf. V. Varadachari. ‘Antiquity of the term, ‘Viṣistādvaita’. Brahmavidyā XXVI. Parts 3-4.
cannot adore Him. While He is invoked, He compresses His expansive form out of kindness for His devotees, just as the peacock does its tail-plumes. Visṇu shines in the heart of the devotee who meditates upon Him as the fire in the forest blazes forth in a particular place there. The words of Mārkandeya, which are cited here, are worth noting:

अस्माभिष्य हरेतस्य माहात्म्यं नाबध्यन्ते ।
मन्त्रैरावाहिते देवे स्थूले कूचे जलेश्ववा ॥
वक्षानुपूनया स्थितवा पूजां गृहाति पूजितः ।

SA XXXI. 66, 67a.

Knowledge of the Ultimate Reality is admitted by all the schools of thought as the means of obtaining freedom from bondage. The Reality must be known as it is, without there being any room for uncertainty or delusion. Such knowledge is called tattvājñāna. Reality, which is referred to by the word, 'tattva', is taken differently by different schools of thought. The Viṣṇūtadvaita school recognizes three tattvas, namely, cit (sentient), acit (insentient) and Isvara (God). The Vaikhānasagama offers a very direct interpretation. The Vedas declare Nārāyaṇa to be the Supreme Tatva. So the word 'tat' must be taken to refer to Viṣṇu. The Paramātman is the object of tattvājñāna, the individual self is the knower and the Vedas represent the knowledge of tattvājñāna.

Vide:

तस्य भावस्तवमिति तस्य परब्रह्मो नारायणस्य भावः ।
तस्य नारायणः परः इति भूतिः । तद्वगमम भानं तद्विदः
ब्रह्मविदः । तस्मात् परमार्थम: द्येः, जीवार्थम: भाता, भूतयो
भानमिति ब्रह्मवादिनो चदःनिति ।

V.K. p.492
"Brahman", "Paramātman", "Nārāyaṇa" and 'Viṣṇu' are the names by which this reality is referred to. It has two aspects, namely, being partless and being possessed of parts. The former (nīśkala) has full pervasion, both internal and external. As it is very subtle, its nature could not be determined. Hence some Vedāntins declare it as both existence and non-existence (sadasat). He is the self of all. He is present in the ākāśa within the lotus-like heart in the flame of Vaiśvānara fire. The nīśkala form is like ghee in milk, oil in sesamum, fragrance in the flower, juice in the fruit, and fire in wood from friction. Ghee, oil and the others mentioned here issue out of things within which they were lying latent. When a self meditates upon the nīśkala aspect of Brahman, there appears forth Brahman revealing in full its individual features. Devotion, which takes the form of meditation, rubs (or strikes) It, and there arises the sakala aspect. The meditator thinks of a particular form of the Deity. When the faggot (araṇi) is rubbed, sparks of fire fly forth. Brahma, Śiva and others who emanate from Brahman are different from It like the sparks of fire from fire. The lump of mud

302 VK., p 492

303 Ibid

The word, 'brahmavīdinah', denotes those who have realized Brahman and therefore expound Its reality. The word 'sadasat' does not refer to the Advaita concept.

304 Vide.

नस्य: शिखाया मध्ये परमात्मा व्यवस्थितः ।
लं ब्रह्मा लं शिवः सेन्द्रः लोकस्वराण्डः ॥

305 VK, p. 493. Cf. Paś I. 7. 45 b
placed on the potter's wheel, is not distinct from the jar, plate and other things made out of it. The meditator can think of such forms which are different from and also identical with Brahman. Viṣṇu takes the form which is taken to represent the sakala aspect, for the purpose of creation, protection and destruction of all beings.

**Vide:**

सर्वव्याप्तिशारीरः परमात्मैव सर्वभूतानां प्रभवर्भणः -
लंकोतिनिमित्तिशारीरी प्रचति।

VK. p 493

Sri, who is eternal and whose form is not manifested, belongs to Him as His power (sakti). She is ever in agreement with His will. She is ever in the form of bliss. She is in the form of primordial matter (mūlaprakṛti) She is the cause for the Lord taking to any activity. This concept is in agreement with that in the Tantras.

The Lord (Bhagavān) could be worshipped in four ways, namely, japa, huta, arcana and dhyāna. Japa is to be done, meditating on a mantra of Viṣṇu. Performance of agnistotra and other such rites comes under huta (homa). The third is offering worship to God in the idol in the temple or house, following the method of the Vedas. Dhyāna consists of meditation on God through yoga. Among these, arcana is the means to attain all objectives. The Lord becomes fivefold for this purpose with

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306 ला च नित्य भायन्तरंदिता अव्यक्तस्वप्निष्ठ प्रमाणार्ओ धारणे साधारणभूता विष्णोस्सन्त्वातुरुप नित्यानन्दमयी मूलप्रकृतिलोकः

307 Ibid., p. 494.

308 Ibid. p. 508. Here the word, 'samaśrayaṇa' is used to mean worship
the names, Viṣṇu, Puruṣa, Satya, Acyuta and Aniruddha. Among them Viṣṇu is the foremost and is called Ādīmūrti. God, who is subtle, pervading every being, must be looked upon as not different from Him who presents Himself in the gross form of an idol, and worship must be carried out without having any idea of distinction between the two. These five forms are distinct from one another like the five fires—Sabhya, Āhvaniya, Anvāhārya Garhapatya, and Āvasathya—and the five prānas. Viṣṇu is all-pervading, Puruṣa is animating, Satya has unlimited static experience, Acyuta does not change under external influence, and Aniruddha has no check from any source. Viṣṇu, also called Ādīmūrti, has four forms called Mahāviṣṇu, Sadāviṣṇu, Vyāpin and Nārāvana. Satya arose from Mahāviṣṇu, Acyuta from Saḍāviṣṇu and Aniruddha from Vyāpin. Puruṣa represents a part of Viṣṇu. Dharma, jñāna, aśvarya and vairāgya are the qualities of Puruṣa, Satya, Acyuta and Aniruddha respectively.

309 Viṣṇu is called Ādīmūrti  VK p. 245, 509, SA XXXVII, 3b, 4a.

310 SA. XXXI 57

311 VK p. 509, See SA 29 for the derivative significance of the names of the five fires

312 VK p 510

313 Ibid. SA XXXVII 3

Cf

अस्तु मूर्तिः कुटस्थः स्तूक्ष्मसूतिः सत्तामात्रः । सांस्कर पर
ब्रह्म विष्णवाख्यः ।

JK, p 52

विष्णोरेण्योऽहुः महाविष्णोरेण्योऽस्त्यः सदाविष्णोरेण्यो
सत्यतः व्यापिनोऽशोऽनिधः हितः ।

VK, pp. 509-10
Prakrti is both sentient and insentient. The former is the self which is ever associated with a material body and gets affected by it as a result of the deeds done by it before getting into it. The self migrates from body to body and suffers the results of its deeds. Insentient prakrti is represented by the products of matter such as the five elements, mind, senses and other such things. The process of creation is stated to be due to God's will, but is not described as such.

There is a glorious description of Visnu who pervades the entire world and remains there as its inner controller. The universe is conceived as His body, several things in the created world becoming the limbs.

Vide:

Vishayasyamash: dhirogya kh nabh: bhua: paA Chandrapri AkrinniCakoriv ibhu dreche vyootiCaltharanaU utdhyoseswar bhutniCtdnyaCikasrayantva: pramaCyanatva kalyanatah bhugpaUdCrayantva: tadeCtniA niCramikdyamadhiksyamarsaCjnaCinna karaCyeatva

J.K. p. 100

This resembles the following dhyana-loka in the Visnusahasranama suggesting that one must have been borrowed from the other.

314 Vide

tha prakrutidhya bhavati chetanachetanavat, abchetana pashmritav-punevudhyadharuspraTyam bhuca \ abhaya jivamruti chetanavat.

VK p 494.

315 There is no reference in the VaikhanaSa texts to the theory of creation. KA mentions that Brahma was asked by Visnu to create the world (XXXVI, 5 to 7). VK. states that creation is effected at Brahma's will. (p 495).

ASV—13
though it is not possible to fix the priority or posteriority of either:

\[ \text{North Indian Shastras} \] 

\[ \text{and South Indian Vaisnavism} \]

The selves are distracted by the Lord's \text{māyā} and, being subjected to the sway of passion, anger, avarice and others, commit sinful deeds which bring them to this world again and again.

These sufferings could be avoided once for all only by God's grace which could be obtained by worshipping Him.

\text{Vide:}

\[ \text{agamās and South Indian Vaisnavism} \]

\[ \text{p.507.} \]

The worshipping of Visnu is enjoined as the means of obtaining security from the dangers of the world and freedom from bondage. Here again worship of the Lord in the form of
the idol is declared to be the best 316 How this worship could be conducted effectively gets elaborate treatment in this *Agama*.

The description317 of the human body, as possessed of the *cakra* of twelve spokes, the *Kundalini saki*, various ducts (*nādi*), and the *cakras* made of them, along with the names of twelve ‘nerves’ like *pingala*, *susumnā*, *īdā* and others, reveal that the *Vaikhanasa Agama* belongs to the *yoga* tradition. There is a detailed account of the practice of *yoga*318 which is required for self-control. Deep meditation is needed to visualize God who occupies the heart of the self. The means of getting *mokṣa* is only through God’s grace.319

While dealing with the performance of *yoga*, the value of the *mantras* is appropriately depicted. *Prapāva* is described as

*Vaikhanasa Agamas* 99

316 अथ भगवत्समाधयः चतुर्विंश्च स्मरति जगुतार्चनन्द्यानमिति।
तेष्वर्चनं सर्वर्थसाधनं स्यात्।

*VK* pp 503-9 Other means are hard to practise.

Vide *

एवं सदा ध्यातुप्रस्तवात्। प्रतिमाक्रिया पद्मपूर्वीस्यामेवः
समाधीमाध्यममौ। यत्समुत्तचिन्नम्। सर्वविषाणि गृहात्
देवायतने वा समुत्तचिन्मेतार्च्येत्। अन्यथा न परं पद्माणि।
तस्मात् अतिचेतनिं परमयुक्तेतु। शान्योऽऽ च शातः समाचरेत्।

317. *Ibid* pp 500-503

318. *Ibid* pp. 510-519

319 Vide *

तद्वा रायनेन संल्लार्यचन्तिमयानो जीवात्मा परमात्माने नारायणे
पद्यति। लोप्यपुनराद्वितिकं दिवयोक्त प्रसादयति।

resembling a human being encompassing the entire world.320 A similar treatment is given to the Gāyatri mantra.321 There is then the representation of the syllables in the Gāyatrīṇyāsa Each syllable has a presiding deity. The japa of this mantra thrice a day is declared to yield manifold benefits commencing from long life and ending with final release.322

Before explaining the process of meditation, the nature of the human body, its protection, development and attributes are set forth.323 The three qualities, sattva, rajas and tamas, are then described with reference to their features and the effects they produce in human beings.324 As long as the self is encased in the physical body, there are three states of consciousness through which it gets experience, namely, waking, dream and deep sleep. The state of transcendence is also attainable.325

The Lord is present in the central portion of the body where blazes forth a fire of golden hue in a triangular form. The bijāksara, repha, shines there with bindu and nāda. The Lord is present within it as Yajñamūrti.326 There is a cakra with twelve spokes in the navel. The self, which is under the influence of merit and sin, revolves there, resting on the vital airs, like the spider amidst its web. There is the Kuṇḍalinī šakti above the navel, covering the cavity of the suṣumnā nādi. The heart which is situated above the navel, has a brilliant flame as of the orb of the sun in the midst of which there is the form of Viṣṇu, shining like the rising sun, with four hands, two of which hold the discus and conch, the third in abhaya pose and the other.

320 Ibid. p. 485.
321 Ibid pp 487-488
322 Ibid pp. 489-491.
323 Ibid. pp 496-498.
324 Ibid. p 499.
325 Ibid.
326 Ibid. p. 500.
bebeded with ornaments, resting at the waist. He is with Sri and Bhudevi and a retinue. Narayana is also present within the orb of the moon and shining at the tip of the nose. Vasudeva shines in the upturned lotus at the top of the susumnā nādi. Viṣṇu who is present in the heart must be meditated upon.

The ducts (nādi) are stated to be 72,000 in number, of which ṛḍā, piṅgalā, susumnā and eleven others are prominent. The first three of these play an important role in man's contemplation and, even there, the susumnā is held to be the path for obtaining final release. These fourteen are spread over the body. Besides the five vital airs (prāṇa and others), there are five more with the names of nāga, kūrma, kṛkara, devadatta and dhanañjaya. Among them, prāṇa rests between mouth and nose, between heart and navel, and between the two great toes; apāna in the navel (i.e., in excretory and generative organs), vyāna in the joints, udāna in the throat, samāna all through the body, nāga in the throat, kūrma in the eyes, kṛkara in the stomach, devadatta throughout the body and dhanañjaya all over the body.

Although japa, homa, arcana and dhyāna are declared to be the four courses for pleasing God, the Vaikhānasa Agama stresses the significance of arcana which will accomplish all that one likes to achieve.

Vide

तेष्वचनन स्वार्थिकाधनं स्यात्

(VK. p.509)

Yet the path of meditation is described at great length. Unlike in the yoga system which treats the separation of the self
From *prakṛti* as *yoga*, this system considers the union between the self and the Lord as *yoga*.

Vide:

नीर्वातपरमात्मनो योग इत्यामनिः

(*VK* p. 510)

Among the eight constituents of *yoga*, *yama* is said to be of ten kinds, of which the first two are identical with those given by Patanjali. *Asleya* is referred to by the word, ‘acaurya’. *Brahmacarya* is stated to be the householder’s attachment to his wife and, as such, means making no advances to other women. The other six which are stated here are *dayā, āryava, ksānti, dhairya, mitāśma* and *sauca*. *Niyama* is of ten kinds, of which *tapa* and *santora* agree with the enumeration by Patanjali. Others are *āstikya, dāna, Viṣṇupūja, Vedarthastravāya, kusitakarmasū layā, garūpadesaśraddhā, mantrābhyaśa* and *homa*. The use of the word, Viṣṇu, brings out the identity of the Godhead. The seventh is an explanation of *hri*, and the next shows the importance attached to the role played by the preceptor. The twentyfour divisions of *yama* and *niyama* make an aspirant fit for understanding meditative practices.333

Nine kinds of postures are enumerated with a description for each and a classification of them as the best, mediocre and ordinary.334 *Prāṇāyama* gets a very detailed description in which it is shown how the vital airs are to be made to pass through the *nāḍīs*. This purifies the *nāḍīs* and enables the aspirant to have the lotus of the heart spread out so as to make him see Narayana there.335

331. *YS* II, 30
333. *VK* pp. 510-611.
Pratyāhāra is of five kinds. The senses are withdrawn from their objects. The aspirant finds everything to be like himself. The vital airs are made to fill up the eighteen vulnerable spots in the body and thereby maintain complete cessation of external activity. Dhāranā is of eight kinds, namely, fixing up steadfastly the mind, control of ākāśa both within and without, control of the five elements and keeping the blissful body of God in the heart.

Dhyāna is of two kinds, according as the niṣkala and sakala forms of God are meditated upon. The former is not available even to the gods and the latter is of the nirguṇa and saṅguṇa kinds. Through meditation the aspirant visualizes God as having supreme bliss for His form. Meditating upon God as the store of auspicious qualities, Yaśaṁurti, Viṣṇu and Nārāyaṇa, is of the latter kind with four subgroups having one for each of these forms. Samādhi is deep contemplation in which the self and God are in the same plane. As a stone that is not hot becomes heated by the sun’s heat, the self acquires a flawless and blissful nature on visualizing God and continues to experience Nārāyaṇa. As long as such a self remains in this world, it gets all kinds of siddhis and is practically released from bondage though embodied (jīvanmukta). This stage of feeling and experiencing the blissful state of final release, while yet alive in this world, is not attainable by any means other than yoga. Since it is said that the self gets all siddhis, this stage is not the same as in the Advaita system.

There are four states in the mental activity of man. They are the waking (jāgrat), dream (svapna), deep sleep (suṣupti) and

336. *Ibid* pp 514-515
337. *Ibid* pp 515-516.
transcendental (*turīya*). The effects on mental activities during these are respectively external knowledge, internal consciousness and enlightenment 341 The qualities are *dharma*, *jñāna*, *aśvarya* and *vairāgya* which each of the five deities possesses 342

The state of *moksa* is one of intimate union of the self with God.

**Vide.**

विभोः सायुधमान्यालवक्ष

*JK*. p 30

That this state should characterize the concept of *moksa* is justifiable, because the self, which emerges from *prakṛti*, that is, *Śrī* ever associated with God, should naturally get back to the place of emergence, of course, with this difference that it returns rid of all residue of *karma* and with full enlightenment.

The place to be attained is called *Vaikuṇṭha*, which, true to its name, cannot be deformed or maimed by any force. It is far above the three called *Pramoda*, *Sammoda* and *Āmoda* in the descending order, the last representing the stage wherefrom the regions called *Viśṇuloka* begin. *Viśṇu* is the deity in *Āmoda*, *Mahāviśṇu* in *Pramoda*, *Sadāviśṇu* in *Sammoda*, and *Vyāpin* who is *Nārāyaṇa* in *Vaikuṇṭha*. The names of the three regions leading to *Vaikuṇṭha* have significance in the sense that they provide room for the enjoyment of divine bliss 343

Among the pupils of Vikhanas, four, namely, *Atri*, *Bṛgū*, *Kāśyapa* and *Marici*, gave out their own versions of the *Vaikhānasa Āgama* which they had studied under Vikhanas. Unfortunately, only a portion of each version is now extant.

341. *JK* p 52,
342. *SA* 37 3, *JK* p. 52
The work of Marici contains, in the last chapter of his *Vimānāreanakalpa*, a list of the works written by all the sages including himself. The basis for these works is the *Vaikhānasasūtra*. His *Anandasamhitā*, of which the *Vimānāreanakalpa* is a part, contains a slightly different list. Bhrgu's *Yajñadhikāra* and Atri's *Samūrtarcanādhisthikarana* contain their own lists. There is discrepancy in the number of texts and in their names as found in these lists.

Atri is stated to have written four texts named *Pūratantra*, *Ātreyatantra*, *Visnutantra* and *Uttaratantra*, according to the version of the *Vimānārcanakalpa*. Bhrgu's version mentions eleven works among which *Samūrtarcanādhisthikarana* is stated to be *Uttaratantra*. Apart from the four in Marici's list in which *Uttaratantra* is identified with *Samūrtarcanādhisthikarana*, there are seven others among which a fragment of *Niruktādhisthikarana* alone is available. All these are said to have contained 88,000 ślokas. Except for these two works, all are lost. Some of these end their names as 'tantra' and others as 'samhitā'.

Bhrgu's works are thirteen, according to Marici, named *Khilatantra*, *Purātantra*, *Vāsanādhisthikāra*, *Citrādhisthikāra*, *Māṇādhisthikāra*, *Kriyādhisthikāra*, *Arcanādhisthikāra*, *Yajñādhisthikāra*, *Varnādhisthikāra*, *Prakirṇādhisthikāra*, *Pratigrhyādhisthikāra*, *Niruktādhisthikāra* and *Khilādhisthikāra*. The lists of others enumerate less works. Bhrgu's list had only ten. Among these, the *Kriyādhisthikāra* and *Yajñādhisthikāra* are available in print. The *Arcanādhisthikāra*, *Vāsanādhisthikāra*, and *Niruktādhisthikāra* are available as manuscripts. The *Mantrādhisthikāra*, *Citrādhisthikāra*, *Varnādhisthikāra* and *Purātantra* are available in fragments. The rest are lost. All the thirteen works are stated to have contained 88,000 ślokas. Except two which end their names with the word 'tantra', the rest end in the word, 'adhisthikāra'.

345 *Yajñādhisthikāra*, LI. 13-29.
346 *SA. Appendix*, 4.
*ASV*—14
Kāśyapa's works are three in the list of Marici. They are SatyaKāṇḍa, TarkaKāṇḍa and Jñānakāṇḍa. Atri's list adds Santānakāṇḍa to the list. The Ānandasamhitā has a karmaKāṇḍa. Perhaps all these make his works five in number as stated by Bhṛgu and Atri. Except the Jñānakāṇḍa which is in print, others are lost. All the works are said to have contained 64,000 ślokas. They end their names with the word 'kāṇḍa.'

Marici's works are eight, as stated in his Samūrtarcanādhi-karana. Their names are Jayasamhitā, Ānandasamhitā, Samjñānasamhitā, Virasamhitā, Vijayasamhitā, Vijītasamhitā Vimalasamhitā and Jñānasamhitā. His other work, Ānandasamhitā, mentions Kalpitasamhitā in the place of the Jñānasamhitā. Bhṛgu's list enumerates eleven works. The list of Atri mentions the works of one Āṅgirasa which are seven, some of them having different names. Some of these are the same as those attributed to Marici. It is not clear whether Āṅgirasa is another name for Marici, but Āṅgirasa is not mentioned anywhere else as the author of the Vaikhānasas texts. Among these, the Vimānārcanakalpa and Ānandasamhitā are alone available. The works, twenty-three in number, are stated to have contained 1,84,000 ślokas. The names of all these works end with the word 'samhitā.'

On the whole, the number of samhitās of the Vaikhānasas comes to sixty. Among them, seventeen are available fully and in parts. Eight of them have been published. Two have not been printed at all. The remaining seven, which are also not in print, are available only in fragments.

347. Yajñādhihikāra, II. 17, 27-29.
348. S.A. Appendix, 4
349. Ibid. IV. 30, 31.
350 For an account of the lists of these texts, see 'Vaikhānasagama-sahityasya saikaramah', Vimarśa, Vol. I, Part I, pp. 7-16.
These texts are written mainly in verse, as in the case of Atri and Bhrgu, but those of Kaśyapa and Marici are in prose. All of them reveal a high level of literary attainment.

In their contents, they are similar and, if there is any divergence, it is only in the more elaborate treatment of some topics in one than in another. Among the four divisions into which these contents are grouped, it is the kriyā pāda that has received more attention than others, Cāryā receiving some treatment. The duties of a vānaprastha which are generally known as those of the vaikhanasas, the significant position which Vikhanas held in regard to rituals and the lack of emphasis on the importance of the ascetic order indicate that the Vaikhanasa Āgama is ritualistic to the core in its outlook and conception. How best the life here could be lived in strict conformity to Vedic traditions and how effectively the Lord could be worshipped have received attention in these works. In fact, the ascetic and the vānaprastha are excluded from officiating as priests for certain rituals. The other two divisions of the Āgama receive only brief treatment.

In general, the texts deal with the methods of construction of temples and making images. Installation, consecration and worship of the deities receive detailed treatment. Special ceremonial baths are described with minute details. Festivals, both private and public, get procedural treatment, indicating the purposes to be served by conducting them. Special emphasis is laid on the ways and means of performing the rites of purification and expiation.

The Srauta rituals receive special emphasis and all of them are declared as representing the various ways in which Viṣṇu is worshipped. Naturally, the various types of priests like the

351. SA, XXX 14 b,
352. See under 275 supra.
ptoik, the adhvaryu and others have a prominent role to play in the rites connected with temple worship. Mantras are frequently cited for use even for what may seem to be only a secular activity like turning up the earth at the chosen site to construct the basement for a temple. The directions for many an item are drawn from the Sūtras of Vikhanas.

All are not entitled to adopt the directions contained in these texts and conduct worship in the temples. Only that Brahmin who has had the study of the Vedas and has undergone the consecratory rites (samskāras) since conception, according to the rules laid down by Vikhanas in his Kalpaśūtras, is competent to conduct the worship of the Lord in the temples.

The Vaiṣṇavas are exclusive worshippers of Viṣṇu and do this worship as an obligatory duty without expecting any results.
Some of the acts which are enjoined for worship are peculiar to their Agamas. For instance, mandala, nyāsa and the positions of the syllables in mantras are mentioned. The ducts (nādi), bindu and other aspects of sonic creation are treated with reference to meditation. Sakti is considered as the power (Sakti) of Viṣṇu.

The opinions of others described as 'kecit' are referred to. Perhaps, these persons were offering a different direction to certain practices which could not be effectively carried out, for want of materials or facilities mentioned in these Agama texts.

Though having an easy flow of graceful expressions, archaic forms are not absent in these texts. This does not at once indicate that they should be very ancient. Such expressions are generally met with in the epics and Purāṇas and also in the Kalpasūtras. Their presence in these texts could be explained on the ground that the authors of these works were sages who were practising rituals.

The sages Marici, Bhrgu, Atri and Kaśyapa, are very ancient and, as it is generally admitted, many of these texts must have taken their rise in North India. The authors of the Kalpasūtras mostly hailed from North India. Curiously enough,

355 See SA Introduction, p XXII
356 VK pp 282-3, 335, 485-491 SA IX 71, 72
357 VK pp 500-505
358 Vide.

विष्णु विन्यूति: श्री: ... सूक्ष्मप्रकृतिरूपा दायकः |
Ibid. pp. 493. 4.
359 Ibid pp 103, 182, 190, 488.
360 KA X, 41, SA, LXXIX, 16.
the Vaikhānasa Āgama as such is not well-known in North India. This is perhaps because the Kalpasūtras of Vikhanas are followed by a handful of people who belong to the Taittirīya recension of the Kṛsna Yajurveda which is popular only in South India where the mode of worship in the temples must also have been derived from the Vaikhānasa Āgama. Most Vaisnava temples in the south are at present governed by the Vaikhānasa tradition. Perhaps, these texts were more popular among the Tamilians. Words of Tamil origin are found in some texts.

The Samūrtārcanādhikarana, which forms part of the Atrisamhitā, has 83 chapters containing about 5,000 slokas. Twenty-five chapters of this work are concerned with architectural details and eleven with the rites of expiation. One full chapter (83rd) is devoted to the worship of the sun. The priests who attend to the worship of God in temples, are required to be kept in contentment, as otherwise the locality where the particular temple is situated would be visited with misery. The gotra and pravara of 47 different families are mentioned in a separate chapter (63rd). The colophon of this work refers to this text as taught orally by Atri (Atriprokta). The printed text has a supplementary chapter called Rathapratistāvdiṅhi, as belonging to Purātantra, one of the four works of Atri.

The printed text has an Appendix I containing six chapters representing a version based on a different manuscript. Bhṛgu, Kāśyapa, Āṅgira, and Atri received teaching about the highest dharma, the Supreme Deity and the method of worship from the four faces of Brahmā respectively facing the east, south, west and north quarters. While mentioning the various branches of learning, those of the Buddhists and Jains are also

361 Karandikā: VK p. 88, Culli, ibid. pp. 154, 293,
362 SA. XLIII, 115-118,
363 Ibid. p. 474.
The Āgamas are said to be five, namely, Vaikhānasa, Sāttvata, Tīrtha, Askāntika and Mūlaka. The Lord uttered some expressions taking Himself the form of a bird, and Brahmā who searched for the meaning of those expressions is here known as Vikhanas. The system which Vikhanas expounded became divided into four groups connected with the names of Atri, Bhṛgu, Marici and Kāśyapa. The Sāttvata mode is based on the Ekāyana Veda. The Tīrtha kind has 24 tantras and prescribes four kinds of initiation (dikṣā). It has four divisions, jñāna, yoga, kriya and caryā as in other Āgamas, and an additional section on prāyaścitta. The other two are not treated, except for the mention of their names. The subject matter in all these five is stated to be one and the same. The Vyākhas are stated to be five in the Vaikhānasa system and four in the Pāñcarātra. The pranava represents the threefold vyūha. Mention is made of the six infirmities (ūrmi), namely, grief, illusion, hunger, thirst, decay and death, the six sheaths (kośa) of skin, flesh, blood, sinew, marrow and bone, and the six phases of existence (bhāva), namely, taking birth, existing, changing, growing, declining and dying. Six paths (adhyā) and six relations, namely, para, apara mahān, antarālaka, divya and divyēṣara, which are connected with sound and sense, are also listed.

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364 Ibid, p 478
365 Ibid Appendix I 3
366 Ibid, p 480, 4-7
367 Ibid, p 481, 16-18
368 Ibid, p. 481 10
369 Ibid, p 483 23-26
370 Ibid, p 483 41
372 Ibid, p 484 43-44. This view has held by Vārāhyāni.
373 Ibid, p 484 44-45.
The name of Sasvasiddhānta is given for 28 kinds. The Pāṣupata and Yāmala are of six and nine kinds respectively. The system of the Buddhists, Nyāya and others are then enumerated. The names of the texts of the Pāñcarātra and those of the four sages of the Vaiśhānasa are given. For the latter together the number of sūlokas is stated to be 64,000 and the number of texts as twenty-five. The nature of reality and the eight-limbed yoga get treated in the next two chapters.

There is the Appendix II which deals with the nature and geography of the world and has only one chapter called Bhuvanakośavarnana as taken from Atri's Viśnutastra. At the end of the printed text, there is a chapter numbered as eight, belonging to Atri's authorship and entitled Durnaksatraprāyas-cittavidihi.

The information contained in two appendices is very useful, yet the mention of adhva, which is generally treated in the other Āgamas, Śākta, Śāiva and Pāñcarātra, does not establish it to be a genuine doctrine held by the Vaiśhānasa system.

Among the texts of Bhṛgu, the Kriyādhvākara has 39 chapters containing about 4000 sūlokas. Worship of God is of three kinds - in the mind, in the image and in the sacred fire. The first kind must not be taken as meditation, but as offering worship in all its details mentally conceived. The second is carried out with respect to the idol which is installed. The third kind consists in mentally conceiving God as seated amidst the sacred fire and making offerings to Him in that fire. The worship of the idol is the best among the three.

375 Ibid pp 485-6, 5-11
376 Ibid. pp 487-488
377 Ibid. pp. 488-504.
378 KA I. 5-12.
379 Ibid. I, 13, 14 a.
Expiatory rites are dealt with in five chapters. It is also shown how to get over minor lapses during worship without undertaking an elaborate expiatory process. There are references to the treatment of the topic in the context in the 
\textit{Yajñadhikāra}, \textit{Nirukṣādhikāra} and \textit{Khilādhi-kāra}. The opinion of Aṅgiras is cited more than once.

Bṛgu's \textit{Yajñadhikāra} contains 51 chapters, of which expiatory rites cover six. The main subject-matter is the worship of God according to the directions contained in the \textit{Vaikhānasa} system. The \textit{Prakirpādhikāra} of Bṛgu is a supplement to Marici's \textit{Vimānārcanakālpa} and Atrī's \textit{Samūrtārcanādhi-karaṇa}. It contains 24,000 \textit{slokas} in 37 chapters. The greatness of the \textit{Vaikhānasa} system, offences (apacāra) and the nature of sin are treated here. Some of the \textit{slokas} in the last chapter are identical with some in the \textit{Manusmṛti}. Bṛgu is mentioned as the propounder of the doctrines of the \textit{Manusmṛti}. He may be perhaps identical with this Bṛgu. Six chapters of this \textit{Prakirpādhikāra} are devoted to expiatory rites. The \textit{Khilādhi-kāra} of Bṛgu has three sections called \textit{jñāna}, \textit{kryā} and \textit{yoga}, dealing respectively with the \textit{tattvajñāna}, practice of worship and meditation on God.

Kaśyapa's \textit{Jñānakānda} is in prose and contains 108 chapters. While recommending the worship of the idol, it is said that here the eyes and mind get delighted through such worship and perfect remembrance of God becomes possible. This gives rise to devotion and faith. He who has faith and devotion has complete success in all endeavours.

There is mention of nine kinds of regions named Vaiśāvya, Brāhma, Raudra, Aindra,
Garuda, Bhautika, Asura, Rakasasa and Paisaca. Only the first is to be chosen for the erection of a temple. How the villages and towns are to be formed is detailed in four chapters (14-17). The person who is devoted to God must set apart one third of his property for the maintenance of his family and spend the remainder for building a temple and maintaining it.

Among the five forms, the unchanging and highest one is Brahman called Visnu. His form is characterized by bare existence and is subtle. He is then partless. The question that would rise then is regarding the forms of Satiya, Acyuta, Purusa and Aniruddha. It is said that these are only the created forms of Visnu, like the shape of the written characters (tipi). The characters are only the symbols of various sounds. Close union of the self with God marks the stage of moksa. Twelve chapters are devoted to expiatory rites.

Marici’s Vimanaarcanakalpa, which is written in prose, has 101 chapters of which 40 are devoted to the construction of temples, six to the daily worship, three to the bath, eleven to the conduct of festivals and installation of other idols, nineteen to the acts of expiation, one to the deities in charge of the holy fire-pit (agnikunda), four to the code of practices, fourteen to tattva and one to the extent of the Vaikhana texts.

The text opens with two stanzas of benediction in honour of God as Srinivasa who gets a glorious description. Marici is the narrator of this text. At the outset he speaks of the means of getting final release. God (Narayana) must be worshipped with the mantras taken from the four Vedas in a manner prescribed by them. Finally, that self which adopts this way of life,

386. Ibid. p. 31.
387. Ibid. pp. 52, 53.
388. Ibid. p. 30.
would reach His place. \textsuperscript{389} Passages from the \textit{Ṛgveda}, \textit{Taittirīya Āranyaka}, \textit{Aitareya Brāhmaṇa} and \textit{Taittirīya Upanisad} are cited to show that Viṣṇu is the Supreme Being. \textsuperscript{390} Worship of the Supreme Being (\textit{Parama Puruṣa}) is called ‘\textit{Vimanāreana},’ \textsuperscript{391} which explains the title of the work.

The results which accrue by this worship are stated to be equal to those of performing \textit{Agnihotra} even for those who do not do it and all-round prosperity for those who do. \textsuperscript{392} Marici declares he will set forth the way of doing this worship, which he denotes by the name, ‘\textit{Kriyāmarga},’ suggesting that this text is devoted to the \textit{kriyā} aspect of the \textit{Agamas}. \textsuperscript{393} This is evident from the large number of chapters (1-40) devoted to the procedural details regarding the construction of the temple and installation of images there. On this account, it is not implied that the \textit{caryā} aspect is not given importance. Chapters 41-85 discuss this matter. Special mention must be made of the detailed treatment given to the conduct of festivals, \textsuperscript{394} and to the acts of expiation. \textsuperscript{395} Nineteen chapters which detail the latter, indicate the pro-Vedic character of the \textit{Vaikhānasa} system.

\textsuperscript{389} \textit{VK} p 2
\textsuperscript{390} \textit{Ibid} pp 2-3
\textsuperscript{391} \textit{Ibid} p 3 The word, ‘\textit{vimāna},’ which means the story in the structure of the temple, indicates that God must be worshipped in a temple.
\textsuperscript{392} \textit{Ibid} p 3
\textsuperscript{393} Vide

कमेन सियामाणि बिस्तरतो वश्यामि।

\textit{Ibid.} p 5.

\textit{KA} has seven chapters for this. The very title, \textit{Kriyādhikāra}, suggests the importance given to \textit{kriyā}. \textit{SA}, XXXIX.

\textsuperscript{394} \textit{VK} L-LIV \textit{KA} has two chapters, XIV & XVI.
\textit{SA} LIII-LVII \textit{JK} LXXXVIII-XC.

\textsuperscript{395} \textit{VK}, LXI-LXXX. \textit{KA} has twelve chapters, XX-XXXI.
\textit{SA}, LXVI-LXXX, \textit{JK}, LXXXIV-CIII.
In particular and of the Agamas in general. Treatment of tattva, yogic practice and makṣā shows that the jñāna and yoga aspects are not ignored in Vaikhnāsa Agama.396

These texts of the four sages lay great stress on the practical side, such as the construction of temples and worship of the idol. Architecture and iconography receive greater attention in the Samuṛiircanādhikāraṇa of Atri and the Vimānārcanākalpa of Marīci. Whatever be the topic, the Jñānakānda of Kāśyapa gives a complete and logical treatment.

This title may seem to be inappropriate to the work of Kāśyapa. For it is not tattva-jñāna that receives treatment here. On the other hand, the practical side of the Agama gets elaborated, and the word, ‘jñāna’, has relevance to the knowledge of this aspect. The title thus gets its justification. The nature of reality is dealt within this work in a casual manner,397 while its treatment is more detailed in the work of Marīci. The yoga and caryā aspects get brief treatment in the works of Marīci and Bṛgu. The works which are lost might perhaps have conveyed more information on the jñāna and yoga aspects.

It is true that Vedic mantras alone are prescribed in these texts for every ritual. In addition, mantras are cited from the Mantrapraśna of the Vaikhnānasas.

396. VK. LXXXV-C. The appendix in SA has a chapter on yoga.
397. JK. p. 2.
CHAPTER V

THE PĀNCARATRA ĀGAMA:

Validity and Antiquity

The Pāncarātra Āgama, which is mainly concerned with the worship of God in temples and houses, treats also of philosophy, linguistic occultism (mantra) and the theory of mystical diagrams (yantra). It is based on the Ēkāyana recension of the Śukla Yajurveda and so is Vedic in its foundations. Vedic mantras are frequently used. Yet it reveals a liberal and progressive outlook in throwing open its portals to all, irrespective of caste and sex, thus bringing within its fold even those who are excluded by tradition from the study of the Vedas. Consequently, mantras are created for their use and also for others. These are called tāntrika mantras. It is the Vaiśṇava initiation (dikṣā) that confers on the aspirants the necessary qualification to participate directly or otherwise in the ritualistic performance of worship.

A passage in the Pāncarātra text, Viṣṇusamhitā, defines the word ‘tantra’ as that which expounds all objects and protects people from fear. Five tantras are enumerated as derived from Vasudeva. They are Vaikāhānavac, Sāttvata, Śīkhaṇa, Asākāntika and Mūlaka. According to the first, Viṣṇu must be worshipped at all times. The family has to be looked after by the worshipper with what he gets unasked. The second is also known as Bhāgavata Pāncarātra. The third refers to that system the
adherents of which worship Viṣṇu twice a day and take to agriculture, trade and cattle-breeding as the means of livelihood. The 
Aṅkāntika system is adopted by those who worship Viṣṇu once in a day, render service to the twice-born and live on begging. The Mūlaka is taken up by those who worship Viṣṇu through thought, word and deed, and live on what is obtained unasked and on what they get from their pupils. A slightly different classification is offered by Atri, but it is not complete as regards information on the last two. Besides, the third one is called Tīrtha instead of Sīkhin.

It is not possible to identify the systems of Sīkhin, Aṅkāntika and Mūlaka. It is also doubtful whether there were systems with these names. These may not be names of any particular systems, but of groups who were identified thus for their distinct practices. The Sīkhin may refer to a group who wear the tuft and do not remove it except when they enter into certain orders of recluses. The Aṅkāntika may refer to that group which depends exclusively on Viṣṇu for getting mokṣa and for other purposes as well. The identification of the Mūlakas is not easy.

400 Ibid II, 28-35
401 SA Appendix, I 3.
402 SKS Brahmarattra, V 33b-42 P V Kane: History of Dharmaśāstra Vol II Part II pp 939-41
403 Vide

वो मोक्षफलेन सारं फलांतराण्यपि भगवत एवेश्चति स
एकांती देवान्तरशून्य इत्यथि:।
Yatindramatadipikā, p. 77.

Vide :

अक्षिप्याध्वामन्यत् फले भगवतोपि यो नेच्छति स
परमैकान्ति ।

Cf. Vedāntakārikāvalī, VIII, 14, 19.
The name, ‘Pāñcarātra,’ is from the word, ‘pañcarātra,’ a compound made up of two words ‘pañca’ and ‘rātra’ with the addition of the suffix ‘ac’. The word ‘pañca’ means ‘five’ and rātra is a changed form of the word, ‘rātri’, which is derived from the root, ‘rā’, to give, with the suffix, trip. The word ‘rātri’, which means ‘night’, is interpreted as that which gives rise to pleasure. Then, the word, ‘pañcarātra’ may be taken to mean a period of five nights and must have been used later to mean a system on the origin of which a period consisting of five nights has direct bearing.

Several explanations are offered to justify the name ‘Pāñcarātra’ for this system. These could be broadly classified under four groups.

The meaning of the word, ‘rātri’, is explained in eight ways under the first group. The other five systems, though great, become as night by the side of this system, like the moon and multitude of stars during the day. Here the word, ‘rātri’, is used as a nominal verb. What these five systems are do not get any reference. A second explanation states that other systems seem dead by the side of this system like others (luminous objects) when the sun is shining ‘Rātri’ stands for the...
five objects of the senses, sound, touch, colour, taste and smell, or the five elements, is the third explanation. These get destroyed when the higher knowledge is acquired. Thus Pancastra destroys all erroneous cognitions. According to the fourth explanation, the five elements are the products of avidyā which gets destroyed by the system. The fifth explanation takes the word, ‘rātri’, to mean the five qualities of the elements. They are taken to represent the embodied beings. The system deals with the selves getting those bodies and their getting rid of them. The next explanation declares that for man, the elements (bhūta), subtle elements (tanmātrā), ego (garva), intellect (buddhi) and unmanifest matter (avyakta) are the nights. These are dealt with here and hence the name. A seventh explanation takes the root, ‘rā’, in the sense of taking. The word ‘pañca’ stands for the five senses, their objects, five elements or their qualities. This word ‘Pañca’ with the root ‘rā’ means human beings who take these which are donated by the word ‘Pañca’. The human beings are called ‘Pañcarā’. They are protected by the system and so the name is ‘Pañcarātra’. The eighth and last explanation takes knowledge to be of five kinds arising from the Purāṇa, Veda, Vedānta, Sāṅkhya and Yoga. By the side of Pañcarātra, these become like night, that is, become worthless and lustreless.409

In the second group of explanations, the word ‘rātri’ is taken in the sense of knowledge which is of five kinds—Sāttvika, Rājasa, Tāmasa, Nasguṇa and Sarvatah Param. Of these, the

409 VS II. 49b-51c, Viṣṇuṭantra cited in the Introduction to Pars p. 37 Viśvāmitra, II 3-8, Pars I. 39b-41c

Vide:—

पुराण वैद्वेदान्तं तथात्यत्त सांख्ययोगम् ॥
पञ्चारात्रेऽविशेषं यथ राजयायतेरजज ॥
फलोत्कर्षेत्वेऽर्जव पञ्चारासमिति स्वरूपम् ॥

Pars. xxxvii 307b—308.
first three refer to the knowledge of the three gānas of matter, the fourth relating to non-material Nature and the last to the transcendental nature of Brahman The Pāncarātra system is said to treat of these matters and hence the name. A second explanation refers to the names of five persons who presented the doctrines of the systems after which the sections are known, making the total number five. The names of the sections are Brahmārātra, Śīvarātra, Indrarātra, Nāgarātra and Rśirātra.

The explanations offered to the word, ‘pāñca’, come under the third group. The fivefold manifestations of God by means of His Parā, Vyūha, Vibhava, Antaryāmin and Anāra forms may be meant by this word. A second interpretation is that Brahma propitiated Visnu for five nights in five ways near the five weapons of the Lord and hence the name. According to a third explanation, Brahma lost the Vedas to the demons, Madhu and Kaiṭabha. He approached Visnu with profound grief and requested directions as to how He is to be worshipped. The Lord asked him to offer worship for five nights with the Dvādasākṣara and aṣṭāksara. This way of worship became known as Pāncarātra. The fourth and fifth explanations take the word, ‘pāñca’, to mean the fivefold classification of the daily routine and the five sacraments respectively.

410 Śabdakalpadruma, III, p 13
411 Bhāradvāja-samhitā, II 12.
412 Vide.

तत्परशृंगविश्वासवशभावादिनिःरूपणम् ॥
पञ्चारात्रायं तत्तन्म मोक्षेकफलवक्षणम् ॥

Ahs. XI, 63b-64a.

413 SA Appendix, III, pp 480-481, ślokas 8b-9a.
414 KA. XXXVI. 11-14a.
415 Schrader, pp, 24-25.
ASV—16
The sixth interpretation is based on the number of sages who propagated the doctrines of the system, Śāndilya, Aupagāyana, Mauṣjyāyana, Kauśika and Bhāradvāja, who were incarnations of the five weapons of the Lord, propitiated Him through penance. The Lord appeared before them and taught to each one of them for five nights the Ekāyana Veda, also known as Rahasyāmnāya. Hence the system is reputed as Pāñcarātra. According to a seventh explanation the five topics that are dealt with in the system gave the name to it. The topics are reality, the means of getting mokṣa, devotion, yogic practice and the objects of the world.

The eighth interpretation accounts for the name of the system 'Pāñcarātra' by referring to the pranava as having arisen from five sources. Brahman is held to be undivided and the other four are from māyā. From Sankarsana (or Balarāma) arose 'a'; from Pradyumna, representing Prajñā, 'u', from Aniruddha who is of the nature of Prajñā, 'm'. Kṛṣṇa is the remaining source. Thus, pranava arose from five sources. It represents the Pāñcarātra system. Lastly, the system gets this name as it arose for living beings of five kinds (four castes and an inferior caste) for whom it was intended.

Before examining how far the explanations cited above are acceptable, it is of interest to refer to a sacrifice named Pañcarātra mentioned in the Sātapatha-brāhmaṇa (XIII 6 1 1). Purusa Nārāyaṇa is stated here to have had the idea of performing this sacrifice which lasted for five days in order to acquire superiority over all beings. In a preceding chapter of

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416 IS XXI 519-533
417 Schrader, p 24
418 Anuruddha S I 39a, Gopālatapanyā Upamsad.
419 Anuruddha S I 39b.

the Brāhmaṇa (XII.3.4), it is shown how He sacrificed Himself and became the whole world. The rite, Agniṣṭoma, was performed on the first day, Uktha on the second, Atirātra on the third, Uktha on the fourth and Agniṣṭoma on the last day. This is also called in the context by the other name, *Purusamedha.* The commentator, Harisvāmin, 420 notes that Puruṣa desired to have all the sentient as also the insentient beings under his control, and knowing that Purusamedha had to be performed to achieve this end, performed it. Then he became Nārāyaṇa. This sacrifice has a bearing on the Purusasūkta 421 of which the seer is Nārāyaṇa. The act of offering Puruṣa as the victim in this sacrifice, Puruṣamedha, is symbolic in character and is found represented by a similar act in the Purusasūkta.

The word, *rātra*, in the name, *Paṅcarātra*, of this sacrifice does not mean night, but the whole day (ahorātra) which begins with one dawn and ends with the next dawn. This name has a bearing on the name of the Pāṇcarātra system. Without going into the meaning of the words which constitute the compound word, *Pāṇcarātra*, it is possible to find the basis for naming the system after the name of the sacrifice, *Pāṇcarātra*. This sacrifice shows how Puruṣa became Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme Deity having control over the sentient and insentient beings. Here is a reference to the Vyūha concept involving self-manifestation. The Paṅcarātra sacrifice provides thus the philosophical interpretation of the fivefold manifestation of God by means of His Para, Vyūha, Vibhāva, Antaryāmin and Aroha forms. This explanation accords well with the statement that He composed, out of the original śāstra, the Paṅcarātra.

421. RV X. 30. 11-14,
describing His fivefold nature such as *Para* and *Vyuha*. This explanation comes under the fourth group.

The name, *Pāñcarātra* may be understood without reference to the component elements, *pañca* and *rātra*. Thus, it is a system dealing with Reality (*tattva*) and the means of liberation. The five forms of the Lord, concepts of the self, *moksha* and the theory of the periodical creation and dissolution of the world are matters brought under *tattva* and treated in this Āgama in the Jñāna-pāda. Yoga, worship of the Lord in the *arca* form and the ways and means of worship are dealt with in the *Yoga, Kriyā* and *Caryā* sections. While dealing with the details of *Caryā*, it has become necessary to prescribe the divisions of the day (*rātra*, literally, *ahorātra*) into five parts and to indicate what should be done under each division. The scope of the *Pāñcarātra* system is well explained in the *Aḥirbudhnyasamhitā*. The concept of *Vyūha* which forms the basis of the *Pāñcarātra* *Sattra* is taken up in the *Sāttvata* system which therefore acquired the name, *Pāñcarātra*. No specific significance need be attached to the words, *pañca* and *rātra*.

However, the number, five, has come to play a prominent role in the evolution of the five forms of God and the fivefold division of the daily routine. The earliest texts of the *Pāñcarātra* *Sattra* refers to these. Yet the *Aḥirbudhnya* does not include the forms of *Antaryāmin* and *Arcā* while enumerating them. The *Lakshmi-tantra* and *Sanatkumāra-samhitā* do not refer to the form of the *Antaryāmin*.

422. Vide:

श्चाद्यममयात् तस्मात् केवलादीनवशशासनात्।
निम्नं सार्वमुद्धत्त्वम् स्वयं विष्णुरसंकल्पम्॥

tapravahuvibhavasvāhāvatidinirupam ॥

*Pancharatrajyam tathā mokshākkalpam ॥*

*Aḥs. XI. 62b-64a.*
PANCARATRA AGAMA

It will not be, therefore, correct to connect the name, ‘Pāñcarātra’, with the number of forms which God assumes or with that of the divisions of the routine of the day. Though some kind of justification could be offered for this theory, it will not be correct either to connect the concept of pañcasamskāra with the name of the system.

The statement in the Ahirbudhya-samhitā that the Pāñcarātra system was formulated by Viṣṇu Himself gave rise to the theory that the Lord Himself taught the Sātvata system to five sages for five nights (literally, ‘ahorātra’ or simply ‘day’). And this is one of the explanations given for the name, ‘Pāñcaratāra’. There could be no doubt about ‘five’ being the meaning of ‘pañca’, but the interpretation given to the word, ‘rātri’, must be late in origin. Found in the Īśvarasamhitā it clashes with the five divisions of the Sanatkumāra-samhitā called ‘Rātras’, named after Brahmā, Śiva, Indra, Rṣi and Brhaspati. However, this could be resolved by taking the five sages to be included among the rṣis and by admitting that there were also others like Brahmā and Śiva who had acquired knowledge of the Pāñcarātra tradition.

Ahirbudhnya teaches Nārada that there are five systems, namely, Trayī (representing the three Vedas), Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Pāśupata and Pāñcarātra, among which the last mentioned alone provides the means for obtaining liberation. This statement should have made the sages take Pāñcarātra alone as the perfect system by the side of which the other four pale into insignificance. To make this clear, the sages understand the word, ‘rātri’, to mean ‘becoming dark or obscure’. In order to proclaim the high status of the Pāñcarātra, they have taken the word ‘pañca’ to mean many things. Yet all those interpretations

423. Ibid.
434. Is, XI 519-534.
425. Ahs, XI, & XII.
are late in origin and seem to have no direct bearing on the name of the system. Nor is there any justification for taking the word 'rātra' in the sense of knowledge. Likewise, there is no need to trace the rise of the prāpava from Vyūha. All other interpretations do not seem persuasive. The Vaikhānasa texts also seek to explain the significance of the name by attaching importance to the words constituting the name. This also must be taken to represent a later attempt to justify the name through the component parts of the compound.

It is worth considering in this context the views of Prof. J. A. B. van Buitenen on the name, 'Pāñcarātra.' The learned professor adduces evidence to show that the connotations attributed by Indian scholars to the word are not tenable. He offers some plausible pleas to take this name in a different sense and to justify its significance in a different setting.

The Pāñcarātra texts, which are available at present, have more of a ritualistic character than philosophical. The Āgama-prāmāṇya of Yāmuna, the earliest work which vindicates the validity of the Pāñcarātra, touches only the ritualistic aspect of the system. The philosophical portions of the Āgama texts should have found their way into them in later days.

Even here, the ritualistic contents, which show the growth of many concepts for several centuries, could not be traced to a single source. The attempt, made by Indian scholars, to connect the name of the system with the Pāñcarātra-sattra to establish its non-yajñic character, indicates the eagerness of the scholars to establish, for the Pāñcarātra rituals, a link with the Vedic rituals.

On the side of the philosophical background, the Mahābhārata (Moksa-dharma-parvan) contains two accounts of the

426. SA, p. 480, KA p 411
427. Introduction to Agama-pramāṇya, pp. 6-18.
Vyūha doctrine. Nara, Nārāyana, Hari and Kṛṣna, all of them being the sons Dharma, belong to the earlier concept. The later development, as found in the second account, seems to be based upon the theistic Sāṅkhya doctrines preached in the epic. In the background of these doctrines, there arose a different concept of Vyūha in which Puruṣa, the Supreme Being, jīva, manas and ahankāra play a prominent role with the names, Vāsudeva, Saṅkarsana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. The earlier concept is replaced by the later one.

Names like Pañcayajña, Pañcakālakartrpati and Pañcarātrika are used by Nārada to address the Lord. Yet, no convincing explanation is offered about what the word, ‘rātra’, means and why the word ‘pañca’ is used with it in the name of the system.

The learned professor therefore turns to other sources to get at the sense of the name. The Brhatkatha-stūkasaṅgraha of Budhasvāmin represents a recluse as a pañcarātrika and also enjoins that a recluse must not stay in a village for more than three days and in a town for more than five days 428

Vide:

एकरावं वसेह्यमेव पञ्चरावं मुतिः पुरे ।
इति प्रबलविताचाम पतं वेद अवाचिनिति ।

1b: 22·220

A prosperous farmer is represented in this context to have left his profession and gone in quest of mokṣa. He is reported to have said:

ध्यानाग्योष्यायद्यानं च विविद्यं भिषुकर्मी यद्य ।
वैद्यकर्मिमिश्युकस्य तस्य नामापि नहस्ति से ॥

Ibid 1b 63

The professor observes on the strength of these and similar references in the same work of Budhasvāmin that the word,

428, This is mentioned also in the Brahma purāṇa, II. 34, 49.
'pāncarātra', could have been coined to denote a person who becomes a recluse and stays in a town for five days only. Evidently, such persons should have been wandering sages and recluses. The Vedic rituals did not necessarily form part of their practices. The farmer refers to himself as a Vaiśya. He has taken to the way of life of ascetics and so is referred to as a pāncarātrīka. He visited the holy places of the Hindus and Buddhists and at last became a Buddhist. "A Pāncarātrīka in this very large sense is therefore an itinerant religious recluse who follows the five-nights rule regardless of doctrinal allegiance." Pāncarātra must have been associated originally with devotional religion. Later, the word 'Pāncarātrīka' must have been formed from this word in this general sense and must have meant a follower of five-nights rule, pāncarātrānusārin. The name, 'Pāncarātra', should have meant this tradition which its adherents followed.

In course of time, the devotional element of such votaries must have come to characterize a tradition associated with the name of Viṣṇu. The name 'Pāncarātra' must have been invested with specific features which substituted for the Vedic ritual Agamic practices. It is thus quite likely that the name 'Pāncarātra' owes its origin to this rule of five-nights. The several explanations, which are offered in the Samhitās of this school, are mutually contradictory and appear to be based on no reliable tradition.

The findings of the learned professor deserve very careful study. It will be prudent to agree with him in treating the several explanations contained in the Samhitās as not very convincing. One is left only with speculation. No evidence, outside the texts which offer these explanations, is forthcoming. All the same, it seems difficult to subscribe fully to the views expressed by Dr. van Buitenen.

The formation of the word 'pāncarātrīka' requires explanation. It is formed from the word, 'pāncarātra', with the
addition of the suffix, thak, according to the Aṣṭādhyāyī-sūtra, "tatra niyuktaḥ". Then the word means one who is engaged in 'pāncarātra'. This word also is a compound of the dvīgu kind, meaning a group of five-nights. There are words formed like this with a numeral as the first member and 'rātra' as the second member. For instance, 'dvirātra', 'trirātra', 'daśarātra' etc. All these occur one after another in Āpastamba-strautasūtra. The word 'trirātra' occurs in Manusmṛti and the word 'pāncarātra' also is found in the same work. Besides the words, 'trirātra' and 'daśarātra', are too well-known for their occurrence in the texts on Dharmāśāstra in the sense of the number of days during which pollution (āśauca) is to be observed.

It is significant that the word, 'rātra', occurs in these compounds to justify the Hindu concept of the duration of a day which ends with the expiry of the night following it. The day therefore starts with dawn and ends with the night which is to be followed by the next dawn. Thus, the word 'rātri' means here 'day and night' (ahorātra). The compound thus formed conveys several senses. For instance, the word 'trirātra' means a period of pollution which covers three full days including nights, as in Manusmṛti. The word 'pāncarātra', later in the same work, means a period of five days. This word is repeated here. The king is required to fix the price of commodities at the expiry of this period, that is once in five days. Here this word does not convey any specific sense except that of a group. The words, 'dvirātra', 'trirātra' and others which occur in the Āpastamba-strautasūtra, refer to the number of days during which specific sacrifices are to be performed.

430. Āpastambastrautasūtra, XXII. 14
431. MS, V, 80.
432 Ibid. VIII, 402.

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The words, 'ekarattra' and 'pañcarattra', occur in the Mahābhārata,433 where recluses are directed to stay for a day in villages and for five days in towns. These words are used in the very same sense in the śloka cited by the learned professor from the Brhatkathāślokaśāṅgraha (The professor, by the way, must have used the expression 'three nights' by oversight in the place of 'one night'.)

The word, 'pañcarattra', has thus merely the sense of a group of five nights with no specific connotation attached to it, such as that of the period of stay for a recluse in a town or a period which should cover the performance of a sacred rite. The Mahābhārata and Ślokaśāṅgraha use the words, 'pañcarattra' and 'ekarattra', in the sense only of duration of time. They do not intend them to be the names of any groups of people. If we are to conclude that the name 'pañcarattra' was coined later on to denote itinerant recluses, then 'ekarattra' could have also been coined, unless there is the suggestion that the recluses moved and stayed only in towns. The word, 'Pañcarattra', occurs in the Harṣacarita434 of Bhaṭṭa Bāṇa in the sense of a particular group of persons professing particular doctrines and leading a specific way of life, as it is clear from the names of other groups in the context who could be identified from the practices and doctrines which they followed. This work was written in the first half of the 7th century A.D., that is, before Budhasvāmin (c 900 A D).

The farmer who refers, according to Budhasvāmin, to the restriction for the stay of the recluses, is not known as a 'pañcarattra', but is referred to by that name. The writer knew of the practice and custom of the recluses. That he became a Buddhist later, after visiting the places dear to the Hindus and

433. Mbh Śāntu, CXC 3.
434. p. 237.
Buddhists, does not at once suggest that recluses who observed this principle of ‘pāñcarātra’, must have been following the rule of five-nights, regardless of doctrinal allegiance. This principle has been in vogue long before the rise of Buddhism. Nor does the name, ‘vihāra’, given to the resting places built after the period of the Buddha for the stay of the Buddhist monks during the rainy season, deserve specific attention. The vihāras could have been built to house the itinerant recluses of Buddhism, but the rule, that the recluses should not travel during this period, is too well known under the name, ‘Saṅkalpa’, or rather ‘Cāturmāsya-sankalpa’. The order of recluses and the principles governing their lives were not invented by the Buddha. In fact, he was an inheritor of Hindu ideals. He did not teach any new religious doctrine, but laid greater stress on some of the ethical doctrines which were already known to the people. Thus it seems that the learned professor’s thesis cannot be accepted, as it is based on unverified principles and assumptions.

The sacrifice called ‘Pañcarātra Sattra’ is already stated to have been the basis for the name of this Āgama. The ritualistic aspect of this connotation of the word, ‘pāñcarātra’, does not affect the name which the Vaisnava Āgama assumed later. There is parity between this aspect of the Āgama and that of the Rgveda. Both had only the ritualistic aspect at the beginning, Philosophical speculation arose later, both in the case of the Vedas and this Āgama. Authenticity cannot therefore be denied to this Āgama.

It is suggested that the non-yajnic aspect of this sacrifice should have been a later development under the influence of Buddhism and Jainism. This also is open to doubt. That is, there is the symbolic representation of the sacrifice in the Pañcarātra-sattra. This is intentional. Such a representation is found also in the passage of the Chāndyoga Upanisad435 where
the chest, hair and heart of the worshipper are imagined to be respectively the altar, darbha grass and the Gārhaṇaṭya fire. Hence, the Pañcarātra Agama must not be taken to have introduced the symbolic representation of the sacrifice. The Upaṇsad is found to contain already this feature.

As regards the replacement of the earlier vyūha of Nara, Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa and Hari by the latter, it must be borne in mind that the Ekāntadharma is said to have disappeared several times and evolved again and again. On the last occasion, which is identical with the rise of the Pañcarātra tradition, a new vyūha was evolved in which the four manifestations of God find representation, allowing the mind and ego to have their due place in the scheme through their presiding deities.

Thus, an explanation has to be given for the rise of the Pañcarātra doctrine, offering a twofold meaning for this name. One lies in the doctrines which were preached by Brahmā, Śiva, Indra, Nāga (or Brhaspati) and Rṣī. According to the other, the word "paṇca" stands for an aggregate having the five limbs of abhigamana, upādāna, ījyā, svādhyāya, and yoga. With reference to ‘rātra’ which means ‘ahorātra’, these five convey the sense that the daily routine should be divided into five parts having these names.

The name ‘Pañcarātra’, in its latter significance, is applicable to the system with special reference to the practical side, that is, the rituals. The words, ‘ījyā’ and ‘svādhyāya’, bring out the Vedic foundations on which this daily routine is based. It is to vindicate this aspect of the system that Vedānta Desika wrote the Pañcarātra-raksā.

Vide:

पञ्चालव्यवस्थित्यो वेक्केदेशविपक्षितम्
श्रीपञ्चाराशिद्धान्त व्यवस्थेयं समपितम्

(p 44, Adyar edn.)

438. Mbh, Śānti CCCCVIII.
The division of the full period of ahorātra is treated in the Jayākhyā-samhitā, perhaps belonging to the oldest group among the Pāñcarātra works.

That the ritualistic contents of the system could not be traced to a single source, must be admitted. The Pāñcarātra-sattra, described in the Sātāpatha-Brāhmaṇa, provided the system with the concept of the period of five nights. In this sense, the classification by the name of the period gets justified. The greater significance, attached to this source, is due to the unassailed supremacy and overlordship of Viṣṇu. The system drew sufficient inspiration from this for its philosophical background. At the same time, the ritualistic aspect of this sattra is reflected in the treatment of the acts of Viṣṇu as having the nature of performing the sacred ritual as enjoined by the Vedas themselves. However, how and when the classification of the daily routine into five parts arose cannot be proved with evidence. Perhaps the five parts of the day, prātaḥ, saṃgava, madhyāhna, aparāhna and sāyam as named in the Dharmāstātras, influenced a similar attempt at diurnal division for the purpose of worshipping God.

In this context, it is necessary to criticise the following statement of Prof Hazra: "It is more reasonable to hold that the original non-Vedic as well as anti-Vedic ideas of the Pāñcarātras were permeated through the Samhitās." It is unfortunate that many Indian scholars have been encouraged to hold views such as these, under the influence of the Western Orientalists. Ideas and practices such as these could be held as non-Vedic, as they do not form part of the contents of the Vedas. There is, however, no justification to

437. JS. ch. XXII Pārs. IX, 161-178
439 Upapurāṇas, p. 110.
treat them as anti-Vedic. No idea or practice that is found in the Pāñcarātra could be proved as opposed to the teachings of the Vedas. That is, the Vedas do not contain any doctrine or enjoin any practice which is contradicted in the Āgamas. The latter do not preach doctrines or prescribe any practices which condemn particular Vedic injunctions. Many of the recensions of the Vedas are lost. The Mimāṃsā system agrees to treat the Śruti texts as authoritative to uphold certain practices which find no mention in the Vedas. On this ground, the Śruti texts are not held to be anti-Vedic.

The sources for the Āgamic practices could be traced to those of people in certain parts of the country and confined to them alone. The Kalpa-sūtras support the authenticity of such practices and their adoption. Those who have taken to practices not traceable to the Vedas and Śrutis, are not stated anywhere as having preached anti-Vedic doctrines.

From time immemorial, Hindu society has been dynamic and progressive. While the externals of the practices remained unchanged, internal changes were allowed to take place, as is clear from statements recorded in the Dharmaśāstra texts which seem to have contradictions and inconsistencies. The division of Hindu society into Vedic and aboriginal was made by Western scholars with the sole intention of underrating the worth of the Vedic texts and suggesting that the aborigines did not have an inferior cultural background. The attention of the readers is drawn to the introductory chapter of this work, where Hindu

440. Tantravārttikā on I. 3 2.
441 P. V. Kane. History of ‘Dharmaśāstra’, III, pp 848-855
Cf. Bharatīya Vidyā, VI, pp. 27-30

अथ खलक्यावचा जनपद्धम्राप्रामधमोऽन्तु विवाहे पतीयात्।

Āvalāyana Grhyā-sūtra, I. 5. 1.

society is shown to have been advanced in progress and civilization in very early days. It is needless to believe in a cleavage of Hindu society as postulated by the Western Orientalists and their Indian followers. Hindu society has been culturally one and the same, having provision for diversity at various levels of thought and practice.

It must be thus conceded that there are no anti-Vedic ideas and practices in the Agamas. Non-Vedic ones are, however, there, as the Vedas are not to be looked upon as an encyclopaedia treating of all aspects of the life of society. Many concepts and practices should have been in vogue even with people professing Vedic culture, that were not recorded in the Vedas. On this ground, the Agamas, which deal with them, could not be treated as non-Vedic or anti-Vedic.

The same explanation holds good for the philosophical background of the Agamas which arose with explanations for rituals. The schools of Vedānta, which drew inspiration from the Nyāya and Sāṅkhya doctrines, changed those borrowed materials to suit their needs. The same feature is found in the Agamas. The Sāṅkhya doctrines, preached in the Mokṣadharma section of the Mahābhārata, were changed to suit the Agama doctrines in the Pāñcarātra Samhitās.

The Pāñcarātra Agama regards Visnu with Śrī as the Ultimate Reality. For the purposes of creation and for worship, Visnu manifests Himself in three forms called Saṅkarṣana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. It is said that Visnu is Vāsudeva from whom arises Saṅkarṣana standing for the self. From Saṅkarsana arises Pradyumna representing the mind. From Pradyumna arises Aniruddha representing the ego (ahaṁkāra). 442 All these constitute the fourfold nyūha. There are the divine descents called

442. Mbh, Śanu, CCCXLVII, 32-40.
avatars of the Lord which are also enshrined in temples. The Lord is also present everywhere inside all living beings as antaryāmin. The self will have to devote itself to the observance of the five daily duties, such as abhigamana and upādāna. Worship is to be done both in the temple and in the house. Such is in brief what this Āgama teaches.

The authority of the Pāñcarātra Āgama has been questioned by adherents of different faiths. The question of validity in the case of the Vaikhanasa Āgama is not so serious, as it is based exclusively on the Vedas. Even if Vikhanas is not held to be Brahmā,443 the authority of the Āgama tradition known by his name cannot be questioned, for he himself was a Vedic seer and his doctrines are hence valid. The same cannot be said of the Pāñcarātra. Though expounded by Narāyaṇa Himself who is identified with Viṣṇu444, it cannot be readily admitted as intrinsically valid like the Vedas which are not the work of any author or authors, human or divine.

The main ground for any objection of this kind is that the Pāñcarātra doctrines are not only not based on Vedic authority, but preach many a practice which is pronouncedly anti-Vedic. The Kurmapurāṇa mentions this system as one among others which are outside the pale of Vedic culture and so deserving rejection.445 Medātithi on Manu (X 22) has a similar remark on this system.

443 Vide

ये नवा ते वैक्हानसाः

Tattvārīya Āranyaka (I 23)

Brahmā, who was performing penance, shook his body. The Vaikhanasas arose from his nails. The word 'Vaikhanasa' is from 'Vikhanas' which illustrates the phonetic change of metathesis.

444 Mbh. Šantu CCCLIX. 95-98.

445. See under fn. 153.
Again, the adherents of the system adopt, in addition to the Vedic mantras, the tāntrika ones also. All the sacramental practices (saṃskāras) beginning from impregnation (mīśka) are governed by their own doctrines. For them, the Dvādaśāksara mantra is everything. Neither the Gāyatrī is recommended nor utilised, nor Vedic study, japa and other works enjoined in the Vedic tradition undertaken.

Vide

एकाधवना निशेकादि संस्काराध्व वल्लादिभि: ।
ह्रादासाक्षरविबेच तेषां विचा न तथी ॥

न सावित्री न मन्तेश्वर: स्वाध्यायजपकम् ।
ये पुनः सावित्रयुजचकप्रभुति लविच्युत्पिरियागनेंकायनः-
श्रुतिविहितानेव संस्कारान् कुविन्ति ।

Agamapramāṇya, p 78.

Secondly, the pāṇcasamskāra is considered as a sacrament necessary for initiation (diksā) for any one to get qualified for offering worship to God. Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas can get initiated into Vedic study through the upanayana. The Pāncarātra tradition prescribes the pāṇcasamskāra both for those who are dvijas (twice-born) and for those (Śūdras and women) who are not eligible to have the upanayana.

Vide

व्रह्मणै श्रीलिखै चैव: शूद्रत्म कुमळक्षणे ।
बर्णीयाय वैविविध्याय नित्ययुक्तैः स्वकमस्तु ॥
सात्वते विधिमात्राय गीत: संकप्पैण थः ।
द्यापरस्य युग्मायान्ते आदी कलियुगस्य च ॥


The word, ‘kītalaksana’ in the first line quoted above must be taken to mean one who has obtained marks of identity, and so must refer to one who gets identified as a Sāttvata by having the pāṇcasamskāra. ‘ca’ in ‘Śūdrasca’ can imply women, for women ASV—18
are not denied the *pañcasamskāra*. Thus, an additional or specific initiation is enjoined by this *Agama* as obligatory, while the *Vedic* tradition does not prescribing any such thing.

Thirdly, as a corollary of this *pañcasamskāra* initiation, it follows that those who are otherwise totally disqualified for understanding the act of worshipping God get adequate qualification. The *upanayana* is not enjoined for those who are not twice-born. On these grounds, it is evident that the *Pāñcarātra* tradition lays down rules for practices which can be claimed to go against the *Vedic* tradition.

But if Nārāyaṇa Himself has expounded such doctrines going against the *Vedic* tradition, how can He be justified in doing so, as He is thus contradicting His own statements:

> शास्तिस्मृतिः ममेवाहः।
> 
> *Visnudharma* 6.31
> 
> "The *Vedas* and Smṛtis are only My commandments"

> बेददेशः सत्वंर्दभेंव वेयः।
> 
> *BG* (XV 15)
> 
> "I alone am to be known through all the *Vedas*"

It is not possible to believe that the Lord would have preached the *Pāñcarātra* contradicting *Vedic* tenets

Fourthly, another argument against the *Pāñcarātra* system is set out in the *Utpattyasambhavādshkarāṇa* of the *Brahmasūtras*. This section contains the following *sūtras* —

1. उत्पत्त्यसंभवात्। (II 2.39)
2. न च कर्तुः करणम्। (II 2.40)
3. बिद्यानांदिविवेचे च तद्विपतिश्चेष:। (II.2.41)
4. बिवतिपतिश्च। (II.2.42)

446. The *Brahmasūtras* given here are numbered as 42 to 45 according to the *Śrībhāṣya* of Rāmānuja.
The Āgama declares that the self called Saṅkarsaṇa is born of Vāsudeva, the mind called Pradyumna from Saṅkarsaṇa and the ego called Aniruddha from Pradyumna.

Vide:

परमकारणात् परव्रजमुताद्वाचासुदेवात् संकर्षणो नाम जीवो
जायते, संकर्षणात् प्रुःससंस्क मनो जायते, तत्सादिनिरहसंशो
सहाकार जायत इति।

Śrībhāṣya on II.2. 39.

The self has neither birth nor death

Vide:

न जायते निषयते चा कदाचित्।

(Katha Upanisad. I. 2. 18)

In the Āgama passage cited above, the self is stated to have birth. Hence the Āgama of the Pāñcarātra system cannot be valid. This is conveyed in the Sūtra (II 2. 39) cited above.

That the mind called Pradyumna arises out of the self named Saṅkarsana cannot be admitted, because the breath, mind and all the sense organs are stated to spring from Brahmā.

Vide:

प्रत्साजायते प्राणो मनस्त्वेग्रहित्याणि च।

Mundaka Upanisad (II 1 3)

The self which is the agent cannot be the source for the mind. This objection to the Pāñcarātra doctrine that admits the rise of the mind from the self is conveyed in the Sūtra (II, 2 40)

If the adherents of the Pāñcarātra system seek to interpret the rise of the self and mind as stated in II 2. 39, by taking Saṅkarsaṇa and Pradyumna as Vāsudeva Himself in His essential characteristic of knowledge, the impossibility of origination is not contradicted, that is, the objection stands undisturbed. If all the four represent only Vāsudeva, the rise of one from another cannot be admitted as also the plurality of the divine manifestations. This is the sense of the Sūtras, II. 2. 42-45.
Fifthly, the *Pāñcarātra* position prescribing idol worship stands contradicted on the strength of the Vedic passages which prescribe the ways of obtaining release. The Supreme Reality is to be meditated upon.

Vide:

आत्मा वा अभे कृपया। श्रोतवयो मन्तवयो निदिष्यासितवयः।

(*BrU* II. 4. 5)

(O! the self is to be seen, listened to, reflected upon and contemplated upon.)

The *pranava* must be meditated upon.

Vide:

ॐ मित्रो तद्वस्त्रमुद्रीथमुपासीत।

(*ChU* I. 1, 1)

(One must meditate upon the *Sāma* chanting of the syllable ‘*Om*’)

These four *sūtras* together form an argument directed against the validity of the *Pāñcarātra* system

Sixthly, *Śāndilya*, it is said, learnt the *Vedas*, *Itihāsas*, *Purāṇas* and all other subjects required to be studied. He could not find, from what he had learnt, the final means to get what was good for him. He felt miserable at this. He prayed to God who gave him the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines.

Vide:

अष्टोत्तर भगवान वेदस्तत्तस्तोपायस्तितस्वित:।
हृदतिनि मया अर्जनः वाकोवच्युतानि च
न चेतेषु समस्तेषु संशयेन बिना कृपेन ।
श्रेयोमार्गः प्रत्यायमि चेत निद्रीविद्यति॥

(*ParS* I.3-4)

447 This bears close likeness to the treatment of a similar theme in the *Bhūmavidyā-prakārama* in *ChU* (VII 1).
The foregoing passages reveal that Sandilya had doubts as to the utility of studying various subjects. He could get full satisfaction only from the Pāncarātra doctrines. This attitude of Sandilya questions the usefulness of Vedic study and, as such, the Pāncarātra doctrines should be considered as anti-Vedic, thus losing their validity.

Seventhly, the Pāncarātra system is not included in the traditional list of subjects studied

Vide –

पुराणान्त्यायममांस्तः धर्मविशार्दां मिथिलातः।
वेदः स्थानानि विद्यानां धर्मं च चतुदेवः

Yajñavalkya Smṛti (I.3)

Eighthly, the Pāncarātra system is called Sāttvata. What does this word mean? It is a system belonging to the Sāttvatas, who are said to belong to a particular community called Vaiśya-Vrātya which includes Sāttvata, Sudhanvā, Ācārya and others.

Those who are devoted to worshipping an idol and earning thereby their livelihood, are called Devalakas. Those who do this work for livelihood without initiation are Karmadevalakas and those with initiation are Kaṭpadevalakas. Both are unfit for any responsible work in religious rites. They are to be kept at a distance from enlightened society. There are two more kinds of

448 Rāmānuja mentions this in continuation of the previous slokas cited from the ParŚ I 3-4. Sudarsanasārī notes that this sloka is the one following I 3-4, but it is not found in the present text of ParŚ I 3-4. Vide.

449 MS X 23 See Medhatithi on Ibid., X, 22, 23.
Devalakas, all of whom are not considered to be real Brahmins. In fact, they are treated as outcastes.450

Ninthly, what is offered to the deity, whether flowers or food, must not be taken by any one and must be thrown away in water. Acts of expiation are prescribed for taking such offerings which are called technically nrmālya 451

Vide:

निबेदितं यज्ञवं पुष्पं फलवथापि वा ।
तत्तदिल्यमिति प्रोक्तं तत्त्यत्त्तेन वाज्येत् ॥

SKS Sīvarātra.V.48,49.

The name 'Sattvata', the description of Devalaka as a priest for worship and the practice of taking nrmālya prove that the Pāncarātra Āgama deserves severe condemnation and so is totally invalid.

Finally, the derogatory expressions found in the Vaiśhānasa texts against the Pāncarātra Āgama and in those of the Pāncarātra against the Vaiśhānasa are to be taken into account while considering the question of validity. The Vaiśhānasa which is based on the authority of the Vedas, should be considered as not only valid, but also ancient. The Pāncarātra Āgama, it is argued, must therefore be treated as later in origin and unauthoritative.

450. Āgamanaprāmānya, p 8

451 Vide:

विष्णो निबेदितं शुद्धं सुनिम्नं भोज्यायते ।
भज्यन्तं इल्लो भुक्तवा चान्त्रायणं चरेत् ॥

Cited in SR. p 82 as taken from the Brahmapurāṇa

Cf Paras XII 36b, 37a, VII 44a for the prima facie view. See Das Gupta S. N History of Indian Philosophy III ch XVI for an account of objections of this kind.
The Vaikhānasa texts frequently refer to the Pāñcarātra practices as non-Vedic, tāntrika and as harmful to the people. The Vaikhānasa system is claimed to have been taught formerly to Vikhanas by Narāyaṇa Yājñavalkya and others introduced into it the mantras of the Ekāyana recension when there was some danger to the system.

The Vaikhānasa is called Saumya and the Pāñcarātra, Āgneya. The latter was revealed by Vāsudeva to safeguard the former. The former must be adopted for offering worship in villages and cities, in palaces and private houses. The latter should be confined to forests, hills, the seashore, banks of rivers and the confluence of holy rivers and the sea. That system which was adopted at first for excavating the ground for the construction of the temple must be continued to be adopted for subsequent purposes. The other system should not be brought in on any account.

Vide

आदी यज्ञन्नमाणित्य कुले वे कर्षणादिक्रमः ।
तेन कुर्यात्मित्रिष्णान्ते न कुर्यात्मन्यस्कारमः ||

SA LXXVIII II

If an attempt is made to mix up one with the other, the kingdom or administration of the locality will suffer. If an adherent of the tāntrika system touches the idol or enters the sanctum sanctorum of the Vaikhānasas, reinstatement and reconsecration must be done according to the Vaikhānasa system. If the Vaikhānasa mode is to be adopted in a temple which is based on the Pāñcarātra Āgama, there is no harm. But the reverse will be attended with grave consequences. Those who meddle with the Vaikhānasa mode would go to hell.

452 SA. LXXVIII 2-12, VK 77
A person who offers worship to an idol, whether of Śiva or Viṣṇu, through the tantrika mode is a Devalaka. That country will be prosperous where the Vaikheṇaṇa system is adopted. Any other system, when followed, will not yield any result. The Lord is stated to favour the Vaikheṇaṇa method and to like only the Vaikheṇaṇas who are His own sons, while those who follow the practice of initiation are His adopted sons.  

The Pañcarātra texts too do not favour the mixing up of the practices enjoined by them with those of the Vaikheṇaṇa texts.

Vide:  

The Vaikheṇaṇa system is severely condemned as yielding misfortune, and as ugly and impure. This mode is there to be replaced by the Pañcarātra system. In general, the rejection of the Vaikheṇaṇa mode of worship and the rules for purification, if the temple and the system of worship are connected with their priests or practices, are found treated in most of the Samhitās of the Pañcarātra Āgama under the heading of Prāyaścitta.


455 Vide

नन्द च वैज्ञानिकस्वास्त्रानुसारिण्यु काश्यपमरीर्विनार्गङ्गायतेषु शास्त्रेषु तदनुविचित्रायु चार्धिकायथा नन्देषु संश्रविविष्टल्लुपेशु भगवत्मृतियाच्छेदानिधिः पूर्णसुपदिशा त्वम् पात्या चार्जेत्?

However, the Samhitās called Ratnatraya, namely, Paṇḍakara, Jayākhya and Sātvata, do not have such insulting references to the Vaikhānasa system.

When the idol in a temple where the Pāñcarātra mode is followed is touched by the followers of the Vaikhānasa tradition, the idol is to be bathed in milk. It requires re-installation according to the Pāñcarātra mode.

Vide

\[\text{Vide} \]

\\\text{Vide} \]

Offering the bath to the deity is of different kinds. "The worst of the lowest kind" will have to be offered when the idol is touched by women or those who have not had upanayana or the Vaikhānasa Brahmins or those who are not Vaiṣṇavas. Homas to pacify the evil influence will have to follow.

Vide

Vide

The Pāñcarātra system must, on no account, be replaced by any other system of worship. The Vaikhānasa mode of worship is stated to be opposed to the Pāñcarātra system.

Vide

\[\text{Vide} \]

\[\text{Vide} \]

ASV—19
A priest who has had initiation in a temple according to a particular system, must not attend to excavating the ground and other acts according to another. It is not proper for one who is a teacher or priest to change the system of which he is a follower.

*Vide*.

एक्र दीप्लिंसतन्त्रे सिद्धते वा द्विजोतमः 
क्रियान्त कुष्ठाञ्चल कर्षणाद्विभासुपुरुषः 
नाचार्यकपमथात्विक्यं पूजाणं मधुविषयः 
तत्त्वमेव च सिद्धतमेव चापि न युज्यते 

*PaS*, IV 19 131-2

The *Vaikhānasa* system and those of the *Sāivas* are declared as non-Vedic and as not benign (*asaumya*), while the *Pāncarātra* is *saumya*. Hence worship should not be according to these modes.

*Vide*.

शैवशैवानसाध्या चाचंभेत्र कद्राचन ।
बैला तत्त्वे शैवस्याचेतित्वानुसारीः 
शैववेशस्यां चाप्यसोमेयं ततुद्वाह्वनम् ।
सौमयं तु सार्वभां चैव तस्मासोमेयं विद्विषयेते 

*Vs* XXXIX.279,280

The *Pāncarātra* system is stated to be the reverse of this in the *Vaikhānasa Āgama*.

*Vide*

सौमयं वैवानसं प्रोक्तमार्गेयं पाण्डराश्रकम् ।

*Sa*, LXXVIII.56.

The *Pāncarātra* mode of installation of the deity is enjoined even when the preliminary rites are performed in accordance with the *Vaikhānasa* or Sāiva mode.

*Vide*;

कर्षणाद्विभासुपुर्वं शैवानसाध्यातः 
पाण्डराश्रम शास्त्रश्रेण स्थापयेत् पुष्पोत्तमम् ।
At the same time, it is stated that the two must not be mixed up with each other.

Vide

तन्मातृ सर्वप्रयत्नेन न कुर्यात्तंत्रसंकर्मम् ।

Ibid. 285b

The Vaikhānasas system is stated to have been expounded by Bhārgava (Bhrugu or his descendants) for the well-being of the Vaikhānasas. This must not be adopted by the twice-born either for their private or public worship.

Vide

वैक्षाणसहितायथैय शास्त्रं भागेयविनिर्मितम् ।

नागुष्टेयं व्यक्तिप्रेणरत्ननोदेशं परस्य च ॥

Ibid 289b-290a

Those who take to the vānaprastha order are stated to be of two kinds, namely, Vaikhānasas and Sūtas. The latter offer worship according to the Agama taught by Bhārgava Bhrugu, it is said, expounded this Agama for the prātishloṭas.456

Vide

गये वैक्षाणसम्: प्रोक्तः भागेयाधामपूजकः ।

प्रतिलोमहितायथैयः भूमुणि तन्त्रसंकेतितम् ॥

Vṣ. XXXIX 295.

The systems of Pāncarātra and Vaikhānasa must not be mixed up as this would lead to total destruction.

Vide

पतेयं संकरं तत्र व्याधेम। हुमनीषिणः ।

तन्त्रसंकेर्देशेण स्वेत नद्ययसंकृयः ॥

Ibid. 297.

456 One is said to be a pratiṣṭoma in social status, if he is born of a higher caste woman and a man of lower caste.
In many respects, the Agamas differ from each other, and so diverse results happen when the practices prescribed by them are adopted. The deities who are installed by the procedures of different Agamas, would get enraged when the ways of worship get mixed up, and would bring ruin to the worshippers.

Vide

मात्रवतं साधनव्यथर्थ श्रीमं सर्वविनाशातः ||
वैश्वानसात्त्मकायं नसुवातःसत्यजयेत ||
अस्थानस्थापिताः कैचितः स्वस्थानवष्टिताः ||
देवात्र्यकौष्ठ सर्व विनम्यसंशयः ||

Ibid 302,303.

Elaborate rules of expiation are prescribed when the practices of the Pāñcarātra system get mixed up with those of the Vaikhānasa.457

Thus, both the Vaikhānasa and the Pāñcarātra Agamas prohibit the adoption of the practices prescribed in each other. On this ground, it is contended, the Vaikhānasa is held to be valid, leading to the declaration of the Pāñcarātra Agamas as lacking authority.

Right from Yāmunācārya who wrote the Agama-prāmāṇya defending the validity of the Pāñcarātra, scholars have been putting forth fresh grounds to maintain it.

The Pāñcarātra system was revealed by Nārāyana Himself.

Vide

पाञ्चरात्रस्य कृत्यस्य तत् नारायणः स्वयम् ||

Mbh Sānta CCCLIX 68a

इदं महोपपितं चुतुच्चरसम्बन्धितम् ||
सांवस्थयोगकृतं तेन पाञ्चरात्रातुसाध्वितम् ||
नारायणामुखाध्विणि नास्त्रोपाध्यक्षमुनः ||

Ibid. CCCLVIII.62,63a

457. VIS XXXIX
Narayana is stated here to be only the 'speaker' (or expounder) and not the author of the *Pancarātra*. It is a great *Upaniṣad* related to all the four *Vedas* and built up by *Sāṅkhya* and *Yoga*. When the Supreme Being is mentioned here as the 'speaker', the validity of this *Āgama* cannot be questioned. The Ekāyana recension is claimed to have been the basis for the development of the system. This is said to be the root of the big tree of the *Vedas*, of which the *Rk* and others are the branches. Of course this recension is now lost. The question does not therefore rise about its validity, much less whether that validity is intrinsic or otherwise. Thus, the *Pancarātra Āgama* is as valid as the *Vedas* are held to be.

The *Pancarātra Āgama* is thus based on the contents of the *Vedas*. It is pro-Vedic, not because *Vedic* mantras are frequently cited for the rituals, but also because its *tāntrika* mantras are based on *Vedic* passages. Certain *Gāyatrī* mantras are found evolved out of the *Vedic* *Sāvitrī* and included as part of *Vedic* passages. This adaptation of the *Vedic* pattern is followed in *Pancarātra Āgama* and therefore cannot make it anti-*Vedic*.

The practices of a sacramental character are not non-*Vedic*, but are based on the *Pancarātra* tradition which in turn is based on the Ekāyana recension. The ceremonial practices of the *Pancarātra* system are exclusively based on this recension and do not deserve condemnation, as is the case with the practices of the *Vaikhānasa* system which are based on the *Vaikhānasa-sutra*.

With reference to the practice of *pancasamskāra* enjoined by *Pancarātra* tradition, it must be said that while the *Vaikhānasa*
tradition recognizes mere birth in the family of the Brahmins who belong to the Vāskyāna-sūtra as itself a qualification for its members (who have had upanayana) for worshipping God ceremonially, the Pañcarātra system prescribes an initiation in the form of pañcasamskāra. With the liberal intention of permitting every person, irrespective of caste and sex, to worship God personally, this act of initiation is enjoined. The procedure of pañcasamskāra is not Vedic, but its practice has sufficient Vedic authority. Vedic mantras are used and the procedure is on the lines of the Kalpasūtras. This is not a proof for the Agama’s non-Vedic character. The pañcasamskāra is the only initiation (dīkṣā) for the Śudras and women and a second one for those who have had upanayana. Such initiation is not an anti-Vedic practice in the case of the twice-born, for a special initiation is ordained even for those who have had upanayana for performing certain Vedic rites. This is also called ‘yajñadikṣā.’

Vide:

मातुर्यकिप्पिज्जनं द्वितीयं मौक्षिकवन्धने ।
द्वारिय यज्ञदीक्षावां द्विजस्य अतिकृतिचोददानात् ॥

MS II. 169

With this special initiation, the Ksatriya and Vaiṣya are declared to have become Brāhmaṇas.

Vide:

ब्रह्मणो च यज्ञ जायते यो कृष्टस्ते ।
तस्माद्राज्ञेयवैहित्याचि ब्राह्मण इत्याधेद्यतिः ॥

Āpastamba Srauta X 11 5-6

The pañcasamskāra makes one who receives it Vaiṣṇava, which Vyāsa calls krtalakṣana. Thus the second initiation is not enjoined by the Agama only. It is taken to have been inspired by the Srauta practice.

461 Special initiation is ordained only for those who get a general kind of initiation. For details, see P. V. Kane, History of Dharma Sastra, Vol. II, Part 2, pp. 1137-40.
The charge which is levelled against the Pañcaratra that those who are not qualified for the upanayana are also given this initiation and declared qualified for worshipping God, cannot be sustained. The rathakāra, who does not belong to any of the first three castes and is not entitled to the upanayana, is permitted by the Srautasūtras, to consecrate the Vedic fire. Similary, permission is given to the nīgādasthapati, who is not also qualified, to have the upanayana to perform sacrifices such as the Agnihotra and Darșapūrṇamāsa. It is also curious to note that the rathakāra, who is held to be not qualified to the upanayana, is allowed to have it under certain circumstances. When viewed dispassionately, one can see the growing tendency of a liberal and broad-minded attitude in extending the application of the rules of the Kalpasūtras. This is not conservatism, but progress. It is this tendency that is witnessed in the Pañcarātra Agama.

That the Pañcarātra tradition is not anti-Vedic becomes evident from the creation of the tāntrika mantras. No attempt is made to stretch the rules of the Kalpasūtras beyond limits and deprive them of their sanctity and individuality. The tāntrika mantras are not really Vedic, but they could be treated as mantras. There are instances of even ordinary non-Vedic passages having been elevated to the level of mantras. Such passages find their place in the Vaikhānasa texts also which are held to be Vedic to the core. The objections against the Pañcarātra tradition which are noticed in the Kūrmapurāṇa and elsewhere should have been raised with a view to safeguard the Vedic traditions from getting mixed up with tāntrika ones.

462 Eg, Diksāniyesti of LT, Introduction. p 14.
463 See note under fn, 133.
464 Vide

वाराण्य वर्धं महीयरं वज्रवांश्रणप
VK, p. 368 Cf, SA XXXVI PaS, IV, 13, 187-143;
When God declared that *Sruti* and *Smṛti* are His commandments and that He could be known only through the *Vedas*, what is meant is that the *Vedas* are of supreme validity and the *Smṛti* comes next to them when it does not clash with their authority. Otherwise, the epics, *Purāṇas* and the host of kindred works would have to be treated as of no authority. Like the Āgama which was taught to his disciples by Vikhanas on the basis of the teachings of the *Vedas*, the *Pāñcarātra Āgama* too was revealed by God Himself to sages, and, as Vyāsa put it, this Āgama, revealed by God, represents the quintessence of the *Upanisads*. The validity of both the Āgamas cannot therefore be questioned.

The *Utpattyasambhavādhirakarana* forms part of the second chapter of the *Brahmasūtras* called *Avirodhādhyāya*. Here it is shown that the concept of *Brahman* as developed in the first chapter cannot be controverted by any concept of any other system whatsoever. This must imply that this *adhikarana* dealing with the *Pāñcarātra* system, should be interpreted to prove that it is not authoritative. This is claimed to be pre-supposed by the author of the *Brahmasūtras*.

The view of Sankara on this *adhikarana* is contained in his *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, which is the earliest available commentary. He interprets the sūtras here as refuting the view of the *Pāñcarātra* system, that the self-called Sankarsana is born out of the Supreme Being, Vāsudeva. His objection is directed only against this doctrine. He admits openly that the other aspects of this Āgama are not refuted.

Vide

योक्ष्यो नारायण: परोद्भवकात् प्रविष्टः परमात्मा सर्वत्मा स अत्मात्मामाननेकाः व्यूहावस्थित तद निराक्रियते। (II. 2. 43)

This is because the *Upanisads* recognise this self-manifestation 465 अभिगमनन्दाधाराधर्म न प्रतिविष्यते (Ibid.) 2. 2. 42.

465. ChU. VII. 26. 2,
Nor is there any objection to worship as prescribed by Abhigamana. Even if Saṃkaraṣaṇa and others are to be treated as gods, then there will be four gods to be recognized which goes against the Pāṇcarātra tradition that Vāsudeva is the only one Supreme Deity. If they are qualities, namely, knowledge etc., then this amounts to treating, for example, the same ‘Saṃkaraṣaṇa’ as a person and also as his quality. This position is inadmissible. Besides, Sāṇḍilya is stated to have given up the study of the Vedas and taken to that of the Pāṇcarātra system. This goes against the authority of the Vedas.

From this, it appears that Saṃkara is not against the Pāṇcarātra Agama as such, except for the doctrine that the self, Saṃkaraṣaṇa, arose from Vāsudeva. From the name of the adhikarana and the first sūtra there, it seems that the entire objection against the Pāṇcarātra tradition is based upon this contention only.

The Viśistādvalta thinkers treat this adhikarana as conveying not merely the objection to the Pāṇcarātra tradition, but also the answer in favour of its validity. The first two sūtras represent the prima facie view and the next two show that the Pāṇcarātra Agama is valid. There are certain adhikaranaśas in the Brahmasūtras which are of this kind in containing both the objection and answer for the particular concepts or theories treated therein.

The first sūtra (II.2 39) which refutes the statement of the Agama that the self in the form of Saṃkaraṣaṇa is born, is based on wrong premises: for this Agama does not state anywhere

486. ‘Adhikarana’ is thus defined.—

विषयो विद्वेश्यवैभेच पृवृपवस्त्रथोत्सरम् 
निर्वेयस्यस्यति पञ्जाः शास्त्रधिकरण स्वहोः 

Sabdakalpadruma I. p. 37.


ASV—20
that the self is born, but emphatically declares that the soul is eternal. The statements made in the Agama text that the self, mind and ego are born must be taken to mean that the deities presiding over these are born. Besides, this Agama passage must be interpreted like the Upanishad passage which says that he who has no birth is born in several ways. By 'birth' self-manifestation is meant. It does not mean that the mind and ego are produced from the self as stated in the sutra II 2.40, for all these are stated to be produced from Brahman.

The sutras, II 2.41-42, could be taken to convey the siddhānta view. According to the sutra 41, the objection to the statement that the self, Samkarṣaṇa, was born of Vāsudeva, cannot stand, as Vāsudeva and the other three are only of the nature of knowledge and the origin (of the world). That is, these four are only Brahman which is knowledge and which represents the original cause of the world. The words, 'self', 'mind' and 'ego', denote Samkarṣaṇa, and others who manifest themselves in particular forms. Hence the question of the self getting birth does not arise. The very same Agama text which states that the self, Samkarṣaṇa, is born of Vāsudeva and the mind, Pradyumna, from the self, declares that matter and the self are inseparably connected with each other and that the self is known definitely to be beginningless and endless.

467 Taittirīya Āranyaka III 13 1.
468 Vide: 

Also यो वासुदेवो भगवान् वेददेवो निर्युग्यात्मकः 
स्वयः स एव राजेन्द्र जीवः संकर्षणः प्रभुः 
संकर्षणात् प्रत्युत्तर न नोभूतः स उच्यते 
प्रद्युच्योत्तिर्फलस्तु तोषहिन्सारः स ईश्वरः 

(Mbh. Śanti, CCCXLVIII, 39, 40.)
Vide –

This passage runs counter to the one which refers to the birth of the self, and so the latter passage should be taken to mean that there is no birth for the self from Vāsudeva or for the mind from the self. ‘Birth’ must be taken in the sense of self-manifestation, as is done in the case of the Upaniṣad passage:

अजायमानो वहुः विजायते

(TA III.13.1)

Regarding the sūtra, II.2.42, it must be noted that it is interpreted differently in different systems of thought. The particle ‘ca’ in it does not have any additional sense of argument, but only the sense of objection or contradiction to what is contained in the previous sūtra. It is claimed to mean that what is taught in the Pāñcarātra Āgama stands contradicted. This contradiction should arise only from the Vedic passages as referred to in the sūtras, II 2 39-40. Such passages as the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (I 1 1) and Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad (II 4.5,) enjoin meditation as the means of getting moksa. The Pāñcarātra texts, on the other hand, prescribe worship of God, primarily in the form of the idol. Hence a contradiction to this Āgama prescription is held to be found in the Vedas.

This kind of interpretation does not stand to reason, for the very aim of the Āgamas is not to prohibit the method of meditation, but to prescribe idol worship as an easier way which could be practised by all without distinction. So it is not anti-Vedic. Rāmānuja’s interpretation which is based upon that of Yāmunācārya, seems to be reasonable. That the self is born is contradicted in the Āgama texts is the sense of the sūtra II.2.42.

The objection of Saṅkara is not justified. If the four manifestations of God as Vāsudeva, Samkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna
and Aniruddha are quite independent of one another, there is the question of more than one Supreme Being. But these are only the manifestations of the same God and so have only functional differences. The other objection which is based on the adoption of the Pāñcarātra Āgama by Sāndilya is not also tenable, for Sāndilya did not question the validity of the Vedas. He could not obtain satisfaction from them, which is an indication of his difficulty to get it. This does not suggest his irreverence towards the Vedas, and as such the Āgama tradition is not opposed to the Vedic tradition. Hence no objection could be raised against the validity of the Pāñcarātra Āgama on the basis of this adhikarana, which aims only at silencing the objection that was entertained against its validity at the time when the Brahmasūtras were composed by Bādarāyana.

It is interesting to note in this connection the views of some other schools of thought on this adhikarana. Bhāskara, the exponent of the Bhedābhедavāda, treats all the śūtras in this adhikarana as directed against the validity of the Pāñcarātra Āgama. While interpreting the Śūtra, II 2.41, he questions the propriety of taking the self, mind and ego as the self and notes that the episode of Sāndilya is directed against Vedic authority.

Madhva, the exponent of the Dvaita school, takes a different attitude. This adhikarana Is, according to him, not directed against the Pāñcarātra Āgama, but against Śāktism and Saivism. The rise of the world from Sakti cannot be admitted, nor should Devi, Tripūrā and Bhairavi be treated as the source of the world. Siva also is not the cause. If knowledge is held to be the cause, then that itself, being the Supreme Reality, could be admitted to create the world. The Vedic passages declare Viṣṇu as the cause, and so any other interpretation stands contradicted, as it is opposed to Vedic authority. It is a matter of opinion as to how far this interpretation could be admitted.
The previous adhikaraṇa called Paśupatyadhikaraṇa (II. 2. 35-38) is devoted to the rejection of the systems which are devoted to the worship of Śiva. It is not the Paśupata system alone that is meant there, but all of them, including the system of Śaivism. Hence this adhikaraṇa cannot be concerned with Śaivism. Treating it as directed against Śakti-ism is meaningful, but the Śakti cult is not totally free from the principles of Śiva's worship. In a way, this cult may be taken to have been condemned in the previous adhikaraṇa itself, though not fully. Anyway, Madhva's interpretation is original, and avoids the difficulty which Śaṅkara and Bhāskara were required to face, namely, partial acceptance of the validity of the Pāñcarātra doctrines. The Viśiṣṭādvaita interpretation is sane and sound in that the objection to the validity of the Pāñcarātra Āgama is noted and the refutation of this objection is admitted. Treatment of a prima facie view and its rejection at the end in one and the same adhikaraṇa do not affect the unitary concept of the adhikaraṇa.

Nimbārka, the exponent of the Svābhāvikabhedabheda-vāda, interprets this adhikaraṇa as containing the refutation of the system of the Śāktas. Śakti cannot be the cause, as no effect could be produced by it without the control of Purusa over it. The śūtra 40 (which is numbered by him as 43) means that Śakti cannot be the cause, if Purusa is the agent. The śūtra 41 (numbered as 44) admits Śakti to be the cause, if it rests in Brahman. That Śakti could not be admitted as an independent cause is conveyed in śūtra 42 (numbered as 45), as it is contradicted by Śruti and Smṛti. In this context, it is curious to find that Kāśmirabhaṭṭa, the sub-commentator of Nimbārka's Brahma-sūtra-bhāṣya which is called Vedānta-pārvijāta-saurabha, follows the Viśiṣṭādvaitic interpretation in his Kaustubhaprabhā. Nimbārka thus follows the line taken by Madhva.
Vallabha, the founder of the Suddhādvaita school of Vedānta, notes that this section is against the school of the Bhāgavatas. He holds that objection is taken against only one aspect of the Pañcaratātra doctrine, namely, the rise of the self, Samkarṣaṇa, from Vāsudeva. While interpreting the sūtra, II 2.44 (according to his numbering), he writes that the objection against the Pañcaratātra cannot stand, if all the four vyūhas are of the form of knowledge and the origin of the world. Objection would however be valid, if all are to have absolute independence.

As regards the objection raised here on the passage of the Āgama which mentions the birth of the self, Samkarṣaṇa, from Vāsudeva, it is difficult to understand what made the exponents of the schools which are opposed to the spirit of this adhikarana, ignore a passage of the Taittirīya Upaniṣad(III.13.1). While the word ‘jayate’ used there is not objected to with reference to Brahman’s birth, objection is raised when it is used with reference to the self. By taking the sense of the root, ‘jānt’, as standing for ‘prādurbhāva’, it is quite easy to note that ‘birth’ means only emergence or manifestation. Only what already exists will make its appearance. Similarly, the root, ‘nas’, meaning ‘adarsana’ denotes disappearance and not destruction or annihilation. As such, when the self is said to be born, what is meant is that it has been in existence even before its appearance which is possible only as encased in a physical body. Hence ‘Samkarṣaṇa’ is a word used to refer to a deity who has emerged from Vāsudeva with a body and also to mean the self (jīva) which it controls.470 It is in this sense the following passage is required to be understood:

यत् प्रसूतः जनत् प्रस्तिस्तोयेत जीवान्यस्थस्वर्ज भूत्याम्।
(Nārāyanīya Upaniṣad 1)

Regarding the objection that the Pañcaratātra Āgama is not included in the list of subjects which are intended to be studied,
it must be understood that the list enumerating fourteen subjects in the \textit{Y\ddot{a}j\ddot{n}avalkya-smṛti} (1-3), is not exhaustive, for there is another list\textsuperscript{471} which mentions eighteen subjects, adding four more, namely, \textit{Āyurveda, Dhanurveda, Gāndharva} and \textit{Arthaśāstra}. \textit{Itihāsas} are also included here. Similarly, the \textit{Agamas} are to be considered as a subject of study, and their absence from the list does not declare their invalidity.

The word, \textquote{\textit{Sāttvata}}, did refer to a \textit{Valśya tribe} which became elevated in social status by the birth of \textit{Kṛṣṇa} in it. But it came to denote the \textit{Pānca-rātra system} and hence lost its pejorative sense. The validity of the system does not lie merely in its name. It is the doctrine that proves its validity. Therefore, the word \textquote{\textit{Sāttvata}} is derived in more than one way so as to make it deserve the name of the system. One of them connects it with the word, \textquote{\textit{Sat}}, which means \textit{Brahman}. Those who believe in \textit{It} or do work (i.e., worship) for \textit{It} are called \textquote{\textit{Sāttvantaḥ}.} Their system is called \textit{Sāttvata}.

\textbf{Vide}

\begin{quote}
\textit{सत्य सत्यं श्रयं तदन्त: सत्त्वन्त: ।}
\end{quote}

\textbf{Or, सात्त्विका श्रयविविद्येशपामिदि कर्म शास्त्रं वा सात्वत्त्व तत्कृत्यं भाच्चायणो वा सात्त्विक:}

\textit{Paraśarabhaṭṭa: Bhagavad-guṇa-darpaṇa on Visṇusahasranāma, Sloka 54.}

The second way of explaining \textit{It} is by taking \textit{It} as delighting those who adopt \textit{It}.

\textbf{Vide:}

\begin{quote}
\textit{सात्त्वति (सुखयति) भाषितान्} \hfill \textquote{(Ibid)}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{471} V.P. III, 6. 26-29.
A third way is by taking the word ‘Sāt’ in the sense of the Supreme Being:

Vide:

सात् (परमात्मा) स शतेष्यामस्तीति वा लाख्वतां; 
लाख्वस्तो वा महाभागवताः. (Ibid.)

This word ‘Sātvata’ may mean a despicable person in its conventional sense. When it can yield another acceptable sense, through etymology, the latter sense should be preferred, particularly when the conventional one could be left aside. Otherwise, the word ārārya472 which is grouped here, along with the word, ‘Sātvata’, should mean a low-born man, while the conventional sense of a learned teacher is to be preferred.

The word ‘devalaka’ refers to those who are not initiated according to the Pāṇcarātra rites and who worship deities like Rudra.

Vide:

भवेदेवलको योवे सद्दकालिकपीकः.

cited in the Āgamapramāṇya p.72

Vide

शिवकेशरायोः पुजायेकाहमयि वा चरेतुः.
दृष्टिः वर्षकार्येणु ते वे देवलकः स्मृतः.

KA XXXVI 32,33.

Thus, there is no stigma attached to the priest who offers worship in the temple according to the Pāṇcarātra tradition, and hence invalidity could not be attributed to the Pāṇcarātra system on this ground.

Nirmālya is prohibited to those not devoted to God. Sandal, unguent and others which represent nirmālya, are applied to the holy idol of Viṣṇu and become purified. They purify the devotees of Viṣṇu who take them. So it is sinful to refer to it and food offered to Viṣṇu in degrading expressions. When these are offered to Viṣṭvakṣena, they become defective as nirmālya, and so they could be partaken before being offered to Viṣṭvakṣena, by the devotees of Viṣṇu. Hence the Pāñcarātra Agama does not lose its validity for prescribing the partaking of 'nirmālya'.

Lastly, the authority of the Pāñcarātra system cannot be assailed on the ground that the Vaikhānasa system contains vehement attacks on this Āgama. That the Vaikhānasa is based on Vedic authority cannot be an argument in favour of its superiority over the Pāñcarātra, since the latter is also based on the Vedas to a limited extent and this can be used as a defence in its own favour. Mutual recrimination is noticed in the texts of both the Āgamas, and so it is not easy to settle the authority of one at the expense of the other. It would be prudent to treat each one as valid without reference to the other. In all probability such passages which condemn the authority of each other should have got into these texts at a later date. Vedānta

473. ParŚ XXXI 197-199,

474. Vide, Āgama-prāmāṇya, pp 74-78

475. ParŚ. XXVII. 24b, 25a VS. offers a wise interpretation. Nirmālya is a reject when offered to other deities (XXIX 12). This text refers to the view of some scholars who hold that what is offered to Viṣṇu, must be taken by His devotees. (Ibid, XXIX 13a) Cf. Naradīya-samhita XXIV. 80b 81.

The following passage in it is worth nothing:

नेत्रो द्वाराच्छ नेत्रेष्ठ मनुष्यकुरं लर्म ।
किचिदःस्यायाप्य पूजार्थ बिध्वस्तेनेत्य पूर्वैः ॥

II. 122b, 123a

ASV—21
Deśika remarks that such passages should have been interpolated by those who were greedy (or eager) to occupy forcibly each other's place and thereby were keen to taste the sugarcane of pleasure, or by bachelors who were degraded priests.

Vide:

ताति नूतसिंधुभङ्ग्राणकृंचिकृत्सिः प्रस्तुतानि परस्पर-स्थानास्रकिरणलोकवेंद्रञ्जिनिः पूजकाथ्येनिदित्तानि।

PR. p 101,

It is possible to offer some kind of defence for this mutual attack. Each system is anxious to speak of itself in the highest self-praise. Naturally, to achieve this, it is required to throw mud at the other.

Vide:

न द्वि निल्लक निल्लक निल्लक परम्परे मध्य लेन्नूकार्हितमानृतिः

Hence serious thought need not be bestowed on this question. One of them must not be unduly extolled, ignoring the intrinsic worth of the other.

Such indulgence in mutual accusations is not confined to these two Agamas. The Vedas too contain passages which illustrate this tendency.

Vid.:

कृष्णाय सन्मित वज्जुनिपादो दृष्टा वाकस्तिष्ठियं
लाभायो व: कदन जेष्ठ लस्वर भोगित सत्यं नेत्रप्रस्तुतम्।

Aitareya Aranyaka. II 3 6 8.

The sense of this passage is as follows:

अक्षिमात्र पुरोहितं (I 1,1) is a प्रात.
प्रात: प्रात: असुरान तें वाकस्तिष्ठिय (Aitareya Brähmapa V 31 6a) is an utterance (गाथा). There is a passage technically called kumbyā which takes the form of giving instruction for good conduct.
Vide:

अचार्यःशिशारूप युज्याः।

(Sāyāna on *bid.*

This is illustrated by the following passage:

श्रन्वार्यम् योज्यान कस्म कुरृ भा खुरृध्यः।

*S.P.Br. XI.5.4.5.

The *ṣk* cited above is of a general nature. The *gāthā* and *kumbyā* given above are treated as particular *ṣks*. All the three are metrical and are of a definite length and so are held to be within limits (*mita*).

इन्हें त्योजात्वा वाध्यवस्थ (T.S. I.1.1.I)

is a *yajus* passage.

गर्ने महाँ अलि ब्राह्मण भारत (T.S. II. 5.9.1.)

is a *nīgāda* which is stated as of the nature of addressing another. Then there are *arthavādas* which are referred to here as *vrtha vāk*.

Vide

वेदवच्च्वाय या च राजसभायां परिहासादिद्वेत्ते ला सत्था बुधा वाकः

(Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa III.5.3.1)

The *yajus*, *nīgāda* and *vrtha vāk* together constitute one whole and are treated as *yajus* itself, but the formation here is not regular and so is said to be not within a particular limit (*amita*).

3. The *Prāṇava* is uttered as part of the *Sāma* chants as in बोमििति सत्यं न

This is not true (*anṛta* - that is, it is a lie.

Here the *Yajurveda* and *Sāmaveda* are referred to as inferior to the *Ṛgveda*. The latter alone has regularity, while the *Yajus* has no regularity and the *Sāma* is only music and has no relevance to reality. The purpose of this passage is not to ridicule or condemn the *Yajurveda* and *Sāmaveda*, but to show how
superior the *Rgveda* is to both of them. A passage of this kind occurring in the *Aranyaka* of the *Rgveda*, illustrates how contradictory passages occur even in the *Vedas*. This does not prove the other two *Vedas* to be invalid.

Similarly, the *Sāmāveda* is condemned by treating it as belonging to the departed souls and contrasting it with the *Rgveda* which is said to be divine and with the *Yajurveda* stated to be human. Hence its sound is impure.

Vide:

![Sanskrit text]

The passage which mentions Śāṅdilya to have been disappointed in not getting at the truth by studying the *Vedas* and to have become enlightened by studying the *Pāńcarātra* doctrine must also receive the same interpretation. The reference to his disappointment with Vedic study is not intended to devalue the *Vedas*, but to extol the *Pāńcarātra* *Āgama*.

Similarly, it is said that, when weighed against each other, the *Mahābhārata* was found to be heavy, while the *Vedas* were light. This is only praise conferred on the importance of the *Mahābhārata* at the expense of the *Vedas*.

Vide:

![Sanskrit text]

Thus these statements convey that while a particular text is intended to be extolled, other texts are given an apparent condemnation. This must be treated only as *arthavāda*, and so the texts which are condemned cannot be treated as...
unauthoritative. The mutually recriminatory passages in the Pāñcarātra and Vaikhānasa texts can only show that each of these Agamas is valid, without getting affected in the least by such condemnation.

The Pāñcarātra Agama should not be treated as unauthoritative, because of the alleged deceitfulness of Vāsudeva as stated in the passage:

वासुदेवाभिवादने केनभिन्नभियुतमुना।
प्रणीतं प्रस्तुतं तत्त्रामिति निक्षितुमो चयमु॥
(cited in the Agamaprāmāṇya p. 23.)

The Pāñcarātra Agama was revealed by Narayana who is identified with Vāsudeva and glorified in the Upanisads as omniscient and compassionate, and so evil designs could not be attributed to Him.

The Vedas, are claimed to be intrinsically valid by not being the composition of any author. But their authority could be questioned, as they too contain contradictory passages like works of human authorship. 476

Vide:

1. भातिरात्रे पोडवितं गुह्यति।
   नातिरात्रे पोडवितं गुह्यति।

2. उदिते जुहोति।
   अनूदिते जुहोति।

3. वीडिमिर्यंजैत।
   यैवर्यंजैत।

We may resolve the contradictions by treating the first set of passages as giving rise to different results when the practice is

carried out independently, the second as intended to be practised by persons with different qualifications for each and the third as to be carried out at different times.\textsuperscript{477}

The \textit{Pāncarātra Āgama}, though it has an author or proclaimer in omniscient Nārāyaṇa, \textit{is free from all kinds of defects such as deception, delusion and perversity}. It is therefore valid, and the more so, because it gives correct knowledge about the Lord. The glorification of Viṣṇu in this Āgama as the supreme among the gods, is a question already settled in many of the texts which declare, on the authority of the \textit{Upanishads}, that He alone is great. Such texts are in the \textit{Mahābhārata}, \textit{Viṣṇupurāṇa}, \textit{Varāhāpurāṇa}, \textit{Manusmṛti} and others. In particular the \textit{Mahābhārata} plays a significant role here. It is in the Sāntiparvan of the epic that the \textit{Pāncarātra} doctrine gets detailed treatment. The author Vyāsa, who gets the entire credit for this, is believed to be not different from Bādarāyaṇa, the author of the \textit{Brahmasūtras}.\textsuperscript{478} Hence the objection to the authenticity of the system is questioned in the \textit{Brahmasūtras} (II, 2 39–42) and is answered in favour of admitting the Āgama’s validity.

The origin of Ekānti-dharma, which is the basic foundation from which the \textit{Pāncarātra Āgama} is developed, is described in

\textsuperscript{477} \textit{Srūtaprakāśika} on II 2 42

\textsuperscript{478} Sudarśanāsūtra cites passages from the \textit{Skandapurāṇa} to support the identity of Vyāsa with Bādarāyaṇa (\textit{Srūtaprakāśika}, Madras edn. with ten commentaries, pp 59-60) \textit{Vedāntadesika} also cites the above passage. \textit{Vide. Tattvaśikā} (Madras edn with ten commentaries, pp 73) He cites a passage from the \textit{Bhāmaś} of Vācaspatimītra

\textit{Vide}:

\begin{quote}
चाहे च परमाणुवधानाध्यात्मकाः
श्रेष्ठसूचनेन वेदद्वासादाय परब्रह्मवेदी ।
श्रावणशस्त्रवचनारायणम् नमो भवतो हरेः ।
\end{quote}

All other exponents of \textit{Advaita} dispute this identity. For a detailed account on this matter, see \textit{SVOL. VII}
an interesting way in the Śāntíparvan, ch.358. The sages called Phenapa were the earliest persons to practise this dharma. Valkhanasa got it from them and Soma received it from Valkhanasa. Then this dharma disappeared. In the Cākṣuṣa cosmic epoch, Brahmā got it from Soma who taught it to Rudra, who imparted it to the Vālakhilyas in the Kṛtyuga. Then this dharma disappeared for a second time. In the Vācika manifestation of Brahmā, it appeared from Nārāyaṇa who imparted it to the sage, Suparṇa, who preached it thrice whence it got the name Trisuparpāṇa. Vāyu received it from Suparṇa and preached it to the sages. Again, this dharma went out of sight. Nārāyaṇa brought it out and taught it to Brahmā.

Vide:

धर्माय जान्त जगाध्वं सर्वस्य सलंग्रहम् ।
आरण्यकेन सत्त्वं नारायणसुखोद्वेलम् ॥

Mbh Śānti, CCCLVIII. 30b,31a.

Brahmā created the world with the help of this dharma. He taught this to Svārociṣa Manu from whom his son, Sankhapāda, got it. It passed on from him to his son Sudharmā. All these happened in the Kṛtyuga. This dharma then disappeared for the fourth time in Tretāyuga. Nārāyaṇa brought it out and taught it to Sanatkumāra from whom it was acquired by Viraṇa Prajāpati who taught this to the sage Raibhya. It was then transmitted to his son Kuṣṭipāla. The dharma disappeared then for the fifth time. Nārāyaṇa taught it again to Brahmā from whom it passed to the sages, Brhīṣadās; from them to the sage Jyeṣṭha who studied the SāmaVEDA and from him to King Avikampana. Again, for the sixth time this dharma was lost. Brahmā was then taught this in his seventh birth by Nārāyaṇa. Dakṣa got it from Brahmā and gave it to Jyeṣṭha, his grandson by his daughter. From him it passed to Ādiyā and then to his son Vivasvān. At the beginning of the Tretāyuga, Vivasvān gave it to Manu who taught this to Ikṣvāku. Again it disappeared and was restored by Nārāyaṇa who taught this to Nārada.
This system is called *Pāñcarātra*, wherein the Lord’s manifestations are one, two, three and four under various reckonings. The *Saṅkhya, Yogs, Vedas* and *Āraṇyakas* (which stand for the *Upanisads*) form part of the system.

Vide.

एकन्यूहित्विमागो वा काचिद ७क्ष्यूहंसङ्खितः ।

निन्यूहित्वापि साष्ठ्यात्तज्ञनूहंद्वयें ॥

प्रसेक साष्ठ्ययोग वेदार्णकमेव च ।

परस्परार्ण्यज्ञानेतारिन पाष्ठरात सं कस्यते ॥

Ibid 81

The *Pāñcarātra* doctrines were promulgated by seven sages called *Citraśikhanāins*. Their names are Marici, Atri, Angiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu and Vasishtha. They wrote 1,50,000 *stokas* The Lord commended what they composed as authoritative, conveying His commandments. Svayambhuva Manu and after him Usanas and Bṛhaspati preached them. King Vasu received them from Bṛhaspati. Vasu practised them and then the system disappeared.479

The *Citraśikhanāins* mentioned here are only the well known seven sages whose names are given differently in some sources.480 Whether Vasu obtained these doctrines from Bṛhaspati requires consideration. An account of the practice of these doctrines by Vasu is given in the *Mahābhārata, Saṃsparvan*, Chapter 343. King Vasu performed the *Aśvamedha* No animal was offered as victim, but instead the effigy of an animal, prepared out of grains brought from the forest. Viṣṇu was pleased with this and appeared before the king and received the offering, but was invisible to others. Bṛhaspati who was the priest there, became angry when the king informed him that Viṣṇu received the


480 The seven sages who are called *Citraśikhanāins* are included among the nine pupils of Vikhanas See fn 287.
offering in person. He blamed the king for discarding the animal sacrifice and using the effigy of an animal made of flour in its place. Besides, the Lord did not appear before him. Brhaspati refused to associate himself further with the performance of the sacrifice. The sages, Ekata, Dvita and Trita, the mind-born sons of Brahma who were present there, recounted their vain attempts to visualize the Lord. In spite of severe penance, they could not see Him. Brhaspati was then convinced, and he helped Vasu in completing the sacrifice.

From this account, it is clear that King Vasu was following the principles of religion as set out in the Pāncarātra doctrines. Brhaspati learnt about them only on the occasion when the sacrifice was performed by Vasu. It is only possible to say that Brhaspati agreed to continue his participation in the sacrifice, when convinced of the value of the Pāncarātra doctrines by the sages; and in this sense, he was also an exponent of these doctrines.

An account of the visit paid by Nārada to Svetadvipa gives some information about the Pāncarātra Āgama. Nārada went to an island called Svetadvipa and found certain persons who had no sense-organs, did not take food and were motionless. They emitted fragrance. He saw there the three sages, Ekata, Dvita and Trita. They told him that at the conclusion of their

481 These are stated to be sons of Brahma (Mbh Sānti CCCXLIV. 6). There are hymns in RV, SY and SV for which they are seers.
Vide RV IX. 33, 3 4, 10 1 3. Their hymns glorify Viṣṇu. Yāska derives their names in different ways

निरुक्त IV. 6.

About the inadequacy of penance, vide:

ASV—22
penance for a thousand years, they were advised by an incorporeal voice to go to Svetadvipa and meet the holy persons there. Accordingly, they did so, but could not see anything there, being blinded by light of extreme brilliance. They could not see the Lord, but with divine grace they again performed penance and beheld men white in complexion, resembling the moon in lustre, and ever uttering mantras with folded palms. This was mental japa. All of them were of the same uniform splendour. Suddenly, a flash of light appeared before the sages who saw a group of people uttering the word ‘namah.’ The vision of these sages became blinded by their extreme brilliance. Only the following sloka which they were uttering was heard by the sages.

Vide

जिन ते पुण्डरीकाक्ष नमस्ते विष्णुभावम्।
नमस्तेःस्तु हसीकेश महापुरुष पूव्ज॥

A breeze was then wafting fragrance. Those persons were conversant with the fivefold division of time (pañcakāla) and they were exclusively devoted to Hari (Viṣṇu) and worshipped Him with great devotion through mind, speech and action. The sages felt that the Lord should have presented Himself before them, as they heard those persons utter words indicating the Lord’s presence. These sages, however, could not behold the Lord. Those persons did not observe the presence of the sages there. A voice addressed the sages asking them to wait till Tretāyuga. The sages were doing japa from then onwards. As yet, they had not seen God and they informed Nārada that he too could not do so.

However, Nārada went to Svetadvipa and praised Hari, addressing Him and using several expressions such as ‘Pāñcarāṭrika’, ‘Vaikhanasa’, ‘Śrīvāsa’, ‘Vāsudeva’ and others. The Lord appeared before him. Nārada praised Him. The Lord said that even Ekara and other sages could not behold Him. After directing him to go away from that place, lest his presence
should disturb the devoted life of the persons there. He went out of sight

Närada witnessed then those persons entering into the Lord. This is called *vilaya*, which is described in the *bhūtaśuddhi* process. Vāsudeva is declared to be the soul of all beings, Saṃkarṣaṇa the self, Pradyumna the mind and Aniruddha the ego.

In the brief period when Närada beheld the Lord, the latter gave him an account of His divine descents. Ekata and others were born as monkeys when the Lord incarnated as Rāma. Närada learnt that the Lord had four forms (Vāsudeva, Saṃkarsana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha). The Lord referred to Himself as Sātvata instead of as Kṛṣṇa.

After the Lord disappeared, Närada went to Badarikāsrama and learnt the *Pañcarātra* doctrines from Nārāyaṇa. Vyāsa is stated in the epic to have gone to the Milky Ocean and returned to the hermitage.

The doctrines of the *Pañcarātra Agama* are set forth by Vyāsa. Aniruddha is the lord of creation. Nara and Nārāyana explain the glory of Bhagavān. The descent of God as Hayagrīva and the *Ekāntadharma* are well depicted. The Lord is stated to be the expounder of the *Pañcarātra*.

Vide.

*Pañcaratrasastra kṛṣṇasthā bākara tu bhagavān śvamṣa ।
Mbh S'ānts. CCCLIX. 68.*

482 *Ibid* CCCXLVI
483 *Ibid* CCCXLVII
484 *Ibid* CCCXLVIII. 85
485 *Ibid* 62-80
486 *Ibid* CCCXLIX. 89
487 *Ibid* CCCLIV
488. *Ibid* CCCLVII, 47-78, CCCLVIII.
The contents of Chapters 342 to 359 of the *Sāntiparvan* show how the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines arose from Nārāyaṇa and were expounded through the ages. The statement that Vaikhānasā obtained them from Phenapa suggests that the *Vaikhānasā* system is ancient and was not different, as it is held now, from the *Pāñcarātra*. Vaikhānasā was taught the *Ekāntidharma* by Phenapa, and this is called *Pāñcarātra* 489

The accounts given in the *Vaikhānasā* texts are confusing.490 *Vaikhānasā* is said to be *Śrīśāstra*, having the name 'Ekāyana'. In another context, Yājñavalkya and others are stated to have scented danger to the *Vaikhānasā* system and created another in which the *Ekāyana mantras* were freely used 491 This came to be known as the *Pāñcarātra*. If this be the case, either the *Vaikhānasā* system (which was also called *Ekāyana*) should have been using the *Ekāyana mantras* and as such could not be different from the *Pāñcarātra*, or the former must not have been based on the *Ekāyana* recension. When the account given in Chapter 358 of the *Sāntiparvan* is considered, it seems that the *Vaikhānasā* was the forerunner of the *Pāñcarātra*. Perhaps these are not two systems with minor differences, but only one and the same system with different names. That this is probable is evidenced by the use of mantras in which the names of Vasudeva, Saṃkarsana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha occur.492 At least, the second and third belong to the *Pāñcarātra*. Vasudeva is not given prominence in the *Vaikhānasā* system.

The account given in the *Mahābhārata* refers to *bhūtaśuddhi*,493 but there is no reference to *yantra* and *mudrā*. The *Ekāntidharma*
which was expounded and promulgated by several authorities at different periods, should have been practised exclusively by the descendants or pupils of Vikhanas who developed a *vyāha* doctrine consisting of five deities—Viṣṇu, Puruṣa, Satya, Acyuta and Aniruddha. As the *dharma* continued being expounded and developed, the Kṛṣṇa cult should have given rise to the *caturvyūha* concept which forms part of the *Pāñcarātra* but is not noticed by the *Vaikhānasa* system. The *Vaikhānasa* may have had its development in a single family professing the *Vaikhānasa-sūtra*, and so was not adopted by others. The *Pāñcarātra*, on the other hand, had to appeal to a very large community which had no specific doctrine for worship.

It is at this time that the two systems had to assert their individuality and superiority over each other in a spirit of rivalry. The texts in both the systems therefore contain passages of mutual attack, and these should be treated as interpolations made by those who were interested in advocating their own doctrines. It is thus that we find certain passages which contradict one another. When viewed without bias, the two systems seem to have had the same source, though their development might have been in slightly different directions.

It is said in the *Mahābhārata* that Āditya got the *Ekāntidharma* from Jyestha. He taught this at the beginning of the *Tretāyuga* to Vivasvān and it passed on from Vivasvān to Manu and from Manu to Ikṣvāku. This *Ekāntidharma* consists in the practice of devotion exclusively to Viṣṇu. To be devoted, one has to carry out the act of worship which is of various kinds and is brought under *karma* or *kriyā-yoga* according to *Patañjali*, the author of the *Yoga-sūtras*. This *dharma* can

494 *JS* IV 13b-14a,
495 *SA* LXV 117, LXXXIII. 4, *VS* XXXIX. 278, 279, 285b,
496 *Mbh Śanti* CCCLVIII, 41-52,
497 *Bhojavṛtti* on *YS*, II. 1
be equated with the *karma-yoga* taught in the *Bhagavadgītā* where the Lord mentions that it was taught by Him to Vivasvān who transmitted this to Manu. From Manu it passed on to Ikṣvāku. Then it disappeared. The order in which this *karma-yoga* was transmitted is the same as in the case of Ekāntidharma in the epic. The contention of many scholars is that the *Bhagavadgītā* does not refer to the teachings of the *Pāṇcarātra*. Yet the order in which the doctrine was handed down is the same in both the *Pāṇcarātra* and the *Bhagavadgītā* and the temptation is irresistible to discover the *Pāṇcarātra* doctrines in the *Gītā*.

The doctrines of the *Pāṇcarātra* Agama must be admitted to be of ancient origin. They were known to Vyāsa, the author of the *Mahābhārata* The *Vaisnavadharma-parvan*, in the *Āśvamedhika-parvan*, contains an account of the *Pāṇcarātra* doctrines. The concept of *vyūha* is frequently referred to there.

The *Jitante Stotra*, which contains 128 *stokas* in six sections, is a *khila* of the *Rgveda*. The verses are unaccented. When Nārada visited Śvetadvipa and met the sages, Ekata, Dvita, and Trīta, they advised him to repeat a *Jitante sloka* and taught the *stotra*. Then, Nārada went to a mountain called Jayanta where Brahmā was performing penance and taught it to him. Accordingly, this found a place in the epics and the *purāṇas*.

The first five sections are expected to be recited each at a part of the day into which it is divided according to the *Pāṇcarātra* system. The last is to be recited at any part of the day.

498 *Bh G* does not teach the doctrines of the *Pāṇcarātra*, as is clear from the absence of reference to the *vyūha* doctrine and the fivefold division of the daily routine.

499 *Mbh līva CII 84, CIV 84-89.*

500 The *Jitante-stotra* is stated to have formed part of the *Rgveda Khila* by Periyavācchan Pillai in his commentary on this *stotra*. 
day. The name of the stotra is taken from the first sloka which has already been quoted in the earlier account of the visit of Nārada to Svetadvipa and which begins with the words, “Jitāmi te”.

Some of the concepts of the Pāñcarātra system are found here. For instance, God has six auspicious qualities which are the foremost among His countless qualities 501 The three vyūhas, Samkarsana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, have each two of these qualities 502 The number of vyūhas 503 and the divisions of the day 504 are also mentioned The doctrine of self-surrender 505 which has a special importance in the Pāñcarātra Āgama, is referred to frequently. The Lord’s figure is gloriously depicted and the left hand of the Lord holds the club which is a particular feature of the idol. 508

The date of this work cannot be settled. The opening stanza could have been there from the very earliest times. This is treated as a mantra in the Pāñcarātra texts, 507 some of which 508 contain an exposition of it. By itself, it does not convey any particular concept of the Āgama. The stotra as such could have been composed during the period when the particular concepts became fully developed. It cannot be late in origin, as most of the Pāñcarātra 509 works refer to it and cite passages from it.

501 Jitante Stotra II 30 , V 2.
502 Ibid IV. 4
503 Ibid II 31, IV 5
504 Ibid. 18, 19, 32, III. 3, IV. 9, 10.
505 Ibid. V. 4, 8
506 Ibid. II 4, 5, 22
507 LT. XVII. 20
508 AhS. LIII.
509 Ibid. LT, XVII. 20; GS, XIII, 223b-224a.
AGAMAS AND SOUTH INDIAN VAISNAVISM

The *Visnupurāṇa* contains some of the doctrines of the *Pāñcarātra* system. Vasudeva is the Supreme Lord. He is present everywhere and everything rests in Him.

*Vide*.

सर्वत्रासौ समस्तं च वस्तुनिष्ठतेति वै यतः ।
तत्तस्त वासुदेवे ति विद्विषि: परिपीते ॥

*VP*. I 2. 12.

The word, 'Bhagavān', refers to Viṣṇu, possessing the six qualities of *jñāna*, *śakti*, *bala*, *aśvarya* and *tejas* without a tinge of any blemishes.

*Vide*.

शत्याक्षितवेदवाच्यीयंतेजांश्वोपतः ।
भवचक्षुर्वाच्याच्यां चिन्ता हेयगुणादिति: ॥

*VP*. VI 5 79.

Viṣṇu with Śrī is the Supreme Reality. Śrī is never without Him.

*Vide*:

निम्नेषप्रयो जगन्माता विषयो: श्रीरणपाधिनी ।
यथा सर्वतो विषुमस्थतयेवं द्विजोत्तम ॥

*VP* I 8 17.

She is Tusti and Sakti.

*Vide*

सन्तोषो भगवान्लोकमस्तुमीयं शांति ।

*Ibid* I. 8 17.

अवप्रमो गद्यपाणि: शक्तिलोकद्विजोत्तम ॥

*Ibid*. I. 8. 29a

510 *VP* VI. 5, 75, 80, 82.

511 *Ibid*. VI, 5. 74, 76, 85
She awards mokṣa to the selves.

Vide:

यन्विषया महाविषया सुन्दरविषया च होमने।
भात्मविषया च देवि तथं विसुक्षिपूलदायिनी॥

_Ibid._ I. 9 120.

There is mention of the four manifestations of God in _vyūha_ form 512

_Viṣṇu_ pervades both matter and the selves and is the Self of all. Both the animate and inanimate beings are enveloped by _Viṣṇu_'s power which sustains them. This power is of the nature of these.

Vide:

प्रभाने वस्तुण्यो व्यापी चेतनात्मात्मवेदन्।
प्रभाने च पुमांश्चेव सर्वं मृतात्मभूतम्॥

विष्णुशक्त्या महाबुद्ध चतौऽसंशयधार्मिन्।
तयोऽसंश्यावधार्मिन्यो च च॥

_VP._ II. 7. 29, 30.

शक्ति: सापि तथा विष्णो: प्रधानपुरुषात्मकम् ॥

_Ibid._ II 7 32a.

These doctrines which belong to the _Pāṇcarātra_ system, are dealt with in this _Purāṇa_. Its date must be before the fourth century A.D., as a reference is made to it in the _Manimekalai_, 514 a Tamil classic composed about the third century A.D.

Since these doctrines are of ancient origin, they could have been incorporated in this _Purāṇa_, but the indebtedness of the

512 _Ibid_ V 18 58.

513. That S'ri is the source of matter and selves is admitted by both the Vaikhanasa and _Pāṇcarātra_ _Āgamas_. _Vide_ —_VK._ pp. 493-494, _LT_, 6. 3-25

514 _See fn._ 183

ASV—23
Pancharatra texts to it, at least for some of them, cannot be completely ruled out.

The tenets and some of practices which pertain to the Pancharatra are mentioned in the Bhāgavata God is sāttvātām pati, the leader of the Sāttvatas. The fourfold manifestation of the Lord is frequently referred to. He has Śrī as His consort and has the six qualities. Reference to the self as 'jīvakōsa' indicates the author's acquaintance with the Pancharātra doctrine. There is no method other than prapatti to get mokṣa. This Purāṇa is doubtless late in origin and contains references to the tantrika mode of worship. But this is not of much help in determining the antiquity of the purāṇas.

The Viśnudharmottara, Sāndilyasamṛti, Purāṇas like Pādma, Vāraka, Gāruḍa, Linga and Vāmana and the Itihāsasamuccaya contain topics dealt with in the

515 Ibid Bh I 2.14,
516 Ibid. I. 5. 37.
517 Ibid. I 16. 30.
518 Ibid I. 3 36
519 Ibid X 82. 48.
520 Ibid. XI 12 15.
521 Ibid XI 11 37 Abhinavagupta (C 1050 A.D.) mentions the name 'Bhāgavata' and its eleventh skandha and quotes the 17th śloka in the 20th chapter in his commentary on Bh. G.

522 Part III
523 Cited in RTS I. p. 424
524 Uttarakhaṇḍa ch. LXXXVIII.
525 LXVI 11, LXIX. 25a.
526 I 137,
527. II. 7
528 XIII-XVIII.
Pancharatra texts. The dates of these works have not been fixed with any degree of certainty. It is therefore hard to find out whether the Pancharatra texts are indebted to these sources or whether what they say on these doctrines should be considered to bear the influence of the Agamas.

The ancient Tamil classics contain a graphic description of the gods, particularly Visnu. The account is identical with that given in Sanskrit works like the Visnupurāṇa. The Pariśādal which is a collection of small poems composed about the beginning of the Christian era, has six pieces devoted to the praise of Visnu. Among them, the third selection is said to refer to Visnu as glorified in the Agamas.

Vide 'Visnudu ahanra kēlvi anaittinum
Paripādal III. 48.

The word 'kēlvi' is taken to mean Agama. The four vyūha manifestations of Vāsudeva, Samkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha are mentioned in the following lines:

Senkatkāri karunkan vellai,
Ponkatpaccai pānkan mā al.

Ibid. III. 81 12

The two passages cited above require some consideration. The word, 'kēlvi', in the first passage need not necessarily mean 'Agama', much less the Pancharātra. The Vaikhanasā Agama too glorifies Visnu exclusively. It may mean any text like a purāṇa or some other kind of religious literature.

While interpreting the second passage, the commentator, P.V. Somasundaranar, writes that the two lines refer to Vāsudeva, Samkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha respectively, as they can be identified from their colours, black, white, red and green. He bases this identification on the black complexion of Kṛṣṇa, who is treated as Vāsudeva (son of Vāsudeva), and the white one of Baliṣṭhāma who is the same as Samkarṣaṇa and who
is taken to be Ādiśeṣa descended on earth Vāsudeva is, however, not Kṛṣṇa, but the primeval Lord. The colours of the four deities are given differently in the Pāñcarātra texts. According to one version, they are white, red, yellow and black, and another has it that they are white, blue, yellow and black. The second version mentions that Śaṁkarśana's colour is similar to that of indrānīla, a sapphire which is blue in colour.

These two lines of the poem may, however, be taken to denote the four deities through their representation by their colours, without considering discrepancies in the colours of the deities as given in the different versions. The Pāñcarātra doctrines should be taken to have been popular in Tamil Nadu long before the beginning of the Christian era as the Paripada is taken to have been compiled about the first century A.D.

Such a date may not be accepted by some scholars who would offer a different interpretation. The colours may stand for the complexion of the Lord in the Kṛta, Treta, Dwāpara and Kali yugas respectively. The Vaikhānasa and Pāñcarātra texts and the Bhāgavata make a reference to this concept. If this interpretation is regarded as forced, the conclusion will not be in favour of the prevalence of the Pāñcarātra doctrines at the beginning of (or prior to) the Christian era, but it may accept the prevalence at that time of a concept of a general kind which is not characteristic of any particular Agama.

530 Bh XI 5 20-32
531 LT, X 27-38. For a slight difference in the account, see Māṇavaḷamahāmuni Tattvatrayabhaṣya, p. 103
532 See Introduction to the ParS,
533 VK p 103
534 SS V 82-92, of LT XXXVI. 62-63.
535 See under fn. 513.
The same work refers to the shrine of Viṣṇu at Tirimālirūficolai near Madurai in Tamil Nadu. It mentions the black-complexioned Kṛṣṇa and white-coloured Baladeva.538 The banners of the two deities help in identifying them. Similarly, the temples of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma are referred to in the Śilappadikārām 537 and Puranānūru 538. In both these works, the two deities are identified by their complexions and also by their banners.

The mention of Balarāma in the above texts may suggest that the Pāñcarātra concept is meant here. Or Balarāma could have been respected, as He is considered as representing an incarnation of Viṣṇu. So the cult of Vaishnavism may be indicated here. Particularly, we have to take into account the fact that the Vaikhānasa form of worship is adopted in the temple at Tirimālirūficolai where both Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma receive worship. Or this need not indicate the prevalence of the Vaikhānasa Agama during the period, for the Vaikhānasa Agama does not attach importance to the worship of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa as supreme deities.

A composition of Tirumangai Āzhvār is held to refer to the Pāñcarātra Agama in a passage 539 where the words, ‘apam nū’, occur. But this may refer to any text that is based on the Vedas. The Āzhvārs refer to the different complexions of God in different yugas 540. They mention the five weapons of Viṣṇu, 541 including the club (gadā) which has to be held in one of His hands according to the Pāñcarātra tradition, 542 and by a

536 Paripādal, III, IV, XV
537 Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma Śilappadikārām, V, 2 171, 172.
538 Puranānūru, 56.
539 Periya Tirumozhi X 6 1 See com by Periyavaccānpillai.
540. For instance, Tiruccandaviruttam, II.
541. Ibid 24, 97.
542, LT, XXXVIII, 54.
whom Vāsudeva and Arjuna are adorable. This would mean that Vāsudeva and Arjuna were considered as fit to be worshipped. Posing a question as to why the word, ‘Vāsudeva’, could not be taken as derived from the word, ‘Vasudeva’ with the suffix ‘-an’, according to the Āstādhyāyī (IV 1 114) in the sense of offspring, Patañjali, the author of the Mahābhāṣya, remarks that the word ‘Vāsudeva’ here is the name of a god and not that of a Kṣatriya, the latter sense referring to Vāsudeva, a Kṣatriya.

Vide:-

\begin{quote}
\textit{Mahābhāṣya on ibid.}
\end{quote}

The Kāśikāvṛtti offers a clear explanation:

\textit{लंबैश्वर देवताविविशेष्य न काशियात्या}

The word ‘Vāsudeva’ which then is required to be taken as the name of God is derived in the \textit{Padamañji} :-

\textit{बलवत्यसिन्म स्वर्मितिज्युतपस्याः परमात्मन पूजा संब्हा}

Here the author, Haradatta, mentions that Vāsudeva is the name of the Supreme Being (Paramātman). He adds further that when it is said in the Kāśikā that ‘Vāsudeva’ is not the name of a Kṣatriya, it is implied that it is not a patronymic. The compound ‘Vāsudevārjunābhyaś’ is of the \textit{dvanda} type and must have the word, ‘Arjuna’ as its first member because of the less number of vowels, according to the rules

\begin{itemize}
  \item अजाधवस्त्रम्
  \item अवपाध्वतरस्त्रम्
\end{itemize}

\textit{(Āstādhyāyī, II.2.33,34)}.

But in accordance with the \textit{Vārttikā},

\begin{itemize}
  \item अस्ववदितं च
\end{itemize}

\textit{(on II.2.34)}.\n
\textit{THE PANCARATRA AGAMA 183}
the word ‘Vasudeva’ denotes one worthy of respect and so is placed as the first member.\textsuperscript{546}

This evidence proves that about 800 B.C., the period of Pāṇini, the word, ‘Vasudeva’, already meant the name of a person who is shown respect. That it is not the name of a Kṣatriya is made clear by Patañjali who lived about 150 B.C. One can say that Pāṇini may not mean God, but only the son of Vasudeva. But it cannot be wrong to hold that Patañjali must have been following a tradition to which Pāṇini also belonged. ‘Vasudeva’ is the name of God and not of Vasudeva’s son alone. As the later commentators explain, there is justification for taking the word ‘Vasudeva’ in the sense of the Supreme Deity of the Pāñcarātra system. This would give a date about 800 B.C when the Pāñcarātra doctrines became developed into a system.

It is held by some scholars that Arjuna, whose name is mentioned in the sutra cited above along with that of Vāsudeva, was also respected and that there was also an Arjuna cult in vogue then, which however became merged into the Vāsudeva cult and came to be forgotten in later days.\textsuperscript{547} This contention deserves serious consideration. Four different suffixes are enjoined in the sutras (II 3.96-99) in the sense of ‘bhakti’, which may mean attachment or liking as the illustration āpūpta, pāyasika, māhārājika, nākulika, pāṇiniya and others suggest. Similarly, ‘bhakti’ can be taken to mean devotion in the case of Vāsudeva and mere affection in the case of Arjuna. Arjuna received perhaps respect from some admirers for his valour or his intimacy with Kṛṣṇa.

There are certain inscriptions of the centuries preceding the Christian era which suggest unmitakably the worship of Vāsudeva.

\textsuperscript{546} Kāśika on the Astādhyāyī IV 3, 98.

\textsuperscript{547} Arjunayana was a living creed in Jaipur and Agra areas, according to Samudragupta’s Allahabad inscription Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, Vol III p. 8, ed. by Fleet
during that period. The Basnagar Inscription which belongs to the 2nd century B.C., identifies Vāsudeva with Krṣṇa. It mentions a column with the figure of Garuda on its top as erected by Heliodoros, the son of Dion and an inhabitant of Takṣasila. He is referred to as a Bhāgavata. He came as an ambassador from the court of Antialkides to King Kauśīputra Bhagabhadra. The column is for Vāsudeva, God of gods. It was not erected as a symbol of victory, but as connected with the temple of Viṣṇu situated on the spot. Perhaps there was a temple of Vāsudeva which required a column, and that was raised by Heliodoros.

Another inscription, of the first century B.C., has been found at Ghosundī in Rajasthan. It refers to the construction of a stone-enclosure called Nārāyanavataka for the images of Vāsudeva and Samkaraṇa by a devotee of Śiva who performed the āsvamedha.

Vide кारितोष्य राज्या भागवतेन गाजायनेन पाराशरीपुष्केण क्षेत्रातेन ज्वमेधदातिना भगवं थां संकर्षणवाचुदेवाभ्यंतातनां क्षेत्रात्मां पूजाशीलप्रकारो नारायणवाटक .

Sircar: Select Inscriptions, pp 91 f.

It is found here that both Samkaraṇa and Vāsudeva had temples and enclosures in stone, implying their worship. The temples or at least the images of the two deities should have already been there. The word ‘Samkaraṇa,’ which occurs here as the first member of a compound of the dvandva type has no sanction according to the rules of grammar, since Vāsudeva is held to be more worthy of respect than Samkaraṇa. Perhaps, Samkaraṇa is here to be taken to refer to Balarama, elder brother of Kṛṣṇa, and so he is to be treated with greater respect.

ASV—24
There is an inscription\textsuperscript{549} belonging to the first century A.D. at Morawell, seven miles west of Mathura. It is called Saudas and records the installation of five vīras by a lady called Tosa. The five vīras are taken by Lüders to be Baladeva, Akrūra, Anādhīṣṭi, Sarāṇa and Vidūratha\textsuperscript{550} T.N. Banerjee identifies them as Saṃkaraṇa, Vāsudeva, Pradyumna, Samba and Aniruddha\textsuperscript{551} This evidence is not in favour of the prevalence of the Pāñcarātra. It is only the Vaskhānasa Āgama that admits the concept of the panchavītas\textsuperscript{552} Even the opinion of Lüders does not support any Āgama tradition.

To the first century A.D belongs the Nanaghat cave inscription (Bombay State) of Naganikā, the Satavahana queen\textsuperscript{553} It contains the expression, "Namo saṃkarṣana-vāndevānām." Naganikā's husband performed a number of sacrifices, including the atvamedha. The position of the word 'Saṃkarṣana' as the first member of the compound is to be justified in the same way as in the Ghosundāl inscription.

The inscription of Pravarasena II in the 18th year of his reign and those of Skandagupta and the copper plate grant of Prabhāvatī Gupta, daughter of Chandragupta II, contain the words 'bhāgavata', 'paramabhāgavata', 'bhagavadpādanudhyātā' and 'atyaantabhagavadbhakta' all of which suggest the prevalence of the Pāñcarātra doctrines. But it is possible to take the words 'bhagavat' and 'bhāgavata' as not referring to any particular Āgamic source, but as reverent references to God as Viṣṇu. The Vaskhānasa texts use generally the name, 'Viṣṇu', to denote the Supreme Being. They use off and on the name, 'Bhagavān', also to refer to Him.\textsuperscript{554} And so the words, 'bhagavat' and 'bhāgavata', need not be from the Pāñcarātra exclusively.

\textsuperscript{549} Epigraphica Indica Vol.XXIV, p. 194.
\textsuperscript{550} Luder's Inscriptions.
\textsuperscript{551} T.N Banerjee.
\textsuperscript{552} KA, XXX 130b-131.
\textsuperscript{553} Sircar: Select Inscriptions I, p. 188.
\textsuperscript{554} VK. pp. 507, 508; SA, Appendix II, 1, 89.
Finally, the Bhāṣa, ‘Pādatāḍitaka’ of Śyāmilaka refers to a temple of Pradyumna.

Vide.

The word, ‘devayatana’ shows that worship of Pradyumna was in vogue in the seventh century A.D. There seems no other reference to a separate temple for Pradyumna.

As there is not any serious objection to admit that the composition of the Mahābhārata and the beginning of the Kaliyuga almost coincided, doctrines of the Pāṇcaratra Agama, as they are treated in the Sāntiparvan of the epic, could not be later than this date. Due respect should be given to the tradition which mentions that the doctrines recorded in the version received by Nāradā, were revealed for the seventh time, and that they were originally preached in the Kṛtayuga. To the sophisticated mind of the modern scholars, such an ancient date for these doctrines, or as a matter of fact for any aspect of Hindu culture, is not only absurd, unsupported as it is by circumstantial evidence, but also is against the trend of current thinking which assumes civilization to have been preceded by a period of pre-literate society. The existence of a society in the remote past which could have evolved and nurtured theistic concepts, framed the ways and means of adoring God and developed them through practice, is, according to modern scholars of the West and those of the East who have chosen to

Śyāmilaka, the author, could have been a friend of Bāṇabhaṭṭa, the famous prose writer. He was a kinsman of Bāṇa and a great scholar and poet. Vide Harsacarita III, p 87 He cannot be be identical with Śyāmilaka, the teacher of Mahimabhaṭṭa (1050 A.D.), as he is cited by Abhinavagupta (c 1000 A.D). Therefore he may be placed as a contemporary of Bāṇa (c 800 A.D.) Some scholars place this work before 500 A.D. Vide —Dr Dasaratha Sarma, ‘Date of Pādatāḍitaka,’ Ganganath Jha Research Institute Journal, XIV, Parts 1-4.
abide wholly by the verdicts of the former, opposed to the
dictates of reason and thinking. Absence of historical data is,
of course, a handicap in arriving at a conclusion on many of
these issues. On this account, it is not absolutely necessary to
discard tradition as baseless. At any rate, the Mahābhārata
needs to be placed in the remote past, and so the Pāñcarātra
doctrines could be admitted to have received development
about 3000 B.C.

It will be of interest to note that Pāñcarātra's antiquity is
borne out also by some literary evidence. Baṇa, the author of
the Harṣacarita, is the earliest Sanskrit poet to mention the
Pāñcarātrikas as the followers of the Pāñcarātra system. The
Brahmasūtras take note of the objection raised against the
validity of the Pāñcarātra and offer also the refutation of this
Sāṅkara (c. 800) is the earliest commentator on the Brahmasūtras to offer his views on the Pāñcarātra doctrines Utpala's
(c. 850 A.D) Spandapradīpikā quotes from a Pāñcarātra śruti
and Pāñcarātra Upanisad.

Vide:

पाःराजश्र्युतार्थम्- यद्रुत् सोपानेन प्रासादमास्तेतु
ज्ञानेन वा नदीं तरेतु नद्र्क्ष्याक्षेण हि अवघानु प्रासा अवगान्तवः।

Here 'Sāstā' refers to Viṣṇu.

पाःराजःपनिष्टिः प्रकताः प्रकताः इति कीर्तितः।

LT XV 18a

पाःराजःपनिष्टिः च वक्ता च वच्च्छः च भोक्ता च भोज्यः।

p 40

556 p. 237
557 II. 2, 39-42
558 Brahmsūtrebhāṣya on II 2 42-45,
559 Vijayanagar Sanskrit series
Some more passages are also quoted in this work under the general name of Pañcarātra. Names of the texts are also mentioned such as Jayā, Sāttvata, Pauṣkara, Viṣṇuyāmala, Śrīkālparā, Vashāyasa, Hamśapārameśvara, Saṃkarṣanaśūtra and Jābālasūtra.

The last-mentioned two works may be taken to suggest that there could have existed in Kashmir some aphorisms of the Pañcarātra doctrine associated with the authorship of Saṃkarṣana and Jābāli. Perhaps this Saṃkarṣana is the same as the character with this name playing the role of the Pañcarātrīka in the Āgamaṛādmbara of Jayanta.560

Jayanta (c. 830 A.D) argues in his Nyāyamāṇjarī and Nyāyakalikā 561 in favour of the validity of the Pañcarātra Āgama. Bhāskara (c. 900 A.D) who commented upon the Brnhmasūtras, was well aware of the Pañcarātra doctrine. Rājaśekhara, the reputed dramatist of the same period, refers to the Vyuha doctrine of the Pañcarātra system.

Vide : 

नायन्त्रवन्तः कवयः पुराणः सकृमः चूंयतोपन्यन्तासिताः ।
सवेर्वरानु प्रति मधपलिवद्वयमस्तक्षरणवक्त्वेवः ॥

Kāvyamīmāṁsā (G.O.S.) p. 38.

However, Somadeva Sūri who flourished about 950 A.D. does not mention the Pañcarātra system and its doctrines, while he takes care to refer to the doctrines of the systems of thought with which he was familiar then. It will not be wrong to infer that the Pañcarātra doctrines were not so well known in all parts of India, particularly in Deccan.562

560. Āgamaṛādmbara, Acts III & V.

Nyāyakalikā, pp. 3-4

However, they were fully known and the texts wherein these were treated were also quite familiar to Yāmuna (916-1041 A.D.) who lived in the south and wrote his Āgama-prāmāṇya 563 in which the Ekāyana recension of the Veda is said to have been proved to be not of human origin. The wording in the text of Yāmuna may permit the interpretation that this was written by Yāmuna himself 564. It may also be taken to have been the work of a writer in Kashmir. It is thus evident that the Pāñcarātra doctrines are very ancient and their popularity for religious practice and philosophical thinking is attested by many writers from about the beginning of the Christian era.

Aparārka, the author of a commentary on the Yājñavalkya Ārtha, attests to the authority of the Pāñcarātra Āgama and declares that its validity could not be questioned 565.

Regarding the exotic origin of this Āgama suggested by some scholars, it must be said that there is partial justification for this. From the account contained in the Śāntiparvan of the Māhābhārata, it is found that the doctrines represented the seventh version when they were received by Nārada from the Lord in the Śvetadvīpa. This island is stated to lie somewhere in central Asia, near Pamir mountains. Whether Nārada paid his visit to this island towards the close of Dvāparayuga cannot be easily decided. Bhīṣma is simply repeating an account of Nārada’s visit. This version, like many of the Itihasas and genealogical accounts included in the Mahābhārata, must be of very ancient origin. The date or dates of these cannot be settled for want of evidence. They may have been composed even when the sacrifices were popular, and so could

563  p. 69.
564  Van Buitenen holds this view. See ibid. note 300.
565  Ācārādhyaśa, śloka 1.
be placed at least when the Kalpasūtras were framed though not before that period. Besides, the previous versions of the doctrines are not stated to have been released from Svetadvipa. Again, there is no evidence to prove that the frontiers of ancient India did not extend to the west and north-west beyond the present limits. With the present state of knowledge regarding the various pieces of evidence, it is too early to be dogmatic about whether or not the Pāñcarātra traditions and doctrines are of foreign or indigenous origin.
CHAPTER VI

PĀNCARĀTRA ĀGAMA DOCTRINES

The Pāncarātra system is called also as the Sātvataśāstra. There are other systems also having the name ‘Pāncarātra’ with some attributes, such as ‘Gaṇeśapāncarātra’, ‘Devipāncarātra’ and others 566 There is also a system called ‘Saptarātra’

Vide:

बिष्णुवादीं प्रतिष्ठादि वक्ष्ये ब्रह्मू श्रुण्भ मे |
प्रोष्कतानि पञ्चरात्राणि सततायाणि वै मया ![

Agni-purāṇa XXXIX-1

In all these cases the word ‘ṛatra’ must be taken to stand for day and night (ahorātra) This indicates that the explanation for the name ‘Pāncarātra’ should be traced to sources other than that which is suggested by Prof Buitenen.

Many a stream of thought has converged to form a synthesis to serve as a basis for the edifice of the Pāncarātra system. The Vedic concept of ritual gives the religious background for offering worship. The Paurānic theory of Brahmā as the creator brings in the creation of the cosmic embryo and his birth there as the Hiranyagarbha That the Ultimate Reality is partless, subtle and manifests itself in the form of the world is traceable to the contents of the Upaniṣads. The principles of the evolution of matter into the world are incorporated to explain the process of material creation which is based on the Sāṅkhya system. The disciplines of meditation are derived from the Yoga system. The manifestation of the Ultimate Reality in the form of sentient and insentient beings, the worship of the Deity mentally and outwardly, the installation of idols, the elaborate procedure for

566 Including the Saptarātra, seven kinds of Pāncarātra are known. Vide Nāradapāncarātra I. 1, 56-57.
the construction of the temple and the conduct of festivals owe their origin to Agama traditions. These sources have been fully utilised to blend harmoniously and carry out the one purpose of serving God.

The Pāñcarātra texts are called Upaṁsads and Saṁhitās to indicate the Vedic foundations,667 for this Agama is based on the Ekāyana recension also called Mūlaśākhā and Suklayaśaśākhā. It belongs to the Kāṇva recension of the Suklayajurveda.668 Why it is called Mūlaśākhā is clear from the following passage:

mahātō vedaṇukṛṣṭasya mūlamūtō mṛdānāyaṁ ।
śrīnāmātāt vedaśyāsate śaṅkāryaśāstatha sūne ॥

jagatmūṭāt kṛṣṇavasya vedaṇaṁ pustakvaṁ dhīmat ।
prātiṣṭhāyaśvatā siddhā mūlaṇaṇḍāyata dhiṣj ॥

Pārs I. 76-77; IS. I 24.

The Agama is also known as Siddhānta. It is of four kinds, according to the nature of the deities to be worshipped. They are Agamasiddhānta, Mantrasiddhānta, Tantrasiddhānta and Tantrāntarasiddhānta.669 Another list mentions Mantrasiddhānta as the first to be followed by Agamasiddhānta.670 According to the Agamasiddhānta, worship is to be offered to the four vyūhas. Worship of Kesava, Nārāyana and others, representing the twelve forms of the Lord, comes under the Mantrasiddhānta. Worship of a single form is enjoined in the Tantrāntarasiddhānta. The Tantrāntarasiddhānta prescribes the worship of forms like Narasimha and others.671

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567 VS II, 11, IS, XXI. 554, Vide Pas I. 71, Colophon Ibid., Mbh. Śānti ccclvi 63
569 IS, XXI, 560-561. Cf. Paus. XXXVII 294-309, LT, XL, 100,101,
570 Pārs I 76, 77, Pas I. 80-83
571 Pas IV 4 19.
ASV—25
the Agamashānta is helpful in getting mokṣa, the Mantrasiddhānta gives the fruits of undertakings and mokṣa, the Tantrasiddhānta grants the four kinds of objects in life and the Tantrāntara grants desired results 572.

The Sāttvata system is classified under ten heads, each having the name Saṃhitā. They are Bhogavatsamhitā, Karoramāhātā, Vidyāmayaṃ Saṃhitā, Kālasaṃhitā, Kartavyasamhitā, Vaiśeṣkī (Samhitā), Saṃyamasamhitā, Adhikārasamhitā, Māgarasamhitā and Mokḥasamhitā 573. These do not seem the independent names of any texts or systems, but only ten topics which are dealt with in the system. They could be identified as those treating about the nature of God, acts of worship, knowledge of tattva, time (for worship), rituals (which are to be done from time to time), specific acts, yoga, qualifications for initiation, and the means of mokṣa respectively.

A system can deal with what is wholesome to man by prescribing the means to get rid of worldly misery. It is necessary to find out the means which would provide man with this Tattvañāna and karma are considered to be the two means which help in obtaining what is beneficial to man. Karma is twofold, according as it leads directly or indirectly to tattvajñāna. The actual worship which is offered to the Lord is the direct means, while others which contribute to it are the indirect ones. The Sāttvata system is concerned with the direct method of worship and, as such, is considered the best among the systems 574.

The Ultimate Reality in the Pāñcarātra Āgama is Brahman characterised by bliss and free from all undesirable qualities.

572. PR. pp. 96-97 for an attempt at reconciling the conflicting views.
573. AhS XII 45-48a
574. Ibid, XIII 7-23.
It is beyond the reach of all beings. Out of this issue the first form of God,

(रूपमाध्य सनातनम्)
called Vāsudeva in the subtle form with two hands, crystal-like in complexion and clad in a yellow garment. It is seated in the heart of beings and is the highest light seen by Brahma in meditation.

From this Sūksma Vāsudeva, there rise the four-armed Sthūla Vāsudeva and Nārāyaṇa. The Sthūla Vāsudeva is also known as Para Vāsudeva from whom springs Vyūha Vāsudeva. Samkarsana emerges from Vyūha Vāsudeva, Pradyumna from Samkarsaṇa and Aniruddha from Pradyumna. The four vyūhas comprising Vyūha Vāsudeva, Samkarsaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha constitute Caturbrahman, and they together with Para Vāsudeva form Pañcabrahman.

The word ‘brahman’ which is derived from the root, ‘bṛh’, meaning to increase, to grow, is taken to mean the unlimited nature of the attributes and of essential nature (svarūpa). This word is used to denote all the above-mentioned emanations of the Ultimate Reality. In particular,
It is employed to refer to the subtle and gross forms called Vāsudeva, Para-vāsudeva, Vyūha-vāsudeva and Nārāyaṇa. ‘Bhagavān’, ‘Vāsudeva’, ‘Viṣṇu’ and ‘Nārāyaṇa’ are generally deemed to indicate one and the same Supreme Being.

Lakṣmī is ever with Brahman. She is the state of existence (bhāva), and Nārāyana, identical with Brahman, is the existent reality. The two together constitute Brahman.

Vide:

भवभारायणों देवो भावो लक्ष्मीरिं परा ।
लक्ष्मीनारायणाङ्गात्मतो ब्रह्म सनातनम् ॥

LT. II. 15.

In this state, she is not differentiated from Him and is said to constitute with Him the non-dual Brahman. She is called also by the name of Sakti.

Vide:

अपूर्वभूतशक्तित्वात् ब्रह्माङ्गेत्स तुद्यते

Ibid. II 11a

The two are inseparably linked with each other, and so one cannot exist without the other. The relationship between the two may be said to be one of identity.

Vide:

अन्योन्येनानविनाभावाल्योन्येन समवयात् ।
तावल्यं विद्व संबन्धं मम नाथस्य चोभयो: ॥

Ibid. II 17b-18a.

The ultimate nature of Brahman and Lakṣmī is that of knowledge.

Vide

शानायकं परं रूपं ब्रह्मणो मम चोभयो:

Ibid. II. 25b.
Lakṣmi is known by several names such as Ānanda, Svatantra, Śrī, Pādmap, Kamalā, Kundālīnī, Anāhaī, Gaurī, Gāyatrī, Sīvā, Tārā, Ratī and others. Brahma is called by several names such as Paramātmā, Bhagāvān, Vāsudeva, Ananta, Prabhava, Hiraṇyagarbha, Sīvā and others. That Śrī and Viṣṇu alone are meant by these receives elucidation from the Viṣṇupurāṇa which declares that every male being represents Viṣṇu and every female Śrī.

Though real identity and non-duality are predicated between Lakṣmi and Viṣṇu in these texts, yet the two are stated to be different in order to preserve the transcendental character of Viṣṇu. She is said to represent the attribute (dharma) of Viṣṇu who possesses it (dharmin).

Vide:

देवाङ्ककिमति सिद्धा अवगायण: परमेष्ठित: ।
एष चैव च शाक्षेऽधम्म धमिस्वभाबत: ॥
अवज्जावस्वरूपेण तत्स्रेपकयोदिताः ॥

AhŚ III. 25, 26a.

Brahman is held to be attributeless, which means that It does not have any attribute which is of the material kind. This does not mean that God does not have any gunas. Brahman has indeed the six qualities, namely, jñāna, aīśvarya, bala, virya, ṣakti and tejas. Of these, jñāna is a non-inert, eternal and self-luminous quality. Aīśvarya is lordship, which is an activity that is unchecked and is not dependent on anything external to It. Bala is strength which is defined as absence of fatigue. Virya is virility which is unchanging, in spite of being the...
material cause. Sakti is potency which becomes the material cause of the world. Tejas is splendour or might, which is capable of inflicting defeat on others without any external help. These six guṇas make up the body of Vāsudeva and Lakṣmī.

Vide:

पाइष्णविश्रां देवं ताहद्या च स्रिया युतम्।

AhS. VI. 25a.

The Lord is called Bhagavān, because He has the six guṇas. Brahman is described as Sadgūṇa, having these six as essential qualities. This is not surprising, since this depiction is based on Upanisadic passages like

आनन्दो व्रतोति वतजानातू।

which illustrate the Brahmasūtra.

तद्गुणसारस्वात्तु तद्धयपदेशः प्राख्यवत्।

The Upanisadic doctrine that Brahman has no limitations due to space, time and objects is accepted by the Pāñcarātra Āgama also. There is a brilliant description of this in the following sloka:

वर्त्तमानं न तदू व्रह्म नातीतं नैव भावित ततू।

अभ्रतं पृष्ठतो नैव नोब्धर्वतं: पार्थ्योद्ययो:॥

AhS II. 47

Colours, dimensions, sizes, conditions, temperatures and movements are all shown in the succeeding sloka to demonstrate the unconditioned nature of Brahman.

583. Ibid. II 56-60a; LT. II 28-32a.
584. Ibid II 28a, LT XXIX. 7; XXXVIII. 23; XXIX. 11.
585. Ibid. II. 53b, LT.X. 5.
586 TV III. 6
587. Br S. II 3 29
588. TV. II. 1.
Thirty-five principles or categories (tattvas) are stated to be admitted in the Sāttvata system. They are God, supramundane space, purusa, sakti, nitya, kāla, sattva, rajas, tamas, māyā, prasūti, prakṛti, buddhi, manas, ahaṃkāra, ten cognitive and conative organs, five subtle and five gross elements. Among them, God is referred to as Bhagavān, which implies His possession of the six guṇas and all emanations such as vyūha, vibhava and others. The supramundane space is paramāṇa vyoma generally referred to by the word ‘paramākāśa’ and is the place of the Lord. Purusa is Hiraṇyagarbha representing the aggregate of individual selves; he is omniscient and omnipresent and from a part of him all the eternal selves emanate. They get absorbed in him at the time of dissolution. Sakti is Lakṣmi. Nitya is Mahāvidyā, who represents the sāttvika form of Śrī and is the source of the world and of speech. Kāla is Mahākāli representing the tāmasa aspect of Śrī, and it springs from nitya, which is only a form of time. While the latter controls and regulates the intellectual abilities and practices of every being, the former takes everything to its stage of fruition. Māyā, prasūti and prakṛti are tamas, avyakta and

589 LT VI 42b-44, Pāś I 8 39-47 enumerate fifty-one categories. This list is vague as it mixes up the products of matter with the names of duties.

590 S Gupta (Translation LT):—Introduction p. xxiii.
591 LT VII 9, AhS XLV 18
592 Ibid VII 11
593 Ibid VII 13a
594 Ibid VII 13b
595 Ibid V 5.
596 LT XXVI 25b
597 Ibid VII 13b, AhS. VI. 48b, 47a, 49.
598 AhS. IV. 51.
prakṛti respectively. The rest are the same as those dealt with in the Sāmkhya system.

Brahman is Nārāyaṇa, single, pure and flawless. It is undefinable, matchless, integrated and undifferentiated. It differentiates itself as the possessor of Sakti and as Sakti herself. Sakti is defined as the subtle condition of any thing that exists. It does not exist away from the thing. Its existence there is known only by the effects. Each manifestation of life has a Sakti inseparably connected with it. There is one omnipresent Sakti called Lakṣmi. She is connected with Him as moonlight is with the moon or sunshine with the sun. She differs from Him like the attribute from that which possesses it and existence from that which exists. They are inseparable like being and becoming, and I-ness and I. Lakṣmi is His essential nature. Like Nārāyaṇa, she too has a form made up of six guṇas and so is called Bhagavati.

Vide:

पूर्णवाचलमुपपत्तवालाईः प्रगतिः स्मृता ।

LT. IV. 48a

Like Him, she is transcendental. She acts under His direction. She has no existence apart from Him and at the same time she has an identity of her own.

Vide:

वासुदेवः परवर्त्त नारायणमर्य महत।
तस्यात्वः परमा शक्तिगृहस्तानन्दिनमयी।
भिन्नाभिन्ना च वर्तं योऽवस्थे न्यून सिद्धिर:।
तात्र तत्र सक्षमस्त तु निध्रियमुत्तौ व्यवस्थिताः॥

LT XV 9, 10.

599. LT VI, 3, māyā, prasūti and prakṛti are represented by tāmas, avyakta and prakṛti respectively.
600. Ibid VIII 4 8
601. Ibid II-11b, 12a; Ahs. III, 2, 6.
602. LT, II 17a.
Creation, protection, destruction, obstruction and showing grace are stated to be the five functions of God\textsuperscript{603} and are also declared to be those of Lakṣmi \textsuperscript{604}. It must be understood that without Lakṣmi (Sakti), the Ultimate Reality is incapable of doing anything, nor can she do anything without Him \textsuperscript{605}. Logically, whatever activity takes place in the attribute is taken as happening in the dharma also. So whatever Lakṣmi does is attributed to Viṣṇu Himself. It is in this light that the sense of the passages mentioning the same five functions as being undertaken by both Viṣṇu and Lakṣmi should be understood.

\begin{quote}
\textit{Vide }

\textit{व्यापारस्तुः देवस्य लाइमक्षिमः न संशयः।}
\textit{मया कृते हि तत्कस्मि तेन तत्क्षतस्ब्धयते।}
\textit{अहं हि तत्स्य देवस्य स्मृता व्याप्तियमाणता।}

\textit{L.T. XI. 6b, 7.}
\end{quote}

It is thus found that Sakti which is latent in the Ultimate Reality is taken in the Vaisnava Agamas, including \textit{Vaskhānasa},\textsuperscript{606} as identical with Śrī and called by several names such as Māyā, Prakṛti, Lakṣmi and others. In the emanations, it is manifested and is never dissociated from Viṣṇu. This concept is opposed to that of the Sāṅkhya system in which matter (prakṛti) is distinct from purusa (the individual self) and is inert. It is animate, and from it arise the selves and the material world.\textsuperscript{607} Its non-separation from Viṣṇu is helpful in maintaining Viṣṇu as the material cause of the world. That Brahman itself changes into the world is against the unchanging nature of Brahman. Lakṣmi is the dharma of Brahman, and she is identical with

\textsuperscript{603} \textit{AhS} XIII. 15a
\textsuperscript{604} \textit{Ibid} XXI-13a, \textit{L.T.} XII. 13, 14
\textsuperscript{605} \textit{L.T}. II. 18b, 19a.
\textsuperscript{606} Ś'akti is Ś'ri. vide \textit{AhS} V, 3b-5, \textit{VK}. pp. 493-4.
\textsuperscript{607} \textit{L.T}. VI 36a

\textit{ASV—26}
prakṛti, and any change occurring there may be attributed to Brahman, but it does not occur actually in Brahman.

The Ultimate Reality is Vāsudeva called by several names and is tranquil (without activity), changeless and ever-existent. It has no limitation of any kind and is the source of very vast divine powers. Saktī, also known as Lakṣmī, is latent in Him.

It is necessary to explain how the worlds have come into being from Him or at His instance, since He is totally inactive. An independent resolve flashes forth in Him who orders the latent Saktī to activate herself, which the Agamic tradition describes as opening of the eyes. This is like the moon rising out of the ocean. It is only the will of Brahman to create.

Vide:

उपेष्टनस्य यो नाम यथा चन्द्रोदयेःप्रक्षु स।
भि नारायणी शक्ति सिखुलशालक्षणा तदा ।

LT. II. 22b-23a.

This Saktī is of two kinds, namely, kriyā and bhūti. The former is action, and it is represented by Sudarśana, the discus of Viṣṇu. The other is becoming, that is, the universe. The former is energy and the latter matter. When Saktī is said to become active, what is meant is that Lakṣmī makes her presence felt. The bhūti part is impelled by kriyā, and so the world comes into being.

Creation is a continuous process and cannot be uniform in its nature. It must have some stages marked by specific changes.
which occur at long intervals. They are evidenced in the Agamic tradition by three kinds of creation, called sūdha (pure), miśra (mixed) and aśuddha (impure). It sets in, impelled by some independent resolve of Viṣṇu 612

The sūdha creation is so called, because no impurity of matter has any scope to tarnish it. The three guṇas (sattva, rajas and tamas) are not present in Brahman, who is hence said to be free from guṇas. When there is manifestation of Lakṣmi, there is said to come a stage when the six guṇas make their appearance. These guṇas, namely, jñāna, aśvārya, śakti, bala, virya and tejas, are non-material. 613

When Sakti becomes active, the six qualities make their appearance. Conjointly, they form the body of Viṣṇu, who gets thereby the name Vasudeva.614 They work also in groups. Jñāna, aśvārya and śakti form one group, which is calledustramabhūmi 615 Bala, virya and tejas constitute another called śramabhūmi. This means that the latter group is active, while the former is at rest. The Pāñcarātra tradition believes in the mixing up of these two in pairs. That is, jñāna and bala combine together, aśvārya and virya became a pair, and śakti and tejas form into a third group. These three pairs play a prominent part in pure creation

Corresponding to the three pairs of guṇas, there arose three beings from Vasudeva Sankarṣaṇa issued forth from Him with jñāna and bala as his dominant guṇas, Pradyumna with aśvārya

612. Vide;

स्वातःस्यादेव कस्याखिदं कचिद् लोमेष्मुच्छति ।
वात्मभूत द्व या शक्ति: परस्य भ्रमणो इति:

613. AhŚ. V. 15b-16
614. Ibid V 28b-29a
615. LT IV. 24b
and virya, and Aniruddha with sakti and tejas. Each one is Vasudeva Himself and has all the six qualities, but a set of two gunas becomes dominant in each. The body of each is made up of the six qualities. The four vyūhas are not different from one another.\textsuperscript{616}

The emanations of the vyūhas are given in different texts in different ways. When Śakti opened eyes, that is, began to be active (unmesa), which is a stage called ṣaktikoṣa, there arose Śāṅkarśāna representing ego-consciousness. All activities were dormant then. Śakti was then Śāṅkarśāna with the names, Śī and Śānta possessing jñāna and bala. The next stage of emanation from Śī is called Pradyumna, who is Puruṣottama. His consort then is Saraswati, whom Śakti represents, having virya and aśvarya. Aniruddha is the name of the emanation from Saraswati. Śakti represents His consort with the name Rati, having sakti and tejas. Rati is also called Mahālakṣmi. Aniruddha is said to be in the māyakoṣa.\textsuperscript{617}

Each vyūha had two functions, creative and moral, concerned respectively with the origin of beings and ethical progress. Creation is carried on by each with the help of jñāna, aśvarya and sakti, while bala, virya and tejas contribute to ethical progress. Creation precedes moral progress. Pure creation precedes other kinds of creation and, as such, the first three gunas function at this stage.

With the emanation of Śāṅkarśāpa, creation is in its embryonic stage having no internal distinctions.\textsuperscript{618} Puruṣa and Prakṛti make their appearance with Pradyumna’s manifestation. This does not mean that the material world is then produced. Only the Kuṭasthapuruṣa and prakṛti with subtle time (sūkṣma-kāla) then come into being.\textsuperscript{619} These evolve further with the

\textsuperscript{616} Ibid VI 5-18
\textsuperscript{617} Ibid VI 6-18
\textsuperscript{618} Ibid VI 7
\textsuperscript{619} Ibid. VI. 10.
emanation of Aniruddha. Body and soul grow. Matter becomes vyakta and gross time (sthūlakāla) comes into being. That is, with Aniruddha’s emanation begins the stage of mixed creation.

Apart from the work of creation, the three vyūhas have control over certain functions, but the texts offer conflicting accounts here. Creation, preservation and destruction are respectively under the control of Aniruddha, Pradyumna and Saṅkarsana according to the Laksṇī Tantra, while the Visvaksena Saṁhitā mentions Aniruddha as the controller of preservation and Pradyumna of creation. This discrepant depiction will have to be explained on the ground that all the four vyūhas have all the six qualities. When the interaction of all the six guṇas with specific pairs of guṇas are taken into account, the attribution of the function of guṇas to the vyūha in question may lead to ascribing a function different from what it is expected to have.

On the ethical side, Saṅkarsana teaches the theoretical side (śāstra) of the Āgama. Pradyumna effects its practice (kriyā) and Aniruddha awards the fruits (kriyāphala). Jñāna, virya and tejas are employed by the three vyūhas for these activities. Pradyumna introduces all the religious rites to be adopted by the followers of this Āgama, while Aniruddha preaches about the science of the soul.

520 Ibid VI 24-28
521 Ibid IV 19, but the reverse is stated in Ibid IV 11, Aniruddha is said to control all the three in AhS. LV 21
522 Vis mentions control over preservation as the work of Aniruddha and that over creation as that of Pradyumna. Schrader. p 38.
523 AhS V 21-24, LT. IV. 17b-18
524 Ibid V 21b, bala is also implied here. LT. IV. 15a takes it to be only bala. AhS refers to the teaching as theśaikāntika mode for getting at the Lord, while LT takes it to be Vedānta.
525 Schrader p 39.
Another aspect of the three vyūhas, which was criticized by Śaṅkara and other writers, has disappeared gradually. The emanation of Śaṅkarṣaṇa from Vāsudeva is depicted as the birth of the self from the Lord. From Śaṅkarṣaṇa, the self, the mind (or buddhi) is born as Pradyumna; and the ego as Aniruddha rises from Pradyumna. The gradual disappearance is stated by F Otto Schrader 626 as traceable to the difficulty of connecting the 'ahaṅkāra with such an absolutely pure being as a vyūha. It is doubtful whether this explanation is correct. The three deities superintend the activities of the soul, mind and ego, which do not belong to the pure creation. This is hinted at in the following passage:

\[ \text{Sanskrit Text} \]

Apart from the four vyūhas, there are sub-vyūhas. Keśava, Nārāyaṇa and Mādhava issue forth from Vāsudeva; Govinda, Viṣṇu and Madhusūdana from Śaṅkarṣaṇa; Trivikrama, Vāmana and Śrīdhara from Pradyumna; and Hṛṣīkeśa, Padmanābha and Dāmodara from Aniruddha. 627 There is another set of sub-vyūhas, according to which, from each vyūha four deities arise, each having the same name as the vyūha and two from each with different names like Janārādana, Upendra, Hari and others 628

Under pure creation are included the vibhavas of the Lord which represent the divine descents (avatāras) of the Lord. Besides the ten well-known descents, there are many which

626. Ibid p. 39
628 PaS, I 2. 28.
could be considered as sub-vibhavas. They are enumerated to be thirtynine in number according to one text and thirtyeight in another. Both the lists are identical except for different names for the same deity and the former having an additional deity with the name, 'Santātman' Kapila, Rāhu, Kala-nemighna, Pārijātahara, Dattatreya, Nara, Nārāyaṇa, Hari and others are some well-known descents of God. Names like Sanaka, Sanandana, Śuka and Saunaka in the list, belong to pious men who have God’s power infused into them. The Padma Saṁhita has the thirtynine descents named differently. Purusottama, Buddha, Dāśārha, Sauri, Hayagriva, Vaikuṇṭha, Sakra, Śrīvatsa, Viśvaksena and others are enumerated under this head.

It is interesting to note in this connection that among these sub-vibhavas, Puruṣa, Satya and Acyuta are mentioned as emanating from Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha respectively. That means that the emanation is in the order from Vāsudeva to Saṅkarṣaṇa to Pradyumna and Puruṣa, from Pradyumna to Aniruddha and Satya, and from Aniruddha to Acyuta. The Jayākhyā Saṁhitā records that Parabrahman is Vāsudeva from whom Acyuta takes his emanation. Satya of shining body rises from Acyuta and Puruṣa emanates from Satya. Puruṣa is the inner controller of all beings and is the source of all divine descents. All of them rest in Vāsudeva. The process of emanation from Saṅkarṣaṇa and Aniruddha is reversed in the two lists noted above. The Sanatkumāra Saṁhitā states that Puruṣa, Satya, Acyuta and Aniruddha worship Sadā-

629 AhS V 50-57a, SS pp 79-80.
630 LT XI, 19-25.
631 PaS I 2 31-37.
632 Ibid. I 2 33b-34a, Nāradiya Saṁhitā, I. 33-46.
633 JS IV 2-14a.
On the other hand, the Vaikhānasa system treats Puruṣa, Satya, Acyuta and Aniruddha as emanating from Viṣṇu who is named as Ṭhīmūrti, and Vāsudeva, Sankarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Śamba as five warriors (vīras). Thus it is found that the vyūha deities of the Pañcarātra get treated as subordinate to the Pañcamūrtis in the Vaikhānasa and the Pañcamūrtis of the Vaikhānasa are vihbhas in the Pañcarātra. However, the treatment of Puruṣa, Satya and Acyuta as emanations from Vāsudeva in the Jayākhyā Samhītā could not be ignored in the light of the treatment given to them in the other Pañcarātra texts. Perhaps, the Jayākhyā records the oldest aspect of the Pañcarātra tradition which was not totally different from that of the Vaikhānasa. However, one noteworthy feature is that both the Agamas have recognised the concept of the primary deities in each other, though giving them a subordinate position in their systems.

The divine descents are grouped as primary and secondary. The form refer to those concerned with Viṣṇu’s descent with non-material (aprākṛta) body and the latter to those in which the power of Viṣṇu takes possession of the body of a mortal.

In fact, there are three kinds of descents of the Ultimate Reality, namely, the supreme form, the vyūha form and the vihbha form. All-pervasive God takes these forms to help His devotees.

Vide:  

ब्रह्मव्रुष्ण जनवाथ: समुदेति जगदिते ।  
आधिम पर्वृष्ण व्यूहरुष्ण चापथ ॥  
तथा बिभवस्थेष्न नामाभासमुपेष्या ।  
व्यापको भववान देवो मकानुयास्काम्या ॥

LT X 10, 11.

634 SKS. Indrārātra, VII 112-113.  
635 SA, XXXVII 3-4  
636 KA, XXX 31.  
637 F O Schrader, pp 43-47; AhS VIII. 51.
All the descents spring from Aniruddha. Some texts declare that the descents of Matsya, Kūrmā and Varāha are from Vasudeva, those of Narasimhā, Vāmana, Parāsūrāma and Rāma from Saṅkarṣaṇa, that of Balarāma from Pradyumna and those of Kṛṣṇa and Kalkin from Aniruddha. Another version mentions the descent of Kūrmā and Parāsūrāma from Saṅkarṣaṇa.

In the Sanatkumārasaṃhitā, two sets of vyūha emanations are depicted. The Supreme Deity is called Sadāviṣṇu, also known as Vasudeva, from whom there arises another Vasudeva with a definite form. He is called also Mahāviṣṇu. From His mind arose the goddess Sānti from whom came Saṅkarṣaṇa, the destroyer also known as Saṃkara. From the left side of Saṅkarṣaṇa, there issued forth Pradyumna, also called as Brahman who created Saraswati, the goddess of speech. Aniruddha, also called Puruṣottama, arose from her. Rati emanated from Him who, lying in the waters, bore a lotus in His navel. This represents the subtle kind of vyūha.

Then an egg came out of the lotus and Hiranyagarbha, identical with the four-faced Brahmā, arose out of it. From him arose a goddess with the name Samdhyā who gave rise to Rudra (also called Satya) and to Marici and other progenitors (praśāpati). Satyā was born as the daughter of Dakṣa, one of those progenitors. From Satyā arose Acyuta, who is identical with Pradyumna from whom Aniruddha arose. This is the gross vyūha emanation.

This version of the vyūha doctrines is very significant and of great importance. It accounts for the assumption of more than
one Vasudeva and for accommodating the Pancauiras of the Vaikhānasas tradition. Besides, Rudra and Saṅkara and Brahmadeva and Sarasvati who do not normally have a place in Vaisnāvism, are shown to have formed part of the evolution of the vyuha doctrines.

There is one more aspect deserving notice in the concept of the vyuhas. Four states mark out relative activity: and they are the inactive (sānta), active (udita), spasmodically active (sāntodita) and constantly active (nityodita). Para Vasudeva represents the inactive state, while the vyuha shows the active state. The third stage is represented by Vyuha Vasudeva, and the remaining three emanations of Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha belong to the last stage.

Inanimate objects also get treated as God Himself Viṣṇu is omnipotent, and so can descend into the images made of metal, stone or mud. In His vishivas, He gets down with a portion of His śakti. Similarly, He occupies the images which are consecrated and installed. It is the request and prayer of the suffering humanity that makes Him come down (avatāra) into this world. He removes the sufferings and then quits the earth to get back to His own abode. The case of the images is slightly different. The devotee yearns to have His vision and be with Him. For this purpose, the Lord gets down into the images and stays on there, so that even after the passing away of that devotee, He continues to be present there. This descent is technically called arecā. The body of God in this form is also non-material (aprākṛta).

642 LT II. 51; vide

Com. on Ibid.
A question is likely to be raised here regarding the propriety of accepting the form in the image made of material products, as non-material. The answer to this lies in the admission of a body for God in His divine descents such as Rāma, Kṛṣṇa and others. Both the material (prākṛta) and non-material (aprākṛta) worlds belong to Viṣṇu. He whose body is made up of the six guṇas, takes up a body which falls within the experience of the selves. In this, His compassion and will are the guiding factors. As He is ever absolutely free from those factors which are to be shunned, the products, made up of matter with its three guṇas, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, could not have any effect on Him. Even though He took His abode in a physical body when He descended down as Rāma or Kṛṣṇa, His body did not have any of the blemishes associated with the guṇas of Prakṛti. Similarly, He is said to take His place in the idol which is consecrated according to Āgamic traditions, and as such the idol becomes fit to be worshipped. It is not a stone or metallic form that is then God, but it is the figure which is to be looked upon as non-material in Its making. Hence the idol is called as the seat of the auspicious one (subhāśraya) and a divine and auspicious form (dvayamaṅgalavigraha). His body is the resting place of the material products.

643 Vide

शान्तसेवितस्वरूपस्तु भक्तातुश्रद्धाकामया।
अनौपस्येन बषुषा हयसूतरौ मूर्तितां गतः॥

Iṣ, II, 91.
Since His descent both in the vibhava and arca forms is not due to karma, the body which He takes then cannot be the product of matter.

His body in the vyūha, vibhava and arca manifestations has to be taken as non-material in its composition. The solution to this question is thus summarized.

The Lord is said to be the Inner Ruler (Antaryāmin) of all selves and is present in the heart of each of them. This concept is based on the Upaniṣads which declares that Brahman is within every object and every self and controls them from within.
But He is unsullied by the impurities of the physical frames within which the self rests from birth to death.

In the Pāñcarātra Āgama. Lakṣmi occupies a very prominent place. She is Sakti lying undeveloped in Viṣṇu before creation. When Viṣṇu takes His descents, she also descends along with Him. The two are inseparable.

Vide:

श प्रदेशो न तस्यास्ति येन भूतं मया विना ।
श प्रदेशो न मे काशिज्जिना तथेऽन मूयते ॥

LT VIII. 10.

When He is to play His own role, she manifests His nature. When she in turn has her role, He manifests His I-ness (ahanta) in her. When both have to function, they present themselves as the existent reality and its state of existence.645 When Aniruddha plays His role, she becomes known as Kamala. These two become the parents of the universe.646 She is called Sri when she occupies the lap of the two-armed Vāsudeva. She is also present on His sides with the names of Śrī and Puṣṭi.647 She takes several forms and occupies various positions around Viṣṇu assuming particular names in each position.648 She becomes Gaṅgā flowing out of the feet of Viṣṇu when He assumes the form of Trivikrama. In His descents as Varāha, Dharma, Vāmana, Paraśurāma and Rāma, she came down as Bhū, Bhārgavi, Padmā, Dharaṇi and Sītā respectively. With Kṛṣṇa who was with Balārāma, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, she

645 LT, VIII 13-15
646 Ibid VIII 16-17.
647 Ibid VIII 21
648 Ibid VIII, 22-34s.
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became Rukmînî, Revâti, Rati and Usā respectively.\textsuperscript{649} That the Supreme Being has for His consort Śrî, otherwise called Lakṣmi, is reiterated in many contexts in the \textit{Pāñcarātra} texts, which do not fail to note that she is a form of Sakti, and that many goddesses in the form of Sakti form her retinue.\textsuperscript{650} In this manner Śrî also is taken to be present along with Viṣṇu in His \textit{vyūha}, \textit{vibhava}, \textit{arca} and \textit{antaryāmin} forms assuming different names. All these four are held as the divine descents of the Lord and so include the forms of Śrî. Her forms also are not made of material products. These descents are intended to be meditated upon by the selves. There is no other purpose to be served in the awakening (\textit{unmesa}) of Sakti.

To the pure creation belongs Vaiśnava which is also known as the Highest Place (\textit{Parama Pada}) and which is beyond the sphere of the cosmic egg. It is also called the \textit{Tripādviṃbhūti} of Viṣṇu where three fourths of God's manifestation are present, while a quarter of it represents the cosmic egg in which Aniruddha functions as creator. It comes into existence along with the \textit{vyūhas} and merges into the Lord at the time of the Great Dissolution. It is also called \textit{Nityaviṃbhūti} which is an eternal manifestation in the sense that it is not created. It is distinct from the created world which is called \textit{Lītavibhūti}.\textsuperscript{651}

\textsuperscript{649} \textit{Ibid} 34b-35a, 38b-40a, 41b; 46a

\textsuperscript{650} \textit{Ahs. VI} 25, IX 31, XXVIII 85; XXXVI, 50.

\textsuperscript{651} The distinction and classification of vibhūti as \textit{nīya} and \textit{litā} must be of later development. The word, \textit{‘mahāviṃbhūti’}, occurs in \textit{LT} XVII 8, and this may be taken to imply the above-mentioned classification.

\textbf{Vide} 'महाविभूति: नित्यविभूति:। "विपाद्यामृतं \ दिबिं।" इत्युक्तरीत्या हीलःविभूत्येश्वरा तस्य महास्वातः महाविभूतित्वम्।}

Com. on \textit{Ibid.}
The Highest Place is reached by the souls which get absolutely free from worldly bondage. There they are held to enjoy several kinds of communion with God. To be the abode of free selves, there must be matter which can provide the places and the means (instruments) of enjoyment (bhogasthāna and bhogopakaraṇa). The enjoyments thus provided are stated to be blissful. Therefore, the Pāñcarātra Āgamas admit that the Highest Place comes into existence along with the vyūhas and as such belongs to pure creation. The material for this creation is pure sattva (suddha sattva). It is not sattva taken away from matter which is composed of the three guṇas, that is, matter purified by being rid of rajas and tamas; but it represents the first stage in the evolution when the two other qualities do not emerge. The places, the bodies with which the released souls then get endowed and the enjoyments, are all stated to be of the nature of knowledge and bliss. These should therefore be non-material (aprākṛta).

It is further held that there is nothing there to become an obstacle to the mental functions of the released souls and that the wishes of those selves get fulfilled invariably. The place is significantly depicted as solidified splendour. The heavenly abode, the body of the released soul and the enjoyments, which are described to be of the nature of knowledge and bliss, having no obstruction to the fulfilment of the desires of the selves, must be totally distinct from those made up of and gained through the products of the three guṇas. In the latter are found

652 Sāyuja is yearned for Vide

अभ्यासात्वद्विषुष्णायनुष्ये यतनं परमवाधिततः ।
अभ्यासात्वश्चय पञ्चेष जायन्ते युक्तिहेततः ॥

Cf Jitante Stotra, II 38  SKS. Rs1. III. 97.

objects of three dimensions, the like of which should not be expected in the former. If they are to be admitted there also, then obstructions of all kinds will have also to come in the way of the enjoyment of the released souls. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that pure sattva is only self-luminous spiritual knowledge. That this should be so is strengthened by the fact that matter emanates from Sakti or Sri and so cannot have any tinge of material defect in the first stage of its emergence when it gets the name, ākṣaṇa sattva. This concept makes us understand how, out of it, the non material bodies (aprākṛta) emerge for Viṣṇu and others and also for the released souls and the creation of inanimate objects like parks, lotus-tanks and others for their enjoyment. All these are spiritual in content and are of the nature of knowledge and bliss.

The Highest Place is called Vaikunṭha where is ever present the highest form (para) of God. This form is said to be the very first and has two hands. From this emanated the four-armed and dark-complexioned God.654 The latter is generally supposed to be the para form with the name Vāsudeva from whom the vyūhas and divine descents emerge. He has the selves, matter, mahat, sāttvika and tamasa ahaṅkāra, and others as Kaustuba, Śrivatsa, Gāḍā, Śaṅkha, Śāṅgī and such other weapons and ornaments.655 Para Vāsudeva is stated to divide Himself into Vyūha Vāsudeva and Nārāyaṇa.666

Para Vāsudeva is ever associated with Śri who is identical with Sakti.657 She too has a body made up of the six divine gunās.

654 PaŚ I.2 13-15; Viṣṇutilāka, II.5.
655. VP, I. 22
666. PaŚ I. 2 16, 17, Viṣṇutilāka II.11-14 identifies Para with Nārāyaṇa.
667 LT, VIII. 21
According to some versions, Sri and Bhūmi are the two consorts. This is not borne out by the texts. As a part of Sakti, Bhū comes down as the consort of Viṣṇu in his Varāhāvatāra

Vide.

AḥŚ. VI. 25a.

Ibid. IX. 31a.

Sakti assumes several names, one of which is Mahī. In these names, she is present with Para Vāsudeva, and all are to be treated as His consorts. Nilā came to be treated as one of His consorts in later Paurāṇic literature. Nappinnai, a cowherdess, was won in a wager by Kṛṣṇa and came to be known as Nilā. A later Upanisad named Nilā Upanisad deals

Viṣṇu is said to have Śrī ever with Him. Vide AḥŚ VI. 25; IX 31, XXXVI 55. LT VIII 21b refers to Śrī and Puṣṭi being on His sides. Śrī herself is said to be Puṣṭi, representing one of the eight forms taken by her, one for each direction of space (LT VIII 25). After the Lord rescued the earth from distress, it was raised to the status of His consort and became designated as Bhūdevī Puṣṭi, who occupied a place on one side of the Lord, came to be identified with Bhū. SS (XII. 165) one of the earliest Samhitās, refer to Śrī and Puṣṭi and not to Śrī and Bhū. ParŚ. I. 7; IS X 2, XIII 179, cf SprŚ XXXIII 53

AḥŚ III 14a.

Ibid. XXVIII, 25a, LT, VIII. 22-47a

Garudapurāṇa, Uttarakhanda, 19. In Tamil literature, she is called Nappinnai. Vide Śilappadikāra, II. 17, 14-16, 24.

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with all these aspects of Sakti. Eight Saktis are often mentioned, named Kirti, Sī, Vijaya, Sraddhā, Smṛti, Medhā, Dṛṣṭi and Ksamas. Another list enumerates the names as Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī, Sarvakāmādā, Prītvardhanī, Yaśaskartī, Śāntidā, Tūṣidā and Puṣṭi. The Sāttvatasamhitā enumerates the names as Lakṣmī, Puṣṭī, Dayā, Nidrā, Ksamā, Kānti, Sarasvatī Dṛṣṭi, Mātir Rati, Tūṣti and Māti.

Sakti is twofold, namely, Bhūti and Kriyā. The word, ‘Bhūti’ means ‘coming’ and ‘Kriyā’ means ‘acting’. The form is Līkā and it is divided in many ways. The latter is the Sudarśana (discus) of Viṣṇu representing Viṣṇu’s will. It is undivided. It keeps the former working on from creation till dissolution.

Vide

एष्वयन्तिमुखं रूपं स्थितिकर्मोरितिरितिता ।

LT XXIX 9a

तेजोमुखं तु यदुपं सा क्रियाशक्तिस्वयं ।

Ibid XXIX 8a.

सिद्धियो या क्रियाशक्ति लक्ष्याः सौदर्शनी कह।

AhS III 45b.

662 Here it is said to have been taught to Vikhanas. Cf KA XVI 5b-102.

663 Vihagendra Samhitā, 35 cited by Schrader p 55. Lakṣmī, Kirti, Jayā and Maya are alone mentioned. JS VI 77a.. LT XX 34b.

Cf KA XVI 56b-87a where eight names are enumerated, namely, Bhūmi Sarasvatī, Rati, Prīti, Kirti, Kānti, Puṣṭī and Tūṣṭī which are called Sāktī.

Eight Lakṣmīs are also enumerated, namely, Mahālakṣmī, Viralakṣmī, Dhanalakṣmī, Sāntanalakṣmī, Jayalakṣmī, Dhānyalakṣmī, Dhaīryalakṣmī, and Rājyalakṣmī. SprS XXXIX, 152-157.

664 LT VIII 25

665. SS IX 85
The *Lakṣmiṇītantra* however treats Kriyāsakti as fourfold, shared by the sun, fire, the moon and Sudarṣana. The importance of Sudarṣana in the doctrinal aspect of the *Pāñcarātra* is very great, as it is evidenced in the treatment of Sudarṣana in all aspects like *mantra* and worship in the texts and in the separate shrines for Sudarṣana in the South Indian temples dedicated to Viṣṇu.

There is in the Highest Heaven a pillar called Viśākhayūpā or Brahmayūpā. It is an effulgence of light and identical with Bhagavān. It has four faces, each facing one direction. That part which faces the eastern quarter is occupied by Bhagavān Vāsudeva with a white form surpassing the splendour of the sun. The form of Sankarsana whose complexion is similar to the colour of the ruby, occupies the south-facing part. The part facing the west presents Pradyumna whose form is red as if scorched by the hot-rayed sun. Aniruddha, whose complexion is like that of the autumnal sky, occupies the north-facing part. The Supreme Lord, mentioned here as Ādimūrti, is present in all these whose brilliance is equal to that of crores of suns. Further, each part has four divisions, the lowest one occupied by Pradyumna, Sankarsana and Vāsudeva. Each *vyūha* represents a state of consciousness. Vāsudeva’s domain is *turiya* where there is no polarisation, Sankarsana’s is *susupti*, revealing the first and faint signs of polarisation, Pradyumna’s is *svapna* with subtle polarisation and Aniruddha’s is *jāgrat* with full but limited polarisation. For instance, that part which faces

666 LT XXIX,
667 AhS XXV-VI, XXXIII, XXXVI-VIII, XLII-IV, XLVIII-L PaS. IV. 32, LT XXX-I, PārS. xxiii-vi -
668 SS IV. 12a, LT, xi. 3-18, The name ‘Ādimūrti’ used here suggests that the *Pāñcarātra* tradition represents a continuation of the *Vaikhānasa* tradition which calls the Supreme Lord by this name, S 1 xxxvii-3b, 4 Cf. LT x 24a
the north has Aniruddha in full prominence, but occupying the bottom, the other three not being as prominent as Aniruddha. Similarly, the western face gives prominence to Pradyumna occupying the second division from the bottom, while the other three do not have that importance. The same must be said of the other two faces. The four states of consciousness (waking, sleeping, dreaming and transcendental) characterise the full faces directed to the north, west, south and east respectively.

This pillar is intended to be contemplated upon by devotees according to their capacities. Those who meditate upon the waking state of consciousness, as represented by Aniruddha, are required to treat all the four deities as identical with the Supreme Being. Each deity having a distinct character and occupying one face of the column incorporates all the four vyūhas. For instance, the form of Aniruddha occupying the face directed to the north must display prominent features like the consort, weapons and ornaments, while those of Pradyumna, Saṅkarsana and Vāsudeva must reveal similar features as indistinct (aspaṣṭa), merely outlined or totally invisible. The western face must have the features of Pradyumna prominently displayed, with those of the other three relatively less prominent. Similarly, the south and east-facing portions display the prominent features of Saṅkarsana and Vāsudeva respectively, according less importance to those of others.

A meditator is required to contemplate at four stages, starting with that of Aniruddha and the other three as depicted in the north face, and gradually passing through to Pradyumna, Saṅkarsana and Vāsudeva, keeping all the other three in each. Each stage corresponds to another stage in the other set, that is, waking, dream, deep sleep and transcendental. The meditator has to raise himself to that state of consciousness which is represented by the stage concerned. This kind of meditation is called Čaturātmya Upāsanā.

670 LT xi 9-18, Introduction to LT, p. 25, AhS. V. 20b-26a.
An explanation is required to be given about the admission of this Visākhayūpa as distinct from the four vyūhas. Just as one step follows another in succession while one walks along, so also one vyūha follows another. The interval between them is not a void. It is charged with a brilliant energy of God who manifests Himself through it serving for His body. It has the six guṇas and is called Visākhayūpa.

Vide:

| vyūdayo vyūhastaptaḥ | padāśvaḥ upadāntam ||
| antrant sarvam | dhesaṁ santaṛtyaṁ teṣaṁ ||
| pūjitaṁ tejasāṁ | rajasādhyakṣaṁ murtiṁ vṛjātmāḥ ||
| viśākhayūpa | ityukaṁsthaveyānādi śaktiḥ ||

LT. XI. 11, 12.

This lustre pervades not only the intervals between the vyūhas but also the vyūhas. Hence the Visākhayūpa is distinct from the four vyūhas which form part of it and at the same time branch off from it like the branches of a tree. 671

The Visākhayūpa is also said to represent absolute sound, out of which arise the sounds in the four stages of nāda, bindu, madhyāma and vaśkharī, presided respectively by the vyūha deities starting from Vāsudeva. 672 This representation is justifiable, because some prominent features of the vyūha deities, such as imperceptibility, bare outline, indistinct appearance and full perceptibility, are also the features of sound in these four stages.

The term 'Visākhayūpa' is made up of two words, 'viśākha' and 'yūpa'. The former denotes that of which the branches are spread out; and in this sense, it has relevance to the word 'yūpa', which primarily means the sacrificial post.

671 Ibid xi 13, 29
672 Ibid xi 17-30.
The sense of the compound word must be taken as 'that which has all-pervading lustre out of which the vyūhas extend on the four sides.' It is thus the source and must be taken to stand for Para Vāsudeva or rather to Param Brahman, that is, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva and Śtūla Vāsudeva taken collectively. This Deity is identified with Purusa who is none other than Nārāyaṇa. The Puruṣasūkta speaks of creation as a symbolic sacrifice. The same principle is applicable to the concept of the Viṣākhayūpa, where the Supreme Being is in the form of lustre without a body, and represents the sacrificial pillar. The word, 'viṣākha,' must be taken to mean a particular form taken up by that pillar. Primarily it stands for the name of 'one of the lunar asterisms (figured by a decorated gateway or arch and containing four or originally two stars placed under the regency of a dual divinity)'.

Thus, including the Viṣākhayūpa, there are five deities. They represent the five letters sa, sa, sa, ha, and kṣa.

Vide:

हात्र लात पात शाक्ति शाखबंधकुप्पमाण उद्दीरित: ||
चातुरादशमिद्वो चतुर्विदिति शाखिनितम् ।
कृण चुडेन संयोगान पाखवृत्ति शाखिनितम् ||
अर्नुत सत्यवत्व बीजः प्रोक्तः सांतःशास्त्राय।

AhS XVI. 83b-85

It is held by some scholars that the Viṣākhayūpa concept was evolved to fill in the central places when the four vyūha deities got their assigned places, one in each quarter, and that this, along with the four vyūha deities, would justify the significance of the number five occurring in the name of Pāṇcarātra.

674 S Gupta: LT translation. Ch. xi. (also Cf. Brahmavidya, xxv 3 & 4, pp. 188-204).
However, this explanation seems unnecessary. Firstly, it must be admitted that the Viśākhayūpa concept is evolved more to help concentration of the mind for contemplation than for explaining the vyūha concept. The meditation is not simply on a lustrous pillar. On the other hand, each deity of the vyūha is to be meditated upon as forming part of the whole vyūha. The Viśākhayūpa may be taken to stand for Para Vāsudeva who does not form part of the vyūha, and four stages of consciousness are alone mentioned here for meditation upon the four vyūha deities and not five. Secondly, the analogy from the Vaiśhānasa text is interesting. No doubt, the vyūha principle is involved in the emanation of Purusa from Viṣṇu, to be followed by those of Satya, Acyuta and Aniruddha. But all the five are together called Pañcamūrti,675 and not as vyūha. Lastly, in all religious schools, each number has a significant role to play. For instance, "ekameva advitiyam brahma"676 shows the importance of the number one in the Vedānta system. This is not taken to mean the denial of duality or of the concept of tattvairaya, of the vyūha concept of four deities, or of the fivefold classification of the day and so on. Of course, the name, 'Pāncarātra' has a unique significance, but the importance given to other numbers like four in the number of vyūhas, six in the number of gunas and the sadaksara-mantra, eight in the astāksara-mantra and twelve in the dvādaśaksara-mantra are not of less significance. The Viśākhayūpa is a cāturātmya concept and does not involve an independent fifth principle brought in there.

All these form part of pure creation which is non-material (a-prākṛta), and if some of them have found room in the world created out of matter in the process of 'impure' creation, it must be understood that the purity of these is not affected in the least.

675 SA xxxvii 2.
676, Ch. Up. VI. 2, 1.
Based on pure creation is the impure-and-pure creation which comprises both the pure and what is different from it. *Kūtastha Purusa* and *Māyā Sakti* represent the manifestation of the *Bhūti Sakti* under this creation. *Kūtastha Purusa* represents an aggregate of souls similar to a bee-hive — souls which have been affected by the impress of deeds done from beginningless time. Another version makes this the all-knowing person at the top of the enjoyers who go forth from him at the time of creation and return to him at the time of dissolution. Though pure in themselves, these selves become impure on account of *karma-bhasana*.

The rise of the *Kūtastha Purusa* from Pradyumna is depicted much in the same way as creation is described from the *Purusa* in the *Purusa-Sūkta*.

Along with the *Kūtastha Purusa*, the *Māyā Sakti* which is non-spiritual energy, comes into existence. It is the primitive form of matter. It is of three kinds, *Niyati* (restriction), *Kāla* (time) and *Guna* (quality).

Pradyumna transfers both *Kūtastha Purusa* and *Māyā Sakti* to Aniruddha for further development. They remain with the latter for a thousand years and undergo changes. Then there emerges *Sakti* from Aniruddha, *Niyati* from *Sakti*, *Kāla* from *Niyatt*, *Sāttva* from *Kāla*, *Rajoguna* from *Sattva*-guna, and *Tamo* from *Rajoguna*. Eight Manus enter into *Sakti* and pass through all the evolutes stated above and in the same order.

677 *AhS* VI 33-4
678 *LT* VII 10, 11a,
679 *AhS* VI 34b
680 *Ibid* VI 37
681 *Ibid* VI 12
683 *Ibid* VI, 44b-59.
Māyā Sakti, Niyati and Kāla are the three aspects of Sakti who is Rati, wife of Aniruddha. Niyati is the subtle regulator of every thing. Kāla is the mysterious power existing in time which invites everything to activity.

Guna, which is manifested from Kāla, is of the three kinds, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Aniruddha as Viṣṇu controls Sattva, Brahmā controls Rajas and Rudra controls Tamas. Their Saktis are respectively Lakṣmi, Sarasvatī and Gaurī. These are held to come under the Sheath of Generation (Prasūtikosa). After this, the Gunas form into a mass called Avyakta which is called Tamas in one of the texts.

Impure creation then starts. It is in two stages, primary and secondary. The former represents the evolution of matter as in the Sānkhya system. Purusas are not many as in that system but only one who is Kūtastha (collective). Puruṣa and Prakṛti get modified (lit. cooked) by time; that is, time also plays a part here. Mahat is called by several names such as Viṣṇu, Go. Avanī, Brahmī, Vadhū, Vṛddhi, Māti, Madhu, Akhyāti, Ṛṣivarī and Prajñā. It is Buddha with the Sattvika element, Prāṇa with the Rājasa and Kāla with the Tāmasa. Dharma, Jñāna, Vīrāga and Aśvarya are the four divisions of the Sattvika aspect, and their opposites, Adharma, Ajñāna Avirāgya and Anāśvarya, represent the four divisions of the Tāmasa aspect. It is said

684 Ibid V 46b
685 LT.V 6 Schrader, p 67 n
686 AhS VI 63a
687 Ibid VII 6b
688 Ibid VII 9b-10a, LT XVI 2b-3a
689 Vide

It is interesting to note that, according to the Vaikhānasā Agama, these four are the qualities of Puruṣa, Satya, Acyuta and Aniruddha respectively. SA xxxvii 2-3

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of the Manus that, as they descend through the Tattvas into the womb of Vidyā, there arises for them Bodhanā, an intellectual organ with which they discriminate between the real and the unreal.690

Unlike in the classical Sāṅkhya, Buddhi represents the Sāttvika aspect of Mahat 691 Among its several names noted above, Akhyāti, Prajñā and Īśvarī indicate that Mahat denotes both vitality and subconscious intelligence.692 Mahat is thus cosmic Prāṇa. Though it is unconscious, yet it is intelligent energy at work. This interpretation is borne out by the use of the word, 'brahman', in this sense in the Upaṇisads 693 and also the word 'Prāṇa' in the place of Mahat, while the Sāṅkhya categories are enumerated in the Ahirbudhyasamhitā.694 The further stages of creation from Mahat are described almost as in the Sāṅkhya system.

The descent of Manus is then shown to account for the rise of people from the intercourse of the male and female principles. The Manus thus become the ancestors of numberless men.

The Gross Creation commences with the appearance of the earth, the last tattva. The principles thus created require coalescence into a mass. This is attempted by Brahmā creating the four youths, Sanaka, Sananda, Sanatana and Sanatkumāra who, however, refused to have offspring. Rudra who was then created, split himself into eleven Rudras. The six progenitors (Prajāpatis), Manu and others, were created, and they attended to the work of further creation,

690. AhS VII. 13, 14
691. Cf Katha U II, 10-13. Buddhi and Mahat are kept distinct
692. Schrader, p 73
693. Ch U I 11 5
694. AhS. xii. 22a.
The individual soul is *citākta*. It is pure in its essence, imperishable unchangeable, eternal and unlimited. It is the consciousness witnessing the functioning of matter. It is knowledge and at the same time the knower. Like matter, the souls emanate from Śrī. They form part of the Bhūti Sakti of Laksñī. They are prepared and pre-determined for bondage or salvation by the Lord’s Nigraha or Ṭirodhanā Sakti. They should then have their form, power and knowledge obscured, leading respectively to atomic size, powerlessness and ignorance. Then they get affected by all imperfections like nescience, conceit, attachment and so on. They indulge accordingly in activities which lead to graver results.

The souls are classified under two heads, namely, pure and mixed. Pradyumna is stated to create the former and Aniruddha the latter through Brahmā, the creator. There is justification for this. Those who have a stock of good and bad karma to be gone through at the end of a dissolution of the cosmos are required to be introduced into the world by Brahmā who is actuated by the quality of Rajas. They cannot make their appearance in the Kṛtyaṅga when Sattva dominates. Those who belong to the pure kind must have the Sattva predominant and so they are allowed to appear in the world in the Kṛtyaṅga by Pradyumna Himself.

The *summum bonum* (hitamatyam) for the self is to be freed. The sorrows should end, never to recur, thus giving room for a positive status in the shape of eternal happiness. The Pāñcarātra

695 LT xvi 18-19
696 Ibid. vi 36. xvi. 22a
697 AhE VI 8a
698 Ibid xiv. 15b-24 These are considered also as the Sakti of Śrī.
699 Cf Ibid xxi 12, LT. xii 13, 14, Schrader. p. 82.
700 Schrader, pp. 84-5.
doctrines therefore declare that this consists in the final cessation of the succession of sorrows which implies positive eternal bliss.

Vide:

अत्यान्तिकी निकृशिष्टु पुस्तो या दुःखसंततेः ।
तत्त्वपत्तिः नित्यं चुल्छ चतु तद्रिते स्नृतम् ॥

AhS. XIII 9.

That is, atomic size, powerlessness and ignorance which were forced on the self by the power of obscuration (tirodhana-sakti) get fully removed, leaving the self in its natural condition. Since the atomic size is forced on the self, it is possible to hold that the natural size of the self is not atomic. The evidence regarding the nature of the liberated soul is that it is omniscient and omnipresent. Its omnipresence cannot be explained, if its size is atomic, and so requires explanation. The Ahirbudhnya Samhita describes it to be of the size of a mote.

Vide:

तत्त्वं प्राण्य तत्त्वं शुच्यन्ते वीतकक्कम्पनः ।
त्रस्तरेण्युपमाणास्ते राज्ञीमकोटिविषुभिताः ॥

AhS. VI 27.

It is therefore proper to admit that by 'atomic' is meant 'small' or 'little'. In the state of bondage, the word, 'āṇu' can be taken to mean spatially restricted, but in the state of release it can mean omnipresence.

The place which the selves occupy after gaining makṣa is one from which they do not return to the mundane world.

Vide:

प्राण्यते परमें वाम्य यतो नाचतत्तें पुजः ।

AhS. XXXVII. 26a.

701. Ibid. p. 59
This is a non-material place shining with the six qualities. The released souls shine there with the lustre of crores of suns and moons. They take no food. The Supreme God of gods lies there on the serpent couch, attended by hosts of ever-free selves.  

702 This Highest Place will disappear at the time of absolute dissolution and emerge at the time of Pure Creation. The released selves will also merge, but will not undergo any suffering.

The nature of the released condition is described as the soul's becoming one with God. During dissolution, it becomes latent in Him. The Lord declares that the liberated selves become Himself and that there is no difference between them and Himself. This is not Advaita, for He adds that the liberated souls sport as He does.  

703 An inseparable union between the two is meant and is described as like that of the Kaustubha gem and the Lord. In that state, the self is noticed to be clinging to the Lord like a gem.  

704 The souls “become practically, but not really one.”

Regarding the means of obtaining liberation, it is said in the Pāñcarātra Āgama that the liberation of the self depends on the compassion of Śrī which persuades her to bestow her grace on the self. This process is called technically S'aktipāta.

Vide:

मया जीवा: समीक्ष्यन्ते श्रिया दुःखविवर्जिता: ।
सोसुनग्रह इति प्रोक्त: शक्तिपातापराह्यः ॥

LT. XIII. 8.

702 LT. xvn. 9, 15-32.
703 PaS I. 4 17.
704 Visputilaka, II. 30, 100
705 Schrader, p. 93.
No one can force God to bring about this. God knows when to give effect to it.706 To please God for obtaining Śaktipāta, four means are recommended. They are Karma, Sānkhya, Yoga and Sarvatyāga 707 In another context, the last one is omitted.708 It is also said that knowledge and religion (dharma) are the means, the latter leading to the former. The former may be of a direct or indirect nature, the latter leading to the former. Religion is twofold, being mediate (vyavādhānava) and immediate. The former consists in offering worship to Brahmā and others who represent God, while the latter takes the form of offering direct worship to God. All kinds of worship sanctioned by or based upon the Vedas and systems of thought like Pāṣupata, Sānkhya and others come under the former 709 The Pāṇeātra mode is of the latter kind.

Vide:

विमृतिमेत् परं ब्रह्म तदैवायवस्थानः ॥
चेय भीणयते योगी स साशादमें हृष्यते ।
सास्वतं शास्तम खर्व तस्यायवलोकनम् ॥

Aṣ Ś XIII. 21b, 22

Among these, Karma can be treated as of the immediate kind when it is employed to worship the Lord. Sānkhya refers to tattvajñāna. Yoga means contemplation on God. Sarvatyāga is the path of prapatti.

The Karma mode may be taken to have been treated in the Carya section of the texts. It involves the worship of the Lord in temples and houses. The daily life of those who choose this mode is divided under five heads, namely, Abhidgamaṇa, Upādāna,

706 LT XIII. 10.
707 Ibid XV, 17
708 Ibid XVII 49
709 Aṣ Ś XIII. 10-21a, 23-25.
Iṣṭyā, Svādhyāya and Yoga Every self is required to offer worship in a temple and also in the house.

After attending to the preparatory routine of bath, sandhyā and others, one must approach the sanctum sanctorum in the temple or house, uttering prayers and attend to the worship of God. This is called ‘Abhīgamana’ which means literally, ‘going towards (God)’. After this, flowers, fruits and other requirements for the worship of God are to be collected. This is known as Upādana Iṣṭyā is the name given to the ritual of worship. After taking food which is called Anuyāga, one has to spend the time till the evening in the recitation and study of the sacred texts, listening to the discourses of the teacher or elders, reflection upon what one has learnt from others and offering comments on what one has received from others. This is called Svādhyāya. Towards the close of the day, sandhyā is to be performed before offering worship to the Lord. Deep contemplation on God must then be undertaken with occasional rests that may pass into sleep. The name ‘Yoga’ is given to this. All these together constitute Pañcakālaprakriyā and those who follow this are known as Pañcakātikās.

The Pañcakālaprakriyā is the daily routine shaped out of the code of conduct laid down in the Śruti texts to suit the needs for the dedication of life to the adoration of Viṣṇu. The Karma mārga of the Bhagavadgītā, which is based upon the Vedic concept of rituals, is itself a method by which the deeds done are dedicated to God as His. This concept involves a further adaptation to the exclusive worship of Viṣṇu. Thus, the practical side of the life of a devotee of Viṣṇu is treated in the Pañcarātra tradition as karma which is obligatory on all members of society including those who take to the order of ascetics.

710 JS SKS Rṣt I 3-14a, PārS IX 161-175, JS. XXII, SprS. XVII, 68-74, PāS. IV 13-3, Cf AhS XV. 8a, 49b, LT. XVII. 13; XVIII. 51, 52. Both AhS and LT, mention the word ‘Pañcakāla’.
Jñāna refers to the acquiring of the right knowledge of the tattva which is the Ultimate Reality. In particular, what is to be known is related to the fivefold forms of God namely, Para, Vyūha, Viśhava, Arcā and Antaryāmin. The vyūha concept has a significant role to play in this Jñāna-mārga, while the arcā form receives a direct treatment in the Karma-mārga. In fact, the Kriyā and Cāryā sections of the Pāṇcarātra texts lay emphasis on the arcā form, of course, in the background of the vyūha concept. The knowledge, which is thus acquired, requires recapitulation on the basis of their common and divergent characteristics.

Vide:

या तत्त्वगणना संख्या तां पुरा शीघ्रेद्वृत्तः।
तत्त: साधस्यवेधम्यर्थस्वरूपमभवावदिकाम्॥
कुष्ठिचाचार्तिकां संख्या शाख्यतथोपदेशाजास्।
चर्चायाभिन्न संख्यायां सिद्धायाममलाक्तमनि॥
सदेति या समीचीना संख्या सततर्गोचरा।
एषा सा परमं संख्या मत्यसाहस्मुज्ज्ववः॥

LT. XVI. 26-28.

The knowledge which is then acquired is real knowledge. This is acquired not by self-effort alone, but also through the grace of God.

The Yoga mode is the means which is based on the practices enjoined in the Yoga system of Patañjali. The process is a highly complex one even for comprehension and difficult to practise. It is purely internal in execution. It is of two kinds, namely, samādhi and saṁyama. The former results from the practice of yoga. In that condition, the self rests in Brahman called Srinivāsa and remains there undisturbed. The latter consists in the performance of good deeds which are related only to the Highest Self. It has physical and mental aspects. It purifies the inner organ and generates pure knowledge.\textsuperscript{711}

\textsuperscript{711} LT XVI. 30-41.
Yoga consists in the union effected between the self and Paramätman and the process is stated to be of eight parts. This is called Hrdayäga which consists in the offering of the self as an oblation (havīs) purified through separation from matter. The eight parts or limbs are enumerated as in the Yoga system of Patañjali. The ten constituents of yama include the four of the Yogasūtras and have in addition dāya, dhrṣṭi, śauca, ksamā, āryava and mitāḥāra. Aparigraha of the Yogasūtras is omitted. Śauca mentioned here finds enumerated under niyama by Patañjali. Some of them here get an original description. For example, brahmacarya is not mere continence, but includes not regarding one’s wife as an object of enjoyment, a concept developed through the significance attached to women in the Agamas. Among the kinds of niyama enumerated by Patañjali, santosa and tapas alone are retained. Eight more are added under the names of siddhāntaśravana, dāna, mati, iśvara-pūjana, āsīkya, hrī, japa and vrata. The first of these consists in the study of the Vedānta Śraddhā is faith in the work that is enjoined in the scriptures and iśvara-pūjana is worshipping Viṣṇu with devotion in accordance with one’s capacity. Meditation (prapādhdna) which is recommended as a means of controlling the mental activities in the Yogasūtras does not get treated. It does not form part of yogic practice. Āstikya consists in the conviction that there exists an object which is accessible through the Vedas. Eleven postures are enumerated along with their descriptions.

712. AbS XXXI 4b, 5, 15
713. YS. II. 29, AbS XXXI, 16, 17, PaS. II. 1-9
714. AbS. XXXI 18-23
715. Ibid. XXXI. 28b.
716. Ibid XXXI. 24-30a, PaS II. 1 9, 10a.
717. Ibid. XXXI. 31b-46, JS. XXXIII-17b-23a where four postures are enumerated.

ASV—30
Prānāyāma is the next limb which receives a very detailed description. Before describing this, the tubular vessels called nādis are required to be purified. They start from the Mulādhāra (perineum) around the navel and pass through twelve cakras within the body and reach the Brahmārandhra, the cavity in the head. The power called Kundalinī, getting its name from its resting in the Mulādhāra like a coiled serpent, covers up the Brahmārandhra with its eight mouths, each representing one aspect of Prakṛti. There are seventy-two thousand nādis in the body, of which susumnā, idā and pingalā are the most prominent. The soul moves about in the cakras like a spider in its web.

Apart from the five praṇas, there are five more called Nāga, Kurma, Krkara, Devadatta and Dhanafiṣaya. The nādis are to be purified by filling up idā and pingalā by turns with air and expelling it, and this must be done thrice during the performance of the morning, midday and twilight sandhi worship. In three months, this process, if practised every day, will cleanse the nādis of all impurities. When the impurities are got rid of, Prānāyāma is to be performed, doing the japa of Sudarṣana or of Gāyatrī mantra all along.

Pratyāhāra, the next limb, is the withdrawal of the mind from the objects of the senses and placing it in the Lord. Fixing the mind in the Lord is Dhāraṇā. Dhyāṇa consists in contemplating upon the Lord with the marvellous form in the midst of the dazzling flame of fire within the ākāśa of the heart. Samādhi, the last stage, brings about the appearance of the Lord.

718 Ibid xxxii. 7-41
719 Ibid xxxii 42-47a
720 Ibid xxxii 51-55, Cf PaS, II, 3
721 Ibid xxxii 56, 57 Cf PaS II 4 8a, 10a.
These limbs, when practised, arouse the *Kundalini-sakti* and make it ascend, step by step, through the *cakras* and merge in the Absolute Self at the point called *Dvādaśānta*. At this stage, there is the union of Sakti with God.\(^{723}\)

*Nyāsa* is enjoined as a means of obtaining final release on the main ground that, with the passage of time, the embodied self is adversely affected so as to lose knowledge, stamina, strength and longevity and is affected by the results of the deeds done frequently. So the self is asked to avoid the two extremes of doing good deeds. Like the *Agniśṭoma* sacrifice and bad ones like killing animals, the results of which are bound to affect the doer. The self must seek the Lord as Its refuge and it will surely reach Him at the end of its life’s journey.\(^{724}\) This is called by several names such as *prapattī, prapadana, śaraṇāgati, bhāryāsa* and so on. The Supreme Place, that is, *moksa*, which a self, seeking release, could not get by such means as *jñāna*, *voo* or *bhakti*, is obtained by this itself.\(^{725}\)

It has six component parts, namely, (i) the resolution on the part of the self to do such acts only as would be in conformity with the divine will, (ii) giving up those acts that would displease God, (iii) a firm conviction that God would protect those who seek His protection, (iv) the choice of God as protector, (v) placing one’s own self in His charge and (vi) the realisation of the helplessness of the self to seek any other

\(^{723}\) LT vii 143-146 Cl. Com., on LT. xx 12, 13.

\(^{724}\) *ibid* xvii 51-59a.

\(^{725}\) AhS xxxvii 25, 26.
Among these, the fifth element must be considered as the act of self-surrender, the others forming its elements, or all the six form may parts of the act. Nyāsa is not a physical act, but only a mental process. It takes the shape of a prayer in the form, “I am a receptacle of sins, I have nothing and have no way to pursue. Please become Yourself the means.”

Being a form of knowledge, this thought also becomes a means of mokṣa, as enjoined in the Vedic passage.

By adopting this means of self-surrender, it is said that all that are expected to be performed, such as penances, sacrifices and giving of alms and gifts are taken to have been done, and mokṣa is assured. It is further held that nyāsa is superior to all other methods enjoined for obtaining mokṣa.

Vide

AhŚ XXXVII. 27b-30a

AhŚ xxxvii. 34, 35a, 36b, 37a
Nyāsa is given the symbolic representation of sacrifice. The self is the oblation offered with the utterance of the word, "namaḥ." One who takes up this means is held to have performed a hundred sacrifices. That it is a powerful weapon to be used to fight against worldly sufferings and gain the state of final release is explained by the declaration that even those who are devoted to the performance of good deeds, who are learned and who are adepts in yogic methods, do not bear any comparison to one who has taken up nyāsa, not being equal to even a billionth fraction of him.

Self-surrender does not consist in placing merely one's self under God. All the possessions are also to be surrendered to Him. Nyāsa is to be done only once. The evil consequence of getting rebirth will happen to one who takes to other courses like karma or bhakti, leaving nyāsa imperfectly done. Those who adopt this means must not violate the Vedic law even in thought. Any lapse, however, could be expiated by the act itself.

Nyāsa is the foremost among the means for crossing the sea of worldly existence. It is the only way which both the ignorant and the learned can adopt. Those who adopt this course enjoy the rewards of their good deeds and get freedom from all kinds of bondage and acquire the highest status.

730 Ibid. xxxvii, 37b-39
731 LT. xvii 63.
732 Ibid. xvii 80.
733 Ibid. xvii 89b-90
734 Ibid. xvii. 96a.
735 Ibid. xvii 102-103a.
736 Ibid. xvii, 104b, 105a.
Those who take to the methods of \textit{karma, jñāna, bhakti} and \textit{yoga} are required to acquire certain specific qualifications which are different according to the distinctions based on birth and sex and mental abilities. Further, there is no certainty that the rewards are sure to be bestowed upon those who adopt them. Some will have to take more births to receive the fruits of these undertakings. Hence these are considered to be hard to practise. From this point of view, \textit{nyāsa} is certainly easier to take up, because there are no restrictions based on grounds of sex, birth, learning and any kind of attainment. However, it is declared that, though easy, it is hard to practise.

\textit{Vide}:

\textit{उपायः लुक्कार लोकायुक्तकर्त्त्र मतो शमः}

\textit{LT XVII. 105b}

The significance of this seems to lie in the fact that \textit{nyāsa} is adopted only once in one's life time, and so the aspirant must become conscious of his getting fully qualified by acquiring all the five constituent parts of \textit{nyāsa} except āśina-niksepa. In adopting the other methods like \textit{karma} and \textit{jñāna}, the aspirant has to qualify himself by having \textit{upanayana} or listening to the teachings from a preceptor or practising the \textit{ahgas} of \textit{yoga}. However, in doing so, he is likely to commit errors which will land him into difficulties such as sinful results, non-removal of ignorance or rise of doubtful cognitions and inability to control mental activities. On the other hand, the result is certain from \textit{nyāsa}, but great care has to be exercised to acquire or realise one's fitness for it. Probably, this is the significance attached to the statement.

In this context, it is interesting to note that \textit{bhakti} is not mentioned as an independent means of \textit{moksa}, while the \textit{astānga-yoga} which gets a detailed treatment, could be taken to represent \textit{bhakti}, though the word \textit{bhakti} is not used as such in this connection. The concept of \textit{bhakti} and the activities of
In fact, worship of the deity is incompatible with the absence of bhakti. To a large extent bhakti alone dominates the spirit of the relationship between man and God as evidenced in many a passage in the Agama texts. The doctrine of uyāsa is not found developed or treated in many well known texts, other than the Ahiñbudhnya, Lakṣmītantra, Śṛīprasna and a few other Samhitās. The general conclusion is to be drawn in favour of the bhakti-mārga which is also known as upāsanā and comprises the eight-limbed yoga, according to other texts.

The dissolution of creation is of four kinds, namely, nityā, the natural and final destruction; naivritti, that relating to the visible universe occurring from time to time; prākriti, that of all categories which evolve from matter; prāṣūti, relating to the dissolution of avyakta in the prasūti-kośa; māyā, dissolution of the matter of the prasūti-kośa in the māyā-kośa; sakti, dissolution of matter in the māyā-kośa into the sakti-kośa, and āityantikā, escape of the self who performs yoga from the sakti-kośa into Sakti. The self does not get annihilated there, but has independent existence in a transcendental form as part of the Ultimate Reality.

Linguistic occultism plays a part in the Pāñcarātra doctrines, forming a strong background for the worship of the deity. Brahman is the source of all sound. When it feels the urge to create, there arises a state of activity combined with inactivity (sāntatā), when the sound and its meaning get distinguished, but yet remaining latent, and objects get indicated by the sounds which denote them. Sound should therefore precede the

737 Devotion, which forms the basis for the act of worship, does not get independent and elaborate treatment, but it gets emphasized as essential for a sādhaka. Vide LT ix 51, xxxiii. 115; Bharadvaja Samhitā, VII 3, PauS xxxi.

738. SKS, Rsi. III. 98-117. See AhS, IV, for a detailed description.
rise of the objects or the objects could be held to rise from sound. At this stage, the sound is known as nāda which gives rise at the next stage to bindu also known as paśyantī. This then leads to the madhyama stage when the logical relation between the word and its meaning lies in the form of an impression Vaikharī is the next stage when the syllables and words are distinctly noticeable.

In the evolution of sounds produced, the units of the alphabet are classified variously. For instance, āsman, antahstha, svara and sparśa represent the four kinds and so called as catuspadī. The mantras are formed out of these and they flow from Brahman. In accordance with the mental realization of the aspirants, particular mantras are evolved. That sound which an aspirant receives with the faith that it would protect him, which shields him from fear with its purport concealed, in which the deity’s nature is manifested in the sequence in which the syllables occur and which reveals pure knowledge, is called mantra.

Vide:

मां वायते, यगत्नल्येव योगेन स्वीजतो ध्वनि: ।
युज्जस्य: सत्यत्रष मन्त्रः वायते भयानु ॥
स मन्त्रः संस्मृतोऽहनाविकास: शब्दजः क्रमेः ।
पूण्येहत्तासमुद्भूते: शुद्धोपाधानवयो यत्: ॥

LT. XVIII 44-45

Since sound originates from Brahman, God is said to present Himself in the form of mantra. Particularly, mantras are useful in internal worship (antaryāga) Japa and dhyāna do thus become meaningful. When the mantras are uttered as in nyāsa and homa, they convey the intended meaning to the deity, and so it becomes clear that God is there to listen to the prayers of His devotees.

739. Cf, AhS. xvi, LT. xviii.
Creation of articulate sounds is on the same plan as in cosmic creation. The sound 'a' is at the root, all other sounds being its transformations, each sound being an effect of the sound which precedes it. The first sound that is audible is the aspirate and it is called visarga or creation; the anusvāra represents the withdrawal of speech (saṁhāra). The former is called the moon (soma) and the latter the sun (sūrya). The short vowels are the sun's rays, while the long ones those of the moon. The consonants represent matter and its evolutes. The antaḥsthas are said to keep God's manifestations in the vyūhas within themselves. The ṛṣman sounds and kṣa represent the four vyūhas and Para Vāsudeva. They form together Pañcabrahman.

The structure of sounds is fitted into the inner yogic body of the aspirant. This body has twelve cakras, each having twelve groups of four sounds each. And it represents the microcosmic formation of the macrocosmos. This is helpful in nyāsa while performing bhūtaśuddhi. The inner worship becomes purposeful, when the set of four sounds is uttered, since this set has the four vyūha deities presiding over it. The presence of these deities is easily visualized by the aspirant.

A mantra is considered to be complete when it has four parts, namely, bīja, śīla, samiśā and pada. Each is powerful in itself. Among them the bīja refers to the soul and the others to the body. Mantras delight the aspirant in his journey through padādhvan. They create a sense of complete detachment in him by taking him through tattvā, katā and varga. Finally, the aspirant enters into the eternal Brahman called

740. AhS. xvi. 76-77, LT xix, 20, 22.
741. Ibid xvi. 83b-84a.
742. Ibid xvi 84b-85a, LT. xix. 30. Cf. SKS. Indra, II.
743. Cf LT xx1 17-21.
744. Ibid. xx1, 25.
ASA—31.
Lakshmi-Narasimha. Among the several mantras that are to be used, those of Sudarśana, Lakshmi and Narasimha are considered to be of supreme importance.

A novel process is found evolved and treated in the Jayatśamhitā regarding the course of upāsanā. It is based on the concept of Viśākhayupa. It bears comparison with Madhuvidyā, according to which Brahman is to be meditated upon in the states both of cause and effect. Brahman is the cause and the sun is the effect. The aspirant must meditate upon Brahman in the state of effect, namely, as the sun, and later in the state of cause in the form of the Inner Self (Antarātman) of the sun. He who does so will become a Vasu in another aeon and, again continuing the meditation as Vasu, he will reach Brahman at the end of his life. Both the sun and Brahman who are to be meditated upon, are only Brahman. Similarly, an aspirant must meditate upon Aniruddha in Svetadvipa, to which place he would go, and then to Pradyumna upon whom he must meditate. Then his meditation on Sankarṣaṇa whom he reaches next, will take him to Vāsudeva. This is stated in the Jayatśamhitā to be another method prescribed for those who desire to enjoy the bliss of Brahman. This method is prescribed for those who follow the pañcakāla-prakriyā. The four deities control the

745 Ibid. xxii
746 Ch. U, III 11
747 Vide

(Cited in the Rasasvatrayasūra, ch xxii, as taken from the Jayatśamhitā)

waking, dream, deep sleep and transcendental states which are referred to as *viśva, tayasa, prājña* and *turiya*. The *Lakṣmiṇītātra* and some other Āgamas speak of a fifth stage called *turiyātīta* which is of the form of Lakṣminārāyana. This is the supra-*vyūha* state of existence which manifests the infinite divinity and splendour of the soul.

This method of passing from one state to another is called *krama-mukti*, which finds also a different kind of representation. By worshipping the *vibhava* form of God, the aspirant gets to the *vyūha* stage. After worshipping Him in that stage, he reaches the subtle form of *Para Brahman* called Vāśideva.

From this, it is evident that an aspirant cannot get *moksa* at the end of the life in which he mediates on a particular form of God. As in the case of *bhakti yoga*, one is required to take a series of births. The stages show that the aspirant will have to start at the waking state and pass on to the dream state by fully getting qualified for it, and so on from one state to the next. This is justly brought out by Parāśārabhaṭṭa.

Vide:

\[ \text{Jātakasāmāsthānāstikāyakāhādyāhācādāmabhāruṣyāḥ} \]
\[ \text{vr̥māntānātānāpāhānārthaātaḥātyāqānaḥ vaḥiḥ chaturgī} \]

\[ \text{Śrīra āgarājastava, II, 40.} \]

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748 *Māndūkya Upanisad*, III 7.
749 *LT* LX 11 12; Cf *JS* VI 13a, *Pās* II, 5 6-7. The preceptor, who initiates the pupil, is said to have attained this state.
Vide *JS* XVI 174b
750 Vide

\[ \text{vibhāračandaśadūṇāḥ prāṇa bṛ̹gaḥābhavatvādāh bālahavārthaḥ} \]
\[ \text{sūkṣmaḥ prāṇyaḥ dhatiḥ vaḥiḥ} \]

\[ \text{Śrībhāṣya, II, 2, 41.} \]
CHAPTER VII

PĂńCARĀTRA TEXTS

The Păncaśatra doctrines were preached by five teachers—Sāndilya, Aupagāyana, Mauṣjyāyana, Kaśi and Bharadvāja. The works of the first and the last, among these, are available, while that of the second gets only reference in some works. The other two left no works. The works of the two writers mentioned above, have more than one text with the same name. They treat matters like worship of God, bhakti and praṇāṭi.

The Nārāyaniya section of the Mahābhārata throws light on the traditions of the Păncaśatra Agama. The vyūha doctrine and the daily round of life classified under five heads are the matters treated there. The earliest texts must be expected to have dealt with these matters only. On this ground, the texts of the two writers mentioned above could not have been very early. The interlocutors, here, are Aniruddha, Samkarṣaṇa, Bhagavān, Vasudeva, Śī, Bhṛgu, Ahirbudhnya, Nārada, Mārkandeya, Sāndilya and others. Some of them are said to have received instructions from others mentioned above, and in their turn, they offered expositions to others. It is not therefore possible to fix the priority of any of these texts over others.

The number of Păncaśatra texts is listed in some of these works themselves. They are 154 in the Vīṣṇuṭantra, 108 in the Pādma and Vīśvāmitra saṁhitās, 106 in the Purusottama-saṁhitā, 103 in the Bhāradvājasaṁhitā, 100 in the Kapiśālasaṁhitā, 91 in the Mārkandeyasaṁhitā and 25 in the Hayāśirṣasaṁhitā and

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751 IS XXI 519-33
752 PaS. I i. 108
Māheśvaratantara and also in the Agnipurāṇa Schrader’s list contains 210 and 14 more of the texts, but the titles of them are not noted.\textsuperscript{753} The introduction to the Lakṣmiyatantra\textsuperscript{754} enumerates 225 works, of which 56 end their names in tantra, two in tālaka, one in vādbhava, one in rakṣya, one in saṁbhava and the remaining in saṁhitā. The Panorama of Pāṇcarātra literature mentions 289 works, of which 45 end their name in tantra, three in sāgara, one in vyākhyā, one in purāṇa, one in tālaka, one in siddhānta, one in ud Havana and the remaining 236 in saṁhitā. This work describes 104 works among which 99 end their names in saṁhitā, three in tantra, one in saṁuccaya and one in cūḍāmāṇi.

It is presumed that the remaining 186 works are partially lost. Twelve among them have more than one text with the same name. The following groups contain redundant names: (1) Garudasamhitā, Tārksyasamhitā, Vainateyasamhitā and Khageśasamhitā; (2) Nārasimhākhyatantra and Nṛkesarasamhitā; and (3) Ātritasamhitā and Ātreyasamhitā. Āindratantra, Kāma-tantra Dhruvatantra, Pāṇiniyamahātantra Pāvakaśamhitā, Puskalasamhitā, Bodhāyanatantra Mahātantra, Māyātantra, Varāhapurānasamhitā, Varāhamitrāsasamhitā, Vādbhavatantra, Sakalasamhitā, Sākatāyanasamhitā, Satvasamhitā, Sammohanatantra Sānkhyatantra, Śūryatantra Somatantra and many others are purely names connected with certain persons and sages who have distinguished themselves in fields associated with them in order to give them a status in the list. Until information is available about many of these works, it is not possible to decide their exact nature. Besides, among these works, 97 are mentioned only once in the twelve lists, 45 twice and 45 thrice.

The Pāṇcarātra texts are classified under three heads, divya, murībhāṣita and māṇusa. The Sāttvata, Paṇḍkara, Jayākhya and others are treated as divya, as they contain the exposition of

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{753} Schrader pp 6-12.
  \item \textsuperscript{754} LT Introduction, pp 10-13
\end{itemize}
the doctrines by Nārāyaṇa Himself. Those which are the expositions of Brahmā and eminent sages are of the second kind, e.g., Īśvara, Pārameśvara and Bhāradvāja and others. The works written by mortals come under the last head. The Āgamas are also classified as sāttvika, rājasa and tāmasa. The Īśvara, Bhāradvāja, Saumantava, Pāremeśvara, Vahāyasa, Citraśikhandi and some other saṁhitās come under the first head. To the rājasa kind belong the Saṅatkumāra, Pādmodbhava, Sātātropa, Tejodravina, Māyavaisbhāvika and others. The Pañcapraśna, Śukapraśna, Tatvarāgara and others are of the tāmasa kind.

Generally, an Āgama text should contain four divisions called jñāna, yoga, kriyā and cāryā. Among the texts of the Pañcarātra, the Pādmasamhitā contains these divisions. Others generally deal with some of these. The Brhadbrahmāsamhitā has four pādas whose exact nature is not stated. The Sāndilyasamhitā has one division called Bhaktikānda—the first part, and another called fourth part. The Saṅatkumārasamhitā has four divisions named rātras, named after Brahma, Śiva, Indra and Rsi. It has lost a division called Brhaspatirātra. Similarly, there are five divisions called rātra enumerated as first, second and others in the Jñānamatraśāro. The Hayāsirasamhitā has four kāndas with the names, Ādi, Sankarṣana, Linga and Saura.

Among the texts, the Paṃskara Jayākhya and Sāttvata saṁhitās are stated to be the best (ratna). 755 Others are based on the Pārameśvara, Pādma and Īśvara saṁhitās. According to the Pādmasamhitā, there are the five best (ratna) texts, Pādma, Saṅatkumāra Parama, Pādmodbhava, and Mahendra saṁhitās. 756 The Kānasamhitā 757 mentions them to be six in number, with the addition of the Kānavasamhitā to the list mentioned above. The Saṅatkumārasamhitā, however, is here mentioned as the foremost among the saṁhitās.

755 Is I 64
756 PaS IV 30 203, 33 201-202a
757, Schrader, p. 20.
The Āgamas might have originated in North India, but the texts were developed in South India itself. These texts contain references to the kings of Cera, Cola and Pandyā regions. The adhyayana uttava, singing of Goda’s compositions, floating festivals and the āzhvārs find reference in these texts. There are even Tamil expressions used in some of these texts. Since these works contain references to Nathamuni, Yāmuna, Vedāntadesīka and the āzhvārs, these must have been composed later than their times. The period of the Āgamas must be therefore between 800 A.D. and 1400 A.D. However, Utpala (850 A.D), Yāmuna (10th century) and Rāmānuja (1017-1137) cite passages from the Pañcarātra texts. Therefore, most important samhitās like Pauskara, Jayākhyā, Sāttivata, Īsvara, Parama, Sanatkumāra, Ahirbudhnya and others should have been composed before 800 A.D.

The Vaikhanasa texts have a uniform treatment of the subject matter with slight differences among them. In this, they differ from the Pañcarātra works where there is much difference between one text and another. Some texts deal with theories of cosmogony, leaving aside temple worship, while others concentrate on temple construction and worship of images. Some describe the principles of yoga in detail while others devote chapters to the means of expiation. The date of

758 Kapiṭjala Samhitā, I 14a. 
Vide Pañcarātra Nūl Vilakkam, p 4

759 Aniruddha Samhitā 26, This also is called Margaśīrṣotsava. 
Vide Viṣṇaurahasyasamhitā 33, Viṣṇusiddhānta 38, Sprs 47. 
Hiraṇyagarbhasamhitā, 12

760 Narayanaśaṃhitā, 45

761 Ibid 21, Sprs 40

762 Upendrasamhitā, 4 5.

763 Vide Karanākā (SKS, p 64), alavattam (Ibid. p 41).

764 Bhadbrahmasamhitā, Viṣṇutantra, Upendrasaṃhitā.
composition of a particular text or its priority over another cannot be decided on the strength of its contents. For instance, the *Ahurvadnya*, *Jayākhya* and *Parama* *samhītās* and the *Lakṣmitantra* give greater importance to cosmological theories, yaniras and other matters. The *Sanatkumārasamhīta* deals with mantras, mudrās, installation of idols, expiatory rites and other such subjects, and contains no reference to temple construction or worship of idols. The *Pauskara*, *Pārameśvara*, *Sāttvata*, Īśvara, Pādma Kāpiṇījala, Viṣvaksena, Śrīprasna and other texts are more concerned with temple worship. It is hard to decide which matter was treated earlier than others, although it will not be wrong to assume that references to temples point to a later date.

The *Pauskara* *samhīta* seems to be the earliest and the *Sāttvata* *samhīta* which refers to it must be placed next to it. The *Jayākhya* comes next, followed by the *Ahurvadhya* *samhītā* and the *Lakṣmitantra*, both of which mention the *Sāttvata*. The *Īśvara* *samhītā* must be placed next, though it mentions the *Pauskara*, *Jaya* and *Sāttvata* and also *Pārameśvara*, *Pādma* and *Īśvara* which may be a case of interpolation. The *Parama*, *Sanatkumāra*, *Pārameśvara*, Viṣvaksena and *Pādma* are placed next in this order. The criterion lies in that the texts mentioned earlier are cited in the one following them. Yet this is not to be taken to help in deciding the priority, as such references to other texts could have been later additions. Besides, there are passages in common between some of them, such as (i) the *Sāttvata*, Īśvara and Śrīprasna and (ii) the

765. PauS in viii. 8, PārS in xxi. 50b-51a,
766. AhS. v 69 mentions SS, xix 64 mentions JS LT mentions SS in II 59 and JS in xi 23
767. JS I 64 mentions SS, PauS, JS and PārS
768. PārS in xxxix. 18, SS. in xxxix. 18,
769. PārS I 19a
Sāttvata, Jayākhyā and Laksmitāutra. This order can be admitted only tentatively, for the Pādmodbhava and Kānva saṁhitās are not available except in fragments. The Mahendra-saṁhitā is also not available, but passages from it are cited in the Sanatkumāra-saṁhitā, 770 Pārameśvara-saṁhitā 771 and Pādma-saṁhitā 772.

The Pauskara-saṁhitā has a little less than 6000 stanzas in 43 chapters. The text is incomplete, and some chapters break off in the middle. The Lord, with the name, ‘Bhagavān’, addresses Brahmā as ‘Pauskara’. The text mentions the Pārameśvara (which is based on it) and also the Sāttvata 773 (perhaps included later in the text). The original text must have been composed in North India Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Sarasvatī, Pravāha, Smhavaktrakā, Aīrāvatī, Gjasthitā, Vitasā, Narmadā, Drādvatī, Parosnī and Sindhu are the rivers mentioned 774. Yamunā is said to flow in south-east, Sarasvatī in the south and Vitasā in the east. Aīrāvatī is identified with Ravi and Vitasā with Jhelum. Drādvatī joins Sarasvatī, Parosnī which is Riv, is identical with Aīrāvatī and is only repeated here. Except Narmadā, all the above-mentioned rivers flow in north and north-west India. The place where this Saṁhitā could have been composed should be somewhere in north-west Panjāb, perhaps near the Himalayas 775.

In order to delight those who have faith in them and to declare and establish certain places as holy, it is stated that

770 SKS pp 139, 282
771 PārS X.
772 PaS IV 33
773 Vide

आदि सर्वागमानां च पारमेश्वरमागमम् ।
प्रमाणपरिश्रुध्युः च हितमञ्जज सास्वतम् ॥

774. PauS XXXI 106-111.
775. See N. N. Godbole, ‘Ṛgvedic Sarasvatī’, BORI XLII, 1-IV.
48V—32
Vasudeva and other deities come down and stay within stones, evidently idols which are installed and consecrated.

Vide:

तृणे ब्राह्मकार्यानां ते सीथानां हि सिद्धे।
क्षेत्रेण बालुदेवास्ते स्थिताधोपलकुश्मु।

XXXVI 24.

The shrine at S-iraṅgam is glorified and is said to have been consecrated by Vibhīṣaṇa according to the Pañcarātra mode. The doors, windows, prākaras are all stated to have some deities presiding over them. Tondaradippodi Āzhvār and Tirumangal Āzhvār who flourished between 750-850 A.D. are stated to have built this temple. Since this construction is in strict conformity to the rules laid down here and in the Pārameśvara-samhitā, both these texts should have attained the present form long before 700 A.D. and the Pauṣkara still earlier, as it forms the basis for the Pārameśvara-samhitā. Several shrines are also mentioned such as Satyavrata (Kaṇci), Vīkaṭa (Tirumalai), Simbācala and others.

God is said to have a mantradeha. Lakṣmi and other female deities are the saktis of the Lord. Anybody can participate in the ceremony of installation, whether they are experts in the three Vedas, or Kṣatriyas, Vaiṣyas, Śudras or Snātakas who have completed the study of the Vedas. They should have abiding faith in God and in worshipping God with mantras. A woman who is possessed of correct knowledge

776 Guruparamparāprabhāva of Pīnbažhakiyaperumāl Jiyaṛ, pp.68-69.
778 Ibid. XXI. 5.
779 Ibid. X. 21. XXII. 7.
780 Ibid. XXXVIII. 26, 27.
(lit. discrimination) is also eligible to participate. This *Samhitā* deals with the *kriyā* and *caryā* aspects.

The *Sāttvata-samhitā* contains twenty chapters called *pārśchedas* and has about 3500 *slokas*. It mentions the *Pauṣkara, Vārāha* and *Prājāpatya samhitās*. This text contains the doctrines taught to the sages by Nārada who passed on to them what Sankarṣaṇa had received from Vāsudeva. The *Vīśākhayūpa, Vaihava deities* and their worship receive prominent treatment, which is an indication and justification of the title, *‘Sāttvata’*, for this *samhitā*. The four deities of the *vyūha* are said to constitute what is called *caturātmika*, in which form the deities are to be worshipped. Four kinds of *caturātmika* are mentioned here. The principal deity, who is Vāsudeva, is referred

781 Vide

नारी चा निद्रवेकिनी ।

Ιbid. I 35

A woman is expected normally to treat her husband as God. Consequently there is no need for her to worship any deity. IS VIII 136

But she is permitted to take the initiation and do worship herself, when she is a destitute, or she has no one to take charge of her. Or, she may take her husband's permission for the same

Vide

नारी अनन्यदरणा निन्दवामिका च।

बनुञ्चत वत्वा साथानुन्याच्छ तत्र ॥

Cf IS XXII 8, *PauS* XXX 186b-189

782 SS, IX 133

783 Ibid. IV

784 Ibid V

Vide:

अमेद्रानाश्यमूलैै वें संस्थितं वटशीवज्जित।

स्वर्त्त्वक्रियाविनिर्ममकथुम परमार्थत: ॥ V. 31
to as Ādīmūrti, a name also used in the Vaikhānasa Āgama to refer to Viṣṇu from whom emerged four deities, Satya, Puruṣa, Acyuta and Aniruddha. The first kind of cāturātmya is that which is the seed for all activities and on account of which the world is of the nature of pure consciousness. To the second kind belongs the eternal form which is resplendent like the sun and which has the several colours assumed by the four deities. This form gives to the worshippers kawalya and destroys the root-cause which brings about bondage. The third kind is charming like a stream of nectar, having all the materials necessary for creation, maintenance and dissolution. The deities take their form and make their appearance and disappear. At the command of the fourth kind of cāturātmya, the universe is intact. God assumes different colours in the yugas. He is also said to have a form called Agnisomāya, made up of letters. The Pāñcarātra system is called Rahasyāmnāya. The members of all the four castes are eligible to get initiated for worship and women who are destitutes or miserable can also take part in it. The husband’s permission is required in the case of a woman whose husband is alive.

785 LT (X) also gives the same description for these kinds, but does not mention the fourth kind. See Ibid. XX, for a subtle kind.

AśVS (V) refers to it and in XVI offers a treatment resembling the one contained in LT, XX. Also Cf. LT X.

Cf. SA XXXVII 4a.
786. SS V 81-82a.
787. Ibid. V 82b-83.
787. Ibid. V 84-85.
788. Ibid. V 86-87a.
789. Ibid. V 87b-89.
790. Ibid. XII 89.
791. Ibid. I 16a.
792. Ibid. XXII 8.
793. Ibid. VIII. 136.
The *Jayākhya-samhitā* has about 4500 stanzas in 33 chapters called *patalas*. This was taught to Nārada by Bhagavān. Sāndilya recounts what he had heard from Nārada. There is an additional section containing 163 stanzas in the first chapter which glorifies the shrine at Kāńcli and gives details about the festivals, the situation of the shrine and so on. No doubt, it is informative, but it must have been interpolated, since all the manuscripts of this text do not contain this passage. The *samhitā* describes creation of the pure type and traces the emanation of Acyuta from Bhagavān, of Satya from Acyuta and of Purusa from Satya. These three represent the three manifestations of Vāsudeva and are in the form of consciousness. Purusa is also called Ananta and is known as the Supreme Spirit. He is the inner ruler (*antaryāmin*) of all. The divine descents emanate from Him. Acyuta is of the form of brilliance, Satya has a dazzling body and Purusa has radiating lustre. All these rest in Vāsudeva, who is of the form of tranquil consciousness. 795 There is difficulty in reconciling these three emanations with the three well-known *vyūhas* of the system, because the latter are identified by distinct colours which however is not the case here.

It is equally difficult to take it as representing the *Vasakhanasa* tradition, for it omits Aniruddha who is admitted as the fifth

795. JS. IV 7 Here a reference could be made to the *Garuḍapurāṇa* (XII 14-15) which mention nine *vyūhas*

Vide,

चतुर्भुजो वासुदेव. पदः प्रथम पदः ।
संक्रमणः पुरुषोऽथ नववर्गोऽथ द्वाशामकः
अनिरुधः द्वाशामकः अत ऊँचामन्तंकः ||

Here it appears that the nine *vyūhas* include Vāsudeva (two-handed) who is mentioned. Including *Para Brahman* these become ten. Along with Aniruddha and Ananta, they become twelve.

Cf, *Hayagrīvasamhitā*, XXIV.
Besides, this tradition takes the order in the reverse way, keeping Purusa at the head. However, the major samhitās include Satya in the vyūha theory and take all the five as forming a unit with five mantras. Or this account must be taken to have been adopted by the Vaisnava Agamas in general, out of which the Vātikhānasa system took them up and added Aniruddha to the list, while the Pāñcarātra system developed the vyūha theory from the same source. But evidence is wanting to support this position. Anyway, this representation may be taken to give a very early date for this samhitā.

Sāntika, paustika, vidveṣana, māraṇa, uccātana and stambhana are cruel rites treated here. By the practice of tāntrika rites, khadgasiddhi, anjanāsiddhi, guliṃsiddhi, rasāyanaśiddhi, yaksini-siddhi and other specific results are achieved. This gives a sufficiently early date (about 400 A.D.), when belief in such achievements prevailed among the Buddhists.

Brahman is said to have a transcendental form of bliss, all-pervading and flawless, a subtle form with which it remains within the heart of all beings and a gross form with which creation, protection and destruction are carried out. It is not generally realised by all people. But, while yet remaining formless, it is realised through meditation.

The sun is brilliant and the moon is delightful. Knowledge which rises as a result of these two, has God for its object. He is of the form of sentience and so is of the nature of Agni and Soma, the form representing the sun. Lakṣmī, Kirti, Jayā and Māyā are His saktis.

796. ViS. xxii. 142.
797. JS xxvi.
798. Ibid. iv. 28, 24, 102b.
799. Ibid. vi. 224-226.
800. Ibid. vi. 77a.
Brahman is peerless, beyond the reach of expressions and senses and is to be realised by Himself. Without any instrument, He is realised and the means for this is the mantra. And mantras are derived from God; they possess shining sounds which increase in strength through the power of the Lord. Each mantra has subtle, gross and transcendental forms.

Brahman’s mantra form is of two kinds, partless and possessing parts. To realise it, knowledge is essential. This is of two kinds, sattā and kriyā. The former consists in the knowledge of the existence of Brahman as such. Kriyā is of two kinds, niyama and yama, which mean the rules of discipline and austerities respectively. Knowledge of the existence of God could be obtained through yogic methods which again are to be acquired through worship.

This Samhita attaches great importance to mantras and their proper use for the equipment of the worshipper. The mode of worship in the temple does not get as much attention as is given in later Samhitas. Cosmology, the vyūha theory and achievements through tāntrika practices which are treated here and are not traceable to any other Pāñcarātra text, may well be taken to suggest a very early date.

The Ahirbudhnya-samhita contains about 3800 stanzas in 60 chapters. The text is in the form of an exposition of the doctrines given by Ahirbudhnya, one of the eleven Rudras, to Nārada. Durvāsas, who had known this from Nārada, recounts it to Bharadvāja. The main purpose of the teaching here is to expound the glory of Sudarśana. The original text is stated.
to have contained 240 chapters and was condensed later for easy comprehension.805

The text opens with a prayer addressed to Visnu in the form of Sudarśana and another to the Sakti of Visnu. The latter is couched in the purely technical terms of the Tantra. The text treats of various siddhāntas with the help of parakṛti and purākalpa.806 There are ten narrations which illustrate the greatness of Sudarśana and the restoration of the Vedas to Brahmā by Visnu, thus providing justification for the development of the Sudarśana cult.807 A very detailed account is given of twenty-one kinds of Upavedas, sixty topics of the Sānkhya system, two kinds of yoga, four kinds of Karma-samhitā, eight parts of the Pāṣupata system, and ten topics of the Pāñcarātra system. The relative worth of these is also evaluated, and the Pāñcarātra system is declared to be the most useful.808 A sage called Apāntaratapāh, sprung from the speech of Visnu, and therefore called Vācyayāna, classified the Vedas.809

Cosmological accounts, including various kinds of creation and dissolution, are given in four chapters (4-7). A very interesting topic is discussed in this regard. Why should there be difference of opinion among thinkers regarding cosmology?

805  AhS i 70-73.
806, Ibid. i 69b  The difference between parakṛti and purākalpa lies in this:

एककर्त्तकमुपास्याः परकृतिः ।
पृष्ठांग्यम्बृहितत्या कीर्तन पुराकल्पः ।

807  Ibid. xxiii 41-43, xiv 48-50
808  Ibid xi-xiii.
809  Ibid xi 57b-59a, cf Mbh Śāntu ccclx 89a. His name is given there as Apāntaratamas, an ancient sage learned in the Vedas who became Vyāsa at the command of Viṣṇu. (Śamkara's Brahmasūtra-bhāṣya, III, 3, 32.)
They are explained as arising on the following grounds. Firstly, man’s speech is not adequate to bring out the truth. Secondly, people mistake one word for another in certain contexts and do not know what synonyms are. Then, limitations of powers of comprehension make it difficult to understand certain things, and one cannot speak about what one could not know. Finally, the aspects of God are infinite, and only one of them is grasped by one philosopher and another by another philosopher and so on.810

Brahman is described as characterised by unlimited bliss, having no beginning and no end. It is identical with Nārāyana. It resides in every being, pervades every thing, is faultless and undisturbed like the waveless sea. It has no tinge of material qualities and is the abode of non-material qualities. It has no limitations due to space, time and objects. It is ever full, ever manifest (nityadīta), and cannot be guessed to be of this or that kind or size.811 The four vyūha deities (Caturātmya) are said to be of three kinds in their collective nature on grounds of their pervasion (vyāpti), the manifestation of the respective qualities (gunonmesa) and personal figures 812

The self has no beginning, is indeterminable blissful, divine (bhagavanmaya), filled, as it were, by the Lord and ever existing under His control. It represents an infinitesimal fraction of the Sakti of God 813. It is only those selves that receive God's grace (called saktipāta) that can prosper and get freed from bondage.814 The self is then rid of the aspects of the effects of its good and bad deeds. Detachment dawns upon it, leading

810. Ibid. VIII. 11-14a.
811. Ibid. II. 22-26a.
812. Ibid. V. 20b.
813. Ibid. XIV. 6, 7.
814. Ibid. XIV, 28b-30.
ASV—33
to discriminative knowledge. The self now gets interested in knowing some means for its future welfare. It takes to the study of the texts, approaches the preceptor and gets enlightenment through his favour. Knowledge of reality, yogic practice, performance of good deeds, resorting to observances and such other activities lead the self to the place of Viṣṇu.

This saṁhitā is unique and differs much from later texts in its contents. One half of the text is devoted to occultism in theory and practice. Philosophy is mainly dealt with in chapters 1 to 14 and incidentally treated in all the remaining chapters; it may be taken to cover one fourth of the work. Initiation, social rules, and yoga occupy six chapters. The remaining chapters give a very brief account of the installation of images. Even here the practical aspect of the magical figures (yantras) dominates, particularly with reference to Sudarśana. Public festivals (utsavas) are not at all mentioned. The doctrine of self-surrender (nyāsa) is treated in ch. 37.

These aspects of the contents reveal one significant trait of the early phase of the development of the Pāñcarātra tradition. Here it is sought to provide a philosophical background for the doctrines as they were taught by God to Nārada. The worship of the Lord was then intended to be carried through mantras and yantras. There is little reference in this text to temples, their construction and worship of idols, all of which should have found a place within the practical side of the Āgama only long afterwards at a time when worshippers could not have found it easy to worship the Lord through mantras and meditation. The Pauṣkara, Sāttvata and Jaya saṁhitās contain a brief treatment of idol worship. Among these, the second and third are

815. Ibid. XIV. 35-40.
816. JS, XX
mentioned in this text. This need not prove that the reference is an interpolation. On the other hand, the traditional aspects should have been there and the more ancient ones must have received treatment in this text.

The constituents of yogic practice are given and described in great detail. How the tubular ducts called nādīs in the body are to be purified for doing prāṇāyāma receives attention in chapter 32. In order to protect created beings, God created Sudarśana, His own form, from which the magical weapons took their rise. They sprang in five groups. Those which emerged from the mouth, breast, thighs, and feet are called nivartaka or upasamhāra astras, as they are intended to be used in defence. Those which issued out of the other limbs are called pravartaka astras and are for offensive warfare. The latter appear as though they would devour the worlds, while the former have hands joined in supplication. The latter are sixty-two and the former forty-three. These weapons have human forms of deadly appearance. But they differ among themselves, having individual marks of identification. Chapter 40 is devoted to the enumeration and description of 102 astras together with their powers. The mantras and weapons which are to be employed to overcome malicious practices carried on by enemies are recounted in chapter 32.

Chapters 51 to 59 are devoted to the exposition of the mantras of Viṣṇu in the light of their gross, subtle and highest (transcendental) meanings. The Prapāva, which is also called Tāra or Tāraka-mantra, is shown to convey through its subtle sense the waking, dream, deep sleep, transcendental, undifferentiated and silent stages presided over respectively by Aniruddha, Pradyumna, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Viṣṇudeva, Sakti and

817 Ibid. V 59, XIX. 64.
818 Ibid. XXX, XXXIV, XXXVI 18-18a.
Visṇu. Similarly, the gross and highest senses are shown to convey Sudarśana and Viṣṇu with active and inactive sakti. An explanation is also given as to what is meant by the words, 'sthūla', 'sūkṣma' and 'para'. It is also shown that the concepts of Godhead taught in the Purānas and the Pāṣupata system, as also expressions like vyakta avyakta, pumān and kāla, convey that the Supreme Reality is Brahman in association with Laksīmi designated as Sakti. 819

All mantras of Viṣṇu such as the aṣṭākiṣara, sadakṣara and dvādaśaḥkṣara are given similar exposition through their three significations.

The word 'namas' is stated to convey the sense of surrender 820 After an exposition of the first stanza in the Jitante stotra in a similar way the Nārasiṃha mantra is treated likewise and also from the standpoint of yogic practice 821 The same mantra is shown to denote the thirteenvnine descents of God 822 Chapters 57 and 58 expound the sense of the mantra of the brilliant Sudarśana and of the five hota mantras 823 The significance of the Purusaśūkta, Śrīśūkta and Vārāha mantra is treated in chapter 59 The first four mantras of the Purusaśūkta are shown to depict the greatness of Vāsudeva, Sankarsana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha respectively. The Śrīśūkta is stated to sing the glory of Śrī and also of Viṣṇu An elaborate exposition of this is stated to have been given elsewhere.

Vide:

हिरण्यकर्णि श्रीसूक्तं केतोव्यग्रास्य बिस्तर: | 824

819. Ibid LT 40-42.
820. Ibid XXXVII 37b-47a, cf. Ibid. LII 2b-3a.
821. Ibid. LIV-LVI
822. Ibid. LVI
823 Ibid LVIII, T A III. 1-8.
824. AhS LIX. 40a. This is evidently a reference to LT. L.
A resume of the contents of the samhitā completes this chapter. Kashmir appears to have been the place of origin of this samhitā on the following grounds, stated by Schrader Birch-bark which grows in Kashmir and the Himalayas, is stated to be used as a sheet for the drawing of a diagram (yantra). The aspirant who gets initiated according to the tradition, becomes rid of all sins like the sun which gets freed from the obstruction caused to its brilliance by snow, a comparison which points to a region in Kashmir or the Himalayas. The reference to King Muktā,īḍa of Kashmir (c. 750 A.D.) in Chapter 48 confirms the place of the rise of the text in that region.

Since Utpala (850 A.D.) cites a passage in his Spandapradīpikā which resembles one in the Ahirbuddhīya samhitā, the date of the work can be fixed before 850 A.D., perhaps in the eighth century. The Kashmir origin of the work and Utpala being a native of Kashmir strengthen the identification of the passage cited by him.

The Laksni tantra contains 4000 stanzas in 57 chapters, of which the last seven are not included in all the manuscripts on which the printed text is based. The work is in the form of a discourse given by Ś.ī to Indra. Nārada gives a version of this to the sages assembled in the Malaya hills. The colophon at the end of every chapter refers to the text as Pāncarātrasāra, perhaps as a summary of a larger original which however is said to have contained 100 crores of stanzas.

Though the text is not divided into sections which are expected of an Āgama work, it is found that philosophy as forming part of jñāna is dealt with in about a third part,
consisting of the first seventeen chapters. The science of occultism takes up nearly twenty chapters. Yoga has a brief treatment. Chapters 37, 41 and 53 deal with kriyā. It is found thus that philosophy and occultism (caryā) have received predominant attention in this text.

One noteworthy feature of this work is that the female principle, sakti, is demonstrated to be responsible for all that takes place as creation, maintenance and destruction, keeping Visnu in the background. Yet it is sought to be proved that only at the will of Visnu, Sri becomes active. He is perfectly tranquil, changeless and eternal, and thus He is in the background. As a philosophical principle, Sri occupies a status equal to that of Visnu. She is thus an integral part of Visnu.

Creation is detailed in three ways. The first method is split into three classes, namely, pure, mixed and impure. The pure type is a transcendental one which includes the nyūha emanations. The second type is mixed; it refers to the creation made by Brahma; and the impure kind follows the Sāṅk'ya theory of evolution. The second method is based on the principle of stages called kośas. The third method is based on the emanation of sound from Brahmā and is divided into six stages called adhvans. This method has a very important role to play in this Agama. It seeks to relate the power of mantras with the worship of the deity.

The contribution made by this saṁhitā to cosmology is indeed high, for in no other Pāñcarātra text creation receives such systematic treatment. The principles underlying the concepts of six kośas and six adhvans are essential to explain two

829 Ibid. III, IV
830 Ibid. VI
831 Ibid. XXII,
facts. Matter and selves are eternal. Where do they rest prior to creation? They have to be in some place undisturbed during the period of deluge. The Āgama tradition admits the principle of kośa to explain the emergence of matter and self, kośa itself marking the stage which represents the projection of sakti. The concept of creation of sound becomes meaningful through its rise from Brahman. Being an emanation from a subtle stage, the gross sound can easily indicate its source. God is often depicted as having mantra as His body. The worship of God through the utterance of mantras, which are made up of sounds in specific collocations, becomes therefore understandable. When sounds are uttered, they find a reflex and reciprocity in God.

The Pāñcarātra system deserves credit for the way in which it makes all the three methods of creation supplement one another. The bearing of each on the others explains how the vyūha deities and idols which belong to pure creation, could be worshipped by the selves who emerge from the kośa and use the mantras which represent sonic creation. Some of the saṃhitās have references to the kośa and adhva creations in the development of the doctrines, of course mention being made of the various stages only as and when the occasion demands them.832

The Supreme Being is a unity in duality. He is ever with Sakti. He is called by several names such as Paramātmā, Vāsudeva Nārāyaṇa and others. He is not differentiated from Sakti and so is said to be non-dual (advaita) 833. He is called Śīṅlavā, while appearing in the meditation of the self without any disturbance 834.

Vide:

यमावयवज्जातु वनमा इक्तिति परे ।
बद्धानि श्रीविष्णुवासवे हृदयान्तपिविविजिता ॥

LT. XVI. 31.

832. ParS. x, SS. xix, xxiv; IS. iii, 16, PauS. xxx; PaS. iv. 7.
833 LT n. 5-11.
834 Cf PauS xxxi. 39.
He is also called Laks̱mi-narāyana.\textsuperscript{835} This shows that He is ever associated with Laks̱mi. The \textit{vyuha} and \textit{vibhava} forms are all described. The number of divine descents is given here as thirtyeight.\textsuperscript{836} And this becomes thirtynine when Viṣākhayūpa is included among them. It is also thirtynine in the \textit{Ahirbudhnyasamhitā}, in which Viṣākhayūpa is not mentioned, but Padmanābha must be included.\textsuperscript{837} The form of God as idol is simply referred to as having a non-material body, that is, having a body made up of six gūṇas.

\begin{center}
\textit{Vide:}
\end{center}
\begin{center}
\textbf{अवचापि तैलिकी या सा भगवद्गृहितात्मनायम्} ||
\textbf{मन्नमन्लेघरन्यासारसापि पाद्युष्णविश्रवः} \textit{I}
\end{center}
\textit{LT. II. 59b-60a}

It is curious to note that both the \textit{Ahirbudhnyasamhitā} and \textit{Lakṣmitantra} do not mention the form as the Inner ruler (\textit{antaryāmin}) and there is no reference even to \textit{arca} in the former. However, these two can be taken to have been referred to in two passages from the former.\textsuperscript{838} It is not, however, clear why no definite mention is made of them.

The self is only Sakti, that is, the \textit{jīvakosa} of Sakti. It is pure and independent. It is consciousness contracted and appearing like a mountain reflected in a mirror. It is afflicted by the five kinds of misery, \textit{tamas, moha, mahāmoha, andhatāmisra} and \textit{avidyā}.\textsuperscript{839} It has five duties to perform.\textsuperscript{840} Its contact with external objects gives rise to the cognitions about them.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{835} \textit{Ibid.} I. 1, u. 16.
\item \textsuperscript{836} \textit{Ibid.} xi. 19-25; xlv. 52
\item \textsuperscript{837} \textit{AhS.} v. 50-56; Schrader, pp. 44-47.
\item \textsuperscript{838} \textit{AhS.} i. 1; xi. 63b.
\item \textsuperscript{839} \textit{LT.} xii. 8, 9.
\item \textsuperscript{840} \textit{Ibid.} xii. 27-29.
\end{itemize}
This is called *ṣṛṣṭi*. Its attachment to those objects is *sthiti*. Attachment to a particular object is discarded by the self when it takes to another, and this is called *saṃkhāra*. *Tiropbhāva* is the formation of impressions created by that object and *anugraha* is the removal of that impression. These are the five functions of the self which is part of Sakti and correspond to the five functions of Sakti with the same names. Through the grace (*sāktipāta*) 841 of Sakti, the self discards its limitations and becomes omniscient and omnipotent. The waking, dream and deep sleep states really belong to matter. The transcendental state does not really belong to the self, because it consists of pure non-material *sattva* 842.

The self is required to get freedom from bondage, to pursue the path of *karma* which would please Sakti which grants enlightenment. Knowledge of Reality is then acquired by following the path of *jñāna*. By pursuing the path of *yoga* as the next step, the self gets freed from all limitations and it becomes one with Lakṣmi-nārāyaṇa 843. *Nyāsa* is recommended as an alternative and easier means of getting *mokṣa*. 844.

Like the *Ahirbudhnyasamhitā*, this text also is free from reference to idols and idol-worship in temples. The theories of creation get a detailed treatment. Sakti's greatness is stressed in every part of the work. The descents of Lakṣmi and Her emanations are covered in three full chapters, 4, 8 and 9.

Linguistic occultism is treated in several chapters. Sound is traced to its source, *Brahman*, through the stages of *nāda*, *bindu* and others. Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and

841. *Ibid.* XIII 6, 10, 11a,
843. *Ibid.* XIV. 58, XV.
844. *Ibid.* XVII.
ASV—34
Aniruddha are the deities for these stages. The sound units called mātrkā are classified and shown to be presided over by the nyūha deities. The structure of the mantra is analysed and explained as constituted of bija, pūda, saṃjñā and pada. Sonic creation through the six stages called adhvan and the classification of mantras into high, middle and low are dealt with in chapter 22. In a way, this chapter describes the mantra form of Lakṣmi, Tārikā, Anurūpakā, Jagadyoni, Pradyumna, Sarasvata and Mahālakṣmi are the seven bija mantras which are often red an exposition in chapters 24, 25 and 26. Sakti with its Agniṣomā, Sūrya and Sudarsana aspects is set forth in describing Kriyāsakti in chapters 29 and 30. This text, which is devoted to the glorification of Lakṣmi, attaches great importance to Tārikā which therefore gets elaborate treatment under gross, subtle, the highest and other standpoints. Tārikā should be acquired through initiation and this is treated along with the way of worshipping it in chapters 42, 43 and 44. The way of successfully worshipping the mantras of Lakṣmi, and the manifestations, Kiril and Jayā, are treated in chapters 46, 47 and 48. Each hymn in the Śrīūkta gets elaborate exposition in chapter 50. It is perhaps this exposition which is mentioned in the Ahirbudhnya saṁhitā. What seems to be intended there is that the exposition of the Śrīūkta is to be given, as of the Puruṣasūkta. There is no saṁhitā or any text which is available where the Śrīūkta gets an exposition. In the absence of information to the contrary, it is the exposition in the Lakshmitantra that should have been

845 Ibid XVIII
846 Ibid, XX.
847 Ibid. XXI
848 Ibid. XXIII 36-38,
849 Ibid. XXXII, XXXIII,
850, AhS, LIX, 40a.
meant. In that case, priority of this text to the Ahirbudhnyasamhita will have to be admitted.

Some indications are there to suggest Kashmir as the home of this Tantra also. One is the recommendation that birch bark be used for inscribing the mantra of Lakṣmi Nyāsa, the doctrine of self-surrender, is treated as in the Ahirbudhnyasamhita. These two are the only two ancient texts which deal with this doctrine. Grant of divine grace is referred to as Saktipāta in both. This expression occurs also in the Sava Agamas of Kashmir. It must be admitted that Vaisnavism flourished in Kashmir along with Śaivism. The Agamas of both these could have had a common source and also influenced each other. In these circumstances, both these texts could have had their origin in Kashmir.

The Pauskara-samhita, too, which refers to some geographical surroundings through mentioning rivers, can have risen in Kashmir. Likewise, the Jayākhyā which refers to many cruel practices could have also taken its rise in Kashmir. So, it might not be wrong to assume that all these early samhitās of the Pañcaratra could have had Kashmir as their home.

The Lakṣmi tantra mentions the Sāttvata-samhita twice. If the reference in the Ahirbudhnya-samhita of the 8th century to the exposition of the Śrīśūkta can be taken to mean this text, then this must be placed before that date.

851. Ibid. XLVI. 38. Cf. AhS. XXVI. 75.
852. Ibid. XVII, cf. AhS. XXXVII.
853. Ibid XIII 8, AhS. XIV. 33, 35.
855. LT II. 59, XL. 29.
The Īśvara-samhitā contains about 8400 stanzas in 25 chapters. It is said to be based on the Sāttvata-samhitā. Both of these are stated to be followed at Yādavādri, known also as Melkote in the Karnāka Prades. Narada is the narrator of the Sāttvata system in this work. Sāndilya, Aupaṛāyana, Maunjāyana, Kaushika and Bharadvāja performed penance on the Totaṇi Hill. They were taught the system by the Lord Himself who said to them:

एष प्राकृतसि मेक्र उपदिष्टो मया द्रिज हौँ सोब्रविनायनात् वै पञ् ये लष्टन्यो न विव्हते ॥

IS XXI 534

A reference 856 is made to the origin of this system in the Kṛta Tuga and its frequent disappearance and recreation. The seven sages called Citraśikhaṅgins, Sanatsujāta, Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatkumāra, Kapila, Sanatana, Brahmā, Rudra and Indra are stated to have promulgated this system. Prahlāda, Sugriva, Hanumān, Vibhiṣṇa, Sanaka and others adopted the routine of poṇcakāla 857. The Paṇḍarkara and the Pārameśvara-samhitās are mentioned 858.

The Paṇcarātra system is said to offer an exposition of the ever manifest (nityodita) stage of God, vyūha and installations which may refer to those of the idols in temples. The Paṇcarātra Agamas are not of human origin and must be treated as the Upaniṣads of Brahman 889. While enjoining the worship of the vyūha deities, Puruṣa, Satya, Acyuta and Ananta are mentioned as forming the vyūha 860. This is in a way after the manner of

856 IS. XXI 538-549
857. Ibid. I 29-31, VIII 177.
858. Ibid. I 64-b.
859. IS. XXI 561-566.
860. Vide.

भथवा पुरुषस्वतयो श्रयुवोज्ञनं एव च ।
चलुरिष्ठ क्षेत्नेव पूजय यद्दाकशेषं तु ॥
the *Jayākhyā*, but the order is that of the *Vaikhānasa*. Ananta is another name for Puruṣa in the *Jayākhyā*, while it denotes a different entity here. Or, the passage may be taken to mean that the *vyūha* of Yāsudeva and others may be worshipped or the four deities mentioned above may be installed, one in each direction, and worshipped. In the latter case, the *Vaikhānasa* method is followed here, except for putting Ananta in the place of Aniruddha.861

Cosmological and philosophical treatment of the doctrines do not find a place here, but the tāntrika mantras are enjoined for use. The *Aṣṭākṣara*, *Ṣodākṣara* and *Dvādaśākṣara* are mentioned as the important mantras 862

This *samhitā* discusses many matters like idol worship in temples, the installation of the idols and conducting festivals. Srīrangam, Yādavādi and Kanči are stated to be important places863 where the *Pāñcarātra* mode of worship is adopted. There is a separate chapter describing the glory of Yādavādi. Sanatkumāra is said to have brought Nārāyaṇa to this hill which therefore came to be called as Nārāyanādi and worshipped Him according to the Sātvata mode. Rāma is said to have worshipped Him at Ayodhya and hence He is known as Rāmapriya. It is said that Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa brought Rāmapriya to Yādavādi and celebrated the festivals after installing Him there 864

Yāmuna (916-1041) cites passages from this work, but they are not available in the present text. Anyway, this text must have been composed long before 900 A.D., when it must have been admitted as a standard work on the system.

861. *SA* xxxvii 12,13
862. *IS* vii. 17,114, xxiii 52,53
163 Ibid i 67.
864. Ibid. xx.
The Parama-samhita has a little more than 1000 stanzas in 31 chapters. What the Lord (named here as 'Parama') expounded in answer to the questions raised by Brahma is narrated by Markandeya to Devala. The installation of idols and the method of worshipping them receive treatment, but there is no reference to the construction of temples and aspects of worship there. On the other hand, cosmology, yogic practices and such other matters are treated briefly.

Three methods are described for worshipping God. Worship through mantras is stated to be karmayajña, japa of the mantras and stotras constitute ākṣya-yajña and mental worship of God is manoyajña. Nothing is said to be more beneficial than offering worship at the feet of Hari.

Vide:

हरिपालार्चनाचन्द्रमन्न मित्रित परमेन हितम्

III. 31b.

Among the mantras, those of Varaha, Narasimha, Sri and Sudarsana are declared to be the best. Chapters 23, 24 and 25 break off with lacunae. The date of this work could be placed before 900 A.D., as it is cited by Yamuna of the 10th century in his Agamopramāṇya. Perhaps, a still earlier date is suggested from the absence of reference to temples.

The Sanatkumarasamhitā contains 3549 ślokas in 37 chapters. The work is divided into five sections each called 'rātra.' The first four are called Brahmarātra, Śivarātra, Indrarātra and Rṣīrātra. The last section, Bṛhaspatrātra, is not extant, and the first three chapters in the Brahmarātra are also missing. From the colophons, the name of the text is also known as

365. ParS. iii. 25a-27a.
366, Ibid. xvi. 2.
Mahāsāṃhitā 867 and Vaiśṇavasiddhānta 868. At the end of the last section, 869 the text is referred to as 'daśasūhasrikā', which means that it consisted of 10,000 stanzas. It is difficult to believe in this, for even if the lost Bṛhaspatīrātra was longer than any other section, the total number would not come up to so much. Or, it must be supposed that several stanzas were lost even in some of the chapters available in print.

There is another text with this name whose chapter called Aksīroganirūlanam, 870 which forms also the 94th chapter of the Śāntitandra of the text, Pancaṭra-mahopaniṣad, is alone available. That the Pancaṭra system dealt with matters like the treatment of diseases is evident from a reference in the present Sanatkumāra-saṃhitā 871 and in the Kāśyapa-saṃhitā 872. It is held by some scholars that there is another work with the name, Mahāsanatkumāra-saṃhitā 873. But there is no need to admit this, for some of the passages cited by these scholars as taken from this latter text are traceable to the printed Sanatkumāra-saṃhitā. Other passages could have formed part of the lost Bṛhaspatīrātra. The Śāntitandra, too, could have been included in this, but the name, 'tantra', goes against this assumption unless it be the name of a topic in one of the chapters of this rātra.

The Āgama-prāmāṇya 874 and the works of Vedāntadesika cite some passages as taken from the Sanatkumāra-saṃhitā on

867 SKS pp. 96, 220
868 Ibid p. 418
869 Ibid p. 418
870 D. 13012.
871 SKS śīva. šr. 38, 211,
872 Madras 1933. edition.
873 Schrader, p. 24; also refer to Brahmavidyā, Vol. 34, parts 3-4, p. 232 fn. 3 and Pancaṭra Nūl Vilakkam, p. 86.
874 Aagamaprāmāṇya, pp. 74, 75.
matters pertaining to dally practices, *prapati* and others. While a few of these could be traced to the printed text, the remaining are lost and should have formed part of some of the sections available. It is not possible to suggest that all these could have formed part of the lost *Bṛhaspatisātra*.

The *Sanatkumāra-samhitā* is in the form of discourses given by *Sanatkumara* on what he learns from Brahma, Siva, Indra, sages and Bṛhaspati respectively in the sections called after the names of these persons. The names of the sages are not given. In the versions of the *Pāñcarātra* tradition contained in the *Nārāyaniya* section of the *Mahābhārata* and recorded also in the *Īśvara-samhitā*, these persons were said to be the promulgators of the doctrines.

*Sadāviṣṇu* is the Supreme Deity who is partless and is also called *Nārāyaṇa*. He is formless.

*Vide*:

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ततः परतरं देवं सब्रविष्णु समाश्रयेतु 
स पव निष्कलो देवं ष च नारायणः प्रभुः II
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*Rṣirātra*. III. 93.

He is called *Viṣṇu* when ritualistic worship is not offered, and when it is offered, He is called *Mahāviṣṇu*. Both are to be worshipped.876 This kind of classification of the deity in the *Pāñcarātra* tradition is known also in the *Vaikhānasa* system.877

This aspect of the Deity is made clear through the treatment of *vyūha*. The Supreme Deity in the unmanifested stage is


called Sadāviṣṇu who is also known as Vasudeva from whom arises a Vasudeva with a definite form and called Mahāviṣṇu who becomes the creator and protector of all. He created from His mind a goddess, Sānti, from whom was produced the destroyer, Sankarsana also called Saṅkara. Pradyumna, also called Brahmā, arose from the left side of Sankarṣaṇa. From Pradyumna arose Sarasvati, out of whom emerged Aniruddha also called Purusottama, Rāti issued out of Aniruddha, who created the waters where He reposed. From his navel, there arose a lotus. From the egg which appeared from that lotus, there came out Hiranyagarbha identical with the four-faced Brahmā. A goddess, Saṅdhyā, arose from Brahmā. Rudra, also called Satya, came out of Saṅdhyā. Marici, Dakṣa and other progenitors were also born of her. Acyuta, identical with Pradyumna, emerged from Satya. Aniruddha sprang out of Acyuta. Thus there are two sets of vyūhas, one subtle and the other gross. Those deities belonging to the gross kind attend to the work of creation. This treatment differs from that given in the Lakṣmītantra.

The account of the divine descent is also peculiar and does not have much in common with that in the Purāṇas. The gods, who were harassed by Hiranyakaśipu, approached Aniruddha lying in the ocean on the serpent-couch. Viṣṇu is not stated to have made His appearance from a pillar, though His slaying that demon is mentioned. The gods desired to avoid old age and so approached Saṅkarsana who took the form of the tortoise and gave them nectar. At the command of Viṣṇu, Visvakṣena became Garuda, the vehicle of the Lord.

878. SKS. Indra, VI.
879. LT. IV.
880. SKS. Indra, III. 14; VP. I. 20 does not mention the slaying of the demon.
881. Ibid. Indra, III. 36.
882. Ibid. Ibid. IV. 39-69.

ASV—35
Hayagrīva, the mind-born son of Pradūyumna, restored the Vedas to the gods who had lost them. When they had lost all knowledge, they were taught the Sāmkhya doctrines by Kapila who was created by Samkarsana. Samkarsana came down as the son of Jamadagni. Kṛṣṇa taught the Pāṇcarātra system. This version of divine descents shows how the vyūha deities contributed to the maintenance of dharma.

As in the Ahirbudhnya-samhitā and Lākṣmi-tantra, here too, there is no mention of the form of God as antaryāmin. But the gāḍgūnya aspect is not dealt with here and thereby it differs from the other two ancient sāmkhitās mentioned.

Curiously enough, this text refers to four kinds of linga, Brāhma, Sāmkara, Vaisnava and Trīdīva. Installation of these is mentioned. It is not clear whether the linga of the Vaisnava kind was prescribed at a time before idol worship came to be adopted.

The mantras are classified as Saumya, Āgneya and Saumyāgneya and also as Vasidika, Tāntrika and Vaidika-tāntrika. The Tāntrika-mantras have an important role in the Pāṇcarātra system. Among the mantras, the Aṣṭāksara, Dvādaśāksara and Visnugayatri are important. A liberal outlook is evinced in prescribing the mantras for other deities such as Devī, Śaṅmukha, Agni, Yama, Rudra and others.

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886 The followers of the Pāṇcarātra are known by different names like Sāttvata, Bhāgavata, Vaisnava and Pañcarātrika. All these are said to have undergone initiation. Ibid III; II, 30-32.
887 SKS Bhāma, VI. 50-52a.
889 Ibid Śiva, III. 2.
890 Ibid. Ibid. I.
Karma, jñāna and yoga are enjoined as the paths to be taken up one after another in this order for obtaining salvation. Worship of the idol is recommended while pursuing the first two ways. While practising yoga, the aspirant will have spiritual experiences in dreams, in his own body, in the inner effulgent self, in his mind and sense-organs. He realises close union (sāyujya) with Visnu while practising yoga.

To adopt any of these paths, it is necessary to worship God. By worshipping Mahāvisnu, through yoga, one becomes fit to adopt karmayoga. Sadāvisnu becomes pleased with this karma and makes the aspirant fit to adopt jñānayoga. Thereupon yogic practice brings about the final release of the aspirant. The proper place, time and kind of penance one is required to undertake are also described.

Those who worship Visnu with the three mantras get, after death, a form like that of Visnu and are also called Visṇu. Such persons are given various regions to occupy where they get different names which are enumerated in Indraśāstra, chapter 6. Some of these are identical with those found in the Visṇusahasranāma. The regions which they occupy are described in the next chapter. Curiously enough, there is no reference here to Vaikuṇtha. Puruṣa, Satya, Acyuta and Aniruddha are mentioned as worshipping Sadāvisnu.

Letters which make up the mantras are enumerated together with their presiding deities. The basic letters and their evolutes are treated in such a way as to throw light on the linguistic aspect of the mantras. Perhaps, a study of them.

891. Ibid. III. 98-117.
892. Ibid. Ibid. III. 97.
894. Ibid. Indra, VII. 112-113.
895. Ibid. Śiva, II.
896. Ibid. Ibid. Indra, II.
In the light of modern linguistics might unravel some mysteries about the nature of sound and letters.

The Sanatkumāra-samhitā uses Tamil expressions like ālavattam and karṇāḍikā (which mean fan and ladle respectively) indicating that these were added while the text was revised for use in Tamil Nadu. Offering of flesh to the deities is referred to suggesting that at least the portions where such references are found were composed either before the full development of Jainism and Buddhism or at a place where their influence was not felt. Archaic expressions are also used quite frequently. Mention is often made of opinions on certain matters which could not be traced to any known source, but which point to the work presupposing some ancient Pāñcarātra texts.

This samhitā refers to Pādmodbhava, a work available only in fragments: Padmodbhava Purāṇa, Mahendra-samhitā, Nāradārcanikā, Garuḍārcanikā, other arcanikās and

897 Ibid p 411
898 Ibid p 64,
899 Ibid pp 106, 121, 123.
900 For example, samārabhēt, Ibid p 67, vinyaset, Ibid p 103; and gayetriyā, Ibid
901. Ibid pp 70, 71, 74, 75, 167, 245, 247. There is an interesting representation of the four vyūhas in four different ways:
2. Indra, Yama, Varuṇa and Soma
3. Vasudeva, Sankaraṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha and
902 Ibid pp 141, 143, 184, 308.
904. Ibid pp 139, 262.
905 This is a part of Pādmodbhava.
906. Ibid
907. SKS, p. 181.
"Satasahasrika." Since this text is treated as one of the five best works (ratna) and is stated to be the foremost among the saṁhitās, it is possible to have an idea of its importance among the Pāñcarātra works. That it is stated to be the foremost (ādya) in the Kapīṇājala does not point out to its priority over others in point of time, but only to its importance. The unique concept of the Supreme Reality, the development of the vyūha theory, the role assigned to the mantras, the practical side of tantra which includes the use of mudrā, maṇḍala and nyāsa and the treatment of the routine life of the followers of the Pāñcarātra tradition in the Brahmarātra give an individual stamp to this text, a feature not to be noticed in any other saṁhitā. The lost portions in the Brahmarātra and the whole of the Brhadapats-rātra must have contained important details on the doctrines and practices of the Pāñcarātra system. These topics and the fact that temples and festivals are not mentioned should have been responsible for calling this work ādya, not ancient, but to be reckoned as first in the enumeration of saṁhitās.

It is worth noting in this context that this text is twelfth in the order enumerated in the Padma-saṁhitā. Mention of the Padmodbhava and Māhendra, which are cited in the Sanatkumāra-saṁhitā, need not be given serious consideration in regard to priority. Anyway, the reference made to this text in the Kapīṇajala-saṁhitā stands unaffected.

The Pārameśvara-saṁhitā has about 9000 stanzas distributed among 26 chapters. It seems to have had two sections, jñānakānda and kriyākānda. The first section is lost, except for

908. Ibid, p. 309
909. Pas. IV. 39, 203. Kapīṇalaś. I. 14a,
910. SKS Indra, IV. 13. The Dikṣādhyāya is lost.
911 Pas I. 1, 100b,
one chapter. Every aspect of the Sāttvata system is said to have been treated here. This chapter which is now available contains an account of the development of the Pāñcarātra system through several stages, much in the same way as in the Nārāyanīya section of the Mahābhārata. The promulgators of the doctrines are named as in the Iśvara samhitā Sāndilya is stated to have taught the doctrines to Sumantu, Jaimini, Bhrigu, Aupagayana and Vauṣjyāyana. Nara and Nārāyana are stated to practise the Sāttvataladharma in Badarikāśrama for the well being of the world. This text is said to have had 100,000 stanzas and to have been condensed subsequently to 16,000 stanzas both for the jñāna and kriyā kāṇḍas.

This samhitā is followed in the temple at Śrīraṅgam the glory of which is recounted Vibhisana arranged for the worship of the Lord here according to the Pāñcarātra tradition. The construction of this temple is found to be in strict accordance with the rules given here.

Why this text should be described as ancient in the Pauṣkara-samhitā on which it is held to be based, is puzzling. Perhaps such references were interpolated at a later date. Many of the ancient and important samhitās like the Pauṣkara, Sāttvata, Jayākhyā, and others are mentioned. Besides, there are passages here identical with those in the Pauṣkara. Rāmānuja (1017-1137 A.D.) is the earliest to cite passages from this text which must give it a date prior to 1000 A.D.

912 PārS. I 35b-42.
913 Ibid I. 72b, 73a
914 Ibid I. 73b-74a.
915 Ibid I 91b-93a
916 Ibid PauS XXXIX. 18
917 Ibid I 19
918 Introduction to Paus, p. 22.
The Visvakṣena-saṁhitā contains a little less than 4000 stanzas in 39 chapters. Vīṣvaksena expounds the Pāñcarātra system to Nārada. Chapter VIII has a fresh beginning with Nārada’s questions put to Vīṣvaksena, indicating that this may be the first chapter for a section. The first seven chapters may therefore be taken to form a different section. This, however, is not marked anywhere in the text. Besides, the chapters are in the form of a discourse addressed by Vīṣvaksena to Indra. Some of them break off. Chapter 27 is in both prose and verse. The entire work deals only with the kriya and caryā aspects.

There must have been either another text with the title ‘Visvakṣena-saṁhitā’ or another section which dealt with the jñāna and yoga portions. This is evident from the citations made from this work by Pillai Lokācārya, Vedāntadesika and Maṇavāla-mahāmuni in their works. The last-mentioned teacher made full use of this saṁhitā in his commentary on the Tattvātṛaya of Pillai Lokācārya. This section is not now available. From the citations it appears that this text contained God’s discourse to Vīṣvaksena.

An account of what this lost portion contained may be briefly given thus. Both the Highest Place and the created world are subject to the control of Viṣṇu and Ś. 919

Vide:

बहुषा मम च शेषा हि विश्वातिश्वारिमिका ।
इसि धृतिगिरिसिद्धं मबङ्गश्रेष्ठपि मानदु ॥

Those who are well-versed in Vedānta declare that God’s forms are five—Para, Vyūha, Viśhava, Niyata (Antaryāmin) and Arca. The last-mentioned is anthropomorphic and is full of compassion.920 The Vyūha deities together constitute a group

920. TrT, Bh, p. 182.
and Vasudeva is said to be supreme. The devotees are to worship Him according to their varying abilities. These four forms emanate from the ever-manifest form. Another group of five on this basis is made up of Para Vasudeva who is ever manifest (nityodita) and the four Vyūha deities periodically manifest (sāntodita). Another grouping is according to the four stages of waking, dream, deep sleep and the transcendental consciousness presided over by Aniruddha, Pradyumna, Saṅkaraṇa and Vasudeva respectively. Sankaraṇa teaches the Vedas and the Pāñcarātra. Pradyumna introduces all religious rites which are to be performed. Aniruddha reveals the nature of the self. The Lord has four arms in this last-mentioned group, two in the second, and Para Vasudeva is dark in complexion with four arms. The number of vibhava-avatāras is said to be 30 as against the 39 mentioned in the Ahirbudhnya-samhitā. Upendra, Dadhibhakta, and Hayagriva are also mentioned as divine descents.

There descents are of two kinds, principal and secondary. In the former, God comes down in person. In the latter He enters into a body, through His own nature or His power, whether it is to take the body of an animal, or a plant like the short mango tree in the Dandakāraṇya forest, or a secondary form like that of Brahmā or Śiva. All these are taken up by Him at His sweet will and pleasure.

The antaryāmin form is stated to be like a relation, ever present, whether the self is in heaven or hell.

921. Ibid. p. 193.
922. Ibid. pp. 186-188.
923. Ibid. p. 193
925. Ibid. pp. 189, 190.
Vide:

अन्तपग्रहपुर्वस्त सत्वां वन्यस्थितम् । ।
स्वात्मरक्षेऽस्तिपि बन्धुरत्मा हि केसाहः ॥

The areś form is like a relation to all. It is within the easy reach of the devotees. It is said that the six qualities (sādgunya) are present in an unexcelled way in the mantra and idol, thereby meaning that the worship of the idol is as good as visualizing God through the mantras. God is present alike in both.

Vide:

सत्वतिशार्ये वाइकुण्ठे संस्कृतेन मन्त्रविक्रिययोऽः ।

He is the object denoted in the mantra and remains in the idol out of compassion for the people.

Vide:

मन्त्रे वायुर्वाक्यम् नित्ये विबाहे नु क्रया स्थितम् ॥

God Himself states that in the five forms He is accessible more easily in every succeeding form, thereby meaning that He is most easily accessible in the areś form.

Vide:

पत्रं पत्र्यकारोऽहमात्मानं पतंतात्मवः ।
पूर्वस्माक्ष्ये पूर्वस्मादृ ज्ञायांस्वेतोन्नरेतः ॥

927. Ibid. p. 199.
928. RTS. I. p. 424.
929. Tattvratrayaculaka, p. 218.
One must take interest and care to worship God in the actual form as if He was powerless, dependent and fit to be protected.  

Vide:

खित्योच जनसाध र्वामिं परमाथि।
अभाकम्बितत्वं च रत्नाधि जनादलम्॥

Certain deities are forbidden to be worshipped Arjuna, Vyāsa, Parāśurāma, Kubera and some others are included in this list.

Those who get released and reach the Highest Place are atomic in size and radiate spiritual atoms of the size of the triad.

The Viṣṇu-saṁhitā has about 3000 stanzas in 30 chapters. A sage called Sumati instructs Aupagāyana on Pāñcarātra doctrines. It contains a brief and lucid account of the doctrines on the caryā and hriyā aspects of the Agama. It gives an interesting classification of the devotees of Vāsudeva.

The Pādma-saṁhitā contains more than 9000 stanzas in 82 chapters. It has four sections, Jñāna, Yoga, Kriyā and Cāryā, with 12, 5, 32 and 33 chapters respectively.

The Jñāna section begins with an account of the circumstance which brought the saṁhitā into being. At the bidding of Brahmā, sage Samvarta went to Patala and learnt the system from Kapila who gave his version of this Agama in one

931. Ibid. p. 202
933. Schrader, p. 57n, cites a passage from ViS, which text is not available.
934. Vi. II. 26-33. Cf. SA, Appendix, III.
and a half crore stanzas. He returned to earth and taught the doctrines to Kapva and others who are the interlocutors in this samhitā.

The Lord is said to have promulgated the system. He is referred to as Ādideva. Among the two derivations offered to the name 'Pāñcarātra', the word 'rātra' is taken in the sense of lustre and it is held that the other five systems became lustreless by the side of this system. The second interpretation takes the word as dead or ineffective in the sense that the other systems became worthless by the side of this system. The Pāñcarātra system is said to be of four siddhāntas. The number of texts is said to be 108. The evolution of vyūhas, divine descent, the nature of Brahman, the process of creation and the means of getting mokṣa are dealt with in this section. Sañlokya is said to be the kind of mokṣa in which the self becomes one with Brahman, like the water in the river, mingling with the water in the sea. The tattvas are enumerated to be fiftyone in number. The created world is described in all its varieties. The purpose of the Lord's holding the conch, discus, lotus and club is stated thus:

स्थत्यैं चक्रं सरसिङ्घ द्वारां सूयः पुनः ।
मुक्त्येत्रा पाप्वजन्नैं च गद्यं सहिन्ये तथा ॥

935. PaS I 1 18
936. The other systems are Śaiva Yoga, Saṃkhya, Nāstika and Jaina. Vide. Ibid. I 1, 47-55.
937. Ibid. I 1, 74.
938. Ibid. I. 1. 80-97a.
939. Ibid. I. 1. 98-118.
940. Ibid. I. 3. 6b-49.
941. Ibid. I. 3 : 5. 28-40.
942. Ibid I. 6. 30-53. Note that sayujya also is mentioned in I. 8, 34.
944. Ibid. I. 9, 12.
The second section is on yoga as a means to get mokṣa. Karmayoga and jñānayoga are the two kinds of yoga. The former consists in fixing the mind on doing what is enjoined in the Vedas. The latter is of the nature of fixing the mind on attaining the highest goal. Yogic practices as laid down by Patañjali are discussed in detail with slight alterations to suit the purpose of the Āgama. The object of meditation is described to be Viṣṇu.

The third section, Kriyāpāda, treats the ways and means of constructing the temple and installation of idols there. The religious leader or preceptor is to take charge of the entire proceedings starting from the selection of sites which are said to be of four kinds. Locality for this is of eight kinds. Forty-nine kinds of temples are enumerated and described. This is followed by the selection to be made for the making of the Mūlabera which should be of a specific colour. Four chapters are devoted to the installation of the images. The section ends with the methods of domestic worship.

In the same section, mention is made of the five forms of God (pañcamūrti) with the form of Viṣṇu at the head of the four vyūha forms. The Supreme Being is referred to as Ādīmūrti.
The five forms, Vāsudeva, Pūruṣa, Saiya, Acyuta and Ananta, are to be installed. All these suggest that the Vaikhānasā tradition must have been the basis for the development of the Pāncarātra.

Six idols are required to be installed in the temple. A temple with all the six is said to be of the best kind, with three of the middle kind and with only one of the lowest kind.

Vide:

कर्मचरित्रिप्रति: प्रकार: कथयते यदुना | कर्मचरिण चोत्सवार्थो च वस्यािर्थो च तयवेच | स्नातकश्रवेशाय च स्वायत्तदायाचे या | प्रतिमा: षट्ट चिद्धात्तत्वा: पुजायासुतमा भवेत् | तिस्तुमरिःध्यमा हे या भादर्या चर्मा भवेत् | III, 19, 1 3a.

The fourth section, Caryāpāda, deals with the methods of worshipping God. Those who follow the Ekāyana recension have the primary qualification for attending to the acts of worship. Others, who choose to adopt this method, have only a secondary status. Initiation (dikṣā) bestows on those who are not otherwise qualified for any Vedic ritual, the required qualification. The second and third chapters give an elaborate description of the procedure to be followed for initiation. The details contained in Chapters I-IV prove that the rites of the Pāncarātra are not anti-Vedic. Worship that is conducted every day is called Nityotsava and this is to be done for the welfare of the country as a whole. Varieties of dance
poses and musical instruments that are to be used show that worship of God is not simply a Vedic ritual but is a feast to the eyes and ears, giving rise to immense delight to the participants and spectators. Chapter VI describes how God is to be worshipped in the house. Attention to God (upāsāra) are said to be 128 in number. Tātrāsana is an additional stage which the other texts do not mention. Several maṇḍalas (and Cakrābhjamaṇḍala in particular) are treated in Chapter VII. The ceremonial bath (snāpana)—its most difficult kind is sahasra-kalaśābhiṣeka—finds a detailed treatment in Chapters VIII and IX respectively. Chapters X and XI give a detailed account of the conduct of annual festivals. Chapter XIII contains a lucid account of the daily routine divided into five kinds. Expiatory rites are described along with the mantras which are to be used. The differences among the four siddhāntas are discussed in Chapter XXI. Mudrā is described as a particular arrangement of fingers. The two palms should be smeared with sandal paste before mudrā is formed. This samhitā enumerates fifty-two of them and describes each one of them. Chapter 23 is devoted to the role of mantras in worship. The mantra enables the person who utters it to reflect upon all beings. It saves one who recites it from bondage.

Verse:

मनन नर्वसत्त्वानां द्वार्ष संसारासागराद्
मनन्त्राणसंयोगानन्मन्त्र इत्युक्ते बुधेः ॥

IV. 23. 96b-97a.

959. Ibid. IV 5.

960. For the sake of convenience, 16 of them are enumerated:

961. Ibid. IV 8. 39a.

962. Ibid. IV 18. 19.

963. Ibid. IV. 22.
Another direction that is given here is that mantra is to be well guarded as a secret. The suffix ‘ra’ is used here in the masculine gender. The mantras are stated to yield relatively higher results in different yugas. This chapter describes also how one could recite the particular mantras and succeed in getting full benefits from them. The Dvādasākṣara, Astākṣara and Viṣṇugāyatri are mantras of the vibhavas; those of the other forms of Viṣṇu like Yajñavarāha, Śrī and others are elaborately treated in Chapters 24-33. Sudarsana mantra takes up the whole of Chapter 32. Not only the mantras of those deities who form the retinue of Viṣṇu get a significant place, but also of the seven Yakṣinīs (Sundari, Manohara, Kāmeśvari, Padmini, Yamini, Mālthinapriyā and Ratipriyā). The mantras of piśācas are then described. Pādma, Sanatkumāra Parama, Pādmodbhava, Māhendra and Kāñcatantra are said to be the best texts.

This samhitā, which is based on the Jayākhyā, is intended to be used in the temple at Kāñci. Yet, it has become more popular than other texts by reason of giving complete information on all aspects of the Agama. This is therefore adopted as the standard text wherever the Pāṇcarātra mode prevails.

The Purusottama-samhitā has one thousand stanzas in 34 chapters. The Kriyā and Cāryā aspects of the Agama are dealt with here. The Nāradiya-samhitā has a little above 3500 stanzas in 30 chapters. Bhṛgu teaches the doctrines to Atrī Vāsudeva is stated to have sprung from Viṣṇu. He is Paramahārīṣa. Saṅkarṣaṇa is Vyoman, Pradyumna is Nāda, and Aniruddha is Haṁsa. Vāsudeva is also stated to be Puruṣa, Saṅkarsana is Satya, Pradyumna is Acyuta and Nārāyaṇa is Aniruddha.
It is not clear whether this depiction of Vyūha represents an attempt at reconciling the Pāṇcarātra and Vaikhanasa concepts of Godhead. Another interesting feature is the spirit of tolerance noticed in Chapters VII and XI, which contain an exposition of the system of Saivism. Worship of Śiva is said to bring certain benefits. Different kinds of offerings to God are recommended.

The Mārkaṇḍeya-saṁhitā, which has about 2500 stanzas in 32 chapters, discusses the caryā and kriyā aspects. Mārkaṇḍeya discourses on these to King Prthu. In 8 chapters of 3500 slokas, the Viṣṇutilaka-saṁhitā discusses yoga, mantras and festivals. The information on these topics is highly useful for supplementing the study of other works. Each chapter has a very large number of stanzas. Brahmā discourses on these topics to the sages. The Viśvāmitra-saṁhitā, containing about 2700 stanzas in 27 chapters dealing with the caryā and kriyā aspects, is in the form of a discourse by Viśvāmitra delivered to Kāśyapa who became dissatisfied with the systems of Mimāṃsā and Vedānta. Viśvāmitra had received this doctrine from Brahmā. The following stanzas explain what the word ‘bhaga’ means when it is applied to Bhagavān.

शान्त निति:मेष्यमेत्यमेनन्त्यपुष्पवार्त्यम् ।
सवष्टिशाविषयी: शक्ति: वचं सवष्टितम् तथा ॥
अन्यिरहायं वीर्यं च तेजः सवष्टितरत्तरम् ।
पलेतः पदुःपीयते भगवाद्वेदेन ॥

Cosmology and the Doḍāsākṣaramantra are dealt with in Chapters 4, 5 and 7.

The Śrīpraśna-saṁhitā has about 5500 stanzas in 54 chapters, Nārāyaṇa expounds the doctrines in answer to questions put by

969. Ibid. 42-44, 45a.
970. XII. 3-4.
sri, and hence the title. There are certain passages here which are identical with those in the Sāttvata and Īdvra samhitās, perhaps borrowed from them. It is mostly devoted to the caryā and kriyā aspects and gives useful information on the conduct of festivals in temples. Separate chapters are devoted to the treatment of yoga, pāncakālaprakriyā, propatti and rules of expiation.

Saṅkarṣaṇa descended as Narasimha through a portion of His power and Pradyumna became Rāma. God tells Lākṣmī that till the time He gave this account, neither the enlightened ones (jñānins) and yogins, nor others were aware of the ēra form.

Vide:

वलावकाल्पश्चस्त्रं ब्रजनिष्ठ योगिनोद्पि च ।
हन्ते वा नाथ्यज्ञानवाचियोर्वरानने ।

IV. 5b, 6a

This passage is evidence to show that the ēra form of God is not very ancient: in its origin yogic practices is stated to be the means for obtaining mokṣa.

This samhitā is followed in the īrī Carapāṇḍavami temple at Kumbhakonam and has several expressions which are of Tamil origin. Many festivals which are held in the temples of South India, Tamil Nadu in particular, are mentioned. Several dance poses, musical melodies and instruments are also referred to. There are other samhitās, most of them dealing generally with caryā and kriyā. They treat of the construction of temples, the conduct of festivals and expiatory rites. Yogie

971. 444, 49a, 44, 45a

972. Kāraṇīya, XV. 3 ; maddala, XV. 67; uddhavati, XV. 23; ekaundrya, XLIV. 9; mravya, XLVI. 78.

973. Pāvata, XXXIX, Ādhyayanotsava, XLVI 69, Śikyotsava, XXXIX 64.

ASV—37
practiced and linguistic occultism do not get much attention in some of these works. In the treatment of the subjects, between one text and another there is not much difference.

Much importance cannot be attached to the enumeration of the names of *samhitās* in some of the texts. For example, in the *Pādma, Mārkandeya* and *Hayagrīva samhitās* and the *Visnusūtra* their own names head the lists. On the other hand, the *Kapiṇjala, Pārameśvara, Bhaṭradvāja* and *Vishvāmitra samhitās* and the *Māhendra tantra* mention the name of a *samhitā* other than their own at the head of these lists. Firstly, there is no evidence to show that the order in which the texts are enumerated was the same in which they were composed. If the order was meant to declare the precedence of one over another, then all the lists should reveal uniformity in their enumeration. Secondly, there is no evidence also to show that this enumeration of the texts was not interpolated subsequent to the composition of the works in which they get mentioned. Thirdly, such lists as those in the *Pādma, Mārkandeya* and other *samhitās* commence with their own names as heading those lists, perhaps to lay emphasis on themselves as more important than those whose names are enumerated there. Lastly, reliance must be placed on other pieces of evidence such as references made in one text to others, like the *Ahirbudhnya-samhitā* and *Lakṣmītantra* referring to the *Sātvata* and *Jayākhyā*. Significance must also be attached to the mention of some texts as great. Until more information is available regarding the contents of the *samhitās* now preserved only in manuscripts, it will not be practicable to have an estimate of their contribution. Besides, the texts that have been mentioned here are the most important ones which the leading exponents of Vaishnavism have chosen to cite in support of various topics.
CHAPTER VIII

AGAMAS AND VAIŚṆAVA LITERATURE

The system of Viśistādvalīta represents the philosophical side of Valṣṇavism. The term came to be used to refer to a system of philosophy which is based primarily on the Upaniṣads and was developed by a long line of writers like Bodhāyana, Nāṭhamuni, Yāmunācārya and Rāmānuja. Because of its tenets, it was referred to by expressions like viśistadravyaikya, dravyaikya and others. Sudarśana Sūrī (1300 A.D.) was the earliest writer to use the expression, ‘viśistādvaita’, to refer to the system.

As philosophy, the system of Valṣṇavism grew and developed on the triple foundations of the Upaniṣads, Brahmāsūtras and Bhagavadvīta. The Purāṇas, notably the Viṣṇupurāṇa, the Vaiṣṇava Agamas, Vaikhānasa and Pāṇcarātra, and the Nālāyiradvainyaprābandha in Tamil provided the basis for the growth of the religious aspect. Philosophy with its theory and religion with its practice, have blended harmoniously to give rise to a system (call it a creed or by any other name) which provided suffering humanity with the means to get over the ills of the world and lead a happy and prosperous life here and hereafter. So the philosophical basis has not been free from the religious tinge and the foundations of its religion have a philosophical background. Valṣṇavism has a glorious heritage which did not discard either the philosophical or the religious background. It is a result of a synthesis of an ecstatic and rapturous experience of the bewitching beauty of God and an

974 Śrābhāṣya I, p. 184 (Venkateswar Press, Madras); Nyāyasudarśana, p 1317.
975 Vaiṣṇavasūtra with Tatparyadīpika (Brindavan edition) p. 40; Śrutaprakāṣika, p 918.
Intellectual insight into the problems of reality. Thus neither was reason undermined, nor emotion given a stoic burial.

Brahman, which is qualified by the sentient and insentient beings, is Bhagavān, Vāsudeva, Nārāyaṇa and Viṣṇu in Vaiṣṇavism. Nothing exists outside Brahman, while everything exists as His mode or attribute; and it is only by admitting this that the names of 'Bhagavān' and others become meaningful. These names occur frequently in the Āgamas and the Viṣṇupurāṇa. Their full significance is brought out in the Āgamas. The Viṣṇupurāṇa does offer explanations for the use of these with reference to God. Whether this work is indebted to the Āgamas or vice-versa is a problem that cannot be solved now for want of adequate evidence. A synthesis was effected by treating Brahman as identical with Bhagavān, Vāsudeva, Nārāyaṇa and Viṣṇu.

As a result of this, Brahman came to be looked upon as sagunā and among the qualities, six (jñāna, viśaya, bala, ativarya, śakti and tejas) are considered outstanding. Still, God is considered as having countless qualities on the strength of the Paurānic and epic descriptions. While God is required to

978. LT II 5, XI, 1; XIV 1; XV 9; XVII 5; AhŚ II 22; VI 20; XLIV, 34b, LIII 12a The Vaikhānasā texts use the word 'Viṣṇu' often to refer to Ultimate Reality and also designate Him as Adīmārti; KA I 1; SA XXXVII 4, VK pp. 249, 503 Sometimes He is referred to as Nārāyaṇa, VK p 497 Vide.

नस्य परमाःप्रो परमासप्तो नारायणस्य |

VK p. 491.

977. VP I 1, 31, 1 3 4; II 6, 41; III 11, 94; V. 37-38, Cf Bh I, 3 1; Varahapurāṇa, XC 3.

978. AhŚ LII; SA XXXI 64.

979. VP I 4, 6; V. 6, 78-80, 82

980. LT II, 26-36; VP. VI, 5, 79, 89.

have a body, according to these latter sources, in order to justify His several names, the Agamas remained content to recognize the Ultimate Reality as having a body in the form of these six qualities. The negative references, which amounted to an interpretation of them as representing the absence of defects in God, gave rise to the evolution of another concept, namely, absence of those qualities which are fit to be avoided. In this, the Agamas have played a significant role, of course following the line of treatment in the Upanisads. This aspect of the sagunatna of Brahman is found in the Pāñcarātra alone. It has influenced Rāmānuja in describing Brahman as opposed to all that is to be avoided and a storehouse of multitudes of natural and countless auspicious qualities of unlimited excellence.

Vide:

विनिलालेखनमलीकि: ..., वर्तमानविकाविकाविनिःवायासंवर्द्धिको अष्ठाणास्यप्रकारः।

Vedārthasaṅgraḥa, p. 43.

An important feature in the treatment of Brahman in the Agamas is that He is ever associated with Śrī. Śrī is Śakti latent in Brahman. Both have full powers to create, protect

982. Mbh Śaṅk., C.G. vii, Varahapuruṣa, XXXIV.xvii
983 Aṣ, vi. 284, ix. 32b; LT vi. 2, Cf. Aṣ, xxxii. 64-69; LT xxxix 19; xxxvi, 60-83, VK, pp. 492-3, N.T.
984. Vide

चक अपहरणार्थ विज्ञान विज्ञानाविद्वारो विज्ञानासंविद्वाले।

985 Chāv. vili. 1 s. Cf. Aṣ, ii. 39a, 46b, 33b; 34, 29s. Cf. ibid. xxxv 67, vide utara Upaniṣad, vi, 11, 19.
and destroy the world. Both have over-lordship over created beings.\textsuperscript{888} The two become a single reality, as it were.\textsuperscript{987} Since God cannot be ever dissociated from Sakti, \textit{Brahman} is said to be non-dual.

\begin{quote}
\textit{Vide:}

अपूर्थम्यूतक्षितवादशेत्रेत्र पृथ्वी निष्कलम्।

\textit{LT. XVI 24a.}
\end{quote}

This is not \textit{Advaita}, for in the latter nothing exists apart from \textit{Brahman}. But here Sakti or Sri exists in \textit{Brahman}. She is not noticed when there is no creation, but is made known as distinct from \textit{Brahman} when there is creation. The existence of Sakti in an explicit state is not denied, and so this is a two-in-one reality. When both Vishnu and Sri are held as equal in the possession of auspicious qualities, and become the refuge of the selves, there is not much difficulty in explaining the passages in the \textit{Lakṣmitantra}\textsuperscript{988} and \textit{Ahirbudnya-samhitā}\textsuperscript{989} which glorify Sri as having full responsibility for everything.

On the transcendental plane, Vishnu and Sri form a unit as a philosophical principle. But they are referred to as \textit{dharmin} and \textit{dharma}, \textit{bhāva} and \textit{bhavat}, and \textit{ahanta} and \textit{aham}. So Sakti or Sri can be considered as an attribute of Vishnu. The two are inseparable and so are treated as a single principle. Sri can therefore be taken as prompting, or acting as accessory to Vishnu in creation and other functions. Ahanta and such other expressions disclose the self-luminous nature of Sri and so, like an attribute to the substance having it, Sri acts and brings credit, not to herself but to Vishnu. In this way, the attribution of one’s function to the other must be understood.

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{988} \textit{LT II 15-19.}
\textsuperscript{987} \textit{Ahs III. 26b.}
\textsuperscript{988} \textit{LT IV 5}
\textsuperscript{989} \textit{Ahs V. 3b-5.}
\end{flushleft}
Vide.

\[\text{अन्योन्येनाविनामाबाध्योन्येन समव्याल} \]
\[\text{ताहास्य विन्दू लेखन्य सम नाढस्य चोभयो:} \]

\[LT\ II \ 17b-18a.\]

Viṣṇu is the husband of Śrī,\(^{990}\) and as such both could be treated as a unit as in any *Vedic* ritual. This concept has developments in the *Purāṇas* and epics \(^{991}\)

The Viśistādvalta concept of *Brahman* is associated with Viṣṇu and Śrī being recognized as the Divine Couple. The compositions of the *Āzhvāra* subscribe to this view.\(^{992}\) The *Siddhitraya* has the word ‘ārimati’ as an adjective to ‘puruṣa’ in the benedictory stanza \(^{993}\) Yamuna’s *Catusāloki* is in sole praise of Śrī. Rāmānuja uses the words, ‘ārintvāsa’ and ‘āriyāhpati’, frequently in his works \(^{994}\)

\(^{990}\) *LT* xxxviii 8; xi. 21, xx 40, *Ahs*, v. 53a, lv. 13a

\(^{991}\) *VP* I 3, 17; *R*, VI, 120, 13.

\(^{992}\) *Mudai Tiruvantādi*, 88, *Tiruvāyōzh;* IV 8, 10, VI, 10, 10.

\(^{993}\) *Śvaparikṣaṇamāsī: śrīmālī śrīvamāṇe
cīvatu sā mā puriścānum pūscaye ṛkṣāmuṣā \]

\(^{994}\) *Pṛthivacarikā vīdhīṇe śrībhāth śrīvāmaṁ\nāśrtbhāṣya, benedictory verse

*śrīmāne nirbhāraścāvṛttate śrībhāth śrīmāne:*

*Vedantāyāra, ibid.*

*śṛṣṭi: kālānuvāntāṃ grhāṅgāvāntāṃ-kāhyāngāḥ:*

*Vedanta-dīpa, ibid.*

*śṛṣṭi: pātim śīlāṅga-vīkṣāṇasvādabhāṣya-bhāṣya, introductory passage.*

\(\text{Cf. śrībhāth śrīvāmaṁ śrībhāṣya śrutā pratiśrīmaṇa} \)

\[LT, \ XVI, 31.\]
The concept of Laksmi, developed in the Laksmitantra and Ahrbuhnya-samhitā, is not admitted as such in the Visistādvalta system. She does anything only at His command. Some thinkers glorify Sri, heightening her greatness at the expense of Visnu’s eminence. It is therefore essential to be cautious in interpreting passages about her in the Pāñcarātra texts.

In this context, it is relevant to refer to the place of Sri in Vaisnavism subsequent to the period of Rāmānuja. The Tenkalal school holds that Sri is a self, the consort of Visnu, ever associated with Him. She is referred to as the mediatrix for the self to win the favour of God. Without Her mediation, none can get God’s favour. This must be understood in the light of a role which an ideal wife plays in favour of her children. The Agamas too lend support to this aspect of Laksmi. If Sri were to be on an equal footing with Visnu, then she cannot be a mediator. The Vedikalal sect treats Sri and Visnu as equal for all purposes and as the parents of the world. She is not only a mediator, but also fit to be attained even as Visnu is. There is no need to exaggerate one view at the expense of the other. A woman has a dual role to play as wife and mother. The two sects have different approaches towards the place of Sri, which deserve due appreciation. It will be prudent to avoid vehemence in criticising either view with the intention of maintaining one’s standpoint. It is needless therefore to raise the issue as to which view is more correct.

The significance of ‘Visistādvalta’ is explained as ‘non-duality or oneness of Brahman which is qualified by the sentient

935 Siotrarahwa, 37; Catustllokā, 3.

Vaikunthabagaduya.

Cl. Sristu 5, 6, 8.
and insentient beings which form its body. Another explanation is that in this system the cause of the world, namely, Brahman with the sentient and insentient beings, in its subtle state, is not different from the effect, namely, the world which is Brahman in its gross state with sentient and insentient beings. The Vedāntins cite a well-known passage from the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad to support the relation of body and soul between the created beings and Brahman in order to fortify the Viśisṭādvala view.

The concept of Brahman, as advocated in the Āgamas, admits of Sakti's emergence from Brahman and disappearance within it at the time of dissolution. From Sakti, both the sentient and insentient beings emerge at creation. Those selves which do not get released during dissolution enter into Sakti. During both the periods of creation and dissolution, Brahman alone exists, the created world being only the manifested condition of Sakti. So the oneness (advaita) of Brahman remains forever undisturbed. The selves lie there in both the states. This appears to be sufficient for explaining the concept of Viśisṭādvala, if it is remembered that Sakti is only an attribute of Brahman. The exponents of Viśisṭādvala have not considered this aspect of the Āgamic concept of Brahman, nor is there any clue in the Āgamas to support the relation of body and soul between Brahman and the world of matter and salves.

996. Vide


998. BrU. III. 7. 3-23. This aspect gets an authentic treatment in God and the Universe in the Vedantic Theology of Ramanuja by Eric J. Leff.

999. LT. VI. 36; Ahs. V. 9-11.

ASV—38
The Āgamic concept stated above regarding Brahman offers an explanation in support of treating Him as both the material and instrumental cause for the world. Brahman is not separate from Śakti. Whatever changes take place in Śakti must be admitted to take place in the dharmin, namely, Brahman. If it could be admitted that Śakti is inanimate, then Brahman can be taken as the instrumental cause also. Since Śakti is the same as Lakṣmi, and so animate, and Śakti gets transformed into prakṛti and its evolutes, it would be better to take Śakti as the material and instrumental causes of the world. Whatever Śakti does, may be ascribed to Brahman, and thus the theory of causation stands explained.

The concept of the freedom of Brahman from limitations in regard to time, space and objects has support in the Adbhudhnya-samhitā where a passage describes this limitlessness in a variety of ways.

The vyūha vibhava and other aspects of God’s existence have been incorporated in the Viśisṭādvaita system. In this connection, it becomes difficult to explain what inspired the glorious descriptions of God in the Viśisṭādvaita works, as there is not much in the Pāñcarātra and Vaiṣhāṅsaka texts that could have evoked it. Both the Āgama texts describe how the idol that is to be made should look like, the weapons it must hold, its ornaments and postures. The methods of constructing the temple structures to serve as shrines for the deities are dealt with in elaborate detail. The Nālāyiraprabandha, which bears the influence of the Āgamas, does not contain much to account for these descriptions, but the poetic imagery in the composition of the Āzhvärs could have suggested the descriptions in ornate style. Besides these, there is the Jitante stotra, which is written in a classical manner that reminds us of passages in the Bhāgavata. The Nārāyaṇiya section of the Mahābhārata

1000 Ahs II 46 53
contains only the opening verse of this stotra. It is also doubtful whether this stotra was then available in full. The entire work in six sections could have been composed later, keeping that stanza at the beginning.

The Stotraratna, which is an early devotional lyric of Yāmuna, contains a wealth of stanzas noteworthy for poetic excellence and emotional appeal. Its author appears to have been indebted to the Jitante-stotra. Likewise, the Gadyatraya of Rāmānuja and his introduction to his Bhagavadvaita-bhāṣya present grand pictures of the appearance of the Lord. All these were not definitely inspired by Āgama texts. While the Āgamas speak of only the six qualities, many more qualities which glorify God's attempts to endear Himself to His devotees, are described in a charming way in these works of Rāmānuja. It is quite possible that the Azhvāra's compositions which depict the glory of the ārāṇi form owed much to the Āgamas, though in contents there is not much in common between the Āgamas and these poems.

There is not anything special in the Āgamas regarding the individual self which could have impressed the exponents of Viśisṭādvaita. However, it is probable that the āprāpta doctrine gained admission into Viśisṭādvaita as a result of the influence of the Śrīvānṇavījakṣa, which in turn was inspired by the treatment of this doctrine in the Pañcarātra Āgama texts, particularly in the Lakṣmītantra and Aḥibudhnya-saṁhitā. Perhaps, this influence did not allow scope to the paths of karma and jñāna. The bhakti way also suffered the same fate, though not to the extent as the other two. In this respect, the Vaikhānasa Āgama, which advocated only the yuga way, did not command attention.

Regarding the state of release, the Āgamas describe it as related to the Highest Place (paramapada). It is made of non-material sattva, representing as if it were solidified splendour. It

1001 Stotraratna, 32-45,
AGAMAS AND SOUTH INDIAN VAIṢNĂVISM

is clear and flawless and it provides limitless bliss. Enjoyments there are blissful, regions are blissful and the bodies of the selves which attain are filled, as it were, with knowledge and bliss. The Lord’s body is made up of the six qualities. It is difficult to describe that place. The selves do not suffer from any defect in their senses and they take no food.

In describing the attractiveness of the region which the released souls reach after death, the exponents of Viśiṣṭādvaīta have displayed much ingenuity and imagination. They depict an ideal world made up of non-material sattva. The mansions and halls, quadrangles, parks and pleasure ponds are all pictured as magnificent, the like of which could not exist anywhere. It is called the eternally manifested glory of the Lord. The Lord is there, attended by numberless selves, eternally free and released. This kind of description is in Rāmānuja’s Vaikunthagadāya and in the Nityavibhūti sections in the Nyāyasiddhāntana of Vedānta-deśika and various works by others.

The literature of Viśiṣṭādvaīta is vast and varied in form. As far as their dealings with the Āgamas are concerned, some works are in the form of stotras, some discuss the validity of the Āgamas and some others are in the form of manuals of religious practices, particularly of the mode of worship.

The doctrines of the Pāṇcarātra are found recorded for the first time in the Nārāyanīya section of the Sāntiparvan of the Mahābhārata. The Viṣṇupurāṇa is the earliest text to treat of Godhead against the background of the Pāṇcarātra doctrines. Visnu, Nārāyaṇa, Bhagāvan and Vāsudeva are the names of the Supreme Deity. He has six qualities and is free from

1003 LT VI 16
1004 Mbh. Śāntu, ch 342-360.
1005 VP VI. 5, 79, 80, 82, 87.
defects. He has a form made up of powers which take the shape of the universe. Sri is ever with Him and is all-pervasive like Him. She grants the fruit of mokṣa. She and Visnu are the Divine Couple, and none is superior to them. The Highest Place is full of knowledge, pure and imperishable. The vyūha theory is well-known and gets frequent reference giving the names of the four deities.

There are other Purāṇas which refer to the Pāṇcarātra doctrines. Some, however, condemn them. The Bhāgavata contains references to the Agama mode of worship, types of and the advantages of adopting this kind of worship, the vyūha forms of God are also referred to. Bhakti receives prominent treatment here and prāpatti also is extolled as the means of salvation.

The Jitante-stotra, which is held as fit for recitation during the five times during the day when God is to be worshipped, is a perfect Pāṇcarātra work. The first stanza is given a detailed exposition in the Akrubudhnya-saṁhitā and this is proof that it was composed before the Saṁhitā. The other stanzas in the six sections could have been composed later. It advocates

1006 Ibid. I. 22, 53; V. I. 47; VI. 8, 86.
1007 Ibid. VI. 7, 70.
1008 Ibid. I 8, 17, 1. 8, 142-145.
1009 Ibid. I 9, 120.
1010 Ibid. I 8, 38.
1011 Ibid. I 9, 51, 56; II. 8, 102-105.
1012 Ibid. V. 18, 58.
1013 Vīṣṇudharmottara, Part III, Padma P. Uttara I.XXXVIII, Nara- simha P. XIII. Agni P. XXV, XXIX, XXX, XXXIX; XLIV, XLVI-XXXIX, LXX; XXIII & XXVII refer to navavyūha. Garuḍa P. XII. 14-15. Brahmāvalīvara P. XXVI Varāha P. 99. 27a mentions Balarama in the place of Śamkaraṇa, līlā P. II, 7 For further references, see PR.
1014 Kūrma P.
1015 Bh. XI. 87, for varieties of areṇ, see Ibid. XI. 27, 12. Cf. Ibid. XI. 2, 15; 8, 29; 21, 49.
1016 Aḥs, LIII.
God is said to have no form which can serve to identify Him. Yet He presents Himself to His devotees in a human form. There is devout fervour throughout this work, and it is likely that it was composed under the influence of works like the Bhāgavata. This hymn contains a glorious description of the Highest Place, the appearance of the Lord there, the sādgunya vyūha, the pañcakāla, the sanyujya kind of communion in mokṣa, and the five forms of God. The last section gives a beautiful description of the Lord with all materials necessary to offer worship to Him. One should wish for the conduct of daily, fortnightly and monthly festivals, with all attendant music and several kinds of food preparations. The devotee must attend on Him and render service to Him by offering whatever valuable possessions he has and can procure. There must be desire for this spiritual atmosphere to continue for years.

This section is based on both the Pāñcarātra and Vaiṣhāṅasa Āgamas which treat these aspects of duties and services.

The Nālāyira prāvandha, which contains the spontaneous outpourings of God-intoxicated divine saints called Āzhvārs, speaks of the Lord’s glory in various ways. The Supreme Being is formless and has unsurpassed bliss and countless qualities. Yet He takes the forms in which His devotees wish to visualize...
The *vyāha* doctrine is referred to directly and also through the colours which God assumes in each *yuga*. The divine descents are graphically depicted. Frequent references are made to the *antarāyaṁ* aspect of God. Numerous are the descriptions of the *arca* forms enshrined in many temples of India. The initiatory rite of *pañcasaṁskāra* in its aspect of receiving the marks of the conch and discus, which the *Pāñcarātra* system enjoins, is referred to, as also the *aṣṭākṣari* and the *dvaḍaśaṅkṣari* mantras. The doctrine of *prapatti* arose on the foundations of the *Bhagavadgītā*. Yet, it gets its exposition in the *Pāñcarātra* Āgamas. It was actually practised by the Āzhvārs who thus reveal the Āgamic influence.

The compositions of the Āzhvārs refer to the forms of the *mūlabhera* in various shrines and also to the conduct of festivals. The public festivals, which include processions

1023 *Mudal Tiruvanadī* 44
1024 *Tiruccandaviruttam*, 4, 17, 44; *Nāṉṉuḥau Tiruvanadī*, 24.
1025 *Mudal Tiruvanadī*, 99; *Munṟam Tiruvanadī*, 94, *Periya Tiruvanadī*, 68
1027 *Pallandu*, 7; *PeriyaṆ̄ha Tirumoghi*, V 4 1.
1029 *BhC* xviii 69
1030, *AṉS* xxxvii, 21-51 LT xviii 54-82
1031 *Tiruvāmoḻi*, VI. 10 10; *Tiruccandaviruttam* 92
1032 The compositions of the Āzhvārs depict the deities of the temples in their *dhruva* form. This does not mean that other forms were not known to them. The Āgamas and customary worship give primary importance to the *dhruva* form and other forms take a secondary place. Icons other than those in the *dhruva* form are also referred to by the Āzhvārs. Vide *Perumāl Tirumoghi*, I-III; *Periya Tirumoghi*, II 2, II 5, V 3, V 7, X 1 7; *Mudal Tiruvanadī*, 77; *Munṟam Tiruvanadī*, 26; *Tiruccandaviruttam* 61, 63
through the streets, are described with reference to the icon called the utsava bera. The Ágamas contain elaborate procedures for conducting the installation of five or six idols in every shrine, and primary significance is attached to the mülabera which is mostly referred to in Ázhvārs' works. That the other idols including the one which is taken in processions, were not current in the period of the Ázhvārs cannot be maintained. Besides, most of the Ágamas which were composed long before the period of the Ázhvārs, refer to the installation of the various kinds of idols, which should point to their actual use. Since the shrines are governed in their rituals either by the Pāñcarātra or the Vasakhāna Ágama, it must be admitted that the Ázhvārs' compositions bear the influence of both the Ágamas.

The first writer who took inspiration from the Pāñcarātra Ágama was Yāmuna (916-1041 A D ) whose Catusloki glorifies Śrī. She gives shelter to all and Her glory cannot be measured by Herself or even by Her Lord. Her grace alone can make people remain happy, while they are in bondage; and also enable them to get moksa. The entire glory of the Highest Place and the Lord's prosperity depend solely on Her will. This hymn of praise is based on the purport of some passages in the Lakṣmītantra and Aḥirbudhnya-saṁhitā which take the word 'Śrī' in several senses.1033 They speak of Śrī as the highest deity,

1033 Vidya

अणाति निकिलानं यत्रीणाति च युज्ञेज्ञेत् ॥
श्रीयति चाहिलेनित्वं अयति परं पदम ।
केशत: स्थूल उद्दिष्ट: श्रीय पर महासुने ॥

AhŚ. LT 61b. 62.

अणाति करणां बाचनं अणाति वृति न्यात सताम ॥

LT. L. 72b.

अणाति युज्ञेज्ञेष्वं शरणं चासिम शाख्यतम ॥

Ibid. L. 80a.
perhaps after the fashion of the Sakti Agamas which raise Sakti above all, including Siva. The four stanzas of Yamuna offer no surprise to us, as their import is not different from that of the passages of the saṃhitās referred to above.

Another work of Yamuna is the Stotraratna in 65 stanzas, glorifying the greatness of the Lord. One among them speaks of prapatti as the most convenient method of getting God's protection and refers to the paths of karma, jñāna and bhakti as hard to be practised. The Pāñcarātra Agamas enjoin that food offered to God be offered to Viṣvaksena to avoid the sin of taking nirmātya which is also called as āgga (Hence Viṣvaksena is called āgga). Yamuna refers to Viṣvaksena as attending on God and describes him as āgga.

Yamuna's Agamaprāmāṇya is the first extant work which seeks to establish the validity of the Pāñcarātra Agama. At the

Ibid. L 32b 83.

"सु अग्गे," "गृ हिलायाम्," "गृ विस्तरे" इति धातवः।
Commentary on LT. L 30b.

Ibid. on 33b, 83.

1034. Stotraratna, 22.

1035. Vide:

निषेधित च च बहुत्र च युग्म फलमयापि वा
तस्विमांतपिति प्रकै तर्कयत्नेन वर्जयतु।

SKS Siva, V 48b. 49a.
outset, he shows that the validity of the Āgama cannot be assailed by arguments based on any pramāṇa. Its validity is proved on the ground that Nārāyaṇa Himself revealed it. Incidentally, the Naiyāyika’s proof for God’s existence is examined and rejected. The Prābhakara theory of the validity only of injunctive statements is rejected, and it is shown that statements on already existent objects could also be valid.

It is further shown that the Pāñcarātra system does not censure the Veda; the treatment there of matters not dealt with in the Veda does not point to its invalidity; moreover, it is admitted as valid by Brigu, Bharadvāja, Vyāsa and others. The words, ‘Bhāgavata’ and ‘Śāttvata’ are of course used to refer to those who follow the Pāñcarātra tradition and offer service in temples. Though the authors of the Smritis, like Manu and Uśanas, declare that the Bhāgavatas and Śāttvatas are of low origin, it must be observed that the people who are called by these names belong to the Ekāyana Sākhā and the Vaijñaneya Yajurveda and have Vedic study, observe the sacraments and belong to the Bhāradvāja, Kāśyapa and other gotras, like any other Brahmins. The words also point to men of low birth, but these are distinct from the followers of the Pāñcarātra. An analogous case is provided by the word, ‘acārya’, which is generally used to refer to a learned Brahmin. But it also denotes a lowly Vaiśya. Some words convey more than one meaning. The priests who are called ‘Bhāgavatas’ and ‘Śāttvatas’ perform worship of the pāṇca-kālīka kind, and those who are called by the same names attend to the cleaning of the vessels and keeping the precincts of the shrine free from dirt. Thus, the very same words convey occupational difference.

1086 Āgama-prāmāṇya, para 1-10
1037 Ibid 18-35
1038 Ibid. 38-41, 61-73
Again, those Brahmins are also called Sāttvas and Bhāgavatas who are of pure character and devoted to Bhagavān. They perform worship, not for earning their livelihood, but out of their sense of duty.

Yamuna takes up in this connection the sūtras of Bādarayana (II 2 42-45) which are interpreted by Saṅkara and Bāskara as refuting the validity of the Pāñcarātra Agama. He prefices his arguments by drawing attention to the fact that Vyāsa who glorified the paramount validity of the Pāñcarātra Agama in the Mahābhārata would not have refuted it in the Brahma-sūtras which he himself composed under the name of ‘Bādarayana’. He assumes the identity of Vyāsa with Bādarayana. Therefore, he takes the first two sūtras as stating the objection to the validity of the Pāñcarātra tradition and treats the next two sūtras as evidence in support of its validity.

The first two state the objection. Saṅkarsana, the soul, cannot rise from Vāsudeva, and Pradyumna, the mind, cannot spring from an agent, Saṅkarsana. This objection is ruled out by Yamuna thus: Since Vāsudeva, Saṅkarsana and others are only Brahman, the rise of one from another need not be objected to. Mind is, of course, an instrument, but it is not produced from Saṅkarsana. Besides, an instrument like a jar is produced by the agent, the potter, and so the objection cannot stand. A second method of refuting the objection lies in treating Vāsudeva, Saṅkarsana and others as knowledge by virtue of their omniscience and because knowledge is had from them. The rise of the Pāñcarātra from them cannot be opposed, also because it is known from the Pāñcarātra that God has perceptual knowledge of everything, and so the rise of knowledge from them cannot be questioned.

1039. Ibid. 13 18, 89-91

Yamuna offers an alternative exposition to the whole argument. The first sūtra may mean that valid knowledge cannot rise from the Pāñcarātra, because its validity is not itself proved. The second sūtra means that the Vedas are not the compositions of any one, while the Pāñcarātra Āgama is one such. The third sūtra which answers this objection states that Bhagavān is the source of perfect knowledge, and so the rise of knowledge from the Pāñcarātra cannot be questioned. The last sūtra declares that the prima facie view stands contradicted, because if the motive of God in composing the Pāñcarātra becomes questionable, then the same may be said with reference to the Vedas, Smrītas and Purāṇas.

Yamuna did not probably seek to establish the validity of the Vaikhānasa, because objections were raised only against the Pāñcarātra which was treated as anti-Vedic. The Vaikhānasa Āgama is admitted to be purely of Vedic origin.

He cites passages from the Parama-saṃhitā, Sanatkumāra-saṃhitā, Īśvara-saṃhitā and Padmodabhava-saṃhitā. Some of the passages cited here from the Sanatkumāra-saṃhitā are not traceable in the printed text.

Rāmānuja (1017-1137 A.D) who inherited the tradition of Yamuna, interprets the Sūtras of the Utpattīsambhavādhikarana on the lines laid down in the Āgama-prāmāṇya. He cites passages from the Parama, Pauṣkara, and Sāttvata saṃhitās.

Rāmānuja makes frequent mention of the six qualities, whenever God is described. God is to be pleased with acts of worship. God enjoys them. The Highest Place (nityavibhūti) and also the world have facilities for His enjoyment. These are enjoyable objects (bhogya) like the objects of sense-organs, instruments (bhogyopakaraṇa) like the sense-organs and

1041 Ibid. 103-115
1042 Introduction of Rāmānuja to Bhagavadgītābhāṣya; Gadyairaya.
places of enjoyment (bhogyasthāna) like the fourteen worlds and the bodies there. Garlands, choories and others come under bhogopakaraṇa. Quadrangles, courtyards and halls become bhogyasthāna. These, which are thus classified in the Laksmi-
tantra,1043 are mentioned by Rāmānuja in the introduction to the Bhagavadvītpa-bhāṣya and Saranāgatīsavya. The three kinds of offerings or means of attending upon God are aupacārika like incense, music and others, abhyavahārīka like ācāmāna, delicious preparations etc., and sāmsparśika like perfumes. They are mentioned in the Ahirbudhnya samhitā which prescribes the procedure for daily worship1044 Rāmānuja refers to them in the Nitya, a manual of worship composed by him where he follows the procedure laid down in the text mentioned above. Six āsanas1045 are enjoined to be offered to God at various stages during worship, and these are strictly followed in the Nitya. The use of the astra mantra, surabhi-mudrā and asṭāṅga-
amaskāra which are ordained in the sāhīhitās, are all mentioned in the proper contexts in the Nitya.1046 It is thus found that the Pāñcarātra Āgama exerted profound influence on Rāmānuja.1047 Though the system of Vaiṣnavaism represents the happy blending of the concepts of Godhead with the names, Bhagavān, Viṣṇu, Nārāyaṇa and Vāsudeva, the Vīśistādvaīta system has been attaching supreme importance to the name, ‘Nārāyaṇa’, as is clear from the mūlamantra and dvaya. The name ‘Bhagavān’ is

1043. LT xiv 51
1044 AhS xxvii 20b, 21a Cf. LT xxxvi. 87-93, which classify them into four kinds—sāndrīṣṭika, abhyavahārīka, sāmsparśika, and abhinīṇīka.
1045. AhS, xxvii; Cf. LT. xxix.
1046. Ibid xxvii 79b, 79a. These lines are quoted by Rāmānuja in the Nitya.
1047. Some scholars are critical of the use of the Pāñcarātra doctrines by Rāmānuja. (Vide.—S, R Bhatt Studies in Rāmānuja Vedanta, pp. 53-55). This is answered in the arguments noted above. It is also ably disproved by J B Carman in his The Theology of Rāmānuja. (pp. 173-174). Cf. Eric J. Lott God and the universe in the Vedāntic Theology of Rāmānuja, (p. 184.)
often used to refer to God and also along with the name, 'Nārāyaṇa.' This is evident from the opening lines in the Saranāgatīgadāya, at the end of the Vākunāṭhagadāya and in most passages in the Nītya.

Under the influence of Rāmānuja's Nītya, some of the leading exponents of Viśistādvaīta brought out their own manuals called Nītya, giving guidelines for leading the daily life in conformity with śāstric injunctions. The ideals of the Vaisnava are set forth here, following the teachings of the Pāñcarātra Āgama.

The Āhūnika-kaṭākā in 528 stanzas was composed by Śrirangānārāyaṇārya, also known as Vangīvāmśeśvara, an immediate disciple of Rāmānuja. He expects the Vaisnava to resolve to follow the routine based upon the pañcakālaprakriyā as laid down in the Pāñcarātra Āgama and speaks of the glory of this routine. He treats each part of this routine, indicating how it should be observed. Bhūtaśuddhi and nyāsa are dealt with in detail. Worship of God is called ijjya or yāga, and before it is actually taken up, mental worship is to be undertaken. This is also called hrddyāga. Along with God, Śrī, Bhū, Nilā, Sudarśana and other weapons and all the retinue of the Lord must be worshipped in this part of the ritual. The six āsanas and the use of surabhi-mudrā in bhujyāsana are indicated.1048

Lost are the Abhīgamanasāstra1049 which was written at the request of Vatukapūrṇa by Śrīvatsānākāmīṣra, also known as Kūrattāzhvān, foremost among the disciples of Rāmānuja, the Nītya1050 of his son, Parāśara Bhaṭṭa; and the Nītya of Naṉṭiyar,1051 a disciple of Parāśara Bhaṭṭa. Opinions on these

1048 xxviii 504b-509a, 110-164a
1049 PR p 138, RTS II p 443.
1050 RTS II pp 306, 443.
1051 Ibid II pp 443, 444.
matters, which Nārāyanamuni, a follower of Śrīvatsāṅkamīśra and Parāśara Bhaṭṭa, Kesamuni and Gṛḍhurasaromuni held, are cited by Vedānta Desīka in his Pāṇcarātrarakṣa. Not only are their works lost but very little is known about them otherwise.

The Pañcāstava of Śrīvatsāṅkamīśra contains five stotras—Śrīstava, Atimānasastava, Varadarājastava, Sundarabāhustava and Vakunthastava. Among these, the Varadarājastava and Sundarabāhustava are intended to sing the glory of God as enshrined at Kaṇcit and Tirumāliruṇḍai (near Madurai) respectively. That the arcā form of God is glorified in these two stotras cannot be held to be due to the direct influence of the Āgamas. Even before 1000 A.D., this form of God was quite popular, indeed, from ever since the Āzhvārs wrote. They offered their worship to God whose form as icon was not introduced by them but was already there for worship.

The sādgunya aspect, the splitting up of the six qualities into three pairs, one pair shared by each of the three deities, Śrīkaraṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, and the importance of the doctrine of prapatt, together with its practical aspects, are admirably treated in these five poems. Inability to measure the greatness of Śrī is humorously depicted thus:

\[\text{Embroidered} \text{āśmamahāvādhīnī hūrṇa nāti pib bāva śāya na}
\text{yathāyādṛṣṭvāmāntāpānī nāva guṇyāvṛttottātā hīyate.}
\text{Yasyāvṛttottām tadbhūtasamudgurān sarbhaktāya bhītā—
\text{dṛṣṭvāmāmāntamāmāntāya kaṇī bhītānā śrāntaśāyāmāntāh.}
\text{Śrīstava, 8.}\]

1052. PR pp 111, 124, 136, 136 (His work seems to be a gloss on the Ahnikakārīka from this reference): 152, etc.
1053. PR, p. 122. The title of the work may be Śātvata-nitya.
1054. PR, p 122. The title appears to have been Nityakarmasāngraha.
1055. Atimānsastava 6, Sundarabāhustava 24, 28, Varadarājastava 93.
1056. Varadarājastava, 16.
1057. Ibid, 92.
As it is really immeasurable, It does not detract from omniscience of the Lord and Sri not to know its measure, as their omniscience cannot know the non-existent sky-lotus.

God may have any one of the five forms, yet the arcā forms have a powerful appeal to the devotees, and not to others.

Vide:

परो वा व्यूहो वा विभव इत्याचौवतरणः
स्रवयवान्तवैमी वरवर्ध यो यो भवति वे ।
सस्तवं सत्तेशानान् वर्गुणनाग्नानू विष्णुद्रह्लान्तः
भजद्वयो भास्येव सत्तमितेरस्यक्तिवतरता ॥

Varadarājastava, 18.

The greatness of the Lord and of Sri is well brought out by a careful use of the word ‘Sri’ in two different senses (as the resort of all and as one who resorts to the Lord)

Vide:

यस्या: कटाक्षणमुक्तमाः
पूर्ववर्तेन भूता भवति सर्वजनोन्नेतरः ॥
त्वां श्रीरतित तदुपसंध्रयणायां
स्वयं च श्रेयः श्रीमुद्राहुदारवचः ॥

Vaikunṭhastava, 29

Parāśara Bhatta, the talented son of Śrīvatasaṅkamiśra, is the author of two fine poems, Śrīraṅgājastava and Śrīgūna-ratnakosa The deity at Śrīraṅgam is identified with the four vyūha deities, and He is said to be displaying the eminence of the four deities.

Vide:

वाजुण्याहाद्राएवः पर इति स भवान् भुकामोहो वहाद्रावात
बोधास्वर्णस्ववेव हरसि वितुते शाख्येववरायां ॥
श्रद्धार्थोपधर्मिनगितम् च भगवच्छकितेरोत्तमः
विभ्रणम् पान्ति तत्र गमयिति तथा व्यूहा रक्षाधिराज ॥

Śrīraṅgājastava, uttaraśataka, 39.
The four deities are to be worshipped as representing the four states of consciousness of waking, dream, deep sleep and transcendence, and the Lord at Srirangam is identical with them. Visnu's greatness is due to Laksmi's, yet the Vedas do not make a separate mention of Sri's greatness, because it gets included within that of her Lord and Lover.

Vide -

स्वरूपं स्वातत्त्वं भगवत इति बल्लवते
व्यवस्थेऽपौर्णिमगति कलु मिर्यंतरलये ।

स्यामासार्वमीत: श्रीः कस्मितुद्वितिध्यथविविषयः
स्त्रद्वस्तोषावाट्वाँ न पुणामिकले श्रुतिरसि॥

Śrīgūḍarānakāśa, 28

The above-mentioned two writers are thus seen to have been greatly influenced by the Pāñcarātra traditions, particularly, the treatment of Sri's greatness. Perhaps, they were directly indebted to Yāmuna's Caiuśloki.

Pārśara Bhaṭṭa is the author also of the Bhagavad-gunadārpana, a commentary on the Viṣṇu-sahasraṇāma-stotra. While explaining some names, he cites passages from the Viṣṇutattva, Brahma saṁhitā, Sūtsata-saṁhitā and Pauska-ra-saṁhitā. Commenting on the name 'Varāroha', which means one who has attained his own eminent position, the author refers to the vyūha doctrine. The Bhāgavatas hold that Para-Brahman is of three kinds, para, vyūha and vibhava. He interprets vibhava as appearance or manifestation of the Lord at His will. This is of four kinds, namely, (i) that which is directly assumed like those of Matsya, Kūrma and others, (ii) that in which He inspires specific persons like those of Paraśurāma, Krṣṇadval-payana and others, (iii) that which arises through His penetrating power as in respect of Purāṇjaya and others and

1058. Śrīraṅgarāja-stava, uttaraśataka, 39.

ASY—40
(iv) that by descent in some individual forms as in arcës.
Appearance is twofold, namely, prädurbhäva and prädur-
bhavāntara. The latter does not mean another prädurbhäva,
but what is different from it. The difference between the two
lies in the former displaying the Lord’s personal activity and the
latter coming under the control of only a fraction of the Lord’s
activity. For example, Rudra is held to prädurbhavāntara,
because he is fully dependent on the Lord’s glory. Those who
desire to get mokṣa are required to worship the prädurbhäva kind
and not the other type. The author cites passages from the
Sāttvata and Pauskara samhitās

The four vyūha deities and śādgunya are referred to, while
explaining the names, Mahāśapās, (twice), Caturvyūha, Atindriya,
Mahādyuti, Anirdeśyavapus, Ahassaṁvartaka and Caturmāriti.
The functions of the individual deities of the vyūha are referred
to, while interpreting the names of Sarvavid, Visvaksena and
Veda. The name of the Lord as Sāttvataṃ-prati is explained
to have a bearing on the Sāttvata system. Prapatti is referred to
while explaining the name, Samnyāsakṛt.

Sudarśana, the discus of the Lord, gets a glorified
description in the Sudarśana-sataka of Kuṇanāryana in which 74
stanzas describe the discus in all its parts and 27 depict the
greatness and appearance of the person of Sudarśana. The
divine couple, Lakṣmi-Nārayana (Lakṣmīnārāyanākhyam
mithunam) is said to be carefree, entrusting the security of the
world to the person Sudarśana. This suggests the influence
of the account of the greatness of Sudarśana in Ahirbudhnyac-
samhita.

Vātśya Varadācārya, also known as Nadadūr Ammāl, a
leading exponent of Viṣistādvalta in the 13th century, gave an
exposition of the doctrine of prapatti, in his Prapannapāryāta

1059. Sudarśana-sataka of Kuṇanāryana, St, 100
comprising of ten sections. At the outset the author proves that this doctrine is authentic and cites the Laksmi-tantra and Sanatkumāra-samhitā and quotes passages from the Visvaksena-samhitā to support his standpoint. With the aid of these passages, the nature of the doctrine is expounded. The same text and Laksmitantra are cited in a discussion on who is qualified for this means \textsuperscript{1060}. Both the learned and the unlearned are qualified for taking up this means.

\textit{Vide:}

\footnotesize
\textit{हृदं शरणमहानामिदमेव विज्ञानताम्।
हृदं तितीयेतां पारमिद्मानन्त्यमिच्छताम्॥}

\textit{LT XVII. 101b-102a.}

That a preceptor can take man across worldly life is explained on the authority of the \textit{Jayākhyasamhitā}. A prapanna must lead his life rendering service to God. Branding the shoulders with heated conch and discus is the external mark: the internal mark consists in the heart being free from passion, speech devoid of falsehood and the body (physical motion) freed from doing injury to others.

\textit{Vide:}

\footnotesize
\textit{रागायपितं हद्यं चागडुप्रानुवादिना।
हिसादिरहितं कायं केशवाराधनं सिद्धम्॥}

\textit{Prapannapārījāta V 57}

On the authority of Sāunaka, the author recommends worship to the āreçā form of God \textsuperscript{1062}. He cites the \textit{Lakṣmis}\textit{tantra} and \textit{Visvaksena-samhitā} to support his exposition of the ethical way of life which a prapanna should pursue on the strength of the Dharma-śāstras and Pāñcarātra texts and which he should

\textsuperscript{1060} \textit{Prapanna-pārījāta} Section. III.
\textsuperscript{1061} \textit{Ibid.} Section IV , Cf \textit{JS} Ch. XVI. 120b-121.
\textsuperscript{1062} \textit{Ibid.} V. 39.
Finally, the author insists that a prapanna should not swerve from the ideals expected of him according to the constituents of prapatti. The way of life led according to those principles, will take him to the cherished goal. This text is a magnificent exposition of prapatti and is mainly based on the Pāñcarātra Āgama.

The five forms of God are described, one in each stanza, by Vātsyāya Varadācārya in his hymn of praise, Paratvādi padaścaka. Among these, Vyūha Viṣuđeva is described first. Though the Lord is the minutest among the minute and largest among the large, He is of the size of the thumb as antaryāmin and visualised by the yogins.

Sudarśana Śūri, the grandson of the brother of Parāśara Bhaṭṭa, became the disciple of Vātsyāya Varadācārya and commented on Rāmānuja's Srūbhāṣya in his Sruta-prakāśikā. In the Utpattyaśambhavādhikarana, he offers a clear exposition of the Viśistādvaśta point of view. The Mahābhārata mentions that the Sāttvata dharma disappeared several times and was revealed for mankind by Nārāyana. This shows that this dharma is beginningless like the Vedas which too have to be revealed from time to time. It was revealed on the mountain Meru, and several sages became its promulgators. This shows the sanctity of the place where it was revealed and that the sages had unanimous regard for the system taught to them. That King Vasu adopted it is enough evidence to show that eminent persons took to it. The system is helpful for pursuing the four aims in life (purusārthas), as the Pāñcarātra texts claim that it is equal to the four Vedas and as it is called Mahopaniṣat.

1083 Ibid, Sections VI to IX LT II. 12.

1084 The author’s treatment of the matter is based mostly on the Laksmiṭantra, Visvaksenasambhita and Viṣṇudharma. Tattvaratna is a Pañcarātra text which is mentioned as glorifying Śri (VI. 5). Other texts are Ahś SS SS SK3 and Atrisambhita.
The *Varāhapurāṇa* has the following passage regarding the mantras for worshipping God:

अन्नामेवेदमन्त्राणां पथराणांश्चितोऽत्रः

मागेशं मात्र च प्रपन्धने ते मां प्रश्नितिः मानवः

LVI

This indicates that the mantras enjoined in the *Pāñcarātra* are as valid as those of the *Vedas*, thus declaring that the *Āgama* is on a par with the *Vedas*. The authority of the *Vedas* requires corroboration from the *Itihāsas* and the *Purāṇas*. Likewise, the validity of the *Ekāyana sākhā* gets strengthened on the authority of the passages in the *Purāṇas* and *Itihāsas* which glorify the *Sāttvata dharma*. The name 'Bhagavān' is stated to denote only Vāsudeva.

The author shows that the *Pāñcarātra* system has an individuality which validates it unlike the *Sāṅkhya*, *Yoga*, *Pāṣupata* and other systems. Besides, the *Vedas* contain a number of eulogistic passages (*arthavāda*) which are completely absent in the *Pāñcarātra* texts.

While interpreting the *Sūtra*,

बिङ्गानादिहिमादेवा तद्वितिवेष्ठः

(II.2.41).

SudarśanaŚuri writes that absolute distinction is not meant between the four *vyūha* deities and as such, the rise of one from another cannot be objected to. As there is something specific in the effect which is not generally traceable to the cause, even so there is some speciality in the possession of a specific form and ornaments by each of the *vyūha* deities.

An objection is noted to the effect that the *Sāṅkhya*, *Yoga*, *Pāṣupata* and *Pāñcarātra* systems should be considered to have been condemned alike. The author rejects this on the ground that all the four systems cannot be refuted on one and the same ground, as they are mutually opposed. Since Narāyana is held to be the greatest deity in the *Pāñcarātra*, it is treated as distinct
from the other three systems. Passages from the Kāloittara-
samhitā are cited by the author.

Pillai Lokācārya, a contemporary of Sudarśana Śūri, wrote a
number of works, and is the author of the Prapanna-parāśāna on
the duties and responsibilities of a prapanna, and of the Tatvatreya on the tattvas, the insentient, the sentient and God.
God's five forms are mentioned in the latter. The qualities and
the functions of each of the vyūha deities are explained. The
main and subsidiary kinds of vibhavas are listed and are shown
to be as such at His free will. The number of vibhavas is stated
to be thirty-six. Among the five forms, the arcā form is perfect,
since that alone creates affection (among people for the Lord),
is the auspicious form and the refuge for all the worlds and
could be enjoyed. This work deserves to be called a collection
of Pāñcarātra-sūtras

In another work, Śrivacana-bhūsana, Pillai Lokācārya states
that the Āzhvārs performed the surrender of themselves
(prapatti) to the arcā form of God. He brings out vividly the
distinction between the five forms of God. The antaryāmin form
is like the water deep in the earth. Paratva is like the water
encircling the material universe, the vyūha form is like that in
the Milky Ocean, the vibhava forms are like the water in flooded
rivers and the arcā ones like that settled in deep ponds. Among
them the last one is within the reach of the people, while others
are not. Those who take to prapatti may be ignorant like us, or
great in their knowledge like the early preceptors, or those who
are devoted to God like the Āzhvārs. Prapatti is based on the feeling
of one's miserable nature and is an indication of helplessness.
It is in fact not a means, but only faith in the grace of God.
The Lord is Himself the upāya and upeya. To get His grace, the
self requires Śrī to be the divine mediatrix (purusakāra) between
him and God. Śrī intercedes on behalf of the self and pleads

1085. Schrader, p. 27.
that he be forgiven. At the same time she extends her infinite tenderness to the self. The grace which He shows then is spontaneous and does not rise from any cause, nor does it require any personal endeavour on the part of the self. Human initiative as a condition for redemption is not required. To adopt it as means would be like a son making a request to his father to protect him. God Himself would arrange to get what is good for the self and to avoid what is harmful to him. What the self is required to do is to know himself and not stand in the way of the Lord showering His grace. Bhakti and prapatti follow as necessary corollaries from the grace of the Protector.

In the second chapter of his work, the author discusses the nature of svagata-svīkāra and paragata-svīkāra and the difference between them. The former refers to the Lord's accepting the prapanna who makes an endeavour for this purpose. The latter means that the prapanna is accepted by the Lord on account of His own free will. The former never assures the result and the latter is ever fruitful. Divine grace got through the latter method is like mother's milk, while that through the former is like artificial milk. Besides, conceit and pride would overpower the self while taking to the former and would affect adversely the nature of the self, namely, its abject dependence on the Lord. The next two sections discuss the attitude which the self should adopt towards God and the ācārya.

In still another work, Mumuksuppadi, the author discusses the import of the three mantras studying the meaning and significance of each syllable. The place of Śri, her acting as mediatrix and the caramaḻloka being applicable only to the vibhava get fully explained. While upholding the view that God Himself would bless the self, the author states that what is enjoined as karma comes under service, as jñāna under the

1066. The three mantras are Mulamantra, Dvaya and Caramaḻloka.
1067. Śrivacanabhūsana, 6, 7, 9; Mumuksuppadi, 110.
knowledge of the self, as bhakti under an earnest desire to get at God and as prapatti under the correct knowledge of God.\textsuperscript{1068}

Among his other works, the \textit{Arthap\=an\=acaka} discusses the five subjects which a Vaishnava should know before he seeks God's grace. They are the nature of Brahman, that of the self, the means of attaining Him, the nature of moksa and the obstacles that lie in the way of getting it. In the \textit{Tattva\=skhara}, he states that prapatti is the means for getting rid of bondage. Prapatti is also called ny\=asa, ty\=aga, nikesa and Saran\=agati and by other names. Surrendering one's self to Paramatman is to be carried out and all are eligible for it. It is a particular kind of knowledge which arises in the self. This knowledge includes (i) a request which is formed through stopping the transgression of God's commands, (ii) God being favourably disposed and (iii) meditation (by the self) of God's omnipotence. This knowledge has two phases, one in the form of the object, namely, God's becoming the means without the self's request for it, and the other, the cognition in the form of the resolve (of the self). Those who are qualified for this must have the earnestness to attain the Supreme Being, absence of the desire for anything else and a determined conviction in God's liberality and other qualities. That the self has nothing to call as its own determines this knowledge.

In a work called \textit{Tandvaya}, the author notes that among the means of getting moksa, prapatti is the best. He cites instances from the Vedas, \textit{Ith\=asas} and \textit{Pur\=anas} to justify this unique position of prapatti. It is defined as knowledge in the form of a request, stating that the self is an abode of offences, has nothing and is helpless, and that He alone must be the means (of moksa) for him \textsuperscript{1069} It is also defined as a request, being the only means for obtaining one's aim which could not be achieved by

\textsuperscript{1068} \textit{Carama\=sloka}, 282 Cf. \textit{Tandvaya}, p. 223.  
\textsuperscript{1069} \textit{Tandvaya}, p. 223.
any other means, and this request must be made with m belief. The six constituents, which are said to belong to *prapatti*, are stated by the author as the traits which a self would get after becoming a *prapanna*. The Āzhvārs are said to have adopted *prapatti*, when they got the *tattva-jñāna* through God’s unconditioned grace, and they did so because they could not brook any delay in attaining Him. A *prapanna* has nothing to do. He has nothing to gain here in this life and so gets *moksa* when he gives up his body. The great Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas have preferred *prapatti* as the only means for all, since it destroys all the accumulated sins of the selves, since every one is authorised to adopt it and since *moksa* is assured at the end of the present life. The self has really no power over its own protection, and the protector, namely, God has a right to protect the self.

Sri is considered only as a mediatrix, and not as *upāya* and *upṣya* Therefore, she is not equal to Viśnu. She is only a self, but as the consort of Viśnu, she could not be away from Him at any time. This concept appears to go against the Pāñcarātra tradition which makes both Sri and Viśnu as Brahman. The author cites here a passage from the *Aḥirbudhnya-samhitā*. The *Pāñcarātra* texts declare that Sri acts at His direction, and so this Ācārya has authority for treating Sri as a subordinate to Viśnu. A subordinate cannot have equal status with the master. Viśnu is the master, and so Sri must be only a self ever with Him as His wife. The approach made here by this author differs from the one made by others. The role which Sri plays as a wife and mother explains this attitude, and the dispute over this between the two Vaiṣṇava sects is meaningless.

Azhagia Maṇṇavāḷaperumāl Nāyanār, the younger brother of Pillai Lokācārya, wrote the *Ācāryaḥrddaya* in four sections.

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1070. Ibid.
1071. Ibid.
*ASV*—41
The import of the Nāláyiradivyaprabandha (particularly the Tiruvāymozhi) is conveyed in this work, and, hence the title. Some decades in the Tiruvāymozhi breathe the sense of bridal mysticism. This author chooses to make a classification of these decades according as the forms of the Lord in Vyūha, Vibhava, Para, Antaryāmin and Arcā attract the bride and make her send Him her message.

The doctrine of prapatti is dealt with in the Parandarahasya of Jñānādhika, also known as Nānāraraccan Pillai, son of Periyavaccan Pillai (C 1300 A.D.). Pillai Lokācārya, his younger brother and Nānāraraccan Pillai wrote the works mentioned above in Sanskritised Tamil, that is, Tamil with a large admixture of Sankrit words.

The influence of the Pāñcarātra Agama is felt in the works of the above-mentioned writers and also in those of later ones. The astāksara mantra is enjoined by the Agamas. The Dvādaśāksara which is of great importance for the Vaisnava tradition is not recognised to have as much importance in the Vaisnava tradition. Instead, the dvaya and caramaśloka have received greater attention. The carama śloka, which forms part of the Bhagavatīdītā 1074, has been raised to the level of a mantra on the strength of the assurance which God has given there for security and protection to the suffering humanity. The path of self-surrender which gets special treatment in the Lakṣmi tantra and Ahirbudhya-samhitā has exerted a profound influence on the Vaisnava Āzhvārs. Therefore, the dvaya-mantra acquired a special status for resorting to prapatti.

Naturally, Pillai Lokācārya's works like the Tattvatraya, Mumuksuppādi, Śrīvacanabhūsaṇa, Yādrechikappādi, Parandaṇapādi, Śriyāhpatippādi, Tattvaśekhara, Tanidvaya, Tanicarama and

1073. Acāryahṛdaya, 156.
1074. BhG. XVIII. 66.
Tanipraṇava discuss the nature of the three rahasyas (secret doctrines). These works also discuss the nature of God and man for elucidating the full import of these. Along with the Sūrasaṅgraha, Saṁsāra-sāmrājya, Navaratnamalai, Navavidhāsambandha, and others, these enjoin on prapānas a way of life that would be in consonance with the esoteric import of these mantras. Another noteworthy feature is that these are all written in Tamil mixed with Sanskrit for the easy comprehension of one and all.

The Nayadyumāṇi of Meghanāḍārī, a contemporary of Pillai Lokācārya, represents Narāyana with His Śrī, Bhā and Niḷā as the Ultimate Reality. Śrī is only a self, but as the beloved wife of Narāyana, is ever present with Him. She is the mediatrix before Him on behalf of the selves. It is strange to note that this author refers to bhakti as the only means of moksa and does not treat prapatti.

Vedāntadesīka (1268 1369) made a significant contribution through his Pāñcarātraraksā to vindicate the authority of the Pāñcarātra Āgama. Of the three sections which this work contains, the first discusses the validity of the Pāñcarātra Āgama at all possible levels and sources, including the Āgama- pratīmānya of Yāmuna. The conflicting views which the Samhitās contain about the nature of the four divisions of the Āgama (āgama, mantra, tantra and tantrāntara) are resolved without injustice to the authority of the texts which discuss them. Actual recriminations found in the Vaikhāṇasa and Pāñcarātra texts are shown to be merely apparent and to have no inconsistency whatsoever. His arguments in this context represent an edifice built upon the strong foundations laid by Yāmuna in his Āgama-pratīmānya. The second section is devoted to the daily practices.

1076. Ibid. p. 233.
which a Vaisnava is to undertake. These must conform to the pañcakāla-prakriyā laid down in the Pañcaratra Āgama. The Samhitās do not give a uniform account of the routine of daily life. There are slight variations in their versions. Besides, the Āgama tradition lays stress on the importance of the dvādaśāksara mantra.

Vide

चतुर्दश्विरिकाग्रायणमः पञ्चकालपरायणम्: ।
ह्रादशाङ्करानिमयो यथा वै मागवतोखमः: ॥

Sāṅḍilya-smṛti, II.

Some Samhitās 1077 enjoin Visnugāyatī for japa in the morning saṁdhyā, dvādaśāksara at midday and aṣṭāksara in the evening. Vedānta-dēśika notes that, in principle, the pañcakāla concept should be followed and there is no need to give up one’s practice which is based on the Kalpasūtra of which one is the follower.

Vide:

एवं ह्रादशाङ्करार्यादानमपि व्यापकान्तरोपलक्षणम्: । स्वप्रांविहीक-निष्प्रामाणेन यथार्थ सर्वेऽक्ष्यकालध्वर्माप्ले:; अतएव हि सामान्यारणां
शिश्वम् प्रतिभाश्च भीमद्यांश्च समाराधनं प्रपन्धवत: पञ्चकाल-कल्पनवेंद्र दिन्तत्त्वमुपदिदिः: ।

PR p. 110

The third section is intended by the author to be an exposition of the Nitya of Rāmānuja. With great sagacity, he supplies several links to make the text of the Nitya intelligible. The intricate details of the morning routine are analysed and studied in the light of the various texts, especially of the Pañcarātra kind, and conclusions are drawn in the most convincing way which a dispassionate scholar would not fail to appreciate.
Wearing of the urdhvapunāras, their number, the materials for them, their form, the kinds of rosary seeds to perform ḫapa, the nature of the prostrations (aṣṭāṅga and paṇcāṅga) and the lapses from which one should carefully guard oneself are discussed with amazing thoroughness. The variety of flowers to be culled for worshipping God, as well as yoga which consists of deep meditation, is explained, following the Pāṇcarātra-saṃhitās. Among the Pāṇcarātra-saṃhitās cited by the author, the following are well known: Pauṣkara, Pārameśvara, Jayākhyya, Pādma and Sāttvata. The Kālottara, Hayagrīva, Saṅkarsana, Śrīkara and Pārameśthya are among the less known but important ones.

In this Nyāyapariśuddhi, the author discusses the validity of the Pāṇcarātra. Vedāntadesika is the earliest writer to take up the Vaikhanasa Āgama and discuss its validity. Those who adopt the Vaikhanasa-sūtra exclusively do not deserve condemnation, for the same should be said of others who follow their own Sūtras. They have been studying the Vedas and following the religious practices sanctioned by their Kalpa-sūtra and so are not a whit inferior to other Brahmins. That the Aśvamedha-parvan of the Mahābhārata declares them to be as valid as the Pāṇcarātra is sufficient ground for according recognition.

Worth noting in this context are the humorous remarks which the author offers on the mutual accusations in the two Āgamas. These recriminatory passages must have been interpolated by those who were intolerant of the greatness of the other system and who were eager to enjoy the slander thrown at the other system as much as eating sugarcane. Alternately, these must be treated as arthavāda (eulogistic) in praise of their own system.

1078. NP, pp. 167-169.
Vide:

The material treated in the Pāñcarātra Āgama provided a fresh ground for Vedāntadesaṅka to contribute to the maintenance of the Vaisnava ideals. The author wrote for this purpose the Saccaritra-rāksā in three sections. Apart from the fivefold daily routine on which the Pāñcarātra texts concentrate, the person who likes or is expected to worship God is required according to the rules of this Āgama to have paṇca-saṁskāra. Among the five sacraments, the marking of the shoulders of the disciple by the preceptor with the heated symbols of conch and discus was assailed by the exponents of other schools of thought on the ground that this amounts to doing injury to another and has no authority to support it. While upholding the authoritativeness of the practice, the author prefaces his arguments with proving the Pāñcarātra Āgama as valid. This sacrament cannot be questioned, because the Āgama enjoins it. Then he cites an unusually large number of passages from various Vedic texts, Dharma-śāstras and Purāṇas to prove the obligatory nature of this sacrament, corroborating his statements by citing passages from this Āgama.

Wearing the urdhva-punāra is a mark of the Vaisnava. The Pāñcarātra texts enjoin its wearing. Here, too, Vedic texts, Dharma-śāstras and Purāṇas are utilised to support this practice. Relevant passages and Pāñcarātra Āgama texts are additional evidence given in the second section.

The third section deals with the obligatory sacrament of worship, namely, offering food preparations to God. The

1080. The Vaikhanasa texts also enjoin the wearing of the twelve urdhva-punāras, KA, XXXVIII, 24-30.
question of taking nirmālya is discussed and the objection to its acceptance is overruled by citing passages from the Purānas and Pāñcarātra texts. The following Samhitās are cited in all three sections—Pauskara, Paramēśvara, Jayākhya, Pādma, Sāttvata Īśvara, Ahirbudhnya, Kālottara, Sanatkumāra, Pārameśthya and Pādmodbhava. The Atri-samhitā of the Vaihānasas is also cited.

The doctrine of self-surrender, which is treated in the Pāñcarātra texts, came to be recognised as an independent means of mokṣa in the period of Rāmānuja as a result of the influence of the compositions of the Āzhvārs which gave prominence to this doctrine. Though it is treated in the Gadyatraya of Rāmānuja, it took some more time to get expounded on strong grounds. Vedāntadesāka took up this matter and treated it in the Nikṣēparaksā.

The prima facie view is first stated, denying a status to this as the means of mokṣa. The grounds for holding this view are as follows. The nature of prapattī cannot be defined, nor does it have the necessary appropriateness. The definition, even if it is given, cannot be precise. There is no Vedic injunction enjoining it. It is possible to deny it the status which is sought to be attributed to it. It does not differ from bhakti which has a status as the means of mokṣa. It is inefficient to act as such means. Finally, it is not widely known as being such means.

1081. Nirmālya is the name given to the food, flower and fruit that has been offered to God.

Vide.

निवेष्टितं च च यदू यद्यं पुष्पं पल्लभादिः शा ।
तत्तन्तरलेख्यिति प्रोक्तं तत्रू प्रयत्नेन बलेयेत् ॥

SKS, Śiva, V, 48b-49a.

Cf SA, LXIII 108b-108.
The author takes up all these points and refutes them, one by one. Then he shows that *prapatti* could be declared to possess all those features which are sought to be denied. He concludes that the non-acceptance of *prapatti* would go against the tradition which is evidenced in ancient texts like the *Rāmāyana* which contain illustrations of the practice of *prapatti*. Passages are cited mostly from the *Ahirbudhnya-saṁhitā* and *Laksṃī-tantra* in support of *prapatti* and to some extent from the *Sātyaki-tantra* and *Sāttvata samhitā*.

All the possible conflicting views on the place of Śrī in Vaisnavism are discussed by the author in his commentary on the *Catuṣṭīlokī*. In the main, there are two views, according to one of which Śrī is all-pervasive, while according to the other she is atomic in size. There are four subgroups under the former. They are that (i) Śrī is only a self; (ii) she is distinct from the selves and God; (iii) she has the status of a goddess, but is not the Ultimate Goddess as Nārāyana is the Ultimate God, and (iv) she is actually the Goddess ruling over others. This last-mentioned view is held by the author. The second main view holds that Śrī is only a self, though she is the wife of Nārāyana. The author criticises others' views and maintains the fourth one under the first main view.

That *prapatti* is a means like *karma*, *jñāna* and *bhakti* is to be admitted, and in the Kaliyuga. Though *bhakti* is not denied, its place is discussed by the author in his commentaries on Rāmānuja's *Gadyatraya* and Yāmuna's *Stotra-ratna*. He cites from a number of *Pāṇcarātra* texts such as *Sāttvata*, *Parama*, *Sankarasaṇa*, *Jayākhyā*, *Visvaksena*, *Ahirbudhnya Pauskara*, *Īśvara*, *Visnutaivva* and *Sanatkumāra samhitās*, *Luksmī-tantra* and others. The name ‘*Rahasyarakṣā*’ given by the author to his commentaries on Yāmuna's *Catuṣṭīlokī* and *Stotraratna* and on Rāmānuja’s *Gadyatraya* is evidence for his treating these works as having relevance to and forming the basis for the three *mantras* and their esoteric significance.
He discusses the validity of the *Pāñcarātra* in the *Adhikarana-sārāvalī* also Sāndilya's statement that he got enlightenment through the *Pāñcarātra* is intended to prove that it is praiseworthy and is not meant to result the *Vedas*. The Lord condensed the teachings of the *Vedas* and out of compassion for people, He composed the *Pāñcarātra Agama*. Like the classification of *Śruti* and *Smṛti*, the author made a division of *Vaidika* and *Tāṇtrika*. The *Pāñcarātra* is valid like the *Visnusmṛti* which upholds *Vedic* practices. The *grhya* cermonials are treated differently by different writers. Yet the *Gṛhya-sūtras* are admitted to be based on the *Vedas*. Similarly, the practices which are enjoined on the basis of the *Ekāyana* recension, differ from those enjoined in other *dharma-sāstra* texts, but yet have their foundations based on *Vedic* teachings. Varadanātha, son of *Vedāntadesiika*, wrote the *Adhikarana-cintāmaṇi*, a commentary on the *Adhikarana-sārāvalī*. On the line, he cites a stanza of Ādi *Visnucitra*, the preceptor of *Nāḍādūr Amrāla*, and explains thus *Smṛti* is based on *Śruti* and so is

1082 Vide

1083 Vide

1084 Vide

Vedic, and yet there is the division of the sacred literature as Sruti and Smrta. Similarly, the Agama (or Tantra) is based on the Vedas and so is Vedic, and yet there is the division maintained as Vedic and Tantric.

Arguments of a similar kind are restated by Vedāntadesika in his Tatva-amuktā-kalāpa and the Sarvārthasaḍdhā, his commentary on it. On śloka 122 of the Buddhisāra, a section of this work, he remarks that on the evidence of the Mahābhārata, Manu and others admitted the validity of the Pāncarātra, which is adopted as an authority on matters that are undisputed, though not admitted by some others. This does not lead to the declaration of its invalidity. The same principle applies to the Vedas. The Ekāyana recension, which was studied like the Vedas, is now extinct, because only a very limited number of persons took to its study as in the case of the Upanisads.

Vide.

तत्रेत्यथानुसिद्धं चरणमेव समं गुरुमेधादिनिन्द्यम

The author's Rahasyatrayasāra is an authentic document of the tradition of prapatti, setting forth the views held by the subgroups of Vaisnavism, analysing them and offering his own comments on them. The doctrine of prapatti is explained in five chapters. Though prapatti is held to be a means by itself, it does not mean that bhakti ceases to be a means. He argues that prapatti should be adopted by every self. The caramaśloka and ṛdaya are definite evidence to recognise this. The passage that God is the refuge of all and is their well-wisher shows that all are qualified to adopt this. The nature of prapatti is characterized by the faith that the Lord will surely protect the self when it makes a request to Him for the purpose. He refers to the views of Pilīācārya on the scope of artha-paṇcaka.
and criticises them 1087 In the opinion of the author, Ramanuja explained prapatti as a constituent of bhakti in the Srībhāṣya and as an independent means in the Gadyatraya The unique nature of prapatti is dealt with in two chapters. Seven are devoted to explain the way of life which a prapanna is required to lead. This work is written in Tamil mixed up with Sanskrit,

Of similar import but smaller in size are several other works of the same author also written in Tamil mixed up with Sanskrit. They are each called 'rahasya', one with the word 'pada' added to it, another 'navanīta' and others 'maṭkā', 'sandeśa', 'raināvalī', and 'culaka'. All of them deal with the three mantras presented in various ways to suit the powers of understanding of people. Among them the Rahasyasandeśa has a commentary by the author himself, called Rahasyasandeśa-vivarana on prapatti. The Rahasyaratnāvalī with its commentary, Hṛdaya, discusses the arthapañcaka, prapatti and the life of a prapanna. There is another set of works, each called 'Tattva', one with the word 'pada' added to it, another 'navanīta' and others 'maṭkā', 'sandeśa', 'raināvalī' and 'culaka'. They discuss the nature of the Ultimate Reality, the self and the world. The Ultimate Reality is studied in all its five forms. Among them, the Tattvatarayaculaka discusses these topics in greater detail than others. While treating of the nature of Īśvara, mention is made of the Viśākhayūpa the number of vibhava forms (as thirty-six) and pure and impure creations.

Among his other works written in Sanskritized Tamil the Paramatābhaṅga contains arguments intended to refute the claims of various systems of thought and for defending the Vaishnava system from the attacks of the other schools. Section 21 states

1087. RTS. II p 92 where the name of Pillai Lokācārya is not mentioned but a passage from the Tanidvaya (P. 223) of the latter is quoted.
the *prima facie* view against the *Pāñcaratra* doctrines. And the next section is devoted to the establishment of the Vaisnava tradition which includes that of the *Pāñcaratra* system. In order to uphold the doctrine of *prapatti*, the author composed the *Abhayapradānasāra* which offers a clear exposition of the doctrine based on a well-known *sloka* in the *Rāmāyaṇa* 1088. The three *rahasyas* are discussed in the *Sārasāra*. How a *prapanna* should live here so as to be of service to God and His devotees is treated in the *Pradhānaśataka* and the *Sārasaṅgraha*. Passages are cited from the epics, *Purāṇas*, the compositions of the Āzhvārs and the *Āgama* texts like the *Ahirbudhnyasamhitā*, *Lukṣmī-tantra*, *Sāttvata-saṁhitā* and others.

The path of *prapatti* and the three *rahasyas* are also treated by the author in the form of verses composed in Tamil. The former is dealt with in the *Adaskkalappattu* and works with the word ‘*curukku*’ added to the name of each. The *Arthapañcaka* deals with that topic. The way of wearing the twelve *ūrdhva-punḍras*, which are enjoined in the *Āgamas*, is explained in the *Pannirunāmam*. The routine of daily life is dealt with in the *Srīvaishnavadinacarī*.

Vedāntadesika’s zeal in preaching Vaisnavism to humanity according to the varying abilities of people is well reflected in his attempt to produce Sanskrit poems, dramas, and *stotras* incorporating the fundamental doctrines of the system. The poem, *Yadavabhuyudaya*, depicts in poetic fashion *ṣāḍgūṇya* and *vyūha* 1089 and *prapatti* 1090. The drama, *Sankalpaśūryodaya*, contains a discussion on the validity of the *Pāñcarātra*. 1091

1088 R VI 18 33b, 34a
1089 *Yadavabhuyudaya*, XVII 116, XX. 79.
1090 Ibid X 75
Among his innumerable stotras, the Lord with Śrī is mentioned as the Ultimate Reality, and source of letters. The vyūha and śādguṇya get glorious descriptions. The basis and nature of prapattī are explained together with an appeal to God for the security of the self. There is an interesting reference in the Sarapāgatidīpikā to both the Agamic modes of worship, where the author does not discriminate one from the other in point of superiority, on which matter the adherents of both the schools have been vying with each other in recrimination. Some of the slokas convey the sense of the yantras for the deities concerned. Sudarśana gets an independent hymn. Mañavālamahāmuni, also known as Varavaramuni (1371–1444 A.D.), was a great Acārya who worked with a missionary zeal for propagating the doctrines of Vaiṣṇavism. He wrote mostly in Tamil with an admixture of Sanskrit. In this he was prompted by a keen desire to carry the message of the Acāryas to ordinary people who could not be expected to have even a working knowledge of Sanskrit. Yet, the Tamil words of Sanskrit origin are not foreign to the Tamil speaking community. So he chose to adopt the mañipravāla way of writing. A study
of his works reveals that he was well-versed in the advanced texts on Vaisnavism, and to his credit goes the distinction for having used this way of writing and achieved success in his mission. In this respect, he was veritably the illustrious follower of his Ācāryas.

Apart from the rich storehouse of inheritance of Sanskrit and Tamil which he availed himself of, mention must be made of the references made by him to the Pāñcarātra sources, which are available from his index to the Jñānasūtra of Arulālapperumāl Emberumānār, and commentaries on the Ācāryahṛdaya of Azhakiyamanaṣalapperumāl Nāyanār and three principal rahasyas of Pillai Lokācārya.

The Pāñcarātra texts are said to be 108 in number. The Ahrsbdhnyā and Visvakṣena saṁhitās are mentioned by name and profusely cited.

While commenting on the section on God in the Tattvatraya, several passages are cited from the Visvakṣena-saṁhitā which is now not available. Para, vyūha, vibhava, arcā and antaryāmin forms are enumerated citing the passages from the texts. While discussing the qualities of God, the Ahrsbdhnyasaṁhitā is cited to describe the six qualities, the vyūha deities and their possession of these in pairs and the responsibility each took up for the well being of people. The same text is cited also to explain the derivation of the name ‘Śrī’. How God’s power (śakti) works for the uplift of man is graphically explained. The path of self-surrender, and its concept and significance are

1100 Śrīvacanabhūṣanaavyākṣya 392
1101 Ibid
1102 Tattvatrayavyākhyāna 182, 187, 188.
1103 Ibid. 182
1104 Ibid, 184-188, Ācāryahṛdayavyākhyāna 70.
well brought out with the help of passages from this text and the *Laksñítantra*. The number of *vibhavas* is thirty-six which gets justification from a passage from the *Visvaksena-saññhitā*. The author notes this number to be thirty-nine in the *Ahirbudhnyasaññhitā*. This discrepancy is resolved by treating the descents of Kapila, Dattatreya and Parasurāma as cases of a subordinate kind. Thus, when these are taken out of the list, the number becomes thirty-six.

The citations given here as from the *Sanatk.nlmara* and *Jayākhya saññhitā* are not traceable in the texts with these names as available now.

R nīrāmānuja (c 1600) cites from the *Kūra*, *Liṅga* and other Purāṇas, in his *Bhāvaprakāśikā* on the *Srutaprakāśikā*, to support the authority of the *Pāñcarātra*.

The *Tattva-mārtānda* of Bukkapatnam Śīlavāsa-cārya is a commentary on the *Brahmasūtras* in the light of Rāmānuja’s views. In the interpretation of the section ‘*Utpattyasambhavat*’, ‘*vijñāna*’ and ‘brahman’ have grammatical co-ordination and so the *śātra* runs as ‘*vijñānādibhāve*’ and not ‘*vāsudevādibhāve*’. The word ‘*vijñāna*’ refers to *jñāna* which is the first quality in the list of sadgūnas. The word ‘*ādi*’ may be taken to stand for the material cause which *Brahman* is. Further, ‘*vijñāna*’ means Vāsudeva and not simply a quality. Objection cannot be taken.

1105. *Mumukṣupadivyākhyāna* 149.
1108. *Jñānasāraspramāṇayojana* 1, 28.
1110. *Brahmasūtra* II, 2, 41.
to the emergence of the self, as there is justification for this in the *Upanisad* itself. The aphorism, *vāpratisedhāca*, must mean “because of the absence of opposition or rejection” The *Pañcarātra* texts reject the birth of the self and so their validity is not (vi) contradicted (*pratisedhā*) The author shows also that this section cannot be taken to go against the Sāktas. The author must have been influenced by the arguments in the *Siddhāntaratnāvali* of his grandfather, Venkaṭācārya

Varadā ārya’s *Pañcarātrakantakoddhāra* silences the objections raised against the validity of the *Āgama*

The *Pañcarātrarakṣāhdraya* of one Rāmānuja is an epitome of Vedānta Desika’s work mentioned in its name. The *Āgama-pradīpa* of Sundararāghava places the *Āgama* on stable grounds.

Kap‘ṣṭhālam Deśikācārya, who was living at Tirupati in the early years of this century, discussed the problem of its validity in his *Śārtrakādhikarana-ratnamālā* by explaining the *vyūha* doctrine as contained in the *Lakṣmītāntra* and *Sanatkumarasamhītā*.

Some works were written on the fivefold division of the day needed to lead the daily routine. Among them are the *Pañcakālakriyādīpa* of Śrīnivasācārya and *Pañcakālaprakāśikā* of Tirumalai Śrīnivasācārya Hārita Venkaṭācārya’s (c. 1500 A D) *Daśā nirnaya* and the *Āhūka* of Gopālaḍēśaka (c. 1750 A D) treat the routine life of a Valṣnava

1111  *TU* I 2 1, 1, *Nārāyana Upanisad* I.
1112  *Brahmasūtra* II, 2 42
1113  *Ms* No D 5259, Govt. Oriental Ms Library, Madras.
1114.  *Ibid.* D 5283
1116  *Ibid.* R. 606
An inquiry into the nature of the mediatrix is undertaken by Nārāyaṇamuni in his Puruṣakāra-mimāṃsā which has a commentary written by Śrīśaṭaleśa. Offering daily worship to God is discussed in the Pratipurusa-bhagavadārādhana-samārthana whose author is not known. Sundaravīra-rāghava determines the qualification for offering worship for the sake of others in the Parārtha-ya janādhiṣṭāna nirvāha. Campakesācārya’s Taṭāradrāṅka-pramāṇasaṅgraha analyses the standpoints about branding the marks of the conch and the discus on the shoulders. Prapatti, as a means which every one is required to adopt, is dealt with in the Nikṣeṇa-cintāmaṇi of Gopāladeśika (c. 1730 A.D.). This practice is upheld by Śrīnivāsa in the Nyāsavidyā-pariskṛti and by Śrīnivāsa in the Nyāsavidyā-viṣayā.

The various aspects of temple worship are dealt with in the Kṣiyākatvāna candrākā of Varāhaguru who offers here a brief but accurate account of the kriyā and caryā aspects of the Pāṇcarātra Āgama. The 37 chapters which this work contains represent the tradition as recorded in the Pādmasamhitā. Of similar nature are the Pratisthāpradāpa of Narasimhāvājapeyin and the anonymous Utsavasaṅgraha, Diksāvidhāna and Prāyaścitā-saṅgraha.

1118 ibid. R 1705
1119 ibid. R 1679
1120 ibid. R 1034 (b)
1122 ibid. R 21. Varadācārya is given as the name of the author in the Adyar Library, TR 233
1123 ibid. R 2129 TR 233
1124 The recent edition of this work in Telugu script by Pandit S B Raqhuemathacāryulu with his commentary is helpful in understanding the text. Besides it gives the number of Talās, Vadyas, Mudrās etc.
1125 ibid. R 3962.
1126 ibid. D 5851.
1127. ibid. R 5255
1128 ibid. D 5733

 Aval—43
The *Sudarśanasuradruma* of Anantācārya (known as Anantā-
vān) of Mysore (c. 1850 A.D.) is an invaluable work on the
sacrament of wearing the mark of the heated conch and discus.
The author quotes profusely from the Vedic and *Pāñcarātra*
texts and Purāṇas. Śrirāṅgācārya of Puriśai who lived at
Tirupati at the beginning of this century made a good
contribution to this sacrament in his *Bhogavaddharmadarpaṇa*
and *Vajrakuthāra*.

Alaśingabhaṭṭa is the author of the *Vajramukūṭavilāsa*, a
work depicting the glory of the Deity at Melkote and also
describing how the diamond-set crown came to adorn Him in that
shrine. The author states 1838 A.D. as the date of his birth.

Among minor works on *Pāñcarātra*, the *Sudarśanamārāṇī*
is said to have been written by Vedācārya, son of Vedavyāsa-
baṭṭa and grandson of Śrīvatsākamīśra, disciple of Rāmānuja. This work argues in favour of the *taptamudāṅkāṇa*
several writers' names and citations from their works are given
here by the author to support his arguments Viśṇucitta, Narāyaṇamuni, Vedavyāsabhaṭṭaraka, Yādavaprakāśi and
Ānandaśīfa are the writers whose views in support of this
sacrament are recorded here. Reference is made to the views
of Bāṭṭa Vācaspati who praised the Lord at Śrīrangam, Gohita
Narāyaṇācārya's *Sadācāraṅgrantha* and Dhanuskayajvan’s *Veda-
bhāṣya*, all of them being unknown till now. The author
mentions Vallāla as his patron. The author refers to a
*sloka* in praise of Rāmānuja and attributes it to his

1129. The works of Alaśingabhaṭṭa are available only in manuscript
form. Vide — S V V O R I MS No 3858

1130. Vallāla was a chieftain at Tiruvetra at this period. The stanza is:

तस्मै रामासुजाय गा नमः परमयोगाः।
यः शुद्धिसुन्तारामनस्व विश्रवीशानं॥

Cited on p 20.
preceptor. This *sloka forms part of the introductory *slokas of the *Srutapraakāśikā of Sudaisanāsīl, son of Vedācārya. As this quotation would suggest the identification of the author with a descendant of Varadācārya, he could not have been the son of Vedavyāsabhāṭṭa.

There is a work with the name of Sāttvatatantra in nine chapters. It deals with the theory of creation under the influence of Śakti. The divine descents are counted as fortytwo, enumerating them according to each Manvantara, the period presided over by each Manu. Devotion is stated to be of three kinds called Nīgūṇa-bhakti, Kārmāṇa bhakti and Līlā-bhakti. Vaiṣṇavas are of three kinds. To the first belong those who are dear to all. Those who display their liking to others in a relative degree are of the second kind. The Prākṛta Vaiṣṇavas are of the third kind as they have love for the idols. Mokṣa is obtained by reciting the name of Kṛṣṇa. The entire work is in the form of a dialogue between Śiva and Nārada. There are certain elements like the role of Śakti and divine descents which show the influence of the Pāṇcarātra tradition or rather the Vaiṣṇava tradition. The other features have nothing in common with the Pāṇcarātra system. Except for the name, this work has affiliation only to the cult of Kṛṣṇa.

There is a Sāṅdilyasamhitā of which a part called Bhakti-khaṇḍa alone is available. Though it treats dīkṣā, nyāsa and other topics that generally form part of the Pāṇcarātra texts, other themes like bhakti, stotras, gurubhakti and practices in the Kali age cover the greater part of this work.

There is also available a Saṃhitā with this name in fragments. Perhaps, Sāṅdilya, the narrator, is brought in as

1131 IV 74-77.
1132 Pāṇcarātra Nūl Vilakkam, pp.75,76
the narrator in the Bhaktikhaṇḍa mentioned above and offering his name to it.

The tenets of the Vaikhānasa system are treated in the Vaikhānasa-sāra-somgraha of Śrīnivāsabhāttacārya and in the Vaikhānasa siddhāntaleśa darśa of Śi Kṛṣṇabhaṭṭacārya. The Uttamabrahmaśādyavāyaḍīsa of Sundararājabhaṭṭacārya discusses the concepts of Brahman, the means of getting mokṣa and the practice of meditation. Similar is the Mokṣopāyaśādiśka of Raghupatiśaṭṭacārya. The Vaikhānasa dhyāna muktāhali of Valnateyabhaṭṭacārya with the commentary of Kṛṣṇabhaṭṭacārya, is of a practical kind, as it deals with the postures of the idols and the reminder of God. Installation of images gets treated in the Pratisthā-vidhi darpaṇa of Narasimhāvājāpeyin and the Pratisthānukramaṇiśka of Venkaṭinarasimhācārya. Kṛṣṇācārya's Arcanā-navanīta and Bharadvāja Narasimhācārya's Arcanāsālaka discuss the procedure of worship.

Śrīnivāsamakhin, son of Timmārya, was a scholar who was a priest in the temple at Tirumalai. A master of eight languages, he wrote a commentary on the Abhijñānaśākuntala of Kālidāsa and other works of Sanskrit dramatists. He also wrote the Vaihānasa-mahimāmaṇḍi, the Vaihānasa-stra-śāttaya-samāndi on the observances of those who belong to the Vaihānasa-strā, the Uttamabrahmaśādyā dealing with the means to mokṣa and Vaiṣyāśka brahmastrā-syaḥkhyāna, a commentary on the Brahmasıtras according to the Vaihānasa doctrines. One of Sundararāji's disciples, whose name is not known, offered an exposition of the principles of system in his Vaihānasa-tattvartha bodhana.

Azhaiśiṅgabhaṭṭa son of Yoganandabhātta, commented upon the Sattvata-saṃhitā in his commentary called Sattvata-tantra-bhāṣya 1133 God tells Samkaraṇa that He must be worshipped.

in three ways and the commentator notes that these ways concern Para, Vyūha and Vibhava 1134 The commentator discusses the kinds of vibhava Ārṇavatāra is shown here to have been included in the vibhava 1135 He supports his interpretations by citing passages from the Laksmītantra and commentaries on the Pañcastava of Śrīvatsāmکārṇiśra and Śrīgūnaratnakāśa of Parāśarabhatta 1136 A passage from the Lakṣmītantra is cited to explain the concept of Viśākhayūpa 1137 Besides citing other texts like the Pārameśvara, the Pādma-saṃhitā is mentioned for a reference to the details regarding mantras and their relative positions 1138 The commentator justifies a view of the cāturātmya aspect found in the Lakṣmītantra but notes that this is against the view in the Sātvata saṃhitā 1139 Maṇḍapa is to be considered as the body of God 1140 To avoid the sin of taking nirmālya, the arcaka must keep something apart for his and other devotees' use and then offer the offering to Viśvaksena and throw it into water 1141 While dealing with initiation, the author gives useful information citing the Jayākhyā and Lakṣmītantra 1142

Alaśyāgabhātta commented upon the Iśvara-saṃhitā in his Sātvatārtha prakāśā 1143 The commentator observes that the Sātvata, Pauṣkara and Jayākhyā Saṃhīās are the sūtras for the Ekāyana-Veda also called Mūlaveda. Iśvara, Pārameśvara and

1134 Ibid. p. 9
1135 Ibid pp. 11-14
1136 Ibid pp. 23-26
1137 Ibid. pp 58-59
1138 Ibid p 173
1139 Ibid. pp 232-233
1140 Ibid. p. 286
1141 Ibid p. 418
1142 Ibid p 493
1143 MS. 3851 S. V. U. O. R. Institute, Tirupati.
Lakṣmītantra are their commentaries (Vṛttis). Conduct of festivals is treated in the Īśvara and Pārameśvara Samhitās. The Lakṣmītantra does not treat this matter. So, the priests in the temple at Kañéll adopt the Pādma saṁhitā. Pūruṣa, Saṅyāsī, Acyuta and Ananta take the place of Saṅkarṣaṇa and others for certain rituals. At the commencement of the act of worship, Viṣvaksena is to be worshipped according to Īśvara-saṁhitā and Ganeśa according to Pārameśvara and Jayākhyā. The commentator identifies certain practices in the text as taken from the passages dealing with them in other texts.

The word ‘anuyāga’ which means taking food after completing the worship of God is derived as intended for the self which is atomic in size.

Vide:

अणुपूनजीवातमलिंधक्ष्मितवास्फाययमनुयाग हस्तपि प्राप्तः

He cites Vedantadesa for an explanation of the word ‘anuyāga’ and quotes an extract from the Pauškarasamhitā about it. This is to be offered to the deity; what is meant is that it should be offered to the deity in the house. Since the manes (jīrṇas) are to be offered the food before anuyāga, the commentator notes that this interpretation does not suit the context. Hence, this word, ‘viniveśya’ must be taken to

1144. Ibid, pp. 43-44.
1145. Ibid, p. 117.
1146. Ibid, p 143.
1147. Ibid, p. 163.
1149. SR. p. 87. viniveśya ca devāya.
1150. Vide PauS XXXI 171, 172.

The commentator supports this interpretation by referring to a passage in the commentary on the Paramēśvarasaṁhitā. The name of the commentator is not known.
mean the offering which is to be made to God within oneself.\textsuperscript{1152} The commentary has useful discussions like the one stated above on topics of crucial value for the tradition.

Śvāmī Nāga (or Nāgasvāmin) wrote a commentary called \textit{Tattvopradīpikā}\textsuperscript{1153} on the \textit{Visnu-saṁhitā}. The commentator quotes the first stanza in the \textit{Tattrajasaptati} of \textit{Vedāntadīśika} as a \textit{mangalaśloka}. The commentary is brief and refers to the relevant \textit{mantras} for application in the proper contexts indicated in the text.\textsuperscript{1154} The commentator quotes from the \textit{Sāttvata-saṁhitā}, Murāri's work\textsuperscript{1155} and a work called \textit{Nibandhana}. He quotes also from other \textit{Agamas} \textsuperscript{1156} The \textit{Pārameśvāra-saṁhitā} has a commentary called \textit{Vīrti} by Nṛsimhayajvan \textsuperscript{1157} The \textit{Lakṣmitantra} \textsuperscript{1158} has a commentary by Krṣṇamācārya.

In recent years, works came to be written defending the practice of \textit{Taptamudrāṅkana}. Among the Vaiṣṇavas, the rift regarding \textit{prapattī} adopted as a means gave rise to the writing of small works in support of this and in opposition to it.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1152} pp. 242-3
\item \textsuperscript{1153} MS No 3859 on SVVORI Tirupati
\item \textsuperscript{1154} Ch VI.
\item \textsuperscript{1155} p 177 Identity of Murāri is not known.
\item \textsuperscript{1156} p. 203.
\item \textsuperscript{1157} Ibid, R 1653
\item \textsuperscript{1158} The editor Pandit V Krishnamācārya himself is the commentator of this text published in the Adyar Library Research Centre.
\end{itemize}
CHAPTER IX

AGAMAS AND TEMPLES

The Agamas, as a whole, are based on the Vedas, and their concept of God is derived from them. It is but natural that the Supreme Deity should be depicted as formless and beyond comprehension. The finite instruments of man and of his powers are totally inadequate to measure God and His powers. God becomes an object of adoration, and so He is represented as an embodiment of lovable qualities and bliss, thus indicating the result of a development that is only of Agamic origin.

This concept of God should naturally be consistent with a way of worship that would be practicable for those who believe in it. Hence the Agamas invariably prescribe yoga as the means of mokṣa. Control of the mind and concentration of the mental activities, which form part of the yogic practice, are essential for offering worship. Therefore, stress is laid quite often on meditation. God, who becomes the object of meditation, is not formless but has forms which represent different levels of realization, beginning from concrete appearance represented by the waking state and passing through the states of dream and deep sleep and culminating in the transcendent one. The Ultimate Reality is therefore called Nārāyana in the Pāñcarātra Agama, and Sadāviṣṇu in the Vaiṣṇava Agama.

1159  TU II 3 8
1160  Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad VI 16.
1161  Cf. LT, XVI  S’ri remarks that this is the most pleasing to her.
1162  Ibid XVI 40. Cf. VK pp 519-20
1163  SS. IV 7-20, LT XI 9-18.
The *Sripraśnaṇaḥhitā* makes an explicit reference to the later rise of offering worship to the *arca* form of God. The *Vaikānasa Āgama* also classifies the act of worship as of two kinds, namely, *Amūrtārcaṇa* and *Samūrtārcaṇa*. The name of the former shows clearly that though worship (*arcana*) is undertaken, it is not with reference to the concrete form of God. It is held that the performance of *homa* in the fire constitutes *Amūrtārcaṇa*. According to this Āgama, this is to be done on the lines prescribed in the *Vaikānasa Kalpastraṇas*.

Both the Āgamas have developed mostly with reference to the worship of God in concrete form. The *arca* form is required to be created out of specific materials. Since Viṣṇu with Śrī is considered to be the Ultimate Reality, the image of God as Varāha paved the way for the earth to be raised to the level of a goddess called Bhūdevī, identified with Pūṣṭi. She too was given a status in the form of an idol to occupy a place to the left of Viṣṇu. Nilā came to occupy a place under the influence of the stories of Kṛṣṇa. While treating Viṣṇu as the Supreme God, it became necessary to give other gods a due place, and so they are treated as forming part of His retinue. The idols so created for the principal deity, particularly Viṣṇu and His consorts and some others as well, such as Viṣvaksena, Hanumān, the Viṣhava deities and others, were required to be only one for each, but not more.

The worship of God can also be done in water, *kūrca* (a bundle of grass used as a seat) and an idol. The tradition of
the Agamas is to treat the first one as low, the second as of the middle kind and the last as the best. The idol is called bera which means 'body.' The Agamas use this word quite often to refer to the idol. Worship of the Lord in the idol is said to please the eyes, mind and heart. It produces devotion for Him in people who worship it. Hari is pleased and becomes accessible to His devotees.

Vide:

चतुष्प: प्रियिकरणाय्ममनसो हृदयस्य च।
प्रियत्य सङ्गायते भक्तिभरक्तस्य सुलभो हरिः॥

KA. I. 13.

1170, KA. I 13b, SA 31 53b, 54

1171 This word does not occur in the Sanskrit language. But it is found as forming part of other words e.g., the name of Kubera, the lord of wealth, who is said to have a bad (deformed) body. Vide

कुत्सायं क्रियिताश्वद्वस्य शारीरं वेरुमुखते।

Vāyupurāṇa, LXX-39a Some commentators take this word to be derived from the root 'Kumb' meaning 'to conceal' with the suffix, 'erac.' Kubera is said to conceal his wealth and keep it away from one and all. Vide Bhanujīdīkṣita on Nāmaṅgānuṭāsana, I 1 68a Cf Vācaspatya pp 2104, 4989; Śabdakalpadruma, II p 144.

This interpretation is not acceptable, for it does not explain how the word 'bera' has come into being. The origin of this word is still mysterious.

The Agamas use the words 'bera', 'arca', 'pratimā', 'bimba' and murti in the sense of the idol.

Bera, JK, LIV, VK p 72, KA III 21a, SA XVIII 1, VISS X 17, SKS Brahma VI 46, 49; IS IV 64a

Arcā VISS X 72, SKS Śiva I 82

Pratimā SA XXII 24b, SS XXIV 15b, JS XX-14a, PARS XVIII. 23a, VIS III 12, SKS Brahma, VI 54b

JS XX-1a, LT L 106b, SS XXV 15b, PARS XXIII. I 2, 3, VISS V 86, PARS VI. 21a

Murti S4 IV 28a, KA XVII 1a, VK p 244, JS XII 20b, SKS. Śiva, III 111, LT XL 54a, AHS XXXV. 53a, VISS. XXII 64, PARS II. 5, IS VI 89b
AGAMAS AND TEMPLES

Five beras, according to the Vaikhānasa system, called Dhruva, Kautuka, Snapana, Utsava and Bali, are required in temples. They are to be made out of various materials in specific sizes proportionate to one another. Some authorities hold the Snapana and Kautuka to be of little importance. By worshipping the Dhruvabera one gets rewards hereafter and the Utsavabera gives rewards here itself.

The Vaikhānasa texts seek to classify the forms of God in a different way also. They are mobile (cala) and immobile (acala). The former is required to depend upon another which is taken as represented by the kautuka-bera. This is to be served with devotion upon which devotion sprouts out in the devotee. People become prosperous by worshipping this form. The other form is also called niskala. It does not depend upon a concrete form. It is represented by the Dhruvabera. This form is mainly intended for the worship of the recluses.

The need to have an image which can never be disturbed from its position accounts for the Mūlabera or the Dhruvabera. But the grace of God is not restricted to be received only by the arca or the devotees who visit the temple. There are persons who may be ill and can not move out of their homes. For their benefit, an image is required to be taken in procession through the streets. This accounts for another image whose size must be in some prescribed proportion to that of Dhruvabera. It is called the Utsavabera. The occasions for taking this image around the locality must be determined. Hence certain days or periods in the year are particularised when festivals can be celebrated with pomp.

1172 VK p 219
1173 KA IX 14-54
1174 SA XLIII 52,
1175 VK pp 491-92
1176 VK pp 91-2
the need to offer a ceremonial bath every day to God. This cannot be done without much inconvenience. So an image called the Snapanabera is intended for the purpose. The Dhruva and Utsava beras have ablutions generally once a week on a fixed day or on specific occasions. The Snapanabera is also called Tirthabera and is taken for immersion in the sacred waters of a tank or river or sea when the annual or any other festival concludes, the occasion being called avabṛtha. An image called Kautukabera or Karmabera is installed for which offerings of flowers, (arcana) are made daily. Lastly, it is necessary to have a Bali bera which is to be taken round for making offerings at fixed places in the temple.

The Vaikhānasa kind of worship, at it is now in practice, does not keep the distinction between the Utsava and Kautukabera. The offerings (arcana) are made direct to the Mūlabera and Kautukabera 1177.

The Pāṇcarātra mode of worship has a Sayanabera, used to show God as taking rest at night at the end of the routine of daily worship. The Vaikhānasa mode permits the Snapana or Bali bera to be used for this purpose. Some Pāṇcarātra texts speak of a Tirthabera as the sixth idol used on specific occasions.

It is hard to understand how and why the present practice arose of keeping only four or three beras in the temples including the major ones. It is found that one of the beras like the Snapana is used to serve the purposes of another which was perhaps not made or lost in course of time. There seems to be no strong justification for keeping both the Tirtha and Snapana beras as suggested in certain texts. The reference in the

1177 Vide  

1177 Vide  

J K p. 77.
Visvaksena-samhitā 1178 to Karma, Nitya and Tarundaṇaya is also vague, unless some kind of justification is to be offered for keeping them.

There are rules which prescribe the size of each bera, the metals out of which they are to be made and the methods and times of worship. Among them, the Dhruvabera is also called the Mūlabera, as it represents figuratively the root out of which a tree is evolved, in which the Utsava-bera represents the flower and the other three the leaves. The utmost significance is therefore given to the installation of the Dhruva-bera. There are certain postures like Sthitī, Asana, Sayana and others for this. Specific ornaments and weapons are required to adorn these idols.

In the making of these idols, the materials will have to be examined and selected, so as to bring prosperity for the maker, the priest and the people of the locality also. Artistic form is to be achieved while making the image. God, however, takes the form which the maker or the priest or the devotee eagerly prays to God to take up.

Vide:

विष्णुदर्शने विष्णु समागत्याविष्टे।

SS VI. 22

छुस्ति प्रतिमाम् विष्णोः प्रतन्त्रत्वद्बन्दनेष्ठः।

छुस्तिर्मयः प्रतिमि छुस्तिर्मयाजतादिर्भ:॥

तामचेन्त्रां प्रमेषठ्ठं यतेत्तं विचिन्तयेतु।

विशत्यपास्तद्रोपस्तु तामेव ब्रह्मरुविष्णीम्॥

Vishnudharma, CVI. 16.

1178 VisS X 82-83

1179 Yaninārūdha, that is, 'stationed in a vehicle' is one of the postures.

Vide Annruddhas XII 1, VK. p. 92.
The idols are to be installed in specific places with elaborate preparations of materials using the particular mantras enjoined in the Agama texts for each deity and for each bera. The kind of grains to be used for preparing the food offerings, the quantity of the ingredients, the kind of flowers to be culled for offering to God, the materials to be brought for each pitcher (kalaśa) whose number varies according to the occasions and which are used for ablution (snapana) of the idol and the number of offerings to be made to suit the occasions are all dealt with in these texts.

To house the idols, the sanctum sanctorum is to be built with enclosures of varying number, quadrangles, courtyards and halls with towers with specified numbers of storeys. Rules are laid down differently in different texts for installing the gods who form the retinue of the principal deity in particular enclosures.

Worship done to the idol is stated in the Vaskhānasa texts to be of two kinds, Śāntika and Paustika, the former bringing about the removal of evils of all people, while the latter is conducive to their welfare.

Worship of God is called yajña which suggests that it is Vedic in character. It is of two kinds, worship in the temple and worship at home. Worship in the temple is extolled to be the best. It will not stop, even if the priest who performs it passes away. It is conducive to the welfare and prosperity of the people of the locality. This classification is also called

1180. Ka 14 205b, Pāñcarātra also has them. Vide JS. XIV 76b.
svārtha and parārtha. The former corresponds to worship done in the house and the latter to that done in the temple.

The Vaiṣkhāṇasa text called Vāsādhikāra offers another classification into pure and mixed. The former is that which is done in the house by one who observes all the forty sacraments prescribed in the Vaiṣkhāṇasa-kalpaśūtras. The idol to be worshipped must be installed in the house and the worshipper must perform homa daily in the fire, and he should not perform worship in the temple. The worship done in the temple for others' sake, following strictly the procedure laid down in the Agamas, is of the mixed kind.

As to who is qualified to perform worship, there is difference of opinion between the Pāṇcarātra and Vaiṣkhāṇasa Agamas. The former prescribes the qualification for all people without distinction of caste and sex. It is based only on two grounds, namely, pāṇca-samskāra and specific initiation. One becomes eligible for the latter only after getting qualified by the former. Some of the texts actually mention that women are eligible for initiation. All are qualified only for offering worship in the

1181 This classification is not actually stated in the Vaiṣkhāṇasa texts though it is implied. Cf KA ch 38, SA ch 81. The Pāṇcarātra has specific references. Vide

स्वार्थ गृहाधिनः पोकमाल्येषु परार्थाक्षमः ।

Ananda-samhita, III 5

Cf –

परार्थः सूर्यसहस्रस्य स्वार्थस्य मुद्रोपवत् ।

उत्क्रमः परशव薪वयमयों मोक्षादिविक्षणः ॥

TS XXI 508,

1182 That pāṇcasamskāra is quite essential to do service to God is explicitly conveyed in PārS xv 959-973. The kinds of initiation which vary with the individuals are treated in JS xv 4-6, xvi 34-61a, xvii, PārS xii 8 10, IS xxix, SS xix. Cf PārS. iv. 1 8. See JS. ch. 18, PauS xxx 136b-189. Also

स्विन्य. गृहाधिनोऽनुशस्य कल्याणगुणश्रंयुता: ।

यादृत तांतिः शास्त्रवेशे गृहीयात् हृपया गुरुः ॥

Visvāmitra S III 27.
house, while Brahmins alone are eligible to worship the deity in the temple. In some texts, it is stated that only those who are descendants of Kaśyapa, Aupagāyana, Bharadāja, Maunjyayana and Śāndilya have the primary qualification, while others have the qualification in the secondary sense.

According to the Vaiṣhānava Agama, only those who, by birth, belong to the Vaiṣhānava sūtra, are eligible to worship in temples. Investiture with the sacred thread (upanayana) is the only qualification, which only Brahmins can have. Others are forbidden from having this right, whatever be their caste or sex. If such persons touch the idol, even by accident, expiatory rites have to be performed.

The person, who is to attend to worship, is called ‘ācārya’ in this system. Besides being a follower of the Vaiṣhānava-sūtra, he must be a householder with a wife and children. Study of the Vedas and training in the performance of Srauta rituals and expiatory rites, diligence in discharging his duties and, above all, abiding devotion to Viṣṇu, mark him as competent for the work in the temple. In addition to attending to his work in the temple, he must also offer worship to God in his house.

The Pāñcarātra system prescribes certain qualifications. The person, who is to offer worship to God in the temple, is

1183 Vide

परार्थयजनं कुयंछिमाः मुख्यानुक्षिप्यो! ।

Pāś caryā I, 8

1184 Śāndilya and the other four sages who received the Pāñcarātra training from him have primary authority to do worship IS xxi 511, Pāś iv 3b, 4a, SprS xxiv 144-146

1185 SA xxvii 1 3, 10 15, lxviii, JK xxi 511, VK, xxxvii pp 487-9, KA xxvii

1186 SA, xxvii 10-15, KA I. 22b-25, VK pp 5-6
here also called ‘ācārya’. He must be competent in the practice of mantras, following the tradition both in theory and practice. He must be in a position to offer clarifications on the issues raised by pupils without referring to the texts. Actuated by selflessness, he offers training and guidance to the pupils. If need be, he gives assistance even to those who are not his students. He never deceives any one, not even the ignorant. Adequate physical and mental strength is expected in him. He must be only a Brahmin. He must avoid loose talk and lead a virtuous life. He may be a brahmacārin, grhaṣṭha or vānaprastha, but never a sannyāsin. He may be a vatu (less than sixteen years old), a young man, of middle age or old.

The Pāñcarātra Āgama speaks also of the qualifications for the pupils who are said be of four kinds, Samayins, Putraka, Sādhaka and Ācārya. Samayins get merely initiated, but do not learn the doctrines of the system and so are not fit to worship God. Those who become sons, as it were, to those who initiate them, are of the second kind. Sādhakas are those

1187 JS XVIII 46-62
1188 LT XXI 30b-36, Purusottama-S II 3-7
1189 AhS. XX 1-7, SS VII 22-23
1190 SKS Indra, IX
1191 PaS III 24 1-25a
1192 Vide

चर्चा वोडशाकाद्वं व वद्दखिनिनिहेतु ।
PaS III, 24, 15b.

1193 SKS Brahma, V-118.
1194 Ibid ,, 120
1195 Ibid ,, 121.

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who understand the nature of the system and become devoted to offer worship to God.  \[1196\] Ācāryas have the competence to expound the mantras and the texts and could conduct the sacraments to the pupils \[1197\] The Ācārya, who is mentioned here, is a pupil at first and then becomes a preceptor \[1198\] All these are fit to get initiation.

The pupil must have amiable qualities, be able to receive and retain what is taught to him and live according to the tradition with faith in God \[1199\] Initiation is open to any caste and even women are eligible, if they get their husbands' permission \[1200\]

The process of initiation gets an elaborate treatment. Several tests are to be conducted to find out whether the pupil will remain true to what he is taught. He must have abiding faith in the Sāttvata system. The period of test is one year \[1201\]

Initiation is called Dīksā, which word is explained as denoting that which cuts away all miseries and karma and reveals

\[1196\] SKS Brahma, V 122
\[1197\] Ibid , , 124 A code of conduct for the last two is laid down here Ibid 128-135 For an elaborate account, see JS xvii of PauS I 14-21
\[1198\] LT xx 8 This classification is stated to have been treated elaborately elsewhere It is not clear whether this is a reference to JS, or SKA or any other text
\[1199\] AhS xx, 8-10, SKS Brahma, V. 130-135.
\[1200\] LT xx, 37-41, IS vn, 25-27
\[1201\] AhS, xx, 11b-14a.
reality in full.\textsuperscript{1202} It destroys all impurities and brings to the pupil supreme bliss.\textsuperscript{1203}

Initiation is twofold according to the economic condition of the pupil. A well-to-do candidate gets it done on an elaborate scale. For one who is not well off, homa is done in the fire with seeds of sesamum, for the penniless oral instruction\textsuperscript{1204} is enough. No one who makes a request for it may be denied.\textsuperscript{1205} There is another classification into ordinary and special Mantras are merely used in the former kind which admits of three further subdivisions, condensed, normal and elaborate\textsuperscript{1206} The special kind is fivefold. The Samayins and youngsters whose hearts are set on Visnu get the first kind. The second is open to maidens and Putrakas. The third is prescribed for the Sādhakas who wish to obtain moksa. The Ācāryas must adopt the fourth to attain sāyujya. Women are eligible for the last kind\textsuperscript{1207}

1202 The initial letter ‘di’ in the word is derived from the root ‘do’, meaning to cut

1203 Vide

355 \[ LT LI 5b 6 \]

1204 \textit{JS} xvi 4b-6

1205 \textit{Ibid.} 7-10a.

1206 \textit{Ibid} 54-55

1207 \textit{Ibid.} 58b-61a.
The pupil must be pure and free from temptations. A *samhāranyāsa* is done by the preceptor on the body of the pupil in order to get rid of the impurities there belonging to *prakṛti*. The body then becomes pure when the teacher does *śrṣṭinyāsa* there. This is followed by *śvhitinyāsa* when the mantra is taught which does not leave the pupil on any account. The preceptor does this at first on his body so as to make himself *mantramaya* and then he does this on the body of the pupil.

The mantra is then taught to the pupil which he is to practise with faith and diligence. To do this, he has to undertake *japa*, *homa*, *tarpaṇa*, *ahṛṣeṇa* and *viṣprabhojana*. All these are collectively called *Puraścarana*.

There is yet another division of initiation as gross, subtle, and absolute. All the three are called *mantraḍikṣa* for which the pupil must have got himself qualified in the practice of mantras. Thereupon, the adept will give initiation in the principles (tattva). The entire process is highly intricate to understand. The pupil will have to occupy the *maṇḍalas*, especially, the *cakrābja-mandala*. At the end, he gets the ritualistic ablution which gets a very elaborate description.

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1208, *SKS Brahmana*, ix 12-14a
1209 *AhS* xx 26b-41a
1210 *Ibid* xx
1211 Vide

**जप्प्द्वयृ तप्प तप्प चा भव्यर्मचर्मणः**
**पश्चाः तप्पापादः होके पुराणामुक्त्येऽ**

*Mantrakaumudi* cited in *Acārendra*, p 122

For a rigorous practice of these, see *LT* xxiv 35-44, LII.

1212, *LT* xli 32
1213, *Ibid*. XLI 9-88; *JS*. XLI XVIII,
1214, *JS* XVIII.
AGAMAS AND TEMPLES

It is thus found that all are qualified for initiation. In this context, it is worth considering what the word 'kṛtalaksana' means in a passage already cited from the Mahābhārata.1215 It means those who have the 'mark.' This 'mark' cannot be getting initiated, but something else by which one getting it becomes eligible to do worship to God. This mark may be that which is made on the shoulder blades of the pupil by the teacher with the heated symbols of the conch and discus. It may be the urdhva-phundra. Anyway, both these show the wearer of them as a Vaisnava Ancient texts 1216 declare these as essential for doing worship to God.

Some of the later Saṃhitās 1217 mention the sacrament of pāncasāmkāra as included under initiation, calling it a dīkṣā. Ancient texts, however, do not refer to this. Though it is necessary to qualify a person for worshipping God, it is not initiation, nor can it be considered a qualification for a priest to offer worship in a temple.1218

The acārya is one of the four kinds of adepts for dīkṣā. He is virtually the director for giving guidance to those who participate in the installation ceremonies. Thus, he is not an ordinary priest. The disciples, assistants and arcakas work under his direction. He must therefore be well-versed in the theory and practice of the Agamic works including that relating to the building of the temples.

1215 Vide:

Brāhmaṇe śaktirñāpedaye śuddhākṛtaḥ kṛtaḥ kareṇe ।
Acanayakre śadāyākṛte nityaśutōte svakṛpasya ॥

Bhāṣa. LXVI 39.

1216. Cf SR I & II.

1217 IS XXI 283b-326, SprS XVI 109-137.

The act of worship is conceived in the Agamas as yāga. The Pāñcarātra has specific rules laid down for this. The Vaiśhānasakaśaölpaśūtras. The cakrāfyamandala is to be used for the performance of the rituals, which are classified into seven kinds:—yāga, stoma, mahāyāga, adhvāra, sava, kratu and haristoma. What precedes in this order is of less importance than what follows it. These are to be performed respectively by the Samayin, Dīksita, Cakravartin, Abhisikta, Guru, Ācārya and Bhagavān.

The Agamas are concerned also with the well-being of the people. This is evidenced from the directions contained in them for laying down the roads in the villages where the temples are to be constructed. The Aparājtaaprecha, Silparatna, Kāśyapa-silpasūtra, Tantra-samuccaya, and many others, treat, among other topics, temple-building with architectural details and other allied topics. However, what they contain do not accord well with the Agamic treatment in all details. Several methods could have been utilised by the Agama texts to serve their purposes. They are not actually concerned with the details of construction, materials and measurement. They are interested primarily in maintaining the ritualistic aspect in the building programmes. Architectural details are therefore not fully available in the texts.

An individual or a group of persons or a rich landlord or a king is referred to as yajamāna or bhakta if he takes the initiative.

1219 Vide

 mantra tva yāgeṇa tato viśṇu saṁabhẹt

JS. XII 1b

1220 SKS Indra, IV. Cf NaradīyaS X 16-20, XI, 17-20

by providing the means for the building of a temple. Any one cannot become a **yajamāna**.\(^{1222}\)

Under the director, artisans have to work. They are referred to by the words, ‘**rathakāra**, ‘**silpin**’, ‘**sihapati**’ and ‘**taksaka**’. Among them, the **silpin** works as a liaison agent between the director or the **ācārya** and the **yajamāna**. The qualifications of these are stated in texts like **Silparatna**.\(^{1223}\)

**Mantras** play a significant role in the **Āgamas**. A mantra is sound with which one associates oneself in the belief that it would protect them. It protects from all dangers one who knows its secret\(^{1224}\) Since the **mantra** emanates from sound, and sound arises from **Brahman**, the **mantra** should denote God alone. The pupil who receives the **mantra** from the preceptor should practise the ritual performance called **purasćarana**. This is to be done on the bank of a great river, or in a temple or a forest or a place which is out of public sight. Full effects cannot be achieved unless the aspirant repeats the **mantra** a specific number of times.\(^{1225}\)

There are many kinds of **mantras**. For instance, **tāraka** is a mantra which saves the devotee from worldly suffering. It is with reference to a male deity. But it is called **tārīkā** when it refers to a female deity. There are others such as **anutāra**, **anutārīkā**, **anuvairasya**.

\(^{1222}\) **PuS** III 15b-17a

\(^{1223}\) Vide **Śrīkumāra’s, Silpatana**, I 29-41

\(^{1224}\) Vide

मननार्युनिन्दादृढ़ल्ल बाणं कुजान्ति बेग्य यतः ।
दृढ़ते पद्मात्सीययं तस्मान्मनः: प्रकृतितः॥

**JS** XIII-203 **Pārs** VI-100, **IS**, III-79.

\(^{1225}\) It must be repeated four lakhs of times. Vide —**Mahodadhi** quoted in the **Ācārendu**, p. 134.
anga and upāngas Pranava, vyāhṛtis, gayātrī, tāra (tārika) and anutāra (anutārika) are held to be five Vaiṣṇava mantras 1226

The Pāṇcarātra Āgama adopts Vedic and Tāntrika mantras 1227. The Vāsikhānasāra enjoins the use of those taken from the Vedas only. The name or names of the deities with appropriate epithets are also used during worship 1228. These are also treated at times as mantras 1229. Mautras are classified as Saumya, Āgneya and SaumyaĪgneya 1230. The letters, which constitute them, have their own presiding deities 1231. Another way of classifying them is as Vaidika, Tāntrika and Vaidika-tāntrika 1232. The second kind is meant for those who get initiated according to the Pāṇcarātra system 1233. Specific mantras are enjoined with reference to the various deities 1234.

The ground or site where the temple is to be erected, requires to be tested from the colour of the mud and availability

1226 They are Pranava, Śadāksara, Astāksara, Dvādaśa-ksara and Jitante Mantra.

1227 The list of Vedic mantras is contained in LT translation, p 391, ISS pp 441-2, Viśvāmitras pp 297-301, ŚprS LVIII-LXIV, LT translation pp 392-398, Kriyākairavacandrika, pp 326-352.

1228 LT XXXIII, VK pp 296-299, KA pp 187-188.


Vide

यस्य देवस्य स्वको मन्नः न विद्यते तस्य नाममात्रं वैष्णवान्तः जुझोति।

VK p 232

1230 SKS Siva, II 1

1231. LT XX, AhS XVII 4-37

1232 SKS Rsi V 37-40a

1233 Ibid V 39a, 40a, IX 10a, cf VS. XXIX 46-47a

1234. LT. Translation, pp. 392-398, VK, pp. 255-258
of water. Some offerings are to be made before this selection is made. A procession is also required to be held according to some texts. The Vastupurusa is also to be propitiated.

Plans for the formation of villages are found in the Agama. The village or town should be the prototype of the temple. Preliminary ceremonies called Garbhanyaša are to be observed at the site. The temple of Visnu must be erected at the centre of the locality. Other deities should have their due place.

1235 Pāś III 1 19a-29, KapitājalaS, VII 1-11, PauS XLVII 1-61; VS XII, 1-36, ViṣṇutiṣṭakaS, VI 1-21, VK p 6, SA II, KA II 1-91; JK, XIII

1236 Pāś III 1 40-47,

1237 Sprš V 9

1238 More than the Agama texts, the Śilpastra works contain clear directions for this. Ādaraṭāpa, cch, LII-LV, Kāsaṇaśilpastra II & III, Mānasāra, VII 253-69, VK pp 12-18, SS XXIV 281, Pāś III 27 5-20, V 1 48-55, JS XVI 103, KapitājalaS VIII 10, VS, XII 48

1239 Several types are mentioned, VK pp 9-11, KA II 64-72, Pāś III 2 1-16, KapitājalaS IX, JK XVII This is dealt with in greater detail in the Mānasāra IX & X. For further details, see H Daniel Smith, pp 16-20

1240 Pāś III 2 21b-27

1241 Ibid. III 2 17-27, KapitājalaS XII 98, JS X 351, KA V 25b-33b, SA X 1-44a,

1242 Pāś III 2 29, cf KapitājalaS IX 15-17a, 23-30

1243. Pāś III 3 33b-61a Subrahmanya, by which name Śkanda is known in Tamil Nadu and Śasta known as Aiyānār are assigned specific places. Ibid. III 2, 35b, 41b The influence of the Tamil language is found in the use of the word ‘mahkāyām’, Ibid. III. 2. 58b, 52b, KapitājalaS IX 34-41, VK p 8.

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are stated, and provision is to be made for their residence.

The ground is to be ploughed, and seeds are to be sown to test, from their sproutings, the quality of the soil. Mantras are to be recited as enjoined. Images of some deities are to be placed in some fixed places as enjoined in the Agama texts.

The structure of the temples must vary according to the capacity of the yajamāna. The temple built by a rich man must be larger when compared to that built by a person of middle income. The structure should be such as to display the six paths (sad adhvānah) through its various portions. The number of enclosures must be five. While the Śrīprāśna and Vīmānārcanakalpa mention seven, the Nāradīya mentions only three. The corners of the ramparts must have on them the

1244 PaŚ III 2 61b-66a, Here is mentioned the particular kind of arcaka to worship a particular deity. It is curious to note that a bhūcavata should himself worship Durgā. Vide —

हुर्गा संपूजयेदेवीं सदा भागवत: स्वयम्.  

Ibid 65a

1215 PaŚ III 2 66b-73, VK p 12
1246 Ibid III. 3, SprS V, KaprījalaS, VIII, VS VI 67-85, VK III, SA V, Kāśyapa Śilpasāstra, I, Minasāra V
1247 PaŚ III, 39-40a, VK p 4, SA V 26-27a, KA II 43-54. 58
1248 PaŚ III 9 12-52, VisvāmitraS XXI, SA IX, H Daniel Smith’s comments on pp 142-43 are of great interest
1249 SS XIX, PāuS, XXX 41a, 203-5, VisvāmitraS IX, NāradīyaS IX

1250 Manasāra recommends five prākāras in a temple, XXX 5-7. Cf Kāśyapasilpasāstra ch 43, Sulparatna, I 40, Viśnutilaka, VI, 320b-327, PaŚ III 10 2-4a

1251 SprS ch 10, VK ch 19
1252, NāradīyaS, XIV, 18.
Image of a lion or Garude. Various mandapas are required to be constructed such as āsthanamandapa, kitchen, clothes store, dhanālaya, granary, yāgamandapa, kalyānamandapa and so on. Specific directions are given for keeping the retinue of God inside certain enclosures. Regarding towers, some texts declare that each enclosure should have a tower in each direction; some speak of the height of the towers. The doors should, besides offering security, be beautiful and symmetrical. They must have the painted figures of gods.

The temple that is constructed is taken to represent the body of man. The sanctum sanctorum represents the head, the śukanāś which is next to it is the neck, the ardhamandapa represents the chest and shoulders, and the prākaras the thighs and knees and the tower the feet. The significance lies in God's dwelling in the devotee. The parts of the vimāna such as adhisthāna, pada prastara and others refer to the limbs of God who is ensconced in the sanctum sanctorum Garbhagrha, Ardhamandapa Mahāmandapa, Snānamandapa, Alankāramandapa and

1253 Vide Śilparatna, xxi,
1254 VS XXXIV 19b-21, Nārādyas, XIV 24-32, MarkandeyaS, II. 71, SprS X
1255 PaS III 10 94-144a, IS xi, PurS xi 31 337, Kapiṭalas xi 164-188, xv 389-50, VS xiii 60, SA x 1, K I, ii, VK on xx, VSS xxxiv
1256 ViS xxi 19
1257 VK x
1258 PurS x, For details on the materials used for making the icons, pedestals and iconometry, see H. Daniel Smith. Vaiṣṇava Iconography
1259 Vide Śilparatna, xxi.
Sabhāmāṇḍapa represent the Mūlādhāra, Svādhiṣṭāna and other sakras in the body. The seven prākāras represent the seven constituents (dhatu); fluid, blood, flesh, marrow, bone, sinew and virile fluid; or matter, intellect, ego, subtle elements, organs of sense and elements. The five prākāras may refer to the five sheaths, namely, anna, prāna, manas, vijnāna and ānanda. The three prākāras represent the self, matter and body. The āhujaṃsthambha is a pillar of dharma. It represents the Brahmanadī with Īdā and Prāgalā on both sides.

Installation of the idols is to be carried out after the temple is constructed. It is explained that through this God remains there to shower His favours to His devotees. It is of five kinds, each yielding different results. The number of idols to be installed is generally five. The Vaikhanasas name these as dhrūva, kautuka, utsava, bali and snapana. The Pāncarātra lists five or six idols—dhrūva, utsava, bali tīṣṭha and savya with snapana sometimes making the sixth. Sometimes they are known by other names mūla, karma, nitya, mahotsava, etc.

1260. Cf, DivyāsūriCārī, I 15.

1261. Pās xxviii 18a.

1262 SKS Brahma vi PārS, xv 4-14a, VS, xv 2. Vī p 218.

1263 Vide

1264 SKS Brahma vi PārS, xv 4-14a, VS, xv 2. Vī p 218.

Idols are said to be of three kinds according to their postures—standing, reclining or sitting in the first, second and third storeys respectively, as in the temples at Thirukkoṭṭivur, Madurai, Uthiramciur and Paramesvara-vinnagaram at Kañcipuram.

For the installation ceremony a hall is to be built for performing homa: this is the yāgasāla. The sacred fires vary according to the deities to be installed: Āhavanīya, anvāhārya, gārhapatiya, āvasathya and sabhya are the five fires according to the Vaikhaṇaśa. The Pāṇcarātra mentions eight fires: āhavanīya, daksīna, gārhapatiya aubhāsana, sabhya, kavyāda, vairūya and bādaba. Mantras are prescribed for doing particular homas to individual deities. The idols are to be kept immersed in water or milk or pañcagavya or living on a costly bed. This process is called adhvāsa. In the meanwhile, God’s presence is invoked in jars filled with consecrated water. The idols are then taken out and carried behind the arakas who go in advance bearing the jars of consecrated water to the inner shrine where the dhruvabera is already stationed. The idols are kept in the places assigned to them. They are all sprinkled with the waters beginning with the dhruvabera which becomes veritably

1264. VSS. x 82-83, AnuruddhaŚ xii 19b-20

1265. KA V 74-83; Cf Pās III 15-16 for other postures.

1266. (i) VK pp 215, 238, 259-8, SA. xxx 12-20, KA vi 125-37, 146-72

(ii) SXS Śiva I, 18-20 From other sources, the fires are held to be of twentyseven kinds Vide Viḍhānapāryāta cited in the Vācaspatya, I p 50.


God Himself 1269 *Nyāsa* is then done on the other idols (differently for each), and the process is repeated 1270 The other idols get consecrated with the power of the *dhruvabera* 1271

During this ceremony, the four *vyuha* deities of the *Pāncarātra* or the four deities or five *vīras* of the *Varkhānasāra* and all deities forming the retinue of the Lord are also installed in fixed places and *homa* offered to them 1272 The installation of five idols is elaborately treated.

The *dhruvabera* must be black in colour. 1273 It is said that this colour is the original one and is the source of other colours. 1274 The *utsava* idol and the *baltbera* must not be made

1269 Vide

सर्वप्रथम व्यापिनलय श्रीविभ्जयोः परमालम: ॥

पदम दशरणं यत्वकााँचाहनमितीतिशु।

*SA* xxxi 62b-63a.


1270 *PaS* III 28 65-72 Cf *Visnutilaka*, VI *Nyāsa* is also to be done on the idol Vide

यथा देहेतः तथा देवे न्यायं कुञ्जरित्वक्षणः।

*SKS Brahma* iv 70b

1271 Cf *LT* translation, p 325, *PaS* xx It is of five kinds. (*SKS Brahma*, vi 114-118a, *VS* xv) or of seven kinds according to the mantras. (*PaS* xix 1 2) For details, see *PaS* iii 34-37, 60-64

1272 *SA* xxxviii *VK* pp 245-8 Cf *pancāvīras* in *KA*, xxx 40-133 For *parivārādevatas*, *KA* vi *VK* xxxiv SS ix, x, xi, *PaS* iii 29

1273 *SA* xxii, 6-10.

1274 Vide

घण्नामपरिः सर्वेषामाति.श्याम उदाहतः॥

श्यामवर्णं हेरेः रूपं नस्माँच्छेष्टतं बिधः।

*ibid* xxii 2b-3a Cf *VK* p, 103.
of stone or wood. There are rules which enjoin the measurements of the pedestal and figure of each bera in proportion to one another and to that of the dhruva-bera.

The dhruva-bera may have three postures, standing (sthānaka), sitting (āsana) and lying (soyana). The utsava bera must normally be of the standing posture, and rarely in the sitting posture, irrespective of the posture of the dhruva bera. The Vaikhānasa texts classify the idols into four kinds, yoga, vīra, bhūma and abhicārika, and lay down their postures and the weapons they should hold. As a general principle, the idols of their temples have sankha and cakra in the two hands, a left hand in kasthasta pose and a right hand with varamudrā, offering boons. This is the case with Śī Śrīnāyana in the Tirumalai hills. In some temples adopting the same Agama, the right hand has the abhaya pose, granting security, and in some others, the club adorns the right hand. The club is to be a weapon only in the case of a posture and is not reckoned as a general one. The club is indispensable for

1275 VK p 149

1276 SA ch xviii 23, KA vi 1-33 VK ch xiii Different versions are given according to the postures Vide Śī NŚ ch, xi-xiv PūŚ m. 12, 15, 19

1277 PūŚ m. 95: SA ch xx lxviii Some of them are found in the temple at Tiruvallikkenk, Madras city Cf VS xi 307-311

1278 VK ch 19 KA v, 75 mentions vrāha in the place of abhicārika. The last is dropped in SA, xx 19 Cf Vīrṇutilaka, vi. 412b-424

1279 Vide ,

चतुर्युजः शारीकर्मो दक्षविनिविधस्तः ।

VK p 502, Cf KA. xxx, SA xx

1280 Tirukkoilūr and Paramesvaravinnagaram.

1281 At Tiruvallikkenk, the utsava idol has a goad and not a gada. See Peiyä Tirumozhi, II 3 1

1282 The vrāha posture must have gada. KA V 77 VK refers to this p 98
an idol according to the Pāñcarātra, and the abhayahasta is equally essential. But in some temples\(^{1283}\) of the Pāñcarātra kind, the club is absent and the figure is identical with that in the Vaikhānasa temples. It seems that the mode of worship should have changed from Pāñcarātra to Vaikhānasa and vice-versa during the 17th century when the idols were removed to places of safety to save them from the Muslim forces which attacked south India.

The Pāñcarātra Āgama attaches importance to the vyūha concept and speaks of the installation of these deities\(^{1284}\) Five mūrtis and vīras are required to be installed according to the Vaikhānasa Āgama.\(^{1285}\) However, they do not appear to have been installed as such in the temples nor are they found to receive daily worship.\(^{1286}\) Besides, both the Āgamas enjoin the installation of the vibhava forms of God. But there also, only some get represented such as Nārāśimha, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa in temples where the principal deities are other than these.

The Vaikhānasa Āgama in particular enjoins the installation of Matsya and Kūrma avatāras in villages, the sea-shore, forests and hills. There must be no kautuka image for the dhruva bera of these.\(^{1287}\)

Some vibhava forms are of more than one type. Varāha is of three kinds—Adivarāha, who rescued the earth from the nether regions and whose face only should be that of the boar, as at Śrīmuṣṭam near Chidambaram, Pralaya-varāha who saved the

1283. Tirumohūr, Pavazhavannan at Kaṭṭōi
1284 ViS xi xix xxxv
1285 SA. xxxviii VK. KA vi, xxx.
1286 Tirunaraiyūr now called Nācchīr Koil, Tirumālhirūḍicolai.
1287 SA. VIII. 15b.
people at the time of the cosmic deluge; Yajña-varāha who killed the demon Hiranyakāsa who had been destroying sacrifices or yajñas.

Girlja and Sthūnaja are two forms of Narasimha. The former represents the Lord's descent to the earth on the representations of the gods about their sufferings at the hands of the demon, Hiranyakāsa. After killing the demon, He stayed in forests on the hills. His wrath was appeased by the prayers of the gods. 'Sthūnaja' is Narasimha as He burst out from a pillar to attack the demon. Sometimes three more kinds are mentioned—Sudarśana-narasimha is seated in the discus and also holding a discus in each of His four hands. Lakṣmi-narasimha has Lakṣmi seated on His lap. Pātala-narasimha is seated on Garuda. There is one reference to a form seated on Ādiśeṣa and known as Yānaka-narasimha.

Trivikrama has three forms. In one, He has eight arms with the left foot raised to the height of the head. In another, the left foot is raised to the height of the navel. The third form shows the left foot raised to the height of the forehead. Kṛṣna also has many forms—Navanītanata (dancing with butter in hands), Pārthasarathi (as charioteer of Arjuna) and Kāliyamardana (killing the venomous serpent, Kāliya). He is also known with four arms. The idol of Vāsudeva may be of two kinds—divine (divya) and human (mānusā). The former has four hands of the Vasūkānasa kind, while the latter is two-handed.

After installation, worship is to be done to the deities every day at regular intervals. The areka should attend to

1228 Prātah (morning), madhyānah (noon), saśāh (evening), pradosah (twilight), and aṛdharaṭrah are the six divisions of the day when worship is offered in the temples. In some shrines, it may be only three, twice or only once. Vide SprS XXVIII. 3.

ASV—47
the morning duties, which include sandhyā and homa, after wearing ārdhvaṇḍa. He must approach the guardians of the gates, bow to them, take their permission and enter the shrine. After prostration, he must seek permission to worship God with the aupacaśrīka, śāṁśaśrīka and abhyavāharika materials he has procured. One must then undertake bhūtasaṇḍhi. Through this process, the gross body will be burnt up by the vital airs. He will then feel himself to have been flooded by the water issuing forth from the big toe of God. Then he is to create a new body for himself out of pure sattva by uttering the pañcapaniṣṭanmantra.

With the pure body he must meditate upon Kūrma, the earth, the milky ocean and others which represent the powers that support the universe. He is to build a boundary around himself with the kavaca-mantra and then have aṅganyāsa and karanyāsa. The mantras which he utters while doing this make him purified and enable him to feel at one with God. Then he is to worship God mentally, which is called Antaryāga, Mānasya yāga and Hṛdyāga. The object of meditation must be Lakṣmīnārayaṇa adorned with conch, discus and club. The offerings must be made with the materials procured mentally. The Purusasūktā, Praṇava, Saḍaksara, Astāksara and Duḍaḍaśāksara should be

1289 AhŚ XXVIII 3-10a
1290 Vide
1291 AhŚ XXVIII 21-28 LT ch 35 Those who worship the deity must stand or sit to the right side of the deity.

Vide:

द्वेष्ठ सुधिष्णे पार्थे आस्थे हरू समाविष्टे।

AmṛudhāS, XVI, 23a,
recited during worship. *Homa* is to be performed in the fire of the triangular form of the fire-altar which is kindled by the fire of his sentence. The procedure is the same as in external worship.¹²⁹₂

The external form of worship is to be undertaken after arranging for the vessels, materials and other requisites. *Vaidika* and *Tāṇtrika* mantras, *maṇḍalas* etc. (according to the *Āgama*) are required to be made use of here. *Vīnāyaka* is to be worshipped at the outset.¹²⁹₃ There are six stages which mark this mode of worship, namely, *Mantrāsana, Snānāsana, Alaṅkārāsana, Bhojyāsana, Mantrāsana* and *Paryaṅkāsana*. At the first stage, one has to offer oneself and one’s belongings to God.¹²⁹₄ During the second stage, dance, music and recitation of *mantras* have to be performed during the holy bath given to the idol.¹²⁹⁵ Sandal paste, flowers and other offerings are to be made during this stage. Incense has to be burnt and offered to God. Apart from dance and music, auspicious songs must be sung.¹²⁹⁶

In this context, it is to be noted that the present-day practice of offering *mantrapūṣpa* is based on this mandate in the *Āgamas*. The offering according to current usage includes the recitation of the initial *mantras* of the four *Vedas*, to be followed

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¹²⁹₃ *LT* XXXVII 65

¹²⁹₄ Vide

\[ \text{दासोहं ते जगद्धाथ सपुष्पाकिपरिवर्तितहः।} \\
\text{प्रेष्यं प्रशाश्चि करतव्ये मां नियुक्तव्य हिते सवः॥} \]

*PāS* IV 3 140

¹²⁹₅ *AhS* XXVIII 49b There is no reference here to the recitation of the *Upanisad* and *Purūṣasūkta* which is now in practice.

by *upanisadic* passages glorifying *Nārāyaṇa* and the *Āstākṣara-mantra*. Passages are then recited from the *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Mahābhārata*, *Viṣṇupurāṇa* and other sacred texts. Portions from select stanzas from the *Nālāyira-divyaprābandha* and the *Stotraratna* of *Yāmuna* and other *Ācāryas* are then to be recited. The *Vaikhānasa* texts do not enjoin the recitation of the *Nālāyira-divyaprābandha*, but the *Pāncaratra* works refer to the singing of passages composed in *bhāṣā*, meaning ‘non-Sanskrit languages’. Some texts actually refer to the Āzhvārs’ compositions which are to be sung.

Two features are worth noting in this context. One is that the *Āgama* texts do not speak of the recitation of the Vedic passages on this occasion. In all probability, during the period after *Yāmuna* and perhaps *Rāmānuja*, too, the system should have been evolved, so as to give due place for all passages which are held to be eulogistic (*stūpa*) of God. Commencing from the *Vedas*, these include the Tamil *prābandhas* and also the *stotras* of *Yāmuna* and other *Ācāryas*. Another feature that is striking is that the *Āgamas* state that the *arca* must recite many mantras during worship, which include the *Puruṣasūkta*, *Jitante stotra* and others. The practice, which obtains now, is the recitation of all these by others as well who are qualified.

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1297 IS XI. 36, 37, XIII 220, 225, SprS XL 34, XLII 116

1298 Vide,

चतुर्साहिस्तिरामादः द्विमिदी स्तुतिमुच्चतमाः।
गापयेह्स्पृणेष्वेत्स्त्र नैवाचास्त्वे दिने दिने॥

IS XIII, 246.

1299 AhS XXVIII 57b *Mantratah arsayet* may suggest the recitation of *mantrapuṣpa* which is now in practice

1300. पूजकः स्वयंमेव अद्रावेत्।

VK, p. 319 Cf PārS XV, 353.
and trained for it. This practice is also to be noted during snāna when not only the Purusasūkta and Upaniṣads, but also passages from the compositions of Periyāzhvār (Viṣnucitta) are recited by all those assembled in the temple. Such a practice could be taken to have been introduced about 1000 AD or even later during the period of Rāmānuja. It is worth noting here that the Nityagrantha of Rāmānuja and that of Śīranga-nārāyaṇārya do not make specific mention of this practice.\textsuperscript{1301}

This stage is followed by Bhojyāsana in which food preparations are to be offered. These are called havus and are to be sanctified by the astra mantra. Surabhimudrā must be shown and then the havus offered to God. To compensate any lapse in the offerings, mātrā, a special preparation made of rice, is to be offered. Mantrasana recurs again when fruits and betels are offered. The Lord is also to be adored with dance and music.\textsuperscript{1302} Here again, a practice, not mentioned in the Āgamas, has come into vogue in temples. A few passages from the compositions of Gōḍā (Āndāl) and Viṣnucitta (Periyāzhvār) are sung by way of prayer for continued service of this kind and as mangalāśāsana.\textsuperscript{1303} A sort of benediction for the Lord’s glory to continue forever. This is followed by a few Sanskrit passages glorifying the pattern of worship enjoined by

\textsuperscript{1301} The Nitya of Rāmānuja and the Ārādhana-kārka of Vangipurattu Nambi prescribe the procedure for offering worship. The Vaisnava tradition is primarily based on the work of Rāmānuja.

\textit{Vide} Prapannapārijāta, V 132.

\textsuperscript{1302} IS IV 189-191, 230-232.

\textsuperscript{1303} The idea of mangalāśāsana is derived from the earnestness of the devotees to greet the Lord and hail His auspiciousness, thus wishing for the continued availability of that vision and presence of the Lord. This seems to derive from a prayer of the same import addressed to Rudra. Vide RV II. 33 9 It has a full development in R. II. 25. 32b-37.
Rāmānuja  A prayer is then offered for the glory of the holy Śrīraṅga to prosper and grow This is followed by the singing of Vāzhiturunāmam which means greetings for the recital of the holy name of an acārya and praying that he should continue for centuries The followers of the Vadakalai school of Vaisnavas sing in the context the Vāzhiturunāmam of Vedāntadesika and those of the Teṅkalai school that of Maṇavālamahāmuni These practices are all later developments, brought in under the influence of the Tamil hymns of the Āzhvārs The arekas have no part to play here.

The last is the Paryankāsana which consists in offering a bed where God could take rest The garlands and ornaments are removed lest they should cause inconvenience to Him

The six stages mentioned above together constitute the daily procedure for worship In a temple where there is more than one idol, these stages are to be taken to represent the worship offered to all the idols jointly Where there are two idols under the names, ‘snāna-bera’ and ‘tīrtha-bera’, the former alone gets the stage of snānāsana The dhruva and utsava beras get it on fixed days in a week and occasions like ekādaśī, śravaya, amāvāsyaya and others Even here, the utsava bera gets it not always in the sanctum sanctorum, but in a specified place outside it Similarly, the Alankārāsana may also be outside the inner shrine at different places according to occasion Normally, the Bhōjayāsana is offered twice once in the noon and again early in the night The second Mantrāsana is twice a day, once in the noon and later in the night, following the Bhōjayāsana The Alankārāsana marks the last stage only in the night when the śayana bera receives worship

The six stages have therefore to be looked upon as marking the acts of worship offered to all the idols jointly on ordinary days with slight variations as the occasion demands when the utsava bera receives some of them. During all the stages, certain kinds of offerings like the arghya, pādyā and acaamanīya
are offered and the dhūpa and dīpa in the second and third. The dīpa is also offered in the last two stages. The act of worship is to be undertaken at all stages with the use of the bell which is stated to be of the form of Śabdabrahman.

The Vaiśhāṇa texts prescribe the method of worship on almost the same lines with some changes. A brahmaśīra or grhaśṭha is permitted to attend to the act of worship. Worship of God is taken to be of two kinds, one of which relates to God as formless (mūkṣa) and the other to God as having a form. Worship is offered to God on the ground as in homa, when no form is visualized, but His presence is also invoked on the kuša seat. Formlessness also characterises His worship in water (as in a jar), in the heart and in the sun's disc. The five fires are to be used for doing homa when the five heras are to be worshipped and three fires (tretāgni) for

1304 Nirūjana with ghatacīpa is referred to in AniruddhaS XVII. 73-76

Cf

पावान्त आम्येतपाँ तन्त्वाः त्रिः द्रव्यशिराम्

KA XIV 155a

And

दीपकांम् तु पावान्तं आम्येतपां परिचारणा ।
देवस्य द्रव्यं पावान्तं आम्येतपां परिचारणम् ॥
आम्येतपां तोऽज्ञाति ।

PānS XV 1015-16a, IS IV 214

It is also of three kinds Vide IS IV 209-201

1305 PānS xxxiv 56b, for details about ghanta, see JS xiii 197-221a.

1308 SA xi 7, the brahmaśīra is prohibited from doing worship Vide PR p 150

1307. KA IX. 2b, 3a

1308 SA xxiv 4, only three are mentioned apart from the dhruva form, but VK p 218 mentions five.
After performing sandhyā, brahmayajña and homa in the fire, he is to commence the worship of God. He must clear off from the person of God the garlands etc., offered the day before and then start his work.

Four stages of worship are alone stated explicitly, namely, snānāsana, alānkārāsana, mantrāsana and bhojyāsana. Worship is to be offered in the morning, noon and night. No bath is to be offered in the night. The offerings that are made to God are classified as of four kinds, śṛṣṭya, dṛṣṭya, śrāvyya and bhojya. The number of personal services is given as 64, 55, 48, 42, 36, 34, 29 and 27, which are said to be of nine kinds.

In another context, it is said to be nine. The use of a curtain is recommended while offering the daily worship so as to keep off those who revile the Vedas, heretics and degraded persons.

After all the stages are completed or the second mantrāsana is over, the areaka must prostrate himself before God. This

1309 KA ix 8, 9
1310 Ibid. ix 47-49.
1311 JK lxix, lxx
1312 Ibid. lxx.
1313 Upacāras are of four kinds, namely, śṛṣṭya, dṛṣṭya, śrāvyya and bhojya. Vide KA x, 35-40. See KA x for the nature of the upacāras. The number of upacāras are given differently in the different texts. VK (pp 290-1) states them to be 1, 2, 5, 8, 11, 13, 28, 29 and 32. They are 120, 64, 32 and 16 according to Pāś IV, 6, 32, 16 and 11 according to ViS xx, 209-226; and 64, 55, 48, 42, 36, 34, 32, 29 and 27 in KA x, 2-4

1314 One of them is anumāna. Vide JK p 110 where it is permitted in the form अर्चनेतायं गुह्यापास; also see SA, xi 11-18a.
1315 SA xl 66-67
prostration is of different kinds. The aṣṭāṅga variety is described in Pāñcarātra:1316 Mastiśka, Samputa, Prahuṅga, Paṅcāṅga and Daṇḍāṅga are the kinds of prostration according to the Vaikhānas system.1317

Sudarśana has a separate installation with specific mantras. 'Cakra' is the name given to this deity in the Vaikhānas system.1318 The Pāñcarātra system attaches much importance to this deity who has a specific yantra for the preparation of which the Ahirbudhnyasaṁhitā prescribes the rules. The yantra

1316. Prostration is said to be of the best kind when it is done with eight limbs.

Vide

कलासोदरजान्विक्षुदिनारात्मनूठ्वनी करी ।
भूमी सम्भा मनसा बालुखेकमनुस्मरन् ॥

cited in PR p 132 from the Saṁkarsana-saṁhīta.

Another description is

उरसा शिरसा वाचा मनसा च कपोलत: ।
Praṇayān karaṁ sajātāṁ praṇamōdaryādvesaṁ uchyaṁ ॥

cited in PR. p. 132.

1317. Vide

मस्तिष्कमिति विशेषयो ह्रदयाभिलस्पुत: ।
संन्यसेत्तत्प्रणामस्तु सम्पुट: समुपावतः ॥

Cited in PR. p. 132.

1318. KA. xi, 169b-177,
may be written on birch bark also. Like Viṣṇu, Sudarśana too has his own retinue.

'Saṭhārī' is the name given to the sandals of God fixed to a pedestal which is placed on the heads of the devotees when they visit the shrine and offer their prayers to God. It is quite possible that this was instituted in the temples of Viṣṇu after the Tamil prabandhas were given importance. Saṭhakopa, also known as Nammāzhvār, is the super-prapanna for all Vaishnavas, and it is felt that a Vaishnava must consider himself to be extremely blessed to have the saṭhārī placed on his head by the arcaka. Inasmuch as Saṭhakopa himself is known as Saṭhārī. Some of the Āgamas refer to the installation of Saṭhārī, calling it by the name of 'pāduka-pratisthā'.

In some Āgama texts, the Āzhvārās and ācāryās are allowed installation under the name, 'Bhaktabimba'. Specific rules are prescribed to give them the forms appropriate to their birth, and install them in particular places like the prākāra, the outer quadrangle or separate shrines.

After the daily worship is over, evidently in the morning, the arcaka is to perform japa of the important mantras, using

1319. AhS, ch 36, 37, 40, 44-46 48 & 49 Note the explanation of the name 'Sudaratana'.

PauS, VIII 41b-42a

1320. AhS xxxvi 49-51

1321. KA, xxxiv. 23-40a, ŚāṇḍilyaS. xviii. It is also called pāduka, SprS. xxxv. 83a.

1322. Ibid. xxxiv 40b-88, AntruddhaS. 34, ViṣṇurahasyaS, xxv. HiranyagarbhaS. (43 slokas, chapter not numbered).
beads for counting the number of times of repeating them.1323 Useful information is given on the question of selecting the beads 1324

The flowers, fruits and food offered to God are stated to become unsuited for partaking by devotees. *Nirmālya* is the name given to them.1325 The *Agamas* declare that these become defective by offering them to Viśvaksena. This defect is removed by distributing it before offering them to Viśvaksena 1326

Regarding the food preparations, there are nine kinds broadly classified as *uttama*, *madhyama* and *adhama*, each one having three subdivisions of the same kind. The economic status of those who administer the temple, the nature of the temple as *svayaṁvayakta* and the like and the occasion, all determine the nature of the food to be prepared and offered to God. Of these nine kinds, some have necessarily to be offered,

1323. *SKS Brahma* ix, 101-3, *JS* xiv 3-5 For *akṣasāstrā*, the materials to prepare it and the way of using it, see *JS* xiv 5-18, PR, ch. 129-130

1324 *LT* xxxix 133-147

1325 *SKS Śiva* v 48b-49a

1326 Viśvaksena is therefore called *śesuṣāna* What is offered to him is thrown into water Vide *LT* xl. 84, it may be given to the cow, *SA* xiii 106, *VK* p 280

Vide

यतो भगवद्यजन त्यक सङ्कुचनादि कमृ ।
प्रक्षोभोगयं याति विभवस्वतेन परिव्रह्दं ॥
अल एव निवेदय तत्ततोस्वर्णिष्ठ सार्वते ।
सेवते तेन तत्सेवार्दश्य कारणम् ॥

*Agama-prāmāya*, pp. 78-79.
and they have no substitutes of a lower kind. Another classification gives six kinds as pure cooked rice, other dishes, admixture of these, separate keeping of these, roots and fruits.

In order to obtain specific objectives, Sudarsana is to be propitiated. The procedure is given differently for kings who seek to gain victory over the regions in particular directions.

Special worship is required to be undertaken on occasions which the Agamas enjoin. Dvadaśī, Amāvāsyā, Pūrṇimā, Śravaṇa, Avatāradana (the day when the deity made His manifestation), the day on which the lunar asterism of the yajamāna falls, the Cātra and Tūlā Visu, Uttarāyaṇa and Dakṣiṇāyaṇa, and the Sankrāntis (the days when the sun enters divisions of the zodiac) are held to be the specific occasions when worship of particular kinds is to be offered to God. If the asterisms and tithis occupy ten nāgīkās on the next day, that day must be chosen for this worship and not the one when that asterism or tithi is not available at sunrise. This worship must be undertaken on that day when the tithi is only for a very small part in the case of Ekadaśī, Amāvāsyā and Dvadaśī.

The Vakhānās speak of Śravaṇa, two Dvadaśīs, Pūrṇimā and Amāvāsyā as Viṣṇu dinas when special kinds of worship are required to be offered. However, the practice obtaining in

1327 Offerings (havis) are of nine kinds. Vide -VK ch. 43, SA ch. 45, Viś xxiv 113-150, KapīyaS ch 18, NaradīyaS ch xi, Visnutattva ch. vi; and Visnutantra ch 1ix

1328 SKS Siva v 52-53, PārS ch 18

1329 AhS ch 39

1330 Vide

1331 Vide

1327 Offerings (havis) are of nine kinds. Vide -VK ch. 43, SA ch. 45, Viś xxiv 113-150, KapīyaS ch 18, NaradīyaS ch xi, Visnutattva ch. vi; and Visnutantra ch 1ix

1328 SKS Siva v 52-53, PārS ch 18

1329 AhS ch 39

1330 Vide

1331 Vide

1327 Offerings (havis) are of nine kinds. Vide -VK ch. 43, SA ch. 45, Viś xxiv 113-150, KapīyaS ch 18, NaradīyaS ch xi, Visnutattva ch. vi; and Visnutantra ch 1ix

1328 SKS Siva v 52-53, PārS ch 18

1329 AhS ch 39

1330 Vide

1331 Vide

1327 Offerings (havis) are of nine kinds. Vide -VK ch. 43, SA ch. 45, Viś xxiv 113-150, KapīyaS ch 18, NaradīyaS ch xi, Visnutattva ch. vi; and Visnutantra ch 1ix

1328 SKS Siva v 52-53, PārS ch 18

1329 AhS ch 39

1330 Vide

1331 Vide
most Viṣṇu temples is generally to treat the monthly Saṅkrānti, two Ekādaśī, Amāvāsyā, Pūrṇimā, Śravaṇa and the asterism under which God manifested Himself in the particular shrine as special for worship which includes bath (snāpana) and procession in the streets for the utsava idol 1332. The utsava idol of Lakṣmī is taken in procession within the temple every Friday. Śrījayanti, Śrīrāmanavami, Kṛttikādīpa, Dīpāvalī, and some festivals peculiar to certain places like Gaṅgāvataraṇa 1333 or 'Padinettāmperukku' (‘the flood on the 18th day’) which represents the celebration of the floods in Kāverī in July-August, are given special significance. Āsanāvādī requires to be celebrated by having music sung in the Āsanāvādī tune. On this day (which falls in November-December) the Āsanāvādī purāṇa is read in temples 1334.

Any festival that is conducted annually or periodically in temples, is called ‘utsava’. There are at least three ways in which the significance of this word is brought out. The utsava is so called because it gives rise to delight and God is much delighted by it.

Vide:

उत्सवान्ते हृदयमिति च तत्तस्मादेप महोत्सवः ।
महाप्रीतित्येन उत्सवेन भविष्यति ॥

Śrīpa. XXX. 2.

1332 The number of days becomes five, if pūrṇimā and one ekādaśī are left out. Or Śravaṇa is to be left out. Otherwise, the number becomes seven. If Pūrṇimā is left out, the number becomes six. Vide —SprS. XLVII 60-61. Yet the name Paṇcaparva is used though without sufficient justification. Or taking Amāvāsyā and Pūrṇimā as one and the two Ekādaśī as one, the name can be justified.

1333 SprS. XLII.

1334. AniruddhaS. XXIII. 88.
The second explanation shows that Js is called by that name because it is prominent, when compared to other occasions.

Vide:

\[ \text{उत्सवोदयः चतुर्वर्तमाधुर्यस्वत्वः सुवीर्यः} \]

\[ \text{SA. LIV. 3a} \]

The third explanation takes the word ‘sava’ in the sense of misery. The festival is called utsva, since misery is removed through it.

Vide:

\[ \text{सब शुद्धिः दुःखं विद्वेदं: समुदाहतम्} \]

\[ \text{उष्णः स सवो यथाचू तस्मादुल्लच उच्यते} \]

\[ \text{PārS XVI. 2b, 3a. (Cf. IS X. 3).} \]

Whatever be the explanation, that utsva provides the people of the locality with an occasion for spending their time with delight, forgetting their wonted discomforts and sufferings, is very evident wherever the annual festivals of God are conducted.

The Vaiṣhāṇava Agama classifies the utsva into three kinds—Kālōtsava, Sraddhōtsava and Naimitikōtsava. The first-mentioned festival is conducted on specified occasions. The second is undertaken by an individual who is inspired by faith and arranges for conducting it. The last one requires an occasion like famine or drought or a condition requiring the propitiation of God.

The most important festival is to be conducted at least once in a year. In some temples, it is conducted more than

1335. This sense does not seem to be correct. There is another definition which is acceptable. Vide

\[ \text{सवो यः: समाज्यातस्वस्यहबिशेषतः} \]

\[ \text{SA LIV 2b} \]

1336. Vide SA. LIV 3b, Ibid 4b-7 for details, as also VK p 338 and KA. XIV 9-11. They are also called as Nitya, Naimitika and Kamya. Vide: IS, X. 4-10; PārS, XVI. 23.
There is no unanimity about the number of days during which the festival should be gone through. The number is stated to be 15, 13, 11, 9, 7, 5, 3, 2 and one in the descending order, the first one being treated as the best. According to some, the number in this order is 9, 7 and 1. Still others give 21, 14 or 9 and 7 in the same order. The festival is called *mahotsava*, a huge festival, and not *BrahmoUava*, as it is now called. The fixing of the period or date for undertaking this is based on several factors. The entire festival is treated as a sacrifice at the conclusion of which the participants bathe in a tank or river or sea. This bath is called *avabrtha*, which also is to mark the conclusion of the festival. The festival is to commence on a day so as to have *avabrtha* on the days of *siçu*, *ayana*, birthday of the king, birthday of the *ācārya* who conducts the installation, occurrence of an eclipse, monthly asterism (which may mean the day having the asterism when God made His manifestation) or the five days belonging to *Visnu*.

The festivals conducted at present are arranged to have *avabrtha* on one of the days mentioned here. In most of the prominent temples, the conclusion on the ninth day is the day with *Sravana*. The festival is conducted normally for nine days and duration of more than this number is rare. It is celebrated twice in a year in some temples as at Tiruvallūr and four times in *Sriraṅgām*.

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1337 It is celebrated twice in a year in some temples as at Tiruvallūr and four times in *Sriraṅgām*.

1338 *SA* LVI 64-68

1339 *Ibid* LVI 57-69, *IS* X 14

1340 *KA* XIV Cf *VK* p 339 where the number of days is mentioned as nine, seven and five. *JK* (p 147) gives the number as 30, 25, 21, 15, 12, 9, 7, 5, 3 and one  

*CF* *SA* LVI 63-69

1341. *KA* XIV. 1b-2.

1342. *Avabrtha* is had on the day with the *Sravana* constellation in temples like Tirumalai and Kaṇcot. *VS* XX. 5b.

1343. It is held for 18 days in the temple at Mannārgudi.
is also held that each day of the festival has a presiding deity.1344

Elaborate preparations are to be made for conducting the festival. Collection of the sacred mud (mṛtsaṅgraha), and sowing the seeds of various grains (aṅkurārpaṇa) form the preliminary rite for the conduct of any festival Dhvajārohaṇa and dhvajāvaroḥaṇa are the two chief items in the festival, the former marking the commencement and the latter the conclusion of the festival. The rite connected with the former is given in a very detailed way, sometimes taking up one chapter of the text.1345 In order to announce the commencement of the festival each day, a Pāraśava1346 shall blow the conch, sound next the big drum and sound thrice the kettle-drum with the left hand and thrice with the right hand.1347

The festival is conducted daily on all days both in the morning and evening. The deity is taken through the streets of the locality both in the morning and evening. On both the occasions, homa is performed by the arcaka who undertakes the responsibility of attending to the festival. Offerings are then made to the guardians of the quarters and also on the baliḥitha, the pedestal intended for this and permanently built by the side of the dhvajasthambha. The idol of Sudarṣāna is then taken around the locality through the streets. This is intended to make the streets safe for the procession which is to follow.

1344 The names, Brahma, Arṇa, Raudra, Vāsava, Saumya, Vaipava, Sarvadaivatyā, Yaśōya and Varuṇa are given to the festivals conducted on nine days VK. LVI KA. XIV 54-66 Names are here given according to tithi also

1345. Vide Pāś. IV 10, IS X 239-238; Pārś ch. 16, Aniruddhaś, ch. 20; Kapīśa, ch. 22, Nārādiyaś, XVIII; Vis. ch. 26, SA. ch. LVI.

1346. For a definition, see the Nāmaḥágāνuśāsana, III. 3, 210b.

1347. IS. XI. 33-39.
Before the actual festival commences Viṣṇu is worshipped, as he is the leader of the army of God. He is considered to be in charge of conducting the festival without inconvenience to anyone and providing security for the festival.\(^{1348}\)

The *utsava* idol is taken in procession with those of Śri and Puṣṭi on most of these days and without them on a few days. With the exception of the evening on the day when the deity is taken around the streets in the morning in the chariot, there is procession on all days both in the morning and the evening. There are specific vehicles (*vāhana*) in which the idol is carried through the streets. There is no direct statement in the text prescribing the use of particular vehicles on particular days in either of the sessions, of course, with some exceptions.

The *Pauskara, Jaya* and *Sāttvata Samhitās* do not treat the *Mahotsava*. But, curiously enough, the *Jaya* contains additional *slokas* in chapter I according to a manuscript which contains detailed information regarding the temple of God at Kañci and the festival conducted there annually in the Vaiṣākha month. It is correct as to the details now obtaining in the temple. However, these *slokas* could be taken to have been deliberately interpolated with a view to present the greatness of this temple. Besides being considered as one of the three gems (*ratna*), the *Jaya* is very ancient and as such, should conform to the contents of the other two *samhitās* which do not refer to the celebration of the *Mahotsava* in the temples at Śrīrāmagam and Melkote, where these *samhitās* are followed. Besides, the ancient *Āgama* texts do not appear to have concerned themselves with such festivals in temples.

\(^{1348}\) Vide

कालेश्वराश्वयः या मूर्तिस्तुयःसम्भवः विभोः: ।
ल एष द्विजः देवः ख्यातिस्पक्षेनः प्रकीर्तितः: ॥

*Paus* XX. 54.
The *Pārameśvara*, 1349 *Pāda* 1350 and *Īśvara* 1351 *Samhītās* and Bhṛgu’s *Kriyādhikāra* 1352 mention the vehicles for some of the sessions, while the *Śrīprāṣṭra* and other *Samhītās* 1353 give the entire list. All the texts are agreed upon having the elephant and horse vehicles on the sixth and eighth day of the festival in the night. The car festival is held on the ninth day when *cūrnābhīṣika*, *mṛgyā* and *avabṛtha* are also held in most of the temples, while it is held on the seventh day in some temples 1354. *Cūrnābhīṣika* is bad on the sixth day there, and *mṛgyā* and *avabṛtha* on the ninth day. The *Īśvara-samhitā* mentions the vehicles without specific reference to their being used in the morning or the evening. It is worth while noting two striking features. One is that *Garuḍotsava* is held in the night in many temples and in the morning in a few. It is held on the fifth day of the festival in the night or on the fourth day in the night in some temples like Śrīrangam. In temples as in Kāṇī and Tiruvallikkeni, it is celebrated on the third day in the morning. Secondly, the car festival is fixed for the seventh day at Kāṇī, Melkote, Tiruvallikkeni and other places. At Kāṇī the huge car used to get back to its destination after passing through the streets almost invariably after a delay of a few days; and in that case, the *avabṛtha* on the ninth day used to get postponed. In general, it must be remarked that, except for the festivals on certain days, the pattern available in the prominent temples has influenced the system in others. The

1349 *Pai S* XVII.
1350 *PaS* IV 17
1351 *IS* VII 260-416
1352 *KA* XIV.

1353 *SprS* XXXV 17-19, Anuruddha’s account is vague. *Puruṣottama* (XXIV 75 6) mentions *hamsa*, *simha*, *Garuda* and *Śesa* as the vehicles to be used on the first four days respectively. *IS* XI 260b-314 *SprS*. XXXV, 18-19.

Agamas offer only a broad outline of the conduct of the festival, leaving the inner details to be settled by the ācārya (who must be well versed in the cāryā aspect of the Agama of the temple), according to the exigencies of the locality.

Interesting details are given for the conduct of the avabrtha. A special time and a general one are given for this, according as the temple is svayam nyakta (where God manifested Himself of His own accord, as at Srirangam), divya (created by a god as at Kañci or Āzhvār Tirunagari) saiddha (where Siddhas installed the idol) or ārṣa (installed by sages). The tirthhabera is to be offered special worship and then taken to a holy tank or river where the ācārya must stand in water reaching up to his navel, after sprinkling holy powder on the heads of devotees. He must plunge into the water along with the tirthhabera. All the devotees assembled there will have a dip in that water at that time. As an alternative, the snapana or bali bera could be taken instead of tirthhabera. The Vaikhānasa Agama enjoins Ś. arṣana to be taken to the place for avabrtha, which is therefore called cakratīrtha. The plunge is to be taken thrice. Even persons related to those who take a plunge get rid of their sins and become prosperous.

On the day next to the avabrtha day, puspa vāga is performed in elaborate detail with profuse use of flowers. This is now

1355 It may be midday or forenoon or the fore part of the night in shrines of the Svamyavāktā kind. Vide IS XI 314-351.

1356 The idol or di-cus could be used for Avabrtha, JK LXI. Both are mentioned in KA XIV 186. The Paniparatra texts also prescribe the discus as an alternative to the tirthhabera. (Kriyakairavacandrikā, p 226.)

1357 SprS XXXVI 132

1358 Ibid 133

called *dvādaśārādhana* 1360 Care is to be bestowed on choosing the right kind of flowers and in conducting the festival at the specified time.1361

After *dhvajavarohaṇa*, the *utsava bera* is to be taken to the *sanctum sanctorum* and placed near the *dhruvabera*

When the vehicle with the *utsava-bera*, well decorated with ornaments and flowers, is being carried through the streets, no one must stand on or sit in or occupy any portion of the vehicle. An exception is made in the case of the elephant vehicle on which the *ācārya* is to sit behind the *utsava* idol with the goad in his hand. The *arcaka* may also sit in the front part of the vehicle 1362

As against this general rule, the *ācārya*, according to another text, can sit in the front in all other vehicles as well 1363 Those who bear the vehicle through the streets must wear a coat and a turban and be adorned with flowers and ornaments The *ācārya* and *arcaka* also must wear a turban This practice has disappeared except in Śrīraṅgam in the case of the bearers of the vehicle and perhaps in Tirupati and Tirumalai where only one *arcaka* wears the turban. However, the *ācārya* who occupies the elephant vehicle wears invariably a turban.

A significant feature of the procession when the *utsava* idol is taken through the streets of the locality in the vehicle or without it, is the recitation of the Āzhvārs' compositions in its

1360 The *Drādaśakṣaramantra* is to be used, *pūjā* being repeated for each of the twelve syllables Since flowers are used, this is called *Puspayāga* Vide *V.K* p 361. For details, see *Kṛṣṇakṣairavacandrika* p 227.

1361 *Sks Śiva* ch 6


1363 *Ibid*. XIV 139
foreground, and the recitation of the Vedas behind the deity. The Agama makes a general statement about the use of the compositions in the bhāṣā, meaning a language other than Sanskrit. Some texts, however, mention that the best Veda composed in Tamil shall be sung in front.

Vide:

\[
\text{गायिकिर्ते देवस्य द्रामिरी भुतिमुच्चमाम ।} \\
IS. XI. 236.
\]

\[
\text{ॐग्युस्तमवेदांस्तु पदक्षे: पुष्चतंस्थिते: ।} \\
Ibid. XI. 231.
\]

\[
\text{देवस्य पुष्चभागे तु वैशाखि वेदपाठकाः} \\
\text{ॐहविविष्णुयवेदांस्तौष्युर्यज्ञानां ॥} \\
S't7 pS. XXXIII 46
\]

Cf. KA CLX 160

This practice must have been introduced after Nāthamuni and should have formed part of the conduct of the festival during the time of Rāmānuja. That this practice was disputed in the 14th century is evident from Vedāntadeśika’s successful effort in silencing the opponents and establishing it on firm grounds 1364.

The Agamas do not make clear as to why the composition of the Āzhvārs are to be sung in the forefront. An answer to this question is suggested in the following sloka of Vedāntadeśika:

\[
\text{कर्म्यमहात्मके शाखे कौटस्कुतनिवर्तकान्} \\
\text{चन्द्र हस्तितिगिरिश्च श्रीयस्योधकस्मिन्नान् ॥} \\
\text{Rahasyatraya-sāra, I. 2.}
\]

1364, Vaibhavaprakāśika, 79, 80.
“I bow to those whose service consists in cleaning the streets of the Lord of Hastigir, who keep off those that raise the why and wherefore in the system which is concerned with *karma* and *Brahman*.”

The systems of *karma* and *Brahman* refer to the *Mimamsā* and *Vedānta* systems. There are persons who do not have belief in either or both of these and who want to raise queries as to the basis of every theory and practice sanctioned in these. In Kānci, there were people who served God by cleaning the streets through which the *utsava* idol was taken. They were not sweepers whose honourable profession would, however, be pleasing to them, but eminent in silencing the objections raised by the captious critics. They must be not only aware of the basis of the theories and practices enjoined in the two systems, but also practice what they firmly believed in. The service of cleaning the streets by these eminent scholars must have formed part of the conduct of the disciplined wise men (*ṣistācāra*). Cleaning of the streets in Kānci by these must have been undertaken before the procession starts from the temple, that is, these persons must be moving well in advance of the procession. The author does not write ‘the streets in Kānci’, but ‘the streets of the Lord of Hastigiri’, which means that they belong to Him in the sense that the *utsava* idol should be taken in procession through them. Some scholars take the word, ‘*vithiśodhakakīmkaṇaṃ*’ used in the plural, to denote Ātreya Ramānuja, the preceptor of *Vedāntadesika* 1365. Others take it to mean some of the Ācārya who attended to this work and who taught the *Tirūvāymozhi* to *Vedāntadesika*. The cleaning of the streets is stated to have meant the removal of the arguments of the opponents.

1365 The *Sarāsvadini* on RTS mentions Appillār, that is, Ātreya Ramānuja, the maternal uncle of *Vedāntadesika* as meant here by the word ‘*vithiśodhakakīmkaṇaṃ*’. It notes that some other Ācārya of the author could also have been meant, p. 41.
This may be conceded. But it is also possible to offer another interpretation. Silencing the arguments of the opponents is already stated in the second quarter of this sloka, and so this could not have been meant by the act of cleaning the streets. Again, it is not clear as to why the respectable person who cleaned the streets should have taught the Tiruvāymozhi in particular to Vedāntadesika. Cleaning the streets could symbolically represent the purification of the streets and making them fit for God’s procession through them. This purification is service (kānkārya) which may be mental, verbal or physical. All the three kinds are applicable here, but it may preferably denote the verbal one suggested by the word (kautaskutanivartakān). This should then mean that these pious people recite some holy passages which cannot be the Vedas, as the reciters of them have to follow God in the procession. What they recite could not be simple stotras, but poems literary in formation and philosophical in import which could bear parity with the Vedas. Since the days of Nāhamuni and Yāmuna, the ubhayavedāntā concept has been in vogue. While one Vedānta is based on the Upaniṣads, the other is based on the Nālāyiradivyaprabandha. If the Vedas are to be recited behind the deity, the compositions of the Āzhvārs must be recited in front. Like the Vedic mantras which have the power to cleanse anything of its impurity and make it flawless, the songs of Āzhvārs too should be deemed to have a similar power to make the streets free of all worldly impurities and make them fit for the Lord to be carried through. Hence it would be appropriate to take the word ‘vithisodhakakimkarān’ in the sense of those who recite the compositions of the Āzhvārs in front of the Lord. Rightly enough, those who recite these compositions head the procession. The pipers and others who contribute to the music follow them. Such highly learned persons could not be mere sweepers. Mere cleaning the streets is not also meant here.

1366, Tiruvāymozhi, II. 16, 11.
Or, the recitation of the compositions of the Āḻivārs in the front may be explained in a different manner. These compositions composed in Tamil do not get included in the Āgamic rituals followed in the temple. If there is a slip in the conduct of the ritualistic performance, *samproksana* is required to be done in the temple. If the Āḻivārs' compositions are not recited, there is no expiatory rite ordained to be done for this. The priests in the temple are not worried about it.

Yet, these compositions have been offered a status equal to that of the *Vedas* in the conduct of daily worship and public festivals. The ritual in the temple is not taken to get completed, if these compositions are not sung at the intervals that are assigned by the early Ācāryas.

If the *Divyaprabandha* should have a place in temple worship, it is necessary to attend to it without disturbing the procedural details that have been in practice and followed in accordance with the prescriptions laid down in the Āgamas. It is worth noting here that the recitation of the *Vedas* is always done behind the procession, that is, after the Deity. This is the case even in the temples of Śiva. When the heads of religious institutions are taken in procession around the streets in villages and towns, the *Vedas* are recited behind them. So also when *mahāprasādas* are taken round the streets and also when the bridegroom starts for the bride's house for marriage. A time-honoured practice like this cannot be disturbed on any account. So the Vaisnava Ācāryas chose to provide the reciters of the *Prabandha* with a separate place of honour in temple processions. To place them just behind the deity would amount to disturbing the hoary custom. To place them behind the *Veda* reciters would mean that they are no better than *bhajana-gośthis*. The *Prabandhas* have been considered as *Drāvīḍa Vedas*, and so they were placed in front of the procession. Thus the Deity is taken in the procession which is led by the recitation of one *Veda* and followed by that of another.
The three Vedas, the Ekāyana recension of the Veda, the Sāttvata and other samhītās are to be recited to the right of the Lord and the Itihāsas and Purāṇas to His left during processions. Others, who are grammarians and logicians, may also join the procession.1367

There should be provision for good music at that time. The flute, vīnā and other instruments will be played upon. There will also be dancers1368 All these are to provide attraction. The atmosphere must not be puritanic, severe and solemn. Even those who do not have much faith in God should be attracted to witness the procession. There may be people whose interest may lie only in the appreciation of music and dance. Some may like only to see the paraphernalia and the show. By witnessing these, they will have an occasion to have a look at God. This is enough for the spirit of the Āgamas to provide for the conduct of the festivals.

Vide:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{लत्तीशीनादकस्मावथ पुल्लो सम्मूडचेतरसमा।} \\
\text{कृष्णम मेततुद्यानां नासितकान्त सदैव हि।} \\
\text{कुबालला कुकुलिवक्रुत्यविच्यावक्यं} \\
\text{कुमालिवक्रुत्य नासितकतवं लघं व्रजेऽ} \\
\end{align*}
\]

\text{Pauś. I 31-32.}

After the return of the procession to the temple in each session, the four Vedas must be recited, to be followed by the recitation of the Tamil compositions of Āzhvārs. Then the stotras in Sanskrit and Tamil are to be sung in praise of the Lord. The practice that is now in vogue is to conclude the recitation of the Āzhvārs’ compositions at first and then that of the Vedas.

1367. IS. XI, 234.


\text{ASV—50}
Among other festivals which last over many days, mention must be made of the Navarātri and Adhyayana festivals. The former is to be concluded on the navami in the Asvayujya month. It begins on the Amāvāsyā day. As the name denotes, it is primarily intended for Sīrī. The Lord is to be taken on the horse vehicle on the ninth day to the vahni tree (also known as śami). Now this is held on the dasami called Vijayadasami. The Adhyayana festival is also called the Mārgaśīrṣa festival. This is done for ten days before and after Śukla Ekādaśi. Viśvaksena and the idols of the devotees of the Lord are brought to the presence of God. They are all worshipped by the recitation of the Vedas, Tamil Prabandhas, stotras in Sanskrit, Prākṛta and Tamil. The Tamil prabandhas are called here as the compositions (gāthā) of devotees. There is explicit reference to the Nālāyiradivya-prabandha in .

The idols of the Āzhvārs and ācāryas (who are referred to by the general name, 'bhakta') are to be honoured on the occasion.

Vide:

Some Āgama texts enjoin the celebration of festivals in every month. No naimittika or kāmya festival is to be celebrated for four months during the Lord's yoganidrā which concludes with the celebration of Utthāna ekādaśi.
AOAMAS AND TEMPLES

The Vasanta-utsava is held generally for seven days, but for three days in some temples. During the day, the deity is served with proper attendance suited to the climatic conditions of the season, and there is procession in the evening within or without the temple. As in the annual festival, there are ānkūra ārpaṇa, homa and other items. There is no dhvaja ārpaṇa. On the seventh day in the evening the utsava idol is carried through the streets on the horse vehicle and the festival is concluded by āvārtha in a tank or river early in the night. The car festival or the Garuda vehicle is enjoined in some texts, but this does not appear to be practised in any temple. 1373

The birth-days of Śrī Rāma, Narasimha and Śrī Kṛṣṇa are celebrated when the idols of these deities are given bath and special worship is offered. Invariably, there is procession for the utsava idols of these deities. In particular, on the day following Śrī Jayanti, there is a festival called Śrīkṣyotaṇa known as Uṇiyāṭi in Tamil 1374. The Āgamas enjoin the celebrations of the birthdays of other vihavas as well, but the present-day practice does not appear to attach much significance to them. 1375

1373 Pradyumnaś, XLIV, Viṣṇutattva XXVII; SprŚ, XXXVIII. 24. The car festival is conducted in the temple at Tirumalai

1374 Śrī Jayanti in IS XIII, ViŚ ch XXX, PauŚ ch XLII; Śēṣasamhitā, ch 10 Śrīramanvāṃ in Viṣṇusiddhānta, ch 9, ViŚ ch. 29, Śēṣasamhitā, ch 10

1375 Some of them have their birth-days alone celebrated, For instance Matsya in Viṣṇutantra, ch 14, ViŚ ch 11; VK ch 55; SA. ch 58, KA ch 11. Kurma in Śēṣasamhitā, ch 6, Viṣṇutantra, ch. 14, ViŚ, ch 11, VK ch. 57, KA ch 11 It is of two kinds, JK ch 79. Varaha in Śēṣasamhitā, ch. 6, Viṣṇutantra, ch 15, ViŚ, ch. 11; VK, ch. 55; SA. ch. 68, KA ch. 11. Narasimha in Śēṣasamhitā 4; Viṣṇutantra, ch. 15, ViŚ ch 11; VK ch. 57, SA. ch 59; KA ch 11. Vāmana and Trivikrama in Śēṣasamhitā, ch. 8, ViŚ. ch. 11, VK, 57; SA. ch. 59; KA. ch. 11. Jāmadagnya in VK ch 58, SA ch. 60, KA. ch. 11. Kalkin in VK, ch. 69; SA. ch. 69, KA. ch. 11. Kāma is represented with bow and arrows (sūyudha) in KA, XI. 87b-93a, SA, LX. 16-23a, as having no weapons in
The Dipotsava in the Karttika month is enjoined to be celebrated in the texts, and the practice bears testimony to it. However, there is some disparity in the Vaskhānaśa and Pañcarātra regarding the proper date for the celebration of this festival, as also those of the birth-days of Śrī Rāma, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Naraśimha. Rules about the duration of the titki and constellations concerned account for this difference.  

On the day following the advent of the uttarāyana (the observance of the winter solstice) on the Makara-saṅkrānti day, there is a hunting festival in which the utsava idol is taken to a distant place. Celebrations like the holy bath and others are gone through after which the Deity is brought back to the temple.  

The floating festival is conducted in the cold season (Māgha and Phālguna months) for nine, seven, five, three days or one day, and the utsava idol is taken in the float normally in a tank for three or five or seven rounds. This is celebrated with great pomp. The float is to be respected as Ādiśeṣa and so all and sundry must not touch it or occupy it. The ācārya, arcakas and the Vaisnavas who render service to the Deity and recite the

KA XI. 93a-95, SA LX 23a-28 Note the following remark in VK. about these descents of the Lord

Mṛtyāvṛttarāṇāṁ ṛṣṇapūjad vyaḥ śaktojāvo nātv bhavet ।
Tasmād pratiśaḍarṇinī śarvāṇि vijñōrīva samācchārayēt ।

Hayagriva, Keśava, Valkuntha and several others are treated in the Hayāṣṭra-saṁhitā, Viṣ and others. Those of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa are treated in all the texts.

1376. IS ch. 13.
1377 Ibid XIII. 254.
1378 Vide

अन्ये तु न स्पृशयुस्तं यस्तु शेषात्मकः प्लयः ।
IS, XII-133a.
Vedas are the only persons permitted to occupy it. In the float a decorated quadrangle is constructed where the utsava idol with Śrīdevi and Bhūdevi is placed. There is to be a different float to be occupied by those who play on musical instruments and the women dancers.\footnote{1379 This is not in general practice at the present day.}

There are numerous other festivals like Dolotsava, Davanotsava, Kodai-utsava (summer festival) and others which are held each in some temples alone. Citrāpūrṇīma, Padinettam-perukku, Pallava-utsava, and others are peculiar to certain temples and to some areas only.

An important festival other than these is that of the birth-day of an Āzhvār or Ācārya, conducted for ten days in each case, the concluding session coinciding with the birth-day. It is only in certain temples that all of them have their birth-days celebrated for ten days. Normally, each has it in his place of birth. In other places, the celebration is conducted at least for the birth-day. Among the Āzhvārs, Nammāzhvār and Āndāl have their celebrations for ten days in all temples. Rāmānuja’s birth-day is observed in every temple with great pomp. In many temples, the festival is conducted for all the ten days in honour of the birth-days of Vedantadesātīka and Manavālamahāmuni. With the exception of some, the Āzhvārs and ācāryas have worship with the recitation of the Vedas and Tamil compositions, all confined to the respective shrine itself. On the last day, that is, the birthday, their idols are taken in procession through the streets with all the paraphernalia, as in the case of the Deity. In some temples, they are taken along with the Deity. After the procession, they are worshipped along with the Deity whose honours are conferred on them, before they are taken to their own shrines.\footnote{1380}

\footnote{1379 \textit{Ibid} XII 110-136, \textit{SprS} XXXIX.}

\footnote{1380. \textit{Visnuitattvasamhitā}, ch. 13, 14, \textit{Vishputantra}, ch. 14, KA. xxxiv, 49a-88 However, there is no mention here of the conduct of the festivals in honour of them.}
During the procession through the streets, devotees from each house offer fruits like plantain, mango, coconut and others. The areaka has to offer them to the Lord without uttering any mantra. The devotees are to be shown God's favour by placing the S'athāri on their heads. People who render service on these occasions, would get the fruit of performing a sacrifice. Special benefits are assured for those who participate in the car festival. The Agamas have the unique distinction of liberalism by an open declaration that the touch of the untouchable on such occasions would not give rise to any defect or pollution.

Vide:

तस्मात्स्पृश्यस्पष्ट्य न दोषाय भवेत्

VK. p. 353.

The energy of all the people should be conserved and converged to bestow pointed attention on the conduct of the festival of God. No other deity of the locality must have a festival during this period.

Snapana, giving an ablation to the Deity, forms an important part of the contents of the Agamas. It is of various kinds. Generally, it is given to the dhruvabera on a particular day in a week and to the utsavabera on fixed occasions like Ekādaśi, Amāvāsyā and Sravanaṣṭi and others. A special hall is required for the purpose. Small pitchers (kalaṣa) are to be made out of certain metals and materials and of prescribed dimensions. Certain kinds of precious stones and of grains are to be procured and put there. The number of pitchers varies according to the

1381 K4 xiv 145b-147.
1382 SprS 36-53a
1383 PaS iv 11, IS x1 306.
1384 SA, lvi, 95b-98a; VK. p. 362.
occasion. Sometimes one hundred and eight of them are required and rarely one thousand and eight. The particular spots, directions and method according to which they are to be placed, are detailed in many of the texts. For offering the bath, apart from pure water, pāncagavya, curds, milk, honey, and other liquids are required, and they are to be filled in pitchers kept in specified places. Different mantras are given to sanctify the various substances mentioned above. These pitchers are to be honoured with arghya, pādyā, ācamaniya, dhūpa, dipa, naivedya, ārātrika and other upacāras. Then, as per the prescribed method in the texts, the ācārya must perform snapana to the deity to the chanting of the mantras enjoined to be used. There are to be short intervals between the use of a certain number of pitchers containing certain ingredients. During those intervals, the Deity must be offered some upacāras including naivedya. The Āgama texts refer to other kinds of snapana. Mahābhiseka is the name given to snapana conducted on an elaborate scale. Worldly prosperity and the like are stated to accrue to those who undertake to conduct snapana of these kinds.

When the work of snapana is done to the Deity, the priest who attends to this work must himself take at first the holy water used for the purpose. If this is not done, the work of

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1385. Maṇḍala, Nyāsa and Mudrās play a prominent part in Snapana. Vide. LT ch 34, SKS Śiva, ch 8, PauS ch 14, IS ch 15, PārS, ch 21, VS. ch 26, SprS. ch 27, KA ch 13, SA. ch 41-50. It is said to be of nine kinds. Ibid ch. 52, VK. ch. 47-9, ViśvāmitraS. ch 19, JK ch 55-7.

1386. PāS IV. 9, SA. ch 51, ViśvāmitraS. ch. 20. The formation of the Kalaśas is given in charts, see Introduction to PārS pp. 7-33.

1387. AhS. ch. 34; PāS. IV. 8.


1389. Vide.
snapana is considered as unfinished.\textsuperscript{1390} He will then distribute that water to those assembled there on the occasion. The holy water will be given thrice to each one. The person who receives it, must take it without allowing even a drop to remain in the palm.\textsuperscript{1391} Those who take it must not wash their hands also, as it would then mean that the palm has become polluted through its touch with the lips. The holy water can never become unholy. On the other hand, it purifies the lips and through them the entire body and the self there. The palm therefore becomes and remains pure.

The present-day custom of offering the holy water at first in the temple every day when the puja or snapana is done, to certain persons who are Acarya purusas and who have their rights to receive it so, without the priest partaking it, has no sanction in the Agamas.

The Aryu-sevas in the temple as those in Tirumalal are to be treated as coming under the kāmya kind.\textsuperscript{1392}

Several shortcomings are bound to happen while attending to temple worship, preparations for temple-building, idol-making

\textsuperscript{1390} Vide:
\begin{quote}
विष्णोस्तीर्थ प्रस्तावं च पूजान्ते देशिकोऽभि: ॥
अपीतव यद्विवान्येष्ये द्वात् पूजा हि निष्फला ।
\end{quote}
SprS. xxix 103b-104a.

\textsuperscript{1391} Vide
\begin{quote}
तीर्थ हि तिः पिबेहित्रविवेजितम् ।
\end{quote}
SA. lxxvii. 43a.

\textsuperscript{1392} Vide.
\begin{quote}
चतुर्व पुरुषार्थायाः सुहिद्वायवेयतमं फलम् ॥
उत्सवोपकुषितः कामः सहःलिप्तवल्लमः ।
\end{quote}
TS. x. 8b-9a.
and other items concerned with the temple. Hence the Āgama
texts have enjoined and expounded the rites of expiation in
detail. These acts are all the more necessary, because the
people visit temples and worship God there. Defects of
commission and omission detract from the sanctified presence
of God in the idols there. So much so, people who attend the
temple cannot get the benefit for their worship. Hence the
Āgamas (the Vaikhanasa in particular) contain many chapters
on expiation (prāyaschitta) 1393

A very important kind of expiatory rite is noticed in the
Pārameśvarā and Pādma Samhitās. It is called Tulārohana. For
the lapses committed by the ruling king he is to be weighed in a
balance against gold. The pieces of gold should be distributed
among the deserving 1394

The practice of weighing a person against gold or silver or
any other object may be anterior to the period when these
samhitās came to include it as part of expiatory rites. This
practice has been continuing even to the present day in some
form or other, but not necessarily as part of expiation for the
shortcomings in the conduct of temple worship.

Among these rituals, the Pañcātra is the most important and
is held to be of paramount significance in making amends for
the lapses, derelictions and imperfections in the worship.

1393 The earlier Pañcarātra texts have one chapter for expiation, but
do not refer to any defect from the Vaikhanāsa practices. Vide —JS XXV,
PauS XLIII, SKS Rṣi-VIII. Later texts prohibit the admixture of the
two Āgama traditions and also that of the Siddhāntas of the Pañcarātra,
Vide —PaŚ IV 18 & 19, ParŚ XIX, XXI & XXII, IS, XIX, KapiñjalaŚ
XXXI, PurusottamaŚ XXX, VS XXV, ViŚ XXXIX, SprŚ L. The
Vaikhanāsas texts also display vehemence in condemning the Pañcarātra
mode of worship. Besides, they give elaborate procedures Vide —
VK LXI-LXXVII, KA XX-XXVII, SA LXVI-LXXX, JK. LXL-CV. KapiñjalaŚ,
xxxii

1394 ParŚ, XX. Cf. Silappadikāram, XXVII 174-176
ASV —51
throughout the year.\textsuperscript{1395} ‘Pavitra’ is the name given to strings made up of smooth, fine and white threads, folded three or four times or more, prepared by maidsens or women who are aged or widows. They have to be purified with the astramantra. They are to adorn the idol, pitchers, mandalas, the pit where fire is lit (agni kunda) and other places.\textsuperscript{1396} The Lord is to be given a sacred bath and worshipped with all upacaras. Homa must be then performed. The Vedas must be recited and music played upon instruments. The ācārya will appeal to God to forgive him for all lapses in his service rendered throughout the year.\textsuperscript{1397} The Brahmins, recluses, Vaskhānasas and others will attend and be suitably honoured at the end of the session which may last for three or seven days.

\textsuperscript{1395} JS xxii, SS xiv, PauS, xxx 34-36, IS xiv

\textsuperscript{1396} Vide Pās IV 14 259, 260a.

See VP II 6 37-41 for expiation of a general kind. Cf KA xxxi, VK lxxviii. For a critical estimate, see H Daniel Smith ‘Prayaśchitta in the works of the Pāñcarātrāgama’ Brahmadīvya, Vol xxx Parts 1-4

\textsuperscript{1397} Vide, Pās IV 14

\textsuperscript{1398} Vide Pās xxx 148b, 150.
the last day being celebrated with pūrnāhutis. The fruits which accrue to the ācārya, arcaka, the Vedic scholars and others who contribute to the successful execution of this in some way or other are stated to be according to their aptitudes and expectations. The occasion for the conduct of this festival is only in the daksināyana.

Acts of expiation are varied according to the nature of the lapse and of the act itself. On occasions, when impurity (āśauca) stains the arcaka, God cannot be worshipped by or through him. Some arrangements are to be made to conduct the daily worship through others who are also qualified to attend to it. After the period of pollution is over, homa must be performed in the fire and worship re-commenced. The possible lapses and defects are classified under several heads, such as not doing the work of worship at the proper time, swerving from the correct path of good conduct, and so on.

In general, both the Agamas lay stress on the power of mantras. So they prescribe not merely homa in the sacred fire on occasions, but also japa of certain mantras. This

1398 Vide

महद्यानपुर्यं तु कृत्या पूर्णविलालिकम् ॥

कृमदावोपसंहत्यं स्वर्यं गुरुविमलायथवा ॥

Ibid ××× 160 Cf PārS xi 437-439

1399 PauS ××× 173-195

1400 JS xx 5b-8  PauS ××× 8  KA mentions Mārgasīrṣa also as the period for this in ××× 1 24-29 Cf VK pp 469-470

1401. PauS ××× 24-27, 211 SKS Rṣi viii


1403 VK lx, KA xxix, SA 1×××ii, ViS ×××ix 17b, JS. xv. 161-223, AhS xlvi-xlvii, PāS, iv 12, iS. xxv, SKS Indra 1v.

1404. AhS, xx, 56, JS xiv, KA, ×××viii 63b-64a
practice is to be traced to the Smrti texts which are directly inspired by the Kalpasūtras.

There is a certain discipline which one should observe while worshipping the Lord in the temple. One must not approach the temple riding a vehicle or wearing sandals or with a distracted mind.

Vide:

न यानपादकारूढः न सोपानकपादशुतः
न विक्षिप्तमना भूतवा सविशेषालेज्जवदयत्मु

SS, XXI.

Music, dance and discourses of a holy nature must not be stopped while they are in progress in the temple. One must not worship the Lord with his body covered with a cloth.

Vide:

वस्त्रेणाचेचाथ वेंहं तु यो नरः प्रणमेतु मामः
शिव्रीं च जायते मूर्खेष्वरीणि जन्मानि भामिनि

Varāhapurāṇa, II

No one should spit in the temple. One must not enter the shrine after having taken food as a nimantāta in a śrāddha. Incoherent talk is to be avoided there.

Vide:

अनिवर्द्रश्यापानं ये कुबंते मम संविहिदो
तेषुपि तिन्मितितां गत्वा जायते जन्मप्रकाममु

Ibid.

1405 Varāhapurāṇa, ch 108 lists 32 apacaras but chapter 65 (in the printed text, identified by the editor of the Pāñcarātraraksā (Adyar edn.) as dealing with this subject, does not treat it.
Those who go away from the temple, ignoring the discourse that is held there would become deaf and dumb.

Vide:

कथा यां कथ्यमानाय भैरवे मे चराननं।
अनाइता च वेय याल्ति तेषा पापकलं भृषु।
वधिरास्तु भविष्यति सूक्त वै जन्मप्रकामू॥

Ibid.

One should not stretch his legs and lie in the temple. The Lord should not be worshipped with the flowers intended for some other deity. One must not smell the flowers and food preparations which are intended for God. This practice continues now also in a way, when they are taken by the assistants to the priests (paricārakas) with the nose and mouth covered with a cloth. During festivals, one must not bathe feeling that he has become impure by the touch of others.

Vide:

उद्धवे वासुदेवस्य चः स्नाति स्पद्धिश्चया।
स्वर्गस्य: पितरस्तस्य पतन्ति नरके क्रणालो॥

Ibid.

Remaining without bowing to the Lord during festivals and raising one hand while bowing constitute offences. Lying down, taking food, wasteful talk, loud talk, purposeless argument, crying, shedding tears, quarrels, attacks on others and such other activities are forbidden in the temple. Censuring or extolling others, taking what is not offered to God, not offering fruits and other things which are then available, sitting down without the hind part touching the ground, reverential salutation of any person, silence before elders, self-praise and abuse of gods are deemed offences. Older Those who consider the Idol as metal and the preceptor as a human being, go to hell.

Vide:

यो शिष्योः प्रतिमाकारे तोहभायं करोति च ।
यो गुरौ मानुष्यां सावधुनां नरुपातिनां॥

One should stand to the right of God and worship 1407

Although worship of God with devotion and uttering the name of God are recommended as the means for salvation, 1408 yet the 
arcā form is strongly recommended for worship in the Agamas. 1409 Even heinous crimes would not affect the person who commits them, if he were simply to have a look at the arcā form of God from foot to head.

Vide:

आपीढानमोखियतपल्लि पद्यत: पुरुषवत्कम ।
पातकाद्वयं नद्यन्ति कि पुनस्तूपातत्कम ॥

Sāndilya Smṛti, II 89

1407 Vide

पञ्च यथाहृ प्रणस्वेतियतत्क्र भगवतः पुरस्तादृङ्गतोऽवस्थाय
गुरुप्रपदरथा भववतं शरणमुपगाय ॥

PR p 132

1408 Bh xii 3 51

1409 KA I 13, 14a,

प्रतिमाराधनं समूहं तत्त्वेत्र यज्ञानाभेदप्रविष्टनाम भवति।

VK p 5

आसकाये तु कहता पूजा स्तुतितवि ध्यानमेव च च।
विचिना शाखास्ते देव पव कृतेभवेत॥
भक्त्या परमयाश्चर्यो देववेदवस्त्र योगिनवः।
तेषामुद्यापार्थयव रूपं मेजे चतुरुपमधु।
तस्साध्येनव रूपेण देवदेवें समर्पियेत्।

ParS III 8 10a.
CHAPTER X

AGAMAS AND THE WAY OF LIFE

Every society has codes of ethics helpful to its well-being. The standards of good conduct and moral behaviour enjoined by them vary from individual to individual and from one stratum of society to another. All such codes and standards among the Hindus derive from the Vedas.

Moral goodness is a question of behaviour. Everlasting happiness is the goal of good conduct. The lawbooks (Smṛtis) and the conduct of those steeped in Vedic traditions are also authoritative. Moral behaviour is alone held to contribute to individual progress and social welfare. Mere knowledge (even if it be philosophical or theological) can lead to no certain goal.

The ethical codes are supported and stabilised by religious traditions. Hence the religious colouring given by Hindus even to secular activities. The epics and the pucānas have played a significant role in fashioning moral concepts—particularly the Mahābhārata, the Viṣṇudharmottara, the Viṣṇupurāṇa, the Bhagavadgītā and the Bhāgavata. With the exception of the Gītā, these texts reveal acquaintance with the vyūha and sādāguna aspects of God, which are vital to the Pāṇcarātra. The influence of the Sāttvata-dharma (which is developed in the Mahābhārata) may be traced to the books mentioned above.

1410 Vide

वाचारांकणो घरसे: ।

Mbh. Anuśāsana CLXI 9

1411 MS II 6

1412 Vide

वाचारहीतं न पुनर्ति वेदा

यथार्थ्याधीता सह पद्मिनः ।

छन्दोंश्चेन मूल्यादाने व्यञ्जनिं

नींदं रक्षन्तं इच्छाज्ञापि

Vaisisthasmṛti.

This stanza is not found in the now available text.
Still, the wide and varied aspects of Vaisnavism are so rich and complex as to deny any significant Agama influence on them.

Dependence on God in leading a virtuous life is stressed in all ancient works. Thus no one has any real freedom. God's (Viṣṇu's) will creates and sustains the world and provides the people with security. Uttering His name even light-heartedly makes for happiness here and hereafter; no need to speak of devotion or dedication of all actions to God bringing this about. God is the friend of all, high or low. His devotees never suffer.

Devotion is of various kinds according to physical and mental capacities. Its quality is determined by the spirit, and not by pomp or show. The greatest of all activities is worship of God, and adoration of His devotees is still more worthy, for God is more pleased when His devotees receive

1413 Mbh Udyoga, lxxvii 13-18, Ibid Anuśasana, cxxliv 136, V P I 17, 91, VI 5 80-82
1414. V P I 17 91, Bh P VI 3 24
1415. V P I 19 37
1416 Vide

न मे भक्तः प्रणाश्वति।
Bh G ix, 31. Cf Mbh Anuśaṣan, xcvi 46.

1417
अक्षिमष्टिविधा वक्र्ये देवदेवे तु शाक्षिणी।
तद्रक्तज्ञनवाचांतः तत्पूजामश्वमोद्वनम्
तत्कथा अवधेन भक्तः स्वर्गदानाश्विकंक्या।
तद्वृत्तमहणे नित्यं तद्विधं दुर्मवज्ञनम्॥
नित्यं तदनेकशेषितं यथ तत्सोपजीवति।
भक्तिर्दश्विधाेश्यति विशं का के रुपजीवति॥

KA, xxiv. 100-102 It is of nine kinds according to Bh P VII 5 23-24.
worship than when He does \textit{Prapatti} is declared to be the surest means of attaining God.

The \textit{Kalpasūtras} and \textit{Smṛtis} that deal with the social and religious aspects of life, explain also how health and purity can be ensured. Bodhāyana and others prescribe general rules for conduct and also give specific directions for the conduct of Vaisnavas and the worship of God. The \textit{Smṛtis} of Manu, Sāndilya, Vasistha, Visnu and others are similar.

1418.

मम मनःकोषेषु प्रीतिरमयिष्ठा भवेत्।
तस्मात् मनःकोषकार्य पूजनीया विदेषते।

\textit{Mbh. Aśvamedhika}, CXVI, 23.

1419 \textit{Bh P} XI 12 15.

1420 \textit{Baudhāyana Gṛhya Sūtras}, II, 13

1421 \textit{MS} I 10, 11

1422.

आपीढामौलीयर्यं पश्वत् पुरुषोत्तमम्।
पातकान्यायु न्यानिति कि पुनस्तूपपातकान्।
रक्ष्यक्षराणि अष्टसौ तथा भागवतेरितात्।
प्रणामपूर्वकः क्षृन्या येक हेदौ वैष्णवो हि स्।)


1423

अघमानू पोडवाच्चाद्वार्यः चक्कादिसूर्यम्।
प्रत्येक्कुन्त्य पञ्चान्तलदा च भूपणे स्मिर्य:॥

\textit{cited as from Vasīthṣa Smṛti in} \textit{SR}, p 54

1424 \textit{Visnu Smṛti}, chs 65-67

ASV—52
The Āgamas' impact on Vaisnavism seems to have become significant only from the time of Rāmānuja. The earlier attitudes may perhaps be due to the Brahmasūtra discussion on the validity of the Pāñcarātra and the stand of Śaṅkara and Bhāskara that this Āgama is unacceptable in part. Yāmuna's rejoinder eased the position. After Rāmānuja incorporated their doctrines in his Gadyatrāya, they came to occupy a position of unquestioned authority. But the Āgamas have not influenced Vaisnava tradition to such an extent as to make it conform extensively to their ideals and practices.

Rāmānuja also wrote the Nitya on the way of worshiping God every day at home. It is based on the Pāñcarātra. Though the Vāśikānasa also has prescribed a daily routine, it is intended only for the followers of the Vāśikānasa-sūtras. Hence, following the lines laid down by Rāmānuja, his immediate disciples, Śrīvatsāṅkämśtra and Śrīraṅganārayana, brought forth their own manuals. They were followed by Parāśara-bhatta, Naṅjiyar, Narāyana-muni, Vedānta-deśika, Varavara-muni and others. Works on āhńika were written by several writers in later periods.

The fivefold division of the daily routine (pañca kāla-prakriya) forms the basis of these works. Till recently there were many Śrīvaisnavas who scrupulously carried out this routine. That is not the case now.

The indispensable qualification for being a Vaisnava is wearing the ārdhva-pundra. The marks which Hindu men and women wear on their foreheads are known as pundras. They may be vertical (ārdhva), horizontal (tiryak) or circular (vartula).
The Vaisnava tradition enjoins the vertical variety, on the authority of the Vedas. Vide:

\[\text{Vide: } \text{SR, p. 61.}\]

The ārdhva-pundra is claimed to keep away evil spirits. It must be worn to ensure purity, while offering sandhyā prayers, doing homa, worshipping God, studying the Vedas and such other religious activities. Otherwise, they will be futile.

The material used for the pundra is white mud; sandal and some other things, recommended in different contexts, are held to apply only to particular persons. The white mud should be taken from only select spots like Śrīraṅgam, Veṅkatādri, Śrīmusṇam, Tirunārāyanapuram, Vṛṣabhādri (Tirumāliruṅsolai), banks of rivers, ant-hills, the areas where tulasi grows and holy places.

The ārdhva-pundra has to start at the tip of the nose and rise upward in parallel columns with some space in between them, where a red or yellow vertical line is drawn with the help

\[\text{Vide PR p 54 citing PārameśṭhyaS Cf PārS. III. 11, 10, 21; IS III. 296-317}\]

\[\text{SR p 64 citing from Pārameśṭhya and SKS Brahma Quotations from the latter are not found in the printed text}\]

\[\text{Vṛddha-hārīta-smṛti II 64-65, Cf SR p 68}\]

\[\text{SR pp 68-69}\]

\[\text{SR p 66 The SKS Brahma passage cited is not found in the printed text}\]

\[\text{Passages cited in SR, pp 68-69 Cf Divyasūricarita, III, 17.}\]
of a powder made of turmeric and other ingredients and called ‘Śrīcūrṇa’.

Several opinions are recorded about the shape of the ārddha-pundra. It may be of the form of flame, the leaf of the bamboo, a flower bud and Viṣṇu’s foot or feet and so on, and each form is said to achieve a specific purpose. But the practice among Śrīvaiṣṇavas is to have it in the form of the divine foot or feet. However, the two sects, Vajakalai and Tenkalai, have chosen to adopt slightly different forms of the punḍra. As a rule, red-coloured Śrīcūrna is worn by both, but some of the former use the yellow colour.

Vedāntadesīka discusses an interesting question about the form of the punḍra. On the idols of God in temples, the punḍra is in the form of a flame. He says that the same form should not be used by men, for whom the form is that of Harṣa-pāda. If they try to imitate the Lord in this, will they seek to follow His example in other matters as well?

अन्यथा भगवद्वृddhiyogakṣeyamādinśvavākulavikramāśvatvam-समयश्वरतनादेशिप्रतिश्रावत । अतो न स्वामिकेत सर्व भूदेहनायया-चरणीयम । ...........किरी वाल्मीकरणात्मक्ष्या हि भगवतस्तदारण्; तन्न शोभैव प्रधानवृद्धित्वथ यथा शोभामिसामात्मक्ष्ठेंद्र श्रस्तुत्तरित्वा किरी विस्तृत्ये?

SR p 73

The number must be twelve including one in the forehead. The others are to be put on specified parts of the body.

1432 KA XXXVIII 9 19-20 Cf SA LXV 126b
1433 KA XXXVIII 9, 10, SR pp 72-73
1434 Vide

श्रस्तवाद्विविहितार्थिप्रेमाविस्मयामेव
भागवतेश्वरे देवमिति स्वयंतम्।

SR, p. 73.

1435 SR p 76.
1436 Passages cited from various sources in SR, pp 73-75. Also see KA, XXXVIII. 11-20, and IS, XI, 292-320.
There appears to be a somewhat weaker sanction for wearing only four.\textsuperscript{1437} The \textit{P\u{n}car\=atra} enjoins the uttering of the twelve names of \textit{Vi\=nu}, when putting them on, while the \textit{Vai\khanasa} prescribes specific \textit{mantras} instead.\textsuperscript{1438}

Putting the \textit{\u{u}rdhva pun\=ara} on the idols in the temples is authorised, as well as on wells, \textit{mantapas}, horses, elephants and vehicles, on the vessels used for worship, flags and other objects belonging to the temple.\textsuperscript{1439} At the entrance to houses, the \textit{pun\=ara} used to be carved on doors or painted on a plank fixed to the top of the door. Here there would be additional figures—of the discus on the right, the conch on the left, Garuda to the right of the discus and Hanum\=an to the left of the conch. In modern days, the wearing of the \textit{\u{u}rdhva-pun\=ara} has practically disappeared among the younger generation.

The practice of wearing the \textit{\u{u}rdhva-pun\=ara} seems to be very ancient. Ved\=anta-des\=i\ka in his \textit{Saccar\=istra-raks\=a} gives profuse citations from Vedic texts like \textit{Katha-s\=akh\=a} and \textit{Baudh\=aya\k Kalpas\=utras}, \textit{pur\=anas} like the Matsya, Brah\=m\=anda, M\=arka\=ndeya, Vas\=istha and Sk\=\=anda, and \textit{Smr\=tis} like \textit{Vi\=nu smr\=ti} and \textit{Smr\=ticand\=rik\=a}. The two \textit{\r{A}gamas} also advocated it. Ved\=anta-des\=i\ka quotes from the \textit{P\=arames\=vara}, \textit{Parames\=hti} and \textit{Sanatkum\=ara Samhit\=\=as}, though many passages cited from the \textit{Brahma-r\=\=atra} section of the last mentioned text are from three chapters which are now lost.

A fivefold initiation known as the \textit{pa\=n\=ca-sams\=k\=\=ara} is enjoined on all the \textit{Srivas\=n\=ivas} without distinction of caste or sex. This sacrament is intended to fit one to discharge one’s duties to

\textsuperscript{1437} Vide
\textit{\r{A}da\=str\=i} \textit{\r{A}t\=ur\=on\i\=var\=i} \textit{\r{S}\=ur\=ita}: \textit{\u{u}ru\=\=laya \=h\=\=ij}.

\textsuperscript{1438} \textit{KA} XXXV 11-18 \textit{SKS} \textit{Brahma} is cited in \textit{SR}, p 74. But these passages are lost.

\textsuperscript{1439} \textit{KA} XXXVII. 24-27.
God and man. It consists of tāpa, pūndra, nāman, mantra and āyā. It is also known as samāśrayaṇa or resorting to (the preceptor as refuge).

Tāpa (heating) refers to the marking of the left and right shoulder blades of the initiate with small heated pieces of metal of the form of the conch and the discus respectively. Vedānta-deśika quotes texts from the Vedas, the Pāṇcarātra and the purānas as authority for tāpa. Two Vedic passages cited by him are given below:

दक्षिणे तु सुजे विषो विभृयां खद्दशिनम् ।
सल्ये तु शाहं विष्ट्रवर्दिति व्रजविद्रो विदु:॥
(from Mahopanisad as in SR. p. 43)

(Those who have realised Brahma declare that the Brahmins must bear the discus on the right arm and the conch on the left.)

The second passage is:

प्र के विष्णो अद्वृतके पवित्रे
ज्ञामास्बोधि तत्त्वे चर्षेिन्द्रा:
मूले वाहोरिघसे

(Bāskala Samhitā as in SR p 93)

(O Visnu, the learned have on the upper part of their arms the sanctifying conch and discus in order to cross over the ocean of worldly existence).

Another Vedic text cited by Vedānta-deśika declares: "He who bears on his body the mark of the heated discus of the omnipresent Visnu which gives security to the army of the...

1440. Vide:

ताप: पुष्कर्त्था नाम मन्त्रे यागधिय पश्चातः

JS XXI, 233.
gods, goes to the place which is devoid of misery, shaking off the sins—the place which the recluses who are without attachment, attain " It is as follows:

चं विभल्यवपुषा अभिसम्पत्ति
वर्तमैवानामसितस्य भिर्योऽ।
स वति नामक वृद्धिता विधुय
प्रयालित पारस्यो वीर्योऽ॥

The word translated as 'on his body' is 'vapusā', the instrumental form of 'vapus' meaning 'body'. There is nothing against taking it to mean "the upper part of the right arm " which will be in consonance with other texts and hoary traditions. Those who do not have their bodies marked by the heated discus cannot exhaust the karmas (i.e., effects of their past actions) which condition is a necessary preliminary to salvation

Another Vedic passage testifies to ancient sages bearing on their bodies the marks of all divine weapons:

इत्यतःतल्ये पुराणा:
खिंजर्यज्ञकाल्यायींिप्रवलित।
(quoted in SR. p 48 as from Bāskala-samhitā)

The marks (śringas) mentioned here refer to those of discus, conch mace, sword and bow, the five weapons of Visnu. They are believed to have been worn on the right and left arms, the forehead, the head and the heart respectively. Now only the first two are worn

Instead of marking the shoulders by tāpa with the marks of discus and conch, mud and sandal paste are used for the purpose

1441 The passage with the word 'vapusā' is quoted in SR p 43 as from Rgveda-khila. The text denying the exhaustion of karmas is RV. IX, 83, 1. Cf. SR. p 43.
by Vaisnava belonging to schools other than that of Ramanuja. The scriptural text from the Rigveda-khila mentioned above states: *bibharti vapusa abhsta Hampton* This clearly envisages tāpa.

Obviously, this sacrament is intended to purify the human body and render it fit for service to God. Fire is regarded as a more effective purifier than water—particularly, 'fire' in the heated symbols of Visnu or His weapons. Such marks on the body render it fit for any religious act that the Vaisnava has to do for pleasing God.

The ācārya officiating in this sacrament has been accused of cruelty. He hurts the body of the disciple only for a noble purpose. He must be likened to the surgeon who uses sharp instruments to operate on the patients. Parents again punish their children severely to induce them to be good, studious and industrious: this is done out of love. Again, in certain regions branding is a remedy for evil or the means of winning good luck. Certain diseases are treated in Saurāstra by branding with a heated iron rod below the affected part of the body. In Mithilā, the mother-in-law and others apply the

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1442 Vallabha's system prescribes the use of sandal paste. Pure mud is required to be used on the occasion of offering worship (*Tattvadipa*, II 242a)

1443 Vide

**तीर्थायं च वहिष्ठ नान्यत: शुद्धिमहतः।**

_Uttara-rāma-carita_, I 13b

The potency of fire is thus set out

**श्रानागिनि: सर्वकर्माणि भस्सलात् कुलते यथा।**

*Bh, G* IV. 37.

Sudarśana has the powers of the sun, the moon and fire. See *AhS*, XXIV 1.

1444. Ātma-tattva-viveka p. 873
flame of a lamp to the knee of the newly wedded bride to ensure good fortune for her.

The law-books of Vṛddha Hārīta, Śāndilya and Vasistha and the Visnudharmottara enjoin this practice. Śāndilya says that one’s utensils and cattle are to be given the marks of the conch and the discus. Children are to be adorned on the fifth day after birth with ornaments having the symbols of conch and discus.

Those who oppose the sacrament of tāpa rely on a passage in a Śrauta-sūtra which frowns on scars from wounds in the body caused in three ways. The three ways are taken to be through the bow-string, engaging in battles or involvement in scuffles in gambling. Such activities must be regarded as forbidden or allowed only to the extent at which no scars are received or given. But they are claimed to refer to wearing the emblems of Brahmā, Viṣṇu or Rudra so as to cause scars. Such an interpretation is untenable: it goes against the authority of the Vedas, epics, Āgamas and the bulk of the Smṛtis. The few Smṛti texts quoted against the sacrament cannot avail.

1445 Vide Śrīmvasācārya’s commentary on NP 414-415
1446 Pārśa XV 962b-965a Cf SR p 52.
1447 SR p 52.
1448. Baudhāyana-Śrauta-sūtra (II 3) uses the word, ‘ātrikinah’ (one without three scars). Caland’s notes identify the scars as those caused by (i) using the bow-string and taking part in wrestling, (ii) participating in gambling and (iii) trying to control elephants. This is as per Bhāvasvāmin’s commentary on the sūtra.
1449. See SR, p. 41.

ASV—53
against this formidable corpus of authority. It should be remembered that there are references also, as already mentioned, to the practice of wearing the emblems of all the five weapons of Visnu (the conch, discus, mace, sword and bow) to get freedom from saṁskāra 1450

There is no decisive evidence to show how old the ritual of tāpa as also the pāṇca-saṁskāra generally is. It might have been originally intended as a protection against evil spirits. The newborn child used to be given a garland containing the emblems. Ear-rings of the form of the conch and the discus used to be worn by devotees of Visnu. In course of time, probably by 700 A.D. 1451 it became essential for a Vaisnava to have the saṁskāra. In Nathamuni's days, it must have been in vogue, though not every Vaisnava of the times observed it. (Wearing ārdhva pūndra might have become widespread earlier.) After Nathamuni, tradition records some instances of tāpa being administered. Tirumalai Nambi administered it to his two sons-in-law 1452 and Periya Nambi to Rāmānuja 1453. After Rāmānuja the sacrament of pāṇca-saṁskāra became obligatory for all Śrīvaṁśnavas, irrespective of caste or sex. In a passage from the

1450 Ibid p 49. See also fn 1447
1451 Tāpa is referred to by the Āzhvārs. See Tiruppallāndu 7 and Periyāzhvār Tirumozhi, V 4 1
1452, Yatirāja-vaibhava, 3
1453 The theory that Śrīsaivalapūrṇa otherwise called Tirumalai Nambi, administered this is against tradition. It goes also against Yatirāja-vaibhava (8) where it is stated

श्रीशैलपूर्णिप्रथ्यभूतपुर्वा-
मागम्य वीक्ष्याकृतबांगिनेयम् ।

चकाररक्षाधीरथाङ्कशाहः-
चिह्नेचरामागुज्ञानकंच ॥

Rāmānuja as a baby is here said to have received the marks of the conch and discus for protection from him. The word used is 'raksārtha.'
Mahābhārata quoted earlier in this book, it is declared that Brahmins, Ksatriyas, Vaśyās and Śūdras can engage in (ritualistic) worship of God if they are always devoted to their duties and are kṛta-laksanas, persons who have obtained marks of identity, that is, have undergone some kind of initiation. Attempts were made to interpret laksana as referring to the wearing of the sacred thread (yajnopavīta) by Brahmins and the branding of shoulder blades in the case of Śūdras and women. This is untenable as the word ‘laksana’ which qualifies jointly and simultaneously four or five groups of persons, is made to bear one meaning when applied to one group and another meaning when applied to other groups. Though the Kalpasūtras do not refer to the sacrament of tāpa, there is Vedic sanction for Brahmins being marked by heated metal with the forms of the conch and the discus on their arms.

Though the sacrament of pañca-saṁskāra makes men and women of all castes qualified to perform formal worship of the Icons of God, not every one can do so in the temple. The right is restricted to those who get initiation. At home also, not all perform the worship: it is usually done by the eldest male member of the family. Though women are eligible, normally they do not do it, in spite of tāntrika mautras being available to them in the place of Vedic mantras.

Seventyfour preceptors or ācārya-purūsas, also called simhāsanādhipatis or ‘occupants of the (spiritual) throne’, are said to have been entrusted by Rāmānuja with the duty of administering the sacrament of pañca-saṁskāra. The Yatrājā-nasīhava (103) and the Guruparamparās refer to this. But there does not seem to be any written evidence to show that the

1455. SR p 65
1456. Bāškala Sākhā text quoted in p. 414 as from SR, p. 43.
1457. JS, XVI-XVIII.
right to give the fivefold initiation is restricted only to the 74 and their successors. As of today, only a few of the successors exercise this privilege, others having given it up for some reason or other.

The ritual of initiation is begun by the ācārya himself with a homa in the sacred fire. The Purusa-sūkta, Śrī-sūkta and other sacred texts are recited. Metallic representations of the conch and discus are ‘bathed’ ceremonially and then heated in the fire. They are then applied by the ācārya to the shoulder blades of the disciple, who also is given the puṇḍara. The teaching of three mantras—the mūla-mantra (i.e., the astākṣara), the dvaya and the caramaśloka (i.e., Gitā, XVIII 66)—constitutes the saṃskāra of mantra. As for śivā, the disciple is instructed in the ritual of worshipping God at home. He is then given a name by which he can regard himself as a devotee of God and His devotees. The occasion is utilised also to teach the disciple the significance of the epics, the Gitā and some other sacred texts and instruct him on how to lead his life as a Śrīvaishnava.

The ācāryas include some ascetics also. This has given rise to a practical difficulty. Sannyāsins are prohibited from offering oblations in the fire. Hence the homa required for the sacrament has to be performed by some gṛhastha attached to the sannyāsin who however applies the heated metal pieces to the shoulder blades of the initiates. For some time past, the tendency has been to seek initiation at the hands of sannyāsins.

1458 It is stated that the saṃskāra of nāman is concerned with how one describes oneself to others. One must add the word ‘dāsa’ (or ‘servant’) to one’s name to indicate that one is a servant of God and His devotees. Vide

एकान्ती व्यपदेशयो नेव ग्रामकुठादिदिःः ।
विष्णुना व्यपदेशव्यस्तस्य सचं स पव द्वि ॥

This stanza is cited in RTS I p. 507, as from ViS. in the printed text of which however, it is not found.
presiding over mutts, and the disciples of ācārya-puruṣas who are householders, are dwindling.

One group of Vaishnavas, it may be noted, do not receive pañca-saṁskāra. The Vaikhānasas claim that they are the children of the Lord and that they do not need the sacrament or preceptors. Other Vaishnavas are distinguished from non-Vaishnavas mentally, verbally and physically. They engage in the distinctive mental activity of bhūtaśuddhi and the verbal activity of japa in the cakrābhjamaṅgala and are subjected to being marked on the body by the metallic emblems of the conch and discus of the Lord. The Vakhānasas reject the three mantras taught to other Vaishnavas by their preceptors. Japa in the cakrābhjamaṅgala is meant only for those who follow the Pāñcarātra exclusively and without reference to the Kalpasūtras. As for tāpa, the Vakhānasas claim that in their families the foetus in the womb gets the marks of the conch and the discus in the eighth month of the pregnancy of the mother when the ritual of Viṣnubali is performed. Nārāyana Himself is said to give the mark to the foetus. Thus the followers of the Vakhānasasūtras claim to be Garbha-Vaishnavas, that is, Vaishnavas even in the wombs of their mothers.1459

In spite of these differences between the two Āgamas, it may be noted that, according to both, the Vaishnava has to bear the marks of the conch and the discus. It should also be remembered that this saṁskāra has for long been considered an

1459 Vide

भृत्कियुक्तस्य मद्वौरस्य
निपेककमोदिविराजितस्य ।
बेखानस्स्य न तत्सुद्व्रा
न मन्नद्रीक्षा न गुरुस्या विना ॥

KA. XXXVI, 54.

Cf. ibid, XXXVI, 42-49, and Vaikhānasā Gṛhya-sūtra, III. 13.
essential qualification for conducting worship and preparing food both at home and in temples. Even women must be thus qualified before they can handle household vessels, bring water or cook and serve food. The pious would not accept even a cup of water from one who had not undergone the *samskāra*, though the strict observance of this rule is no longer common.

The daily routine has been prescribed for the Vaishnava who has undergone *pañca-samāskāra*. An immediate disciple of Rāmānuja—known as Vaṅgi Vamśeśvara and Śrīranga-nārāyaṇa-eśāra—has written a manual, *Āhnikā-kārikā*, based on *pañca-kāla-prakriyā*. It should be deemed an authentic account of Rāmānuja’s views.

The round of daily religious exercises differs in some essential particulars in the *Pāñcarātra* and Vedic traditions. The latter enjoins the *Gāyatrī-japa* thrice daily. The *Pāñcarātra* prescribes the *japa* of *Viṣṇu-mantras*. During *japa*, Viṣṇu is to be meditated as being present in the sun’s disc, and He is to be worshipped with specific names. The *mantra* for the *japa* in the morning is *Viṣṇu-Gāyatrī*, the devatā being Viṣṇu; at midday, it is *dvādaśākṣara* invoking Mahā-viṣṇu; and in the evening, it is *aśāksara*, the Deity being *Sādā-viṣṇu*.

Vedānta Deśika warns against hastily discarding Vedic practices and adopting in their place directions from *Pāñcarātra* texts except on very strong grounds. He points out that followers of Rāmānuja’s teachings have performed marriages, *upanayana* and other sacraments and rituals in accordance with the *Śūtras* to which they owe allegiance. Further, all know that Rāmānuja’s preceptors like Periya Nambi performed sacrifices and other rituals according to their *Śūtras*. Hence those intent

1460 *Āhnikā-kārikā*, 35
1461. *RV*. III. 62 10,
on following the precepts and practices of Ramanuja and his disciples should not adopt for rituals and ceremonies the mantras enjoined in particular Pañcarātra samhitās. The Ahnīka-kārikā enjoins homa and other rituals of the kind mentioned in Kalpa-sūtras. In this context, the question arises as to accepting the Pañcarātra injunctions about rituals involving the slaughter of animals. King Uparicara Vasu is said to have offered as victim in a sacrifice the figure of an animal made of the flour of wild grains. Brhaspati, the preceptor of the gods, accepted this view after initial opposition. The Pañcarātra is held to be Vasu's authority. The Dvaitins, influenced by the humane considerateness of the Pañcarātra, recommend sacrifices of this kind. The Viṣistādvaśīnī, though far more influenced by the Pañcarātra, argue that a Vedic ritual, if obligatory or required on specific occasions, must not be given up or modified.

The offering of arghya to the sun during sandhyā prayers is cited as a ritual involving himsā, as it brings about the death of the demons impeding the progress of the sun. One has to turn round oneself in the clockwise direction to get rid of the sin of killing. But the killing of an animal as a victim in a sacrifice is not deemed a sin. Himsā or causing injury is an act which leads to evil.

अनश्यापक्वचुपारतव्रे हिर्साल्क्षणम् ।

1463 RTS II, 444-5 See also PR p 130
1464 Ahnīka-kārikā, 83-87
1465 Mbh. Śānti, CCCXLI 11
1466 Ibid. 18 20, 63, 64
1467 The Dvaitins' views are set out in the Pista-pāśu-mīmāṁsā of Vijayāndra
1468 RTS II 444-5
1469 Tattirīya Āranyaka II 1, 2
1470 Vedānta Deśika's Tātparya-candrikā on Ramanuja's Gāthābhāṣya, II. 19.
In this sense, there is no *himsā* in sacrifices, as the victims attain to a better state after death. Rāmānuja observes:

अतिशयिताभ्युदयाः स्थानान्मूले ब्यापारोऽस्यपदः खोरोऽपि 
न हिंसा प्रक्षुद रक्षणमेव।

*Sribhāsyas* III 1.25.

Therefore the ritual killing of animals is meritorious. It inflicts beneficial injury like surgery:

चिकित्सकेऽ च तात्त्विकार्यं पदः संक्षारणमपि रक्षकमेव 
बद्धिः, पूजयन्ति च तत्ज्ज्ञः।

*Sribhāsyas*, IV. 1.25.

(Cf. *Adhikaraṇasūryavali*, 284-6, of Vedanta Deśika on *ibid*)

As regards the *japa* of any mantra, it can be verbal, silent or mental, securing protection from evil spirits, accomplishing desired objectives and helping in the attainment of *mokṣa* respectively.1471 The rosary, *aksasūtra*, is to be used for counting the number of repetitions.1472 Interruptions to *japa* are not generally permissible, but the arrival of a devotee of the Lord requires a break in it.1473 Devotion to the devotees of God is stressed so much.

1471 *JS* XIV 3-5a

1472 *LT.* XXXIX 38-47. The use of the rosary and selection of materials for it are stated here. Cf *JS* XIV 5-18.

1473 Vide
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Besides japa, four other rites are enjoined by the Panca-rātra—‘sacrifice', libation, ritual bath and offering food to Brahmins. Collectively, the five are known as puraścarana. They are needed for securing full spiritual power through mantras. Among the prescribed mantras are the Visnu-gāyatrī, the Śāvitrī, Sūdarṣāna-mana, Bīja-maṇtra, Astra mantra, the Bhūta-suddhi mantras, Sakti-maṇtra, Pañcopanisam-mantra, Vaiṣṇava mantras generally and many others. Of these, only a few are used in japa and for attaining specific objectives. The Śāvitrī is obligatory for every one qualified to study the Vedas. Among the Vaiṣṇava mantras, the pranava, saṅkṣara, astāksara, dvādaśakṣara and Jītante are described as vyāpaka. The astāksara is universally enjoined by Vaiṣṇava tradition in addition to the Gāyatrī. Vide:

स्वसद्रिष्टकोनिष्ठामार्गेण यथार्थ सर्वेण्यं पञ्चकाल्यपम्
प्राप्ते; अति पद हि माध्यकाराणां दिश्या: प्रविष्वा श्रीमद्भ्रात्त्र्करे रण समाराधनं पञ्चब्रह्मम्: पञ्चकाल-
कल्पनथैव दिनचयांमुपदिदिक्षुः।

PR p 10 (Cf VK. p. 108).

Worship of God is obligatory for everyone. It is of two kinds—in the temple and at home. The former known as parārtha-yajana (worship for the sake of others) is concerned with the consecrated idols in the temple and intended for the welfare of the community. The Agamas however suggest that ‘parārtha' means ‘concerned with what is superior' or 'excellent'. It is like the sun, while worship at home is like a domestic lamp.

परार्थ: स्वर्यलक्ष: स्वार्थस्तु मृदीयवत्।

IS. XXI. 508a.

1474. This is the view only of the followers of the Pāñcarātra

1475 Visnu-gāyatrī is a vaidika-tāntrika mantra. Vide SKS. Brahma, IV. 71. It is adopted in Vaikhānasa texts also. See VK pp. 28, 89

ASV—54
It is also declared that \textit{parārtha} \textsuperscript{1476} worship leads to final liberation.

\begin{quote}
परार्थ उद्देश्यो मोक्षवाचकः
\end{quote}

\textit{(Arcanā-navanīta).}

This is not to imply however that domestic worship, \textit{svārtha-yajana}, can be dispensed with.

In temples regulated by the \textit{Vaiśhānava Agama}, only the followers of the \textit{Vaiśhānava Kalpasūtras} can conduct worship. But in temples adopting the \textit{Pāñcarātra Agama}, any \textit{Vaiṣṇava Brahmin} following any \textit{Kalpasūtra} can perform the \textit{ārādhana}. But the primary eligibility is said to be with those who are descendants of the Brahmins who were taught the doctrines by God and whose families have been attending to worship in temples\textsuperscript{1477}. Special initiation is necessary for these as well as others who have only secondary eligibility\textsuperscript{1478} Men and women of all castes can and must worship God at home after receiving \textit{pañca-saṃskāra}.\textsuperscript{1479}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1476} \textit{Para} is taken in the sense of \textit{superior} Domestic worship is \textit{svārtha} \textit{SprS} LIII 152-155, \textit{IS} XXI 509a
\item \textsuperscript{1477} \textit{SA} XXII 10-15
\item \textsuperscript{1478} Vide
\item \textsuperscript{1479} \textit{Paus} I 35, 36a, \textit{Vis vāmitraS} III, 27 Vide also
\end{itemize}

\begin{quote}
(\textit{Cited in PR} p 66, Adyar edition, from \textit{Yogaśāñcāvalkya}) This must not be taken to mean everyone in a family should offer worship, but that domestic worship should never be given up.
\end{quote}
Worship at home is conducted with reference to one or more small icons or to a stone called sālagrāma in which the Lord is believed to be specially present.\textsuperscript{1480} The latter is preferred as the worship of icons at home requires time and involves strain. Household icons should be made of metals like silver or copper or of certain other specified materials.\textsuperscript{1481} They should be not less than six inches in height.\textsuperscript{1482} They require formal consecration.

The sālagrāma is found in the river Gaṅdakī when it flows through Nepal. As ‘śāla,’ means a kind of fish and ‘grāma’ a dwelling place, the compound word means the place where the śāla kind of fish reside. Vide:

\begin{quote}
ताहः व्यापनं स्थानः शालः
\end{quote}

(Bhānuji's commentary on Nāmalīkānusāsana II. 2. 37).

and:

\begin{quote}
समी संवस्थानामो
\end{quote}

(Ibid II. 3. 19 )

But the exact significance of this name is not known, and it is sometimes written as 'sālagrāma'. It is to be treated as svayānvyakta.\textsuperscript{1483} According to a traditional account,\textsuperscript{1484} the river, Gaṅdakī, cursed the gods who in turn cursed it to become a black, dull stream. The Lord (Viṣṇu) reconciled the two by decreeing that two Brahmins, Grāha and Maṭanga, should come to the river on account of a curse and die there, after which they would get mokṣa. Insects, born out of their

\textsuperscript{1480} SA LXXI, 3.
\textsuperscript{1481} PauS. I 35-36s; ViśvāmitraS III. 37.
\textsuperscript{1482} ViS. X. 56-61.
\textsuperscript{1483} IS. XX, 34b-15a See also PaS, III. 32. The name occurs as 'sālagrāva' in SprŚ XXIX. 114b.
\textsuperscript{1484} Brahma-vaivarta-purāṇa, XIX.
marrow and fat, would convert the water into vajra-like hard stones, thus redeeming the river from the curse. These are the sālāgrāma stones,

They are distinctive in having one or more marks of Viṣṇu's discus, conch, club or other weapons. Vide:

चक्राक्षुङ्गो शालग्राममलक्षणम्

(Raṇavīra-bhakti-ratnākara, p. 75).

The marks may be visible or subtle. From the nature and shapes of these marks, they are identified as Varāha, Matsya and other forms of God. For instance, the Varāha sālāgrāma is said to be ghonākṛita 1486 while the Matsya is thus described: 1488

वासे प्रद्यते रेखा मत्स्यमूर्तिः सुभद्रा ।

As Viṣṇu is ever present there, no pratiṣṭhā (consecrated installation) is necessary. 1487 A donor of the sālāgrāma will get happiness and prosperity. 1488

For worship in the house, a group of five or six sālāgrāmas, called a kṣetra, is recommended. Perhaps this is meant to be similar to the number of betas in temples. Sālāgrāma worship is similar to that of temple icons.

The object of worship at home, whether sālāgrāma or icon, may be inherited (pūrva-puruṣa-sthāpita), acquired from select spots (svayam grīha), installed by some one in one's house (anya-nyasta) or purchased (dhana-krīta) 1489

In the Vaishnava idea of God, many currents of thought about God, man, the world and their inter-relations meet and

1485 Raṇavīra-bhakti-ratnākara, p. 79.
1486. Ibid. p 407.
1487. Ibid. p 3
1488. Ibid. p 9
1489. Paus. XXX, 84-87.
mingle. Important contributions were made by the epics, purāṇas and poems of the Āzhvārs. Even before Rāmānuja, Vaiṣṇavism had gained a distinct form. During and after his times when the temple became very important, the influence of the Āgamas began to be increasingly felt, but it never became all-comprehensive.

Worship of God is also called ārādhana which means ‘an act of pleasing’. The Vaiṣṇavas expect people to be parama-kāntins, those who realise that they are entirely dependent on God and therefore have no favour to ask. The descriptive term is understood in two ways: those who have decisive knowledge (anta) only (eka) about God (parama) as the means and the goal; and those who are great (parama) in having decisive knowledge (ekānta) about God as the means and the goal. They have no other purpose to be served, seek no other god and resort to no other means. Vide:

परमकāntसौ एकान्तेऽवेति परमेकांतः, सोस्यास्तीतिष्ठति परसेकांतः।
एकज अन्तो निध्वय: प्राध्यतया पापकतया च तदुभयं संभूय परमेकांतः; परमकांतसौ एकान्तेऽवेति च अमासः। तताध्य-नालोपायत्वानन्तप्राग्योजनतवोंस्मुच्यत्वातपरस्यामु, अनन्त्योपायतवं
चानन्यादेवतातक्तवपर्यर्तम्।

(PR. p. 140).

Every Vaiṣṇava is expected to take a resolve (saṅkalpa) to please God who as Bhagavān is possessed of six auspicious qualities and is Nārāyaṇa. Some resolve to do things which are kainkarya.

The procedure for worship at home is detailed in Rāmānuja’s Nitya, which seems to be taken from the Lakṣmi-tantra1490 and Ahirbudhnyasamhitā1491. The instructions

1490 LT XXXIX.
1491 AhS, XXVIII.
regarding bhūta-suddhi, pañcopaniṣan-mantra, surabhi-mudrā, astra-mantra (for keeping the offerings secure) and such other things given in the Nitya are taken from the Pañcarātra; the influence of which is also seen in performing hrdayāga or mānasāyāga before performing external worship.

The recitation, however, of the compositions of the Āzhvārs and ācāryas during the ritual of mantra-puspa and śāttumarai has no precedent in the Āgamas. The Nitya of Rāmānuja and the Āhnika-kārīka of his disciple, Vañgi Vaṁśeśvara, mention dance and vocal and instrumental music as part of the formal worship and direct the offering of flowers at the utterance of each of the vyāpaka-mantras and of each śūkta of the Puruṣa-sūkta, but they do not refer to the mantra-puspa and śāttumarai. The Abhigamanasāra of Śrīvatsāṅka-mīra, the Nityas of Parāśara Bhaṭṭa and Naṅjiyar, the Nitya-karma-sāṅgraha of Grdhrasaro-muni and the manual of Krṣṇa-muni are lost, and we cannot find out when and how the procedure now followed in the arādhanā-krama was fixed.

In regard to these and many other practices in Vañṣṇavism in relation to the worship of God, pious persons have received them from tradition dating back to very early times, though they may not all be based on Dharma-gastra or Āgamas. But they spring from one source of dharma, the good conduct of good persons.

Vide:

आचारययैव साधूनामात्मस्तुष्टिहेतुव च

MS. II. 6.

Some of these practices may be mentioned. While most people prostrate only once, Vañṣṇavas of the Vaḍakalal sect do

1492 Āhnika-kārīka, 403-7.

1493 These lost works are referred to in PR, II and III. See especially pp. 113, 122-5, 128, 130, 131.
It twice or four times, that is, an even number of times. In temples one should worship at the shrine of Śrī before proceeding to the shrine of the Lord. One can have a special worship called arcana through the areaka (the officiating priest). It consists of offering a specific number of times (usually 108 or 1008) saffron powder (kunkuma) at the feet of the dhruva bera of Śrī and tulasī leaves at the feet of the dhruva-bera of the Lord, to the accompaniment of the uttering of their numerous names (108 selected names or 1008 such names). The list of names is known as the nāmāvalī, and it is available not merely for Śrī and Viṣṇu, but also for incarnations like Rāma, Kṛṣṇa and Narasimha. One of the 108 names of Śrī is Prakīrt, and obviously it indicates the influence of Āgama philosophy. Each name is recited like a mantra with the pranava at the beginning. The noun is declined in the dative case and the word ‘namah’ (prostration) comes after it. The flowers, leaves or kunkuma offered during arcana is at the feet of the icon. Fruit, coconuts and betel leaves with areca nuts are then held before the Deity for acceptance. Burning camphor is waved three times from the foot to the head of the Deity evidently in

1494 Vide

हिंद्रा प्रदक्षिणं कुर्णित्मणावसं च तथा विषम ।
यतस्तमो हि भगवान् देवस्तवस्य वेहुरिः ॥
Pārśa VI 416

Cf IS, XII 21

1495.

ष्रेणवादि नमोंदने शुक्यस्तम्मुदीर्यन ।
SA LX. 50a

1496.

हरिपदार्चनादन्यत्सः किन्यतिपरं हितम ।
Pārśa. II. 31b

1497. JS IV, 214.
order to enable the worshippers to get a good view and to give them the assurance of divine blessing. But the arcana is also part of the temple routine which includes the offering of water for arghya (washing the hands), pādyā (washing the feet), ācāmaniya (sipping) and other upacāras and the use of water in bathing the icons. Such water acquires sanctity and is distributed to the worshippers after it becomes available. The sāthāri (which contains a representation in metal of the two feet of the Deity) in then placed on the heads of the devotees in token of divine acceptance of their services and devotion. The flowers and tulasī leaves used for arcana are also distributed to the devotees. Other features of temple worship like special offerings or periodical abhisekas (ceremonial baths) can be offered to particular deities on behalf of devotees at their request, but as in the case of arcana.

It is enjoined that worshippers at the shrine should stand to the right of the Deity, but the direction is not observed. Another injunction not followed is that the worshippers should leave the shrine walking backwards without turning their backs to the Deity. The prescribed circumambulation of the shrines however is carried out.

The name of Śrī’s shrine is tāyāri sannidhi in Tamil, which indicates that Śrī is the Universal Mother. The word, "sannidhi", to denote a shrine, implies the presence there at all times (of the Deity). Indeed, the entire temple is permeated in a special way by the divine presence. The mandate is therefore given that after passing the dvaja-sthambha one should

1498. Important temples arrange for such services. The Srinivāsa temple at Tirumalai is unique in having such services practically every day throughout the year.
1499. PR p. 132
1500. PārS IX. 66.
1501. In Śiva temples, the goddess is called ‘Amman’ in Tamil.
not bow or prostrate to any one other than the Deity, not even to kings and preceptors.\textsuperscript{1802}

At the time of festivals or processions of the Deity, every individual must try to render some kind of service. This takes precedence over all other work including the performance of \textit{sandhyā-vandana} which should be postponed, if due when the processional idol is taken out. Similarly, the general rule that silence be observed during the \textit{mahā pradosa}\textsuperscript{1503} (that is, the evening having the \textit{trayodaśī tithi}), is not to be followed by those who have to render \textit{vācaka-kāśikārya} (verbal service) by reciting the \textit{Divya-prabandha} or the \textit{Vedas}. This code of behaviour has been clearly inspired by the sense of a primary obligation to render service to the \textit{arca} form of God, deeming it more important than any other duty whatsoever.

The concept of service has influenced even the choice of terms to describe worship of God. Those who carry out formal worship are said to do \textit{ārādhana}, an act which pleases, and visiting the temple is taken to provide an occasion for \textit{sevā} (service). Philosophically, the self is regarded as a \textit{śeṣa} (subordinate) to the Lord and hence a servant (\textit{sevaka} or \textit{kāśikāra}) to Him; what he does is \textit{kāśikārya} (service). The same attitude is extended to characterise his relations with his preceptor, parents, elders, relatives and other Vaiṣṇavas. In all these cases, he is said to render \textit{sevā} when he shows his regard and respect or even prostrates himself.

\textsuperscript{1502} \textit{Vide} PR. p 135.

\textsuperscript{1503} \textit{Vide} PR. p 144 where the \textit{Kalavidhāna} and \textit{Smṛtyarnava} are cited

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Festivals in the temples are deemed occasions of celebration at home where feasts are prepared. Some arrange for public feeding on a large scale on such occasions. Contributions are given for conducting specific festivals in temples when food preparations on a large scale are offered to God and distributed to devotees. Gifts in cash and kind are also given to aracakas and others rendering service in temples. Some persons create endowments out of money, landed property etc to yield income for conducting the temple festivals in which they are interested. Money is poured every day into the hundis of temples. The vast daily collections at the Tirumalai temple of which the annual income runs into several crores from voluntary contributions, serve as a correct index of the fervent devotion of the people.

The epics and purānas no doubt have nurtured this devotion. But it is the Agamas that have played a notable role in directing this devotion to temples. The daily routine, the official and private offerings and the festivals at temples are governed by the Agamas. A study of South Indian temples, particularly that at Srirangam, reveals the Agama influence on temples and society.

As regards domestic worship, it has to be offered twice every day, whether to a consecrated icon or a sālagrāma. But it is usually performed only once, in the morning. The procedure is the same in the case of both the icon and the sālagrāma. If, for unavoidable reasons, ārādhana could not be carried out, at least the food prepared at home should be formally offered to the Deity. This can be done even by ladies. It is also usual for a small lamp fed by ghee or oil to be kept near the domestic shrine and lighted both in the morning and the evening and kept burning for some time. After the conclusion of the worship, holy water is first taken by the person who did the ārādhana and then distributed by him to others.

In one detail connected with the worship, members of the Teṅgalai sect (except for a few in Andhra) differ from others:
they do not ring the bell during ārādhana. Sometimes this is explained as due to the fact that the person doing the ārādhana has to use his left hand to ring the bell, as the right hand has to make the offerings.

Usually, ācamana (ceremonial sipping of water) has to be performed at the commencement of a religious act. This is forbidden before and after taking the holy water.

\[\text{Vide.}\]

\[\text{ācamana-nirnaya cited in } PR \text{ p. 133}\]

Another prohibition is in regard to accepting food from a house where Viṣṇu is not worshipped in ārām form:

\[\text{Kedāvaraḥḥuṣṭe yasya nā tiṣṭhāti mahāpate} \]
\[\text{tastānān nāvabhoktvamabhavayam sam hī tattv}\]

cited in \(PR\), p. 115

It is mandatory to take only the food offered to God during ārādhana. Accepting such food is anu-yāga, as it is an act pleasing to God, being regarded as part of worship and carried out while thinking about Him. Except recluses, all are to take food twice a day.\(^{1504}\)

In regard to parisecana, the ceremonial sprinkling of water round the dining leaf followed by taking a small quantity of water from the palm of the right hand to the accompaniment of uttering a mantra, it is enjoined in some texts that it is only for the cooked rice. This means that other dishes like soup and vegetables are to be served afterwards.\(^{1505}\)

\(^{1504}\) KA, XXXII 77.

\(^{1505}\) Ibid. XXXVIII, 79, 85, 86
practice is now prevalent only among the Vādakalai Vaisnavas. The Vaikhānasas do not follow it at the present time. After the pariśecana the holy water used in worship (ādhaṇa) has to be taken. This is also done at the end. But this has not been prescribed.

In the fivefold division of duties according to time, though svādhyāya and yoga find a place, they are not practised even by the extremely pious nowadays.

The Agamas deal with some festivals which recur annually. The Vaiṣṇavas in course of time have concentrated their devotion on Viṣṇu to the exclusion of other deities like Śiva, Ganeśa, Subrahmanya, Indra and Sūrya. The Agamas however provide for their worship as gods forming Viṣṇu’s retinue. In fact, the worship of Ganeśa is enjoined before starting any ritual. But the paramāthaṇṭn ideal of devotion developed under the influence of the Gītā and the Purāṇas, did not allow consideration for other deities. Thus the Vaisnavas do not observe Vināyaka-caturthī, Skanda-saṣṭhi or Śivarātri, nor do they visit the temples of these deities. The birthdays of Āzhvārs gained importance among them. Every Vaisnava household celebrates the nativity of Āndāl on Tiruvadippūram day when the moon is with the asterism Pūrvaaphaṅgūṇa. Some Vaiṣṇava festivals like Śrīrāma navami, Śrī Jayanti and Nṛsimha Jayanti are celebrated by all Hindus. The Agamas deal in detail with these three celebrations.

1506 Vide

अब्दुत्तोपस्तरणमस्तीयायावाच प्रायवेदवृजः

Ibid XXXVIII 89a

1507 PauS XXX 59

1508 See PR p 140

1509 Nṛsimha-Jayanti, however, is not observed by the Tengalai Vaiṣṇavas except for some groups in Andhra and Karnātaka.
There are differences among the Vaisnavas in fixing the days for these festivals and in some minor details of observance. Sri Krsna is said to have been born under the asterism, Rohini, during the night of the eighth day of the dark fortnight in Sravana. This is the Sri Jayanti day. The astamī and the Rohini asterism do not occur on the same day every year or extend simultaneously throughout their duration. Usually, the tithi and the nakṣatra are simultaneous only for a few hours. The astamī may extend for the whole day with Rohini occupying a part of it, or vice versa. In the former case, we have the Janmāstami, while the latter gives rise to the Sri Jayanti. The Kṛttika constellation or the saptamī may extend for some time with the Rohini and astamī respectively. Or Rohini and astamī may be together when the moon rises in the dead of night. Or the day may be such that Rohini prevails at midnight without having had any association with Kṛttika earlier, though the astamī could have come after sunrise when saptamī was still continuing. Or again, the astamī could prevail without any tinge of saptamī during the day, though Kṛttika would have preceded Rohini in the earlier part of the day. Any one combination of these conditions permits the celebration of Kṛṣṇa's birth-day, according to the Muniśrava section of the Vādakalai Vaisnavas. The Vaikhānasas stress the presence of astamī at sunrise, whether or not Kṛttika is there at that time to be followed by Rohini later in the day. But many Vaisnavas prefer Rohini at sunrise, even if the tithi should happen to be navamī or daśamī.

1510. Bh P X 3 8, V P V 3 7, cf KA XXXVIII 121,
1511 KA XXXVIII 114
1512. Naradiya-samhitā XXIV 13-14
1513. Gopāla Deśika's (1750 AD) Jayanti-nirnaya.
1514 KA XXXVIII, 114-115.
But most members of the Vadakalal sect and the Teṇkalal Vaiṣṇavas follow the Pañcarātra in this matter. On the Śrī Jayantī day they fast during the day and eat at night after celebrating the birth of Kṛṣṇa. Pañcarātra dicta regarding tithi and constellations are followed in celebrating the Śrī-rāma-navamī, Nṛśimha-Jayantī, Kṛttikādīpa, Sravana-dvadāśi and other festivals. It is said that a pious and learned scholar of Kāṇci during the last century adopted Pañcarātra rules completely to the exclusion of the regulations of the Smṛtis and wrote an Āhntka (or manual of daily duties) setting out his views. But the limited extent of the Pañcarātra influence on Vaiṣṇavism is reflected in a section of the Munitraya group among the Vaḍakalal sect adopting Smṛti rules for observing the Śrī Jayantī: they fast throughout, taking a meal only next morning.

1515 JS XIII; SprŚ. XLIV. 12b-16a, KA. XVIII. 21-32a, VK. p. 317, KA. XVIII. 47-48.
CHAPTER XI

CONCLUSION

In the preceding pages, the Vaishnavism of South India has been shown as being based on the Vedas, epics and other ancient works and as later developing under the influence of the Purānas and Āgamas. The variety of sources and influences makes it inevitable that the leading concepts like those relating to the avatāra or the vyūha evolved at different times in different ways. There does not seem to be any uniformity in treating them. Modern scholars cannot trace these concepts definitely to any sources or chart the stages in their evolution.

Earlier in this work it has been suggested that the Pāñcarātra is only a revised version of the Ekānti-dharma which was dealt with for the first time in the Vaikhānasa system. The yantra concept which could have served as a link between those of japa and pratimā did not find scope in the Vaikhānasa system. But it is the pratimā (image or icon) that occupies a place of importance in both the Āgamas.

The Vedas do not seem to refer to the worship of the images of God. The Vaikhānasa Āgama however declares that such worship is the best way of approach to God. And the use of Vedic mantras is enjoined by both the Vaikhānasa Sūtras and the Vaikhānasa Āgama. In fact, they claim that any sacred rite performed in the holy fire is only worship of God (Viṣṇu). The Vedic ritual was thus treated as a form of worship of God. Because of this, the Mīmāṁsakas and other orthodox followers of Vedas opposed to idol worship, did not care to criticise the Vaikhānasas.

The Pāñcarātra system, however, fared differently. It was criticised as foreign in origin and subject to foreign influence,
for allowing worship by those not entitled to Vedic studies and evolving *Tantrika* mantras for their use, and for using *yantra* and mudrā. In the course of this book, these criticisms have been met.

It may be remembered that the criticisms on the *Pāñcarātra* Āgama invite reference to the *Utpattyasambhavādhikarana* of the *Vedānta Sūtras*, forming the last section in the second part of the second chapter. Saṅkara approves of all the tenets and rituals of the *Pāñcarātra* except for the declaration about the "birth" of the *jīva* or individual self (who is known in the system by the name of Saṅkarṣaṇa), this is because the Vedas hold the *jīva* to be uncreated Rāmānuja, as pointed out already, has effectively answered this criticism.

But the question may be raised whether this section contemplates any criticism of the *Pāñcarātra*. After all, its first Sūtra, "*Utpattyasambhavāt*", means only "due to the Impossibility of birth (or production or rise) (of something)". Here there is no reference to the *Pāñcarātra* which seems to be brought in only because some of its texts appear to speak of the creation of the *jīva*. The Sūtra can be directed against any system opposed to the acceptance of *Brahman* as the cause of the universe. It can refer to the hypothesis of inert *Sakti* being such cause, on the strength of some *Upanisadic* texts, as suggested by Madhva. Though this view seems reasonable, it does not explain Rāmānuja's stand. Perhaps he thought it necessary to answer the criticisms of Bhāskara and Saṅkara against the *Pāñcarātra*. He demonstrates that there is no substance in them because the *Pāñcarātra* really does not hold the *jīva* to be created. His followers uphold his line of treatment in strict adherence to the principle that the strength of a group lies in the unity maintained by the individuals therein. We may also note that Viśīnabhaṅka (who wrote extensively on *yoga*) thinks that this section refutes theories about the origination of *Brahman*—a view that may solve many difficulties.
The Purāṇas speak with different voices about the Pāñcarātra. The Viṣṇu, Bhāgavata, Varāha, Brahma-vaivarta, Garuḍa, Pāṇḍma, Agni, Līṅga, Vāmanā and some others support it. But the Kūrma, Vāyu, Parāśara, Sāmba and some others attack it. The contents of some Purāṇas like the Skānda and Āditya are heterogeneous. Such evidence could be neither dismissed nor readily admitted.

The same diversity of opinion is found among Kalpasūtras and Smṛtis. Pāñcarātra practices are supported by the Kalpasūtras of Agnivesa, Baudhāyana, Dakṣa and others, but condemned by Āśvalāyana and others. Similarly, the Smṛtis of Viṣṇu, Śāndilya, Vaiśeṣka, Śātaṭapa and Vṛddha-vāsiṣṭha and the Yoga-yaññavalkya and others are in favour, while those of Hāitaka and Yama are against. There are indecisive opinions in Vīramitrodaya and even in Yoga-yaññavalkya and the work of Śātaṭapa.

In this welter of conflicting opinions, the testimony of the early statements made in the Mahābhārata and those in the Viṣṇupurāṇa and Bhāgavata must be taken to be of primary authority.

Ramānuja

The impact of Vaiṣṇava Āgamas on the Vaiṣṇavism of various schools, claiming a hoary antiquity and a firm basis in the Vedas, epics and the Purāṇas, may be seen in important features of their precepts and practices. The school of Rāmānuja (1017-1137 A.D.) is most closely linked with the Pāñcarātra. The Āgama had influenced Vaiṣṇavism in the south even before the days of the Āzhvārs. The prevalence of Vaiṣhāṇasa temples in the region from an early period attests to the influence of this Āgama also.

The Viśistadvalta system of Vedānta, expounded authoritatively by Rāmānuja, has won recognition all over India. But its followers are most numerous in the region now comprising the ASV—56.
States of Tamil Nadu, Andhra and Karnataka. It has some centres in the north like Pushkar, Brindavan etc. The life of the Vaisnavas of the Ramanuja school is almost uniform in all these places except for a few local variations. The temples here are regulated by either the Pañcaratra or the Vaskhānasā Agama. They all observe the custom of reciting the songs of Āzhvārs which is a sort of universal rule among this school of Vaisnavas, though the Agamas do not directly enjoin it.

In general, the cosmological speculations of the Agamas have not had much impact on Viśistādvara Vaisnavism though their philosophy has exerted influence on it. The religious life of these Vaisnavas has been deeply influenced by the Pañcarātra. Nevertheless, this influence is not all-inclusive: in several matters they prefer to follow the dicta of Smṛtis. This is evident from, to take one example, the differences of opinion, based on Smṛti texts, in regard to fixing the dates of Smṛtis. Important festivals like the Sri Jayanti, Śrī-ramā-navami, Nṛśimha-jayanti, Sravana-dvādāśi and others.

A striking feature of Vaisnavism is the growing conviction from the time of Rāmānuja onwards that it is an imperative duty to worship every day the icon in the temple or the icon or the sālagrāma at home. This mode of worship has gained importance as part of the bhakti movement. The earlier tradition of the Upanisads appears to have been to stress the gaining of knowledge concerning God through a life of discipline, abstract thinking and meditation. Eminent sages like Vyāsa, Narada and others, out of humanitarian zeal, sought an easier approach to God. Relying on the assurances of the Lord in the Bhagavadgītā,1517 they taught bhakti to be the easiest as well as the surest means to realise God.

1516. Vide SR, p. 46. Cf. RTS, II 444-5; PR, p. 130
1517. Bh G. XII. 7, 10, XIII. 10 etc.
At this stage, the Ágamas came forward with directions for worshipping God in the finalized form of idols in temples. They too were animated by the zeal to serve humanity and help them in their troubles and afflictions. The Vaisnava Ágamas have made a significant contribution towards this. It is noteworthy that there are relatively more Vaisnav temples in Tamil Nadu than in other States.

The importance given by Ramanuja and his followers to the worship in temples accounts for the large number of Vaisnav families living in the neighbourhood of temples in places like Tirumalai, Srirangam, Kanchipuram, Kumbhakonasam and others. The temple festivals in these places draw large crowds year after year. On other days also, pious persons feel it an obligatory duty to make at least one visit to the temple every day and offer their services to God according to their capacity. This tendency has influenced to a considerable extent the daily life of the Vaisnavas generally and particularly in the places mentioned above and others like Tiruvallikkeni (in Madras city), Mannargudi, Azhvar Tirunagari, Melkote (in Kārnataka) etc.

Though yogic practices are dealt with in both the Ágamas, stress is laid primarily on upāsana (worship), particularly of God in the form of Idols. It is declared as the means for pleasing and approaching God. Elements of propatti enter into it, as it is the acknowledged means for salvation.

Music and dance are an essential part of the worship of God, particularly in temples. This receives emphasis in the Pāñcarātra. It is also mentioned in the Purāṇas. Dance is not now permitted in temples, and music is confined to playing the pipe (nādasvara). The flute, lute etc., are now not in use.

1518  VK pp 507-10, PaS. II. 1, 1-6.
1519,  PaS IV. 11.
The four-thousand hymns of the Āzhvārs, according to tradition, were set to music by Nāthamuni. But the way in which they are now recited in the temples is not musical. It is easy to guess that the musical mode was lost or abandoned at some time. Among the factors contributing to this might be the feeling that concentration on music might lead to neglect of meaning and even devotional fervour, and that the recitation of the hymns in the temples would be restricted to those having musical talent and training.

Likewise the bhajana-gosthī or choral group singing songs in praise of God is not in high favour in South India. It seems to be just tolerated on occasions like the Dhanurmāsa (December 15-January 15) or annual festival processions. The emphasis is on service to God in temples in some capacity or other, service to devotees and passively witnessing celebrations of festivals.

M A D H V A

In addition to Rāmānuja, three other teachers of South India have made substantial contributions to Vaisnavism—Madhva from Karnataka and Nimbārka and Vallabha from Andhra. All of them have been influenced by the Pāñcarātra and the Purāṇas. Rāmānuja differs from others in coming under the influence of Āzhvārs also. Among the forms of God, these teachers give special importance to arcā and vibhava (or avatāra).

Madhvacārya (1199-1277) belonged to Udupi near Mangalore. He wrote a number of works on philosophy and religion demonstrating the ultimate supremacy of Viṣṇu. His Tantra-sāra-saṅgraha treats in four chapters the practical aspects of Vaiṣṇavism. Pranavā is stated to denote Brahman who is identical with Viṣṇu. The Aṣṭāksara is the source of all mantras and is the most important among them.¹⁵²¹ The Sāvitrī is said to have

¹⁵²¹. *Tantra-sāra-saṅgraha*, I. 2, 13,
sprung from the Astāksara recited twice. Nyāsa is described for mantras and letters. 1523 God (Viṣṇu) is to be worshipped in the cakrābja-mandala, the heart, mountains, water or the ground. 1524 The conch, discus and such other things are emblems of Viṣṇu who is said to have two consorts, Lakṣmi and Bhu. 1525 The materials for making images, their detailed measurements and other particulars are given in Chapter III, as also the procedure for consecration. The four vyūhas are mentioned. 1526 This work clearly shows that Madhva was closely following the Pāñcarātra tradition and deeply learned in the lore of mantras.

The Viṣṇu-rahasya that he often cites describes fully the worship of idols, particularly those of Viṣṇu. Idols are of two kinds, cala and acala. The former is said to be the Vaisnava Brahmin

चलाचलबिमेदेन प्रतिमा हिंतयं मम ||
चला तु वैश्वनो विनो हिििविधात्रवचला मता ||
Visnurahasya, X. 2.

The statement that the Vaisnava Brahmin is the cala form of the Lord may mean no more than that he should receive worship as if he were divine, because the worship of the devotee is pleasing to Him. 1527 Since this is not made clear, a conservative interpretation would be that the text is merely eulogistic suggesting that Vaisnava Brahmins should be honourably treated.

1522 Ibid 14
1523 Ibid I 37-39a, 44, II.
1524 Ibid I 49
1525 Ibid L. 18, 19
1526 Ibid IV 168
1527 Vide RTS, I. 489-90 where a passage is cited from the Pādmottara
The acala type is of two kinds—what is sahaja (naturally formed) and āhita (consecrated). Of these, the sahaja pratimā may be a tīrtha (a sacred river like the Gaṅgā or a holy tank like that at Pushkar), a kṣetra (a sacred spot like Prayāga, Kaśi, Kurukṣetra or Badarī, or an idol found in the earth at such a spot) or a śilā (i.e., a saṅgṛāma which requires no consecration before being worshipped). All are qualified to worship this form.

Worship in the temple has to be performed thrice every day. Only Brahmmins are said to be capable of offering worship there. Even among them, learned though they may be, certain blemishes of character or conduct act as disqualifications.

Stress is laid on mano-yoga, the fervour and sincerity of devotion. Without this, observance of external formalities is a mere show. Hence worship is said to be both internal and external. The former is done with the mind, and the dangers involved in its performance by those with uncontrolled minds are vividly described. The latter is to be done with the physical body, and using wealth and other possessions for performing homa or extending charity.

1528. Visvārahāśya, X. 7a-10
1529. Ibid. X 119
1530 Vide
1531. Ibid. X 14b-21
1532. Ibid LII 43a, 49a.
1533. Ibid. LII 14
1534. Ibid. LII. 15-42a.
1535. Ibid. LII. 49b-84.

Ibid. X. 136.
Though the Visnurahasya does not deal with the construction of temples, other important aspects of the Pāñcarātra are discussed and described. This may explain why Madhvacārya quotes frequently from the Visnurahasya and why it has enjoyed the favour of writers owing allegiance to the Dvaita system. But it must be different from the Pāñcarātra text having the same name 1536

In spite of the importance attached by the followers of Madhva to temple worship, there do not seem so be many temples governed by them. The temple at Udupi is under the control of the pontiffs of eight mathas there, each of whom takes charge for two years in turn. The idols in the mutts at places like Mantralaya (in Kurnool district of Andhra) and Tirukkoyilūr (in Tamil Nadu) are worshipped by the ascetics there according to the Pāñcarātra. Festivals are celebrated in the temple at Udupi with processions, but there is no chorus of Vedic chanters following the idol. The ascetic himself offers the holy water used for worship to the disciples and the congregation.

The Āhnska, mentioned above, is informative on the daily life of the Madhvas. All acts should be undertaken only for pleasing Visnu and they form part of worship. The worshipper should wear on his forehead a tilaka in sandal paste in the form of the ārdhva-pundra.1537 Similarly, a mark in the form of the lotus must be worn on the chest, in the form of the bamboo leaf on each arm, and in the form of the flame of a lamp in other places. This seems to be an attempt to reconcile the differing rules in the Iśvara, Pārameśthya and Nārādyā Samhitās.1538 Curiously enough, there is no mention of the

1536 LT Introduction p 11 It is not however clear that a work having this name is meant here. See Schrader p.10
1537 Madhva’s Kṛṣṇāmyta-mahārṇava, II 227-9
The use of sacred mud from Srirangam, Dvārakā, Sīkūrma, Simhādri, Prayāga, Vāraha (Srimuṣṇam) and groves of tulasī, along with holy water from the worship of sālagrāmas, is allowed. While performing ācamana, the names of the four vyūha Deities should also be uttered along with the twelve names of Viṣṇu beginning with Keśava.

The followers of Madhva observe the sacrament of lāha by getting their shoulder-blades branded with the heated metal emblems of the conch and the discus. It is their belief that the marks on their shoulders should not be allowed to fade out. Many impress every day with sandal paste the forms of the conch and discus as ūrdhva-puṇḍara not merely on the shoulder-blades but also on the chest, arms etc.

The Āhniṣka details the procedure for worship and describes the pūjā-mantapa where it is to be performed. Worship is to be offered with devotion even to Ananta, Garuda and others forming the retinue of God. After snapana, the Dvādaṣa-stotra of Madhva must be recited. Vessels containing food to be offered must be placed on the bijāksara of Śrī written on decorating designs made with coloured flour on the floor, and consecrated with the mūla-mantra. The mantras for offering food

1538 See PR pp 72-3
1539 A Brahmarātra text cited in SR p 72 refers to this form.
1540 Āhniṣka, pp 16-17
1541 Šankha-cakrāṅkana is a dīkṣā which confers superiority. Without it and the ūrdhva-puṇḍra no undertaking yields fruits. Vide

तस्य तथा शांख यथा गाले न विजये |
हब्यं कत्यं तथा स्वर्गे देवाश्च पितरोपिष्ठि हि ॥
नैव गृहस्तिः कुपिताः शुना स्वर्गे वथा तथा ।

Ibid. VII. 64-65a.
consist of the names of the five vital airs in association with those of Anruddha, Pradyumna, Samkarsana, Vasudeva and Narayana. The mūla-mantra must be uttered for Brahman. The Īśānī-stotra of five sections is to be then recited. After performing Vaiṣṇavadeva, the preceptor, Brahmins and the retinue of Viṣṇu must be worshipped. After completing the worship, one must draw on the forehead a straight black line (using charcoal from the incense offered) on the puṇḍra of sandal paste.

Thus the Pāñcaratra is held in high esteem by the Madhvas as the best among the sāstras.

Vide:  

अन्येषामागमनं तु वजारोहऽथे भवन्यापि !  
पाञ्चरात्रस्य कुत्सनस्य वक्तांहः स्वयमेव हि !  
अतोऽधि सर्वशास्त्रेऽवर्तमेतत्निवृत्ते ।

Visnurahasya, VII. 32-33a.

In accordance with its dictates, they use the pīṭa-pāśu in sacrifices. They hold that even kāmya rituals are to be performed without expectation of reward when they become akāmya, pleasing to the Lord. While doing any act, particularly any act the Veda enjoins, one must have knowledge, devotion and detachment. Vide:

भगवज्ञत्वक्षानवैरायणपूर्वकं च कर्मं कर्तव्यम् ।

Madhva's Karma-nirnaya.

1542 The printed text, according to the followers of Rāmānuja, has six sections.


1544. Such acts should never be given up. Krṣṇamṛta-mahārṇava, 235b.
Nimbārka (circa 1200 AD), born in Andhra and originally called Bhāskarāeārya, was an ascetic reputed to be an avatāra of the sun-god who put down heretics. A story about his name, Nimbārka, relates a miracle. Once he played host to a Jaina ascetic with whom he was having a philosophical debate. Suddenly they realised that they had debated till the sun was about to set. As neither of them could take food after sunset, he made the sun stand still in its course, asking the Jainas to wait under a nīm (namba) tree and serving food to them there. Hence the name of ‘Nimbārka’ or ‘Nimbāditya’.\(^{1545}\) Niyamānandācārya was another name of his.\(^{1546}\)

The sect founded by him is called ‘Hamsa’ after the incarnation of Viṣṇu as a swan who taught the Veda to Brahmā.\(^{1547}\) In the same form he taught the pure tradition to Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatana and Sanatkumāra. Nimbārka received it from Nārāya. His cult is known as Sanatkumāra-Nārada-sampradāya, Vide:

हेलस्वरूपं सनकादिकेक्षत्तत्त्वोपदेशाय विधाय शुचे
तस्य परं भागवतस्थाधिः सत्त्वमप्रदाययथमुपादिशाय:।
ध्यायत्वात्माद्वी तद्विन्योत्वाद चार्योऽवेयं हरिप्रियेन
निम्बार्कनारायणस्तिमरवोधं सनाराद्व्वेयसाजाजनेन॥

(Kesāvi Kāśmira-bhatta’s commentary on the Bhagavadgītā last sloka)

\(^{1545}\) H H Wilson Religious Sects of the Hindus, p 86. Das Gupta’s History of Indian Philosophy (III p 399) says that he was a native of Nimba or Nimbapura in Bellary District and that he died in 1165. See P N Srimvasachary’s Bhedabheda, p. 155. Giridhara Prapanna’s Daśālokī-vyākhyā Laghu-mānūja, 6 says he belonged to Brndāvana near Delhi.

\(^{1546}\) Devacārya, Siddhānta-Jāhnavi, p 6

\(^{1547}\) The Hamsa-incarnation is mentioned in Bh P X 2, 40. Cf. Ibid. XI 4, 17. His appearance thus before Śiva (XI, 19 13) and before Brahmā (XI, 17, 3) is also mentioned,
Among the followers of Nimbārka are both householders and recluses. They are largely found in Upper India, near Mathurā and in Bengal. They wear the urdhva-pundra with white earth or the sandal paste offered to God with a circular black mark in the centre. They also wear a necklace of tulasī beads. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are worshipped by them

Nimbārka's philosophy can be described as Svābhāvika-Bhedābheda. It makes a wonderful adjustment of conflicting metaphysical views. It seems an adaptation of the tenets of the ancient thinker, Audulomi, referred to in the Brahma-Sūtras. It admits dvaitadvaita between phenomena and the noumenon and bhedābheda between the self and Brahman who is both saguna and nirguna. Brahman is the abode of auspicious qualities, free from imperfections and both the material and instrumental cause of the universe. The immanent Sakti of Brahman is responsible for creation.

It is further held that Brahman is Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, having a dual spiritual form made of beauty and bliss. The six guṇas listed by the Pāncarātra are among Brahman's innumerable qualities, thus testifying to the influence of the Āgama on Nimbārka. Prapatti is a path to moksa open to all. Self-surrender to the grace of God is the most important of its six elements. Devotion to Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa deepens into intense

1548 For these particulars, see H H Wilson, Religious Sects of the Hindus, p 86.
1549 Brahma-sūtras, I 4 21; IV 4 6.
1550 Cultural Heritage of India, Vol I p. 573.
1552 Ibid p 155.
1553 Vide Laghumartijūsā on Daśāloki p 18.
1554 Keśava Kāśmirī Bhatta's commentary on Bh, G., p. 2; XVIII, 66; Svanadgaṇī-tattvā-prakāśikā, XVIII, 73.
love, evoking a revelation of God's blissful nature and leading to moksha. The friendship of the gopis should be sought.

Nimbarka wrote the Daśaślokā, a brief conspectus of his system, and a commentary on Brahma sūtras called Vedānta-pāruṣāta-saurabha. His immediate disciple, Śivavacārya, commented on it in Vedānta-kautubha; which received a commentary, Kaustubha-prabhā, from Kāśva Kāśmira Bhātta. Devācārya explained the Brahma-sūtras, Nimbarka's lines in Siddhānta jāñnavā which has a super-commentary, Setu, by Sundara Bhātta Vanamāli Maśra discusses the system in detail in his Vedānta-siddhānta samgraha (also known as Śruti siddhānta) in seven chapters. The Bhagavatgītā is interpreted according to Nimbarka by Kēśiva Kāśmira Bhātta in Tattva-prakāśākā.

Nimbarka holds Kṛṣṇa, associated with Rādhā, to be the Supreme Reality. Hayagrīva is specially mentioned in the Śruti-siddhānta. The three ultimate principles, Brahman (Kṛṣna),cit (the self) and acit (inert matter), are real, co-eternal and both different and non-different from one another. Vide:

\begin{quote}
ब्रह्माणिन्नोऽधिक्षेत्र: स्वस्वस्वरूपतो भिन्न यथा।

Vedānta-pāruṣāta-saurabha, II 1 22.
\end{quote}

Brahman's auspicious qualities and freedom from imperfections are stressed. Vide for instance

\begin{quote}
स्वभावतोपास्तस्मस्त्वृपमोऽक्षमक्ष्यामः कृष्णकार्तिम्।

व्युत्थाविजेन व्रजः परं चरणाय श्यामेष्य कृष्ण कमलेक्षणं द्वितीयं॥

Daśaślokā 4
\end{quote}

1555 Cultural Heritage of India, II p 152

1556 Vanamāli Misra's Vedānta-siddhānta-samgraha (also called Śruti-siddhānta), II 60

1557 P N Srivivasachari's Philosophy of Bhedabheda, p. 158, The name 'Kṛṣṇa' is thus derived

पार्थ कष्टयति निमूलयति हति कृष्णः।

1558 Śruti-siddhānta, I. 1, IV. 1
There are many similarities between the systems of Ramanuja and Nimbarka. Prapatti and its elements are common to both. Sayujya characterises mokṣa. Inert matter is of three kinds—immutable (aprākṛta), mutable and time 1559 Brahman is Viṣṇu and His body is eternal. Brahma and Rudra are subordinate to Him. Viṣvaksena, Garuda and many other eternally free selves attend on Him 1560 The main purpose of His descents on the earth is only to enable His devotees to have intimate communion with Him.1561 The term, 'māyā', is understood as knowledge.

Vide:

माया बुधमेव ब्राह्मिते निषिद्धकृष्णात्तृत्र ।
तथा भगवद्भ्रह्मव्रकारोति भूतिनिर्लं एव ।

Keśava Kāśmīra Bhattachā's Bhagavadgītā-bhāṣya, IV. 6.

Similar views had been advanced by Ramanuja earlier.1562 The Gītā’s main teaching is the doctrine of self-surrender. The above-quoted commentary thereon observes:

उपास्यस्य सब्ज्ञाप्रत्येकीकारणाय गतिते
परमेवं गीताभासोमित्यवगम्यते ।

Ibid. XVIII. 73.

The similar views of Ramanuja’s school have been referred to earlier 1563

1559 For the Nimbarka school see Siddhanta-jahnavi, p 77, and Daśatālokā, 3 Compare Rahasvaraksā on Ramanuja’s Śrīranga-gadyam, p 69

निगुणकालशुद्धस्तवरुपेन अभितन्तबिध्यम् ।

1560. Keśava Kāśmīra Bhattachā's Bhagavadgītā-bhāṣya, p. 2
1562. Śrībhāṣya, I. 1. 21. Durgācārya offers the same explanation on Nirukta, V 15 Śrīdhara interprets māyā as knowledge under Bh. P, X 8 30

1563. See also P. N. Srinivasachari’s History of Viśisṭādvaita, p, 374,
Rāmānuja's methodology seems to have influenced Nimbārka, as may be seen particularly in his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtras*. Through Rāmānuja, again, he must have come under Pañcarātra influence. The system is not directly mentioned by him, but he uses the word, 'vyūhaśrūga'1564. Similarly, Śrīnivāsaśācārya mentions śadgūnyā without referring to the Āgama.1565 But Keśava Kāśīmira Bhāṭṭa cites passages from the texts of the system which is mentioned by name.1566 According to Vanamāti Miśra, the Pañcarātra is in the best among the source-books.1567 Manu Śmir and other authoritative texts are based on it.1568 He refers to the four *vyūhas*.1569 Charting the course of the soul attaining release, he says that it proceeds to Antruddha, then to Pradyumna, thence to Śaṅkaras and finally to Vāsudeva the Paramātman.1570 The fivefold sacrament is described in detail and enjoined as obligatory.1571

Nimbārka and his followers accept the Pañcarātra wholeheartedly. He does not take pains to controvert views questioning the Āgama’s authority or to reject the theory that the *Brahma-sūtras* section at the end of Chapter II, part 2, is against the creation of the universe by Śak I without the control of God. Śrīnivāsaśācārya also does not refer to these

1564 D-tasloktayarman, 4. The word is taken by the commentator Purusottama a pupil of Śrīnivāsaśācārya, to mean the four *vyūhas* and also several kinds of divine descents like the puruvāvatāra, the qumāvatāra and itihvatāra Giridhara-prapanna in his commentary, Lachu maṇḍūka, gives a brief account.

1565 Bhagavadgītā tattva-prakāṣikā, p 2

1566 Kaustubha-prabha on Brahmsūtras II 4 44. In his *Tattva-prakāṣikā*, under Bh G VII 2 and IX 30 Satytat-tantra and Śrś-sattvata are cited. Nārada-pañcarātra is quoted under XVIII 73. Under X. 3, a statement is identified as found in *Pañcaratratavacana*.

1567. Vedānta-sūdānta-sangraha, 11. 78.

1568. Ibid IV 81-82.

1569. Ibid. IV. 26-33.

1570. Ibid. II. 61-63.

1571. Purusottama’s commentary on the *Dasatlokā*. 
controversies. But Kesava Kasmira Bhaṭṭa adopts Rāmānuja’s views on the matter. He stresses particularly the authority of the Mahābhārata in the matter. There is an ingenious suggestion by him that if Vyāsa criticised the Pāñcarātra it must have been some other school of thought with the same name.

Nimbārka’s followers however do not adopt temple worship. They have implicit faith in their preceptors who are grhaisthas or recluses. Perhaps the worship of idols conducted in the mathás by leading preceptors is adopted by the followers.

V A L L A B HĀ CĀ R Y A

Vallabhācārya (1478–1531) is said to have been born in Andhra. In his view, Brahman having sat, cit and ānanda as Its attributes is the cause of the world. But it is nīrisēsa in the sense of not having any ordinary or material attribute. It is one, infinite and the inner controller of all the selves. The difference perceived between them and Brahman is not natural, but due to His will. Between the two, there is also non-difference which is perfect and not due to illusion (māyā). Hence this system is called Suddhādvaita.

The Supreme Being is Kṛṣṇa and the way of attainment the Puṣṭi mārga. Vallabha’s teachings rely largely on the Bhāagavata, which is admitted as the fourth prasthaṇa. Accordingly it is to be understood in its sevenfold meaning as śāstra, skanda, prakarana, adhyāya, vākyya, pada and aksara. Puṣṭi’ means ‘nourishment’—from love of the Lord derived from His grace which nourishes its object. The grace may be ordinary, (māryādā) or special (puṣṭi). The latter destroys the effects of time, karma and svabhāva.

1573. Vide

कृष्णाजयनाथलुक्ति हि पुष्टिः कालातिवाचिकः।

Tattvārtha-dīpa, II. 229.
The first step to attain God’s grace is to surrender to Him. This evokes God’s grace and purifies. The next step is to render service to God in the form of an idol. Then comes ātmanivedana which consists in offering all of one’s belongings to God, never using anything before an offering is made of it. Service creates a strong attachment to the Lord called nirodha which is of three kinds—pratima, āsakti and vyasana.1574

Pusti may be sūdha or miśra, svārtha or parārtha. Rituals enjoined by the scriptures are inferior to devotion, they belong to the path of maryāda in which God’s grace becomes limited in some way or other. But the pusti marga is free of such limitations. It can also be called the path of nirguna-bhakti, as it transcends the material affections of satvā, rajas and tamas. Such devotion has no object to gain and is disinterested.1575

This path leads to enjoyment of divine vision. The devotee has no need of renunciation. His enjoyment shows everything including makṣa as worthless.1576 The cowherdesses of Brindāvan are treated as the ācāryas of this path.1577 The devotee has to

1574. Vide

Kṛṣṇaśeṣa tatrā karṇi mānasī śa para māta.
Vallabha’s Siddhantamuktāvali.

Cf

प्रपश्विश्वतिपूर्वकसमवशारिकः निरोधः।
Hariyāya on Vallabha’s Nirodha-laksana, p 232.

1575 प्रेमपूर्विका सेवा हेतु: फलामितान्थान
तद्भिन्नाभिशुद्धिकी अनिष्टता वा।
Vallabha’s Subodhini on Bh. III 29 12.

1576 The Cultural Heritage of India, Vol I, p 603.

1577 Vide

भगवत्यूतम्भोक्ते भवतीमित्युत्तमम्।
भक्ति: प्राहलिता दिर्द्वया सुनीतामपि दुर्भेन।
cultivate their mental attitude, the gopi-bhāva. The bridal mysticism of such devotees requires the cultivation of some feminine traits. This leads to the bhagavad-bhāva in which the self finds the Lord in all things connected with Him, and He is realized as Sarvātman. In moksa the self acquires the brahma body and satisfies all desires. There is no fall or return from that state.

Vallabha declares that the pustī-mārga is the real purport of the Vedas, the epics, the Pāñcarātra and all sacred texts.1578

Vide:

अर्थोदयमेव निविलेरविष वेदांकवे
रामायणं: सत्यिस्तयं पांचरात्रं: ।
अत्येष्ट राष्ट्रवचनें: सहहंसप्रसुत्रे
निर्मायते सहद्व्य दुरिणा सदेव ॥

Tattvārtha-dīpa, I. 140.

It is open to all without any distinctions, It is best among all the paths to salvation because there is no fear of a fall.

Vide:

मार्गोदवं सत्यमार्गार्गामुतमु: परिकृतिलिं: ।
यस्मिन् पातमयं नास्ति मोचक: सत्या वत्: ॥

Ibid, II. 222.

The preceptors here are called Gosvāmins 1579 which is often written and spoken of as ‘Gosains’. Their dress is costly and

1578 In his Vṛtti on Tattvārtha-dīpa, (I 3) Vallabha calls the Bhāgavata, Gītā and Pāñcarātra as Bhagavat-chāstra.

1579. One view is that this was originally a title of Caitanya and the preceptors of his cult. After Vallabha’s followers wrested control over a temple at Gokula from the followers of Caitanya, they are said to have taken the title, A. K. Majumdar, Caitanya, his Life and Doctrine, p. 273.

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food luxurious. Their followers, among whom are many rich merchants and businessmen, are required to dedicate body, mind and wealth to them.

Gold icons of Gopāla, Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā are worshipped in their temples. The Kṛṣṇa image has a dark hue and is richly decorated. Worship is conducted eight times every day. The ritual does not follow any traditional procedure, but consists of offering flowers, perfumes and food to the accompaniment of prayers of praise.

Festivals are celebrated in temples. They include, in addition to Kṛṣṇa Jayantī, the Rāsyātra in October. The dances of the gopīs are commemorated through song and dance. Pictures and images of Gopāla are worshipped in the house.

Vallabha's followers mark the forehead with two red vertical lines meeting at the top of the nose, with a round, red spot between them. Similar marks are also found on the arms and chest of the devout. They wear rosaries of tulasī beads and greet one another as 'Śrī Kṛṣṇa' and 'Jaya Gopāl'.

Mathurā, Brndāvan, Puri and Dwāraka are their holy places. The greatest sanctity is attached to Śrī Nāth Dwār temple near Agra. Every one in the sect has to visit the place at least once in his life and contribute to its upkeep.

Vallabha holds that the Brahma-sūtras reject the validity of the Pāñcarātra because it teaches the birth of the self. He agrees with it however on all other points. According to him it expounds the puṣṭi-mārga.

1580. For details, see H. H. Wilson, Religious Sects of the Hindus, pp. 72-73.
1581. Ibid. p. 75.
1582. Ibid.
This describes the Pāñcarātra method of worship and comes under māryādā in Vallabha's system. The vyūhas are however held to be inferior to God as Purusottama.

RĀMĀNANDA

Rāmānanda was born at Prayagraj. The date is uncertain. He is claimed to be a direct disciple of Rāmānuja or the fourth or the fifth in descent from him through Devānanda, Haryānanda and Rāghavānanda. On account of a dispute with his preceptor, Rāghavānanda, he was ostracised. This led to his founding a new sect open to all without distinction of caste or creed. The regional language replaced Sanskrit as the medium of instruction. His twelve disciples were representative of all the castes and many professions. Bhakti and prapatti from the south were taken to the north by him.

He recognised no distinction between God and His devotees. His teachings were marked by a spirit of

Vide:

वाल्लभायांके लोकाधिघातं तत्सन्निक्रियवेत् पूर्वः

बिहितःत्वेन कियमाणः अवनात्रि दृपालनामार्यं यः ।

अयमेव बैस्यातो मार्ग इत्ययक्ते ।

Vallabha's Bhakti-hamsa, pp. 169.
synthesis. Whatever feeling (*bhāva*) is natural to one should be the basis for the means to attain God. Devotees could be house-holders or recluses. 1580

The incarnation of God (*Viṣṇu*) as Rāma is held in the highest reverence among all His forms. Therefore the followers of this teacher are sometimes called ‘Rāmavats’. The sālagrāma and the *tulasi* plant are also worshipped. Mendicants called ‘*Bairāgīs*’, numerous in the Indo-Gangetic plain and largely hailing from the poorer classes, chant the names of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. 1591

Rāmānuja’s liberalism, based on the Vaiṣṇava tradition coming down through the *epics* and the *purāṇas*, must have influenced Rāmānanda in preaching that distinctions of caste should not be observed among devotees. However, no Devānanda or Harinanda is known among the immediate disciples of Rāmānuja. Perhaps the tenets of this school went to the north through men who were impressed by the teachings of Rāmānuja, and have also thus influenced several small sects in North India through Rāmānanda, among whom the followers of Kabir are often included.

CAITANYA

Viśvambhara, born in 1486 A.D., was called Gauranga on account of his fair complexion. After he became a monk, he was known by the name of Caitanya. His father was Jagannātha Miśra and his teacher Vāsudeva Sarvabhauma, the great logician. During a pilgrimage he received the *Gopāla-mantra* at Puri from Īśvara Puri. Meditation on it led him to an ecstatic state filled with the vision of Kṛṣṇa and made him a worshipper of the Lord in this form along with Rādhā. 1592

1580. Ibid. p. 25.
1591. Ibid. pp. 27-28
Though Caitanya's teacher, being a disciple of Madhavendra Puri, belonged to the Madhva tradition, Caitanya himself taught not Dvaita, but Acintya bhedabheda. He held that the difference and non-difference between the selves and God is inscrutable. This doctrine was later elaborated by Rupa, Sanatana and Jiva, each of whom had the title of 'Gosvamin'.

Narayana and the four vyuhas are admitted as shining forms of Krishna (God). Free from the influence of the guṇas of matter, He has three powers or energies—saarupa or sentience, tatastha or the self, and bahiranga, also called maya. They correspond to para, ksetrajña and avidyā saktis. The svarupa-sakti has the three attributes of sat, cit and ānanda, also known as sandhinī, saṁvit and hlādinī respectively. Radha represents the last of these.

The ideal of Radha-Krishna helps in realising the absence of distinction between Krishna and His devotees. Loving devotion towards God (preman or bhakti-rasa) is taken to be the fifth important aim of life (or puruṣartha), the other four being practice of virtue, acquisition of wealth, satisfaction of desires and attainment of salvation. The sentiment of devotion and the various religious emotions under this head are dealt with in the Bhakti rasāmpta-sindhu and Ujjvala-nilāmani of Rupa-gosvāmin and Bhakti-sandarbha of Jiva-gosvāmin.

Bhakti is said to be of three kinds—sādhana, bhāva and prema. Each of these is a stage. The performance of enjoined

1593 Ibid p, 47-50, 'Śripāda Madhavendra' by Dr. H Vedānta Sastrī, 'A I O. C. Summaries of Papers', pp. 148-50. Majumdar records the tradition that the idol he worshipped was installed at Nath Dwar temple.

1594 Majumdar, Op. cit., ch XXIII.

1595 Majumdar, Op. cit., chs, XXIII and XXIV.
rites rouses inclenent devotion; which intensifies; and which finally serves as the means and end of enjoyment. 1596

Bhakti should be preferred to karma, jñāna 1597 and vairāgya. It dispels doubts, destroys egotism and makes the effects of past actions wither away. The practice of intense devotion requires that the injunctions of the Vedas, Smṛtis, Purāṇas and Pāñcarātra texts be obeyed. Jñāna and karma should be regarded as a joint upāya in which the rituals are to be performed according to the Pāñcarātra 1598 Jñāna can be practised along with and as subordinate to bhakti. Viṣṇu's name and mantras (particularly, the Gopāla-mantra) are to be uttered always. All action must be dedicated to God. Pilgrimages are recommended. God's forms, qualities and sports must be sung about: Prapatti can also lead to mokṣa.

The idol of God should not be thought of as a piece of stone. When an idol is taken in procession it must be circumambulated.

Worship of images is called dvaṭā yāga and that of household deities arecanā. Hell awaits those who neglect them. Initiation is necessary for this kind of worship.

Among men the devotees of Viṣṇu are the best. Among the gods, Śiva and Brahmā are to be worshipped as devotees of Viṣṇu. Distinctions should not be observed among devotees.

One Gopāla Bhātta from the south introduced the principles of the Pāñcarātra into Gauḍīya Vaisnnavism. His teachings are found in Haribhakti-vilāsa 1599. The influence of the Āgama is

1596. Ibid. pp. 293, 299, chs. XXV, XXVI.
1597. Ibid. pp. 335, 337.
1599. Ibid. pp. 332-334 give an account of this work in some detail.
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considerable. Vyūhas are admitted. Saṅkarsana is said to preside over ahaṅkāra, Vāsudeva over citta, Pradyumna over buddhi and Aniruddha over manas. The pupils of Caitanya cite in their works the Sātvata-saṁhitā, Hayāśīrṣa-pāncarātra and other such texts. Rituals involve bhūta-suddhi and follow the Āgama directions.1600

The school of Caitanya has developed an elaborate and complex theory of divine descents. Kṛṣṇa or Purusottama is the Supreme Being and not a divine incarnation. He has three forms. The svayaṁ-rūpa is natural and exclusive to Him. The tadekāma-rūpa is an hypostatic manifestation identical with Him and also distinct through appearance and possession of attributes. This is subdivided into viśesa (as in the case of Nārāyaṇa and Vāsudeva) having the same power as the original exclusive form; svāmśa, which is inferior and exemplified by Matsya, Saṅkarsana and others; and āveśa of sakti as in Ādi-śesa, of jñāna as in Sanaka, and of bhakti as in Nārada.1601

There is also a fivefold division of divine descents. The vyūhas represent the puruṣa-vatāra. The guna variety allows the play of the three guṇas as in the case of the trinity of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. Twenty-four forms illustrate the lilāvatāra type. Every Manu’s reign involves a descent, as in the case of Hari, Vaikuntha, Vāmana and others. Among the four yugas, each has its own special kind of descent.1602

The Supreme Being inspires certain souls and makes them descend as prophets. They are God’s descents only in a

1600 Rūpa Gosvāmin’s Sankṣepa-bhāgavatīmāta, p 205


1602 Ibid pp. 27-29. See also S K De’s “Early History of the Vaishnava Faith and Movement in Bengal”, p. 154 and Jiva-gosvāmin’s Śrī Kṛṣṇa-sandarbhā where nine vyūha descents are mentioned. The additional five are Nārāyaṇa, Hayagrīva, Varāha, Nṛsimha and Brahmāna,
Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa of the 18th century wrote the Govinda-bhāṣya on the Brahma-sūtras in accordance with the teachings of Caitanya. It is in the main on the lines of Madhva.1608 A pupil of Pittāmbara-dāsa and Rādhā-dāmodara, he held the individual self to be a part of God. Rādhā is the foremost among His energies (śaktis).1609 In another work, Prameya-ratnākara (VI. 1) he stressed the need for the five sacraments. The worship of the sālagrama is yāga Vide

शालग्रामादिपूजा तु यागशब्देन कथयते ।

Prameya-ratnākara (VI. 3c).

The principle of viṣeṣa (particularity), perhaps taken over from Madhva by Rādhā-dāmodara in his Vedānta-śyamantaka, is stated to help the Lord in whom It is inherent to distinguish Himself as Brahman and Paramātman. Baladeva explains this as supralogical (acintya).1610 Passages are cited by these writers from the Sāttvata, Ananda and Vishvaksena Samhitās.

The impact of Rāmānuja's teachings is seen in several respects. Seva to God, the preceptor and devotees is enjoined. Significantly, bhakti is identified with it, Vide:

भज हत्येप चे घातः सेवाया: परिकीतितिः ।
तस्मासेवा युः: प्रोक्ता भक्तिः खाधनशूयली II


Thirtytwo offences are listed as needing to be avoided while offering service to the Lord. They are similar to the enumeration of Vedānta Deśika in his Pāñcarātra-raksā,1611

1609. Ibid. p. 290.
1610. Das Gupta, Indian Philosophy, IV. p. 442.

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Gopāla-bhaṭṭa’s Hari-bhakti-vilāsa gives a detailed account of the worship of images in temples and all rituals connected with it. It is on Pañcarātra lines. Gopāla-viṣṇu is the Supreme Deity according to Kramadīpikā which mentions the five sacraments. This is another work of the school.

Madhva’s influence on Caitanya’s philosophy amounts to little. But in the line of Caitanya’s preceptors is Mādhavendra Pūrī, as mentioned in Gaura ganoddesa-dīpikā.

Caitanya’s greatness is revealed in his stress on the practice of bhakti in many ways. Worship of the idol at home and that at the temple is imperative. His social outlook was liberal. In his teachings, women and Śūdras are permitted to worship the salagrāma. But this right seems to be denied in practice. Structures are enjoined to be raised for housing the deities. But there seems to be no provision for building shrines for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Caitanya himself is worshipped as a dual descent of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. He is said to have been worshipped even during his life-time.

The rasika aspect of the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa cult influenced the glorification of Rāma and Sītā on similar lines in a late work Vasiṣṭha-saṁhitā. But this Rāma cult does not appear to have had many followers.

1612 Ibid pp 332-4
1613 Ibid p 284. There is discussion in ch XXII. The authority of this work is disputed.
1614 Ibid p 334
1615 Ibid.
1616 Ibid p. 292
1617 M R Misra, “A Note on the Vasiṣṭha-saṁhitā” in “Summary of Papers of the 26th International Congress of Orientalists”, 1964, pp. 164-5. The work was copied in 1802 A.D.
CONCLUSION

VIJÑĀNA BHIKSU

Vijñānabhiksu (c. 1550 A.D.), a well known writer on the Sāṅkhya and Yoga systems, commented on the Brahma-sūtras in Vijñānāmyta. He was a āṣuḍ, ascetic who held the Supreme Brahman to be Śrī Kṛṣṇa Nārāyana i.e. Kṛṣṇa-Brahman Ātman could be denoted by the word, ‘Īśvara’. Though He is the Lord of all, He creates mahat etc., with His potency called ‘māya’.

Though there is really one Self, a plurality of selves has to be admitted for practical purposes.

Among the vyūha manifestations, Vāsudeva alone is eternal. Samkarśaṇa and others are His manifestations. Samkarṣaṇa (Śiva), Pradyumna and Aniruddha arise from Viṣṇu, the subtle body of Brahman. Nārāyana and Viṣṇu are the manifestations of Bhagavān. Matsya, Kūma and other descents are lilāvatāras, while Bhagavān is an amesāvatāra 1618.

The Utpatti-asambhavādhikaraṇa of Brahma-sūtras (II 2) is interpreted by Vijñānabhiksu as denying that Brahman has birth. He thus wisely avoids the controversy about the validity of the Pāñcarātra 1619.

OTHER VAISNAVA SECTS

The important schools of Vaisnavism referred to so far influenced some minor sects. The founders of the schools could not have influenced these sects. They developed gradually. Rāmānanda, for example, could not have taught anyone who later founded a sect. But he is said to have had twelve chief disciples.1620 Some of them or their students and later

1618 Vijñānāmyta, I. I. 5.
1619. Ibid. II 2.
1620. Wilson and Bhaktmāla give different lists.
AGAMAS AND SOUTH INDIAN VAISNAVISM

teachers seem to have started sects bearing their names. They belong to all castes and many professions. Stress on *bhakti* is the one common feature among them.

Among such teachers was Tulasī Dās (1545-1624), a pupil of Jagannātha Dās and his student, Nābhajī. (In another version he studied under Nāra Hari Dāsa, a pupil of Rāmānanda) 1621 He was a Brahmīn of Hājipur near Citrakūta. After a sojourn at Brndavāna with Nābhajī he wrote the *Rāmacarita-mānasa*, a celebrated work which gives a Hindi version of the *Rāmāyana*. He ardently advocated the worship of Rāma and Sītā. His *spīce* seems intended to prevent the disintegration of *saṅgātana-dharma*.

God is taught to be formless. But the love of His devotees for Him induces Him to assume a visible form, just as the water, latent in ice and hailstones, becomes patent under certain conditions. 1622 The real devotee finds God in the movable and immovable things. 1623

He is an ardent champion of *bhakti* and describes its nine varieties. 1624 It is fostered by the company of holy men and recluses. Devotion annihilates the sufferings caused by the cycle of births and deaths. But the path of *jñāna* is hazardous: one following it is liable to fall. 1625

The Lord is said to take His abode in the heart of the self for two reasons. The self must not seek anything from Him: there must be genuine love for Him.

1623. *Ibid* IV 3
1624. *Ibid* III 344.
In metaphysics, Tulasī Dās considers as erroneous the theories that declare the world as real, unreal, or partly real and partly unreal. The seeker of self-realisation must reject them. For they are of no help in realising one's nature or that of God. But some claim him to be a follower of Saṅkara, though he was a devotee of Rāma and had the title of 'Gosain' (as borne out from his Jñānadiptikā).

Another teacher of a small Vaisnava sect was Nābhāji (1600) who wrote the Bhaktimala. He was initiated into Vaisnavism by Agraḍās, though his connection with Rāmānanda is not proved.

Widely prevalent in North India is the worship of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. The importance given to God in a feminine form dates back to the distant past. The Sākta Agamas play up this tradition and make male divinities inferior. Other Agamas tend to give equal importance to both the sexes in their conception of Godhead. Thus Lākṣmi and Sītā are given due importance in Vaisnava Agamas. Rāmānuja stressed the importance of worshipping the Father as well as the Mother of the universe. But the name of Rādhā does not occur in the source-books of the Kṛṣṇa cult.

A sect of Rādhā-vallabhis worship Kṛṣṇa merely as the vallabha or lover of Rādhā to whom primary importance is given. Harivāmsa who founded a mutt at Brṇḍavana in 1585, is said to be its founder. His Rādhā-sudhānīdhi praises Rādhā.

On the whole, the cult does not seem to be very different from Bengal Vaisnavism.

1626. VINAYA-PATRIKA, III.
1627. Munshi, "Indological Felicitation Volume", XX, XXI and pp. 401-411
1629. Ibid, pp. 98-100.
Some Vaisnava sects with limited following are found in Jaipur, Delhi, Orissa and a few other places. They bear such names as Saktibhāvas, Hariśchandis, Sādhana-panthis and Mādhavīs. The sect of Caran-dāsīs preaches high moral standards and enjoins regular worship of the sālagrāma.\footnote{1630}

The ‘bairāgis’ and various orders of ascetics like the Nāgas do not constitute different sects, though H H Wilson takes that view.\footnote{1631} They belong to the sects mentioned above and similar Vaisnava sects, their differences in observances being due more to their life as recluses than to the theoretical aspects of philosophy or religion.

A peculiar cult called ‘Radhāswāml’ had for its fifth leader Param Guru Huzur Sahabji Maharaj (born in 1881). His Yathārthā-prakāśa states that the Supreme Being, superior to the perishable and the imperishable, is the Parama-puruṣa. The worship of Krṣna who is His divine descent, yields spiritual benefits. As renunciation is held to be impossible, the active life of performing the duties enjoined in the sāstras is advocated. Yoga is also recommended.

**SPREAD OF VAISHNAVISM**

Many of the important developments of Vaisnavism in later times have been briefly glanced at in the last few pages. But Vaiṣnavism has prevailed all over India from ancient times, as may be seen from numerous temples, inscriptions and literary works. Many royal dynasties patronised the cult, but without narrow-minded fanaticism. The regions over which they ruled constantly changed on account of wars and conquests. It is not therefore easy to determine the history of Viṣnavism in each region.

\footnote{1630}{Ibid pp 100-103.}

\footnote{1631}{Ibid. 103-6.}
The tolerant spirit suffered a serious setback when Rāmānuja was persecuted and the Viṣṇu idol at the Govindarāja shrine in Chidambaram was removed. These anti-Vaiṣṇava activities are attributed to Kulottunga I in the 11th century. There is a tradition that Rāmānuja consecrated the temple at Melkote (in Karnataka) in 1099 A.D. and that he remained there till 1110 when the persecuting king died. But other dates have been mentioned such as 1070 when Adhirajendra was the ruler. The Chidambaram sacrilege is dated at 1087 A.D. Though all this led to ill feeling between Śaivis and Vaiṣṇavas and many bitter attacks in writings were made by each against the other, the kings continued to extend their patronage to all cults, though they might have faith only in one of them. Hence inscriptions of a Vaiṣṇava tinge, Viṣṇu temples and coins with emblems like Garuda on them do not prove any exclusive faith of the ruler or the people of the area in Viṣṇu.

Below is attempted a brief survey of Vaiṣṇavism in the several States of India in broad outline.

1 Tamil Nadu

Vaiṣṇavism is known in Tamil Nadu even at the beginning of the Christian era. Ancient classics like Śilappadikāram, Paripādal, Ahanānūru and Puranānūru which belong to the early centuries after Christ contain references to the temples at Śrīrangam, Tirumalai, Tirumālirunčolai (near Madurai) and Tiruvanantapuram. The divine descents of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa were being worshipped indicating an old tradition about them. Most of the temples referred to are in Pāṇḍya and Cola regions.

1632. Guruparampara prabhāva of Tṛīya Brahmatantra-svatantra Jiyar. Kulottunga died only in 1120.
1633 Prof K. A Nilakanta Sastrī’s Cholas.
1634 T A Gopinatha Rao, History of Śrīvaiṣṇavas, p. 44
1635 Vide E S Varadaraja Iyer’s A History of Tamil Literature, pp 203-250.
One striking feature of the classics is their freedom from narrow sectarian prejudices.

Manimekalai, a poem of the 3rd century, shows that there were debates and discussions between various sects, including Vaisnavism. It refers to worshipers of Visṇu living at Vaiśali, along with followers of other sects. It is positive evidence on the prevalence of the cult in that area, but has no bearing on the conditions in other places.

The Āzhvārs (who perhaps flourished between 600 and 800 A.D.) have sung of about 82 shrines in Tamil Nadu, scattered along the east coast and spreading westward to the Pāṇḍya and Cera territories. Temple worship should have been well established long before their time. Epigraphic evidence shows that most of them followed the Vaikhāṇasa rituals. The Uttaramerūr temple and the cave temples at Māmallapuram appear to have been constructed according to the Marici-samhitā of that school. While this is testimony to the popularity of this Āgama, the absence of epigraphical references to the Pāṅcarātra cannot prove that it was unknown.

Among the Pallavas Simha Viṣṇu (r. 575-600) and his brother's descendant, Nandivarman II Pallavamalla (r. 710-75), were devotees of Viṣṇu. Rājarāja I (r. 985-1014 A.D.) of the Colas was well disposed towards Vaisnavism. His sister, Kundavai, built a Viṣṇu temple at Dadapuram in South Arcot.

1636 See V. Varadachari, "Treatment of the schools of religion and philosophy in Manimekalai", S V V O Institute Journal, XIV, pp 9-26
1637 See Manimekalai, XXVII 98-99. For the identity of Vaiṣṇi see R. Raghava Iyengar's Araiottukuti, p 257
CONCLUSION

Considerable benefactions to Śiva temples were also made. This harmony between the sects during the Cola period is marred by the persecution of the Vaisnavas in the 11th century already referred to: but the persecution did not spread to Kāñci. 1640

In the rock-cut monuments of the Pallava period as at Mahendravadi and Māmāndūr are found figures and paintings of Viṣṇu. The Mahendra style is seen at Māmāndūr at Singappeyram Kōvil (near Chingleput), at the Raṅganātha cave temple at Singavaram and at the Dharmarāja-mantapa at Māmallapuram. In Māmallapuram itself, the Varāha-mantapa and the Ādi-varāha cave temple show the Māmallal style. At Tiruttangal in Rāmanāthapuram an admixture of the Cālukya and Pāṇḍya styles may be seen. 1641

The Valkuntha-perumāl temple at Kāñci is remarkable for its huge structures and panelled sculptures. It is said to have been built by Nandivarman Pallava (710-75). 1642 But Tirumaṅgal Āzhvar calls the temple ‘Paramēsvara-vinnagaram’ and associates the name ‘Pallava’ with the stanzas in praise of the Lord as enshrined there. 1643 This suggests that Paramēsvara-varman (660 80) constructed it. Nandivarman’s name is associated with another temple near Kumbhakonam called ‘Nandipura-vinnagaram’. Perhaps he completed the Kāñci temple and built the temple near Kumbhakonam. His successor, Dantivarman, constructed on similar lines a fine temple for Sundaravaradaperumāl at Uttaramerūr. 1644 Later

1640 Ibid pp 401-2.
1642 Ibid. Part II, p 219-20
1643. Periya Tirumozhi, II, 9

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Vijayanagar rulers improved on the traditions evolved by the Pallavas, Chalukyas, Colas and Pandyas. For example, the cornices with monolithic stone chains at the kalyana-mandapa built by them at Sri Varadaraja Swami temple at Kanchi is a fine example of artistic progress.¹⁶⁴⁵

The spread of Vaisnavism in Tamil Nadu owes much to the diffusion of the Azhvars' poems by Nāthamuni, Yāmuna, Rāmānuja and their successors. The Pallava rulers, Jatāvarman Sundara Pandyā, Kulottunga II, Rajendra Cola, Vijayanagar emperors and the Naik kings at Madurai and Tanjore made invaluable contributions by constructing, renovating and maintaining temples of Visnu.¹⁶⁴⁶

Rāmānuja's followers are the most numerous among the Vaisnavas in Tamil Nadu. His efforts at moral and spiritual regeneration were directed in many directions. He reformed the administration of the temple at Srirangam, wrote out a manual, Nitya, for the daily round of religious duties, graded religious and philosophical instruction and practices according to the qualifications of each Vaiṣṇava, instituted or re-organised the recitation of Azhvars' compositions daily in the temples and, in the streets whenever the processional idol was taken out, and the celebration of the adhyayana utsava once every year, he deified the Azhvars; and founded seventy-four ecclesiastical seats of authority and perhaps some mutts also.

The reforms at Srirangam temple were extensive. The staff were divided into ten groups each with specific duties. The Vaikhanasa mode of worship was changed to the Pāñcarātra.

¹⁶⁴⁵ Ibid. pp 236-7

Seals with figures of Garuḍa, Samkha and Cakra were made to be used by different authorities. The *Nitya* inspired many later works of the same kind; to which reference has been made in earlier pages. Not content with the manual, he is said to have given the following instruction to suit different aptitudes and qualifications.

\[
\text{पतित्वा भाष्यं तत्पत्वचनमशकौ शाहरिगिरिः अद्वा, वास्तः प्रभुपरिचितस्थाननिविवः।}
\text{प्रभोः कैकुर्य चा प्रपद्यमतोर्यथमनं}
\text{प्रपद्यानं बामें भवतु परिचयापरिचयः।}
\]

Ārāyurappadi Guruparampara, p. 242.

Another easy duty he imposed was the maintenance of flower-gardens for the benefit of temples.

Rāmānuja arranged for the installation of the images of Āzhvārs in temples. Annual festivals were instituted for celebrating their birthdays. The idols of the Āzhvārs were assembled before the Lord in temples during the annual *Adhyayana* festival and accorded honours.

Seventy-four ēārya-puruṣas (spiritual preceptors) are said to have been authorised by him to instruct and initiate disciples and give them the sacrament of the *pañca-saṃskāra*. Most of them were householders and some of their descendants continue to exercise their spiritual office. But the tendency nowadays for those who care for initiation is to seek it at a mutt.

It is quite probable that the systematic organisation of the *mathas* (mutts), religious institutions presided over by sannyāsins and entrusted with propagating doctrines, initiating disciples and administering temples, was due to him. Such institutions...
continue to this day. In case the very institutions founded by him have not survived, later ones could have taken their place. Mathas are associated with the temples at Tirumalai and Srirangam. Among mathas started later may be mentioned those named after Ahobilam and Vanamamalai. The former, though started at Ahobilam in the Andhra region, has been presided over by sannyasins from Tamil Nadu, where it has several branches. Similarly, the Vanamamalai Matha, with its headquarters in Tirunelveli District, has branches in almost every place sacred to Visnu.

Ramanuja accorded primary importance to Srirangam among the places sacred to Vaishnavas. The following Sanskrit prayer for the temple is attributed to him:

श्रीमंतः श्रीरामकृष्णपुरुषोवामुदिनः संवर्धय

Ramanuja's successors made it incumbent on the part of every Vaishnava to recite this in every temple and home.

Among other contributions of Ramanuja may be mentioned the settling of Vaishnava families round temples to render service, help in their maintenance and derive spiritual benefit from them.

The term, 'Vaishnava', in Tamil Nadu has largely come to mean a follower of Ramanuja, because the majority of the worshippers of Visnu owe allegiance to him. But there are also a considerable number of Madhvas in the region, and they are also Vaishnavas. There are only a few representatives of other Vaishnava sects from other regions in Tamil Nadu.

2. Karnataka

In the Karnataka region Vaishnavism dates back to many hundreds of years before Ramanuja. But till his sojourn there, Jainism was in a flourishing condition. Visnugopa (r. 450-460) is claimed that Sri Yadugiri Yatrasja Mutt of Melkote was founded by Ramanuja and has continued to this day.
of the Western Gaṅgas was more a saint than a king. He gave up Jainism and became a Vaśparva. Durviniita (540-600) of the same family was also a worshipper of Viṣṇu. 1849

Two of the rock-cut monuments at Badrasal in Bijapur District are dedicated to Viṣṇu. Bas-reliefs on the walls represent the divine descents. One of the monuments is known to have been excavated in 578 A.D. by Mangaliṣa, brother of Kirti Varman. It contains the figure of Astabhuja-svāmin. 1850

Biṣṇideva (r 1111-1141) of the later dynasty of Hoysālas was an ardent Jaina who was attracted to Rāmānuja when in exile from the Cola kingdom and became a Vaśparva and called himself Viṣṇuvardhana. It is said that this followed on Rāmānuja freeing his son from possession by an evil spirit in 1099. 1851 While the king continued to be tolerant towards Jainism and Saivism, he built at Rāmānuja’s instance the Nātāyana temple at Melkote.

The Hoysāla style of architecture is seen in the temples built by him and his successors. He consecrated the Viṣṇu-vaṭṭa (also known as Cenna Kesava) temple at Belur in 1117. This temple became a complex of temples under Ballala II and others. “The temple is a veritable museum of sculptures, large and small, and intricate vegetal and floral carvings.” 1852 A smaller temple in the same style was built at Somanāthapura in 1268. 1853


1650 Brahmanavidya, XXVI Pts 1-2 p 17. See also “International Congress of Orientalists Summaries of Papers”. p. 151.

1651. T. A. Gopinatha Rao, History of Śrīvaśkavas, p. 36. The dates of Rāmānuja’s persecution and his flight to Karnataka require verification.


1653. Ibid. p. 212.
The Jaina version of Bittileva’s conversion adds that it was followed by thousands of Jains being ground by oil mills. The allegation is not generally believed, but regarded as “a favourite embellishment in handing down accounts of disputation.” This is supported by Viṣṇuvardhana’s continued patronage of Jainism and Saivism. The same policy continued under his son, Narasimha I (1141-73). His son and successor, Ballāla II (1173-1220), favoured Saivism, but was tolerant. Narasimha II (1220-35) was a tolerant Vaṣṇava. Someśvara, his son, neglected Viṣṇu temples which were renovated by Jatāvarman Sundara Pāṇḍya who defeated him. In the period that followed, perfect amity prevailed among the various sects. A temple to Harihara (combining in himself the characters of Śiva and Viṣṇu) was built.

The most important Vaṣṇava centre in Karnātaka is Melkote. Rāmānuja is said to have stayed there from between 12 to 25 years. Apart from finding the mūla bera of Nārāyaṇa and consecrating it, he also brought somewhere from the north the utsava idol and named it ‘Sampatkumara’. The Nārāyaṇa (otherwise known as Rāmaprīya) temple is said to have been built in the Bahudhānya year corresponding to 1098 A D. During the annual festival in March-April the outcastes (or ‘Tirukkulattār’ as Rāmānuja is said to have called them and now known as Harijans) were allowed to enter the

1654 Yatrājavaibhava, 97
1655 William Coelho, The Hoysāla Vamsa p 284
1656 Ibid pp 251-95
1657 The traditional account that he brought the idol from a Moslem ruler at Delhi clashes with the historical fact that Delhi was under Hindu rule till the 1190’s.
1658 The difficulties in accepting this date are pointed out in S. Krishnaswamy Iyengar’s History of Tirupati, I, pp. 273-6.
temple for worship on the occasion of the car festival and succeeding days.\textsuperscript{1659}

The hill range on which the temple is built is known as Yadugiri or Yadavâdiri on account of traditions of association with the Yadava clan to which Śrī Kṛṣṇa belonged. On account of Rāmānuja’s stay there it came to be called ‘Yatigiri’.\textsuperscript{1660}

Though the Āzhvārs did not celebrate Tirunārāyanapuram in their compositions it is said that Rāmānuja dedicated a decade of verses in Tiruvāymozhi (IV 1), where meditation on the divine feet of Tirunārāyana (Śīmaṇ-nārāyana) is recommended.

The daily worship at the temple is conducted according to the Pāñcarātra mode. Rāmānuja’s directions are followed in the daily routine and the annual festivals. There is no shrine for Āndāl in the temple, and the features of the Adhyayana festival in December-January differ in some respects from those of the same festival in Tamil Nadu temples. The daily recitation of the Āzhvārs’ hymns is carried on in Tamil even though the temple is in a Kannada-speaking region. (The life of the Vaisnavas in Karnataka is not different from that in Tamil Nadu.) \textsuperscript{1661} The idol of Rāmānuja in the temple was installed and consecrated at the request of his devotees when he left Melkote for Śrīrangam.\textsuperscript{1662}

There are several Vaisnava mathas at Melkote. The Yadugiri Yatrāja Mutt claims to have been founded by Rāmānuja. The Ahobilla and Vānamāmalai Mutts have their

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{1659} C R Srinivasa Iyengar, \textit{Life of Rāmānuja}, p. 224.
  \item \textsuperscript{1660} \textit{Yatrājavaibhava}, 100-103
  \item \textsuperscript{1661} It may be of interest to note that an inscription of Rajendra Cola, dated 1014 in Karnataka refers to a Śrīvaiṣṇava community.
  \item \textsuperscript{1662} \textit{Yatrājavaibhava}, 103.
\end{itemize}
branches here. The Parakāla Swāmī Matha also has a branch. This institution has its headquarters at Mysore. It is held to have been founded by Brahmatantra-svatantra-svāmin, a direct disciple of Vedānta Deśika. The idol of Hayagrīva worshipped in the Matha by its heads is said to have come down from Rāmānuja through Vedānta Deśika. For a long time the rulers of Mysore owed allegiance to the Matha. It has branches outside Karnataka in Tamil Nadu, Andhra and even in Allahabad.

Scholars in Karnataka till the beginning of this century and a little later have made valuable contributions which can easily bear comparison with those in Tamil Nadu.

Udipi (near Mangalore) in the Karnataka region has a temple of Śri Kṛṣṇa built by Madhvācārya. It has several mathas some of which have branches in Andhra and Tamil Nadu. Udipi is a centre of pilgrimage for Madhvas.

Surveying the history of the Karnataka region as a whole, it is found that Vaiṣṇavism flourished at different periods under the regimes of Kādambas, Čalukyas, Hoysalas, Vijayanagar kings and Nāyaks of Madurai. These rulers held sway over the whole or some parts of the region.

3 Andhra

Inscriptions mentioning Viṣṇu and His temples in the Andhra region are available from the 2nd century. At Čīrma in Krishna District an inscription of Yajña Satakarni (c 165-194) begins with an invocation to Vāsudeva. The Pallavas who succeeded the Ikṣvākus were upholders of vaīdika-dharma. The queen of Buddhavarman (c 250 A D) made gifts to the Viṣṇu temple at Dātūra. About the same time a temple to Viṣṇu-hāraṅkula was built at Kāndukuru by Viṣṇugopavarman, the

1663. A, D, Karmarkar, Cultural History of Karnataka, p. 171.
general of the *yuva-rāja*, Visṇugopa.1664 Nandavarman (c. 420) of the Sālāṅkayana family made gifts to Visṇugṛhasvāmin.1665 Visṇuvardhana, the founder of the eastern Calukya dynasty who ruled coastal Andhra, was known as ‘*Parama-bhāgavata*’.1668 Under the Vijayanagar emperors (14th to 16th century) Vaiṣṇavism made notable progress. The Telugu epic, *Āmuktamālīyadā* of Emperor Kṛṣṇadeva-rāya (1509-30), treating of the life of Godā and the Āzhvārs, testifies to the strength of the Vaiṣṇava influence.

The most famous temple in the region is that of Sīṁlavāsa at Tirumalai. Once on the northern borders of the Tamil region, it is referred to by the earliest Tamil literature. Nine of the Āzhvārs and Āndai sing of it. Early inscriptions refer to constructions in the temple by Rājarāja Cola and Yādavarāya. Later, the Sāluvas, Kṛṣṇadevarāya, Acyutarāya and Sadāśivarāya made offerings to the temple 1667

There are other temples of Visnu at Tirupati at the foot of the Tirumalai hills and at Tiruccānūr near by. Many temples were built or renovated by Vijayanagar rulers. Among them the Vithalasvāmi temple is said to be the finest of its kind in South India.1668 Other rulers who patronised Vaiṣṇavism in the Andhra region include Mummādi Nāyaka and the Reddi kings. They were all tolerant to other faiths.1669

1664 *Brahmavidyā*, Dts 1-2 "Insitutional Evidence in Hindu Temples", pp 18-20
1665 *Epigraphica Indica* IX pp 317-9
1666 "Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute," XLII, p 185

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The temple at Ahobilam in Kurnool District has been extolled by Tirumangai Āzhvār. Those at Śrīkur̥mam (Śrīkākulam) and Simhācalam (Visakhapatnam) have associations with Rāmānuja. There are other famous shrines at Mangalagiri (Guntur) and Bhadrachalam (Godavari).

The Smārtan Brahmins of the region who joined the sect of Rāmānuja under his influence and that of his successors seem to constitute a separate sub-community by themselves. Families belonging to the sect living in Tirupati from early times and this sub-community keep themselves somewhat aloof from each other. But the way of life of all Vaiṣṇavas in Andhra does not differ from that in other regions. The same is true of temple rituals. The Divyaprabandha and its commentaries are studied in Telugu script and used.

Rāmānuja’s associations with Tirupati are numerous. He demonstrated that the recent claim of the Saivas that the Deity in the temple was Śiva was untenable. The Deity Himself is said to have preferred the insignia of Viṣṇu. A philosophical discourse which is now embodied in his Vedārtha-saṅgraha was delivered in the temple in the presence of the Lord Sudarśana Sūri (13th century) begins his commentary, Tātparya-dīpikā, thus:

When the image of Govindarāja at Chidambaram was thrown into the sea, Rāmānuja recovered it and had it installed at Tirupati, perhaps much earlier than 1135 at which tradition places this event. The conduct of the rituals of the temple


was settled by him. But how far he was responsible for all its features is a matter of opinion.

There are several mathas at Tirumalai. There is one connected with the temple. Branches of Ahobila, Vanamāmalai and Parakāla Svāmin’s mathas are at Tirumalai. Under their influence Telugu-speaking Vaishnavas have learnt to speak and read Tamil.

In Rāmānuja’s days, his uncle, Tirumalai Nambī, and disciple, Anantārya, were rendering service at the Tirumalai temple. The family of Pillān, the second son of Tirumalai Nambī, settled in the heart of the State and enjoyed royal patronage in the Vijayanagar empire.

The followers of Madhva are also found in the region. Mutts of this faith are there. Mantrālaya near Adont is the seat of a pontiff. In later days, a group of Dāsas emerged, who sang devotional songs in Kannada and spread bhakti.

4 Kerala

The temples of Visnu in Kerala are numerous. They have been following for hundreds of years the tāntrik mode of worship. The Tantra-samuccaya of Nārāyanā Nambuṭiri (born 1428) is a standard text book in twelve chapters dealing with the worship of various deities including Visnu. Temple architecture is also treated in Devālaya-candrikā. This work on temples and Manusvālaya-candrikā on human residences are also attributed to him. They quote there Tantra-samuccaya Sesa-samuccaya, dealing with matters not dealt with in this work, is of unknown authorship.


1673 N V Mallaya, "Studies in Sanskrit Texts on Temple Architecture," Preface, p 111, and Brahmavidya, XXV, pp 582-5 Mallaya mentions the several texts on architecture and temple worship on which Nārāyanā Nambuṭiri’s work is based.
Among the Viṣṇu temples in Kerala, the most famous are those at Trivandrum, Guruvāyūr and Tiruvaṅkūru. There are also thirteen temples including that at Trivandrum which have been hymned by the Āzhvārs, but most of them are not well-known. The following is the list of the thirteen temples included among the 108 holy shrines:


Of these, all except Tiruvļttuvakkodū have been sung by Nammāzhvār. That temple was hymned by Kulasekhara. Tiruṅvāyī has been glorified by Tirumāṅgal Āzhvār. The shrine at Tirumūzhikkālām also has received poetic tributes from Tiruṁmaṅgal Āzhvār. Tiruvaṅkūrīrama is said to be the birth-place of Nammāzhvār’s mother; there is a shrine for him in the temple. If the Guruvāyūr temple is earlier than the Āzhvārs, it escaped their attention like other well-known temples in Tamil Nadu such as Srimuṣṭam and Madurāntakam.

Though the thirteen temples are in Malayalam-speaking Kūrāla, they have been celebrated in Tamil song Kulasekhara, one of the Āzhvārs, is said to have been the ruler of the regions round Kozhikkode (Calicut). All this suggests that Tamil must have been widely spoken in this area between 600–800 A.D. and that the temples must have followed the well-known Vaiṣṇava Āgamas.

But today they are mostly governed by Tantra-samuccaya and Seṣa-samuccaya. In some shrines the Pāñcarātra and Vaikhānasa
modes are seen. The *Pāñcarātra* has been incorporated into the *Tantra-samaccaya* in regard to the construction of temples, installation of idols and conduct of daily worship. At Trivandrum, however, no particular text is said to be followed. The priests are governed by a tradition of instruction received through a long line of teachers, according to the directions of a sage called Divakara. The ritual of worship includes *nyāsa* and *mudrā*.

Kerala *V śṇu* temples do not have any marking like the *udṛḥvav-puṇḍra* on the walls or anywhere else, unlike as in temples in Tamil Nadu, Andhra and Karnataka. Nor are there shrines to Sudarśana, Rāmānuja or the Āzhvāra—not even in the temples glorified in the *Dīya-prabandha*. Lakṣmī gets a separate shrine only at Tirunāvāy. On the other hand, most of them have a shrine for Śaśā (otherwise known as Aiyappan). In Trivandrum, Vyāsa and Āsvatthāpan also have separate shrines.

The priests in these temples hold office by heredity and qualify themselves by initiation. They come from the ranks of either the Nambūṭiri Brahmins of Kerala or the Pottis belonging to the Mādhva *sampradāya*. The Nambūṭiris are followers of Śaṅkaracārya, but are different from the Śrāmatra Brahmins in Tamil Nadu and elsewhere. While they do not undergo the *pañca-samśkāra*, the Pottis receive from the heads of the *maṭhas* at Udipi on the *ṣaṭyana-śkūḍa* day the marks of the heated emblems of the conch and discus. Nambūṭiris called 'Tantris' conduct the festivals at important temples.

All the Kerala temple priests, whether Nambūṭiris or Pottis, wear a vertical mark of sandal paste (*gopi-candana*) on the forehead as well as on other specified parts of the body. They enter the shrines in wet clothes after a bath and without any upper cloth. They distribute to the worshipper as *prasāda* holy water and sandal paste. The *ṣaṭārī* is not in use in Kerala. Male worshippers in the temples are also not allowed to wear any upper cloth.
In most places, the temples have no vehicles or vāhanas: the deity is carried on a living elephant for processions. At Trivandrum, Tiruvattāru and some other places, a few vehicles are used. At Trivandrum these consist of Garuda, Kamala (or the lotus), Indra, Sesa and the palanquin. There, the main festival is conducted twice a year for Ananta-padmanābha and once a year for Kṛṣṇa, Nṛṣimha and others. The festival is for ten days. The palanquin is used on two days and the Garuda on four. For the first eight days, the deity is taken in procession inside the temple twice a day, in the evening at half past four and four hours later. On the ninth day called vettas (hunting), which is known as mṛgavā in the Agamas, the deity is taken outside the temple. So also on the tenth day when the avabṛthas (or ārāttus) takes place at the sea near Trivandrum. There is no Veda-pārāyana group in the processions.

The temple of Kṛṣṇa at Guruvāyūr is the most famous in Kerala. It attracts worshippers even from outside. Pilgrims fulfill vows (prārthanās) as at Tirumalai in Andhra. Nārāyana Bhattatiri's (c. 1550) famous poem, Nārāyanīya, a beautiful epitome of the Bhāgavata, is addressed to Kṛṣṇa as enshrined in this temple.

The Vaiṣṇavas of Kerala cannot be distinguished from other sects through external appearance or specific observances. They owe allegiance to the philosophy of Śankara. They wear the ārdhva-punda with sandal paste and not with the sacred white mud and the red śrićūrṇa. Nor do they have the pānca-sainkāra. The only exceptions are descendants of Tamāl Vaiṣṇavas at Trivandrum. There are a few villages near Palghat where ārdhva-pundra is worn as in Tamil Nadu. They are said to have a distant connection in the past with the Ahobila Mutt. In this region, there are also a few temples where the priests claim to be descendants of Āsthānasas brought there in the past.
Unlike in other parts of India, worship of Paraśurāma as an avatāra is carried on in Kerala. This is prohibited in the Pāncarātra. Vide:

भागवामरहितता: । ।
(Kṛṣyā-kairava-candrikā, p. 196)

5. Mahārāstra

Like Kerala, the Mahārāstra region is free from sectarian exclusiveness. The specific attention paid to Śaivism has not affected the worship of Viṣṇu. Historically, Vaishnavism has flourished in this area through the reigns of the dynasties of Sātavāhanas, Ikṣvākus, Rāstrakūtas, Ābhiras, Cālukyas and others whose sway often extended into adjoining regions.

As early as the 2nd century B.C, we have the Nāneghat inscription of Queen Nāyanikā, wife of Sīr Śatākarini I, which invokes Dharma, Saṅkarṣana, Vāsudeva and others. The inscription of King Vāsiṣṭhiputra (c 155 A.D.) refers to Rāma (i.e., Balarāma) and Keśava (i.e., Kṛṣṇa). The Ābhira king, Vāsiṣṭhiputra Vasusena (3rd century A.D.) who was a Śaiva, installed a wooden image of Aṣṭabhujasvāmin along with cakra and chatra. There is a shrine of Śiva in the next chamber. The Antroll-Echaroll inscription of Nannarāja of the Rāstrakūta family and the Ellora plate of Danudurga (r 745-56) bear the Garuda seal. An inscription of Govinda III (808) testifies to his Vaishnava faith.

The most famous Vaishnava temple of Mahārāstra is that of Pānduranga Viṭṭhala at Pandharpur. Pilgrims flock to this

1675 Brahmavidya, XXV pp 1-4, 520-1.
1676 S V. U O. R. Journal XII pp. 36-7
1677 The word, Viṣṇu, became 'Biṭṭi' in Kannada and 'Viṭṭhala' in Mahārāṣṭrī
temple from far and near: most of them, however, are from Mahārāṣṭra and Karnātaka. They worship Śiva in an adjoining shrine before offering their homage to Viṭṭhala. Neither any ritual nor philosophy governs the worship here. Bhajan parties throng the temple.

Though Viṭṭhala is Kṛṣṇa, the temple does not contain any shrine for Radhā or any gopi. A shrine of Rukmīni appears to have been added in later years.

Mahārāṣṭra and Kannada saints have hymned Viṭṭhala. They include Jñānadeva, Nāmadeva, Ekanātha and Tukārām of Mahārāṣṭra and Purandara Dāsa of Karnātaka. Nine kinds of bhakti are admitted by them.

Śrī Cakradhara-svāmin (13th century), a disciple of Govinda Prabhu, composed sūtras in Marāthi to expound a philosophy of bhakti. His ultimate categories were Parameśvara, Jīva, Devatā, and the world. Parameśvara is without form or attributes, but He descends to the earth to liberate the selves from bondage. Five Kṛṣṇas are mentioned—Dattātreya, Kṛṣṇa of the Purāṇas, Kṛṣṇa at Dvārakā, Govinda Prabhu and Cakradhara himself. His followers call themselves Mahānubhāvas, and they claim to have a philosophy representing a stage beyond any other school of Vedānta. Bhakti is the sole means of salvation, but it should be directed to Parameśvara and not Devatā.

Jñānesvarā wrote a commentary (1290) on the Bhagavadgītā based on Saṅkara’s bhāṣya, but going beyond it by combining poetry, mysticism and philosophy. It has become famous as the Jñānesvarī.

As in Kerala, so also in Mahārāṣṭra there is no clear-cut distinction between Vaiṣṇavas and Saivas. There are some

1678 Cultural Heritage of India, IV pp 356-71
exclusive worshippers of Viṣṇu, but they are not alienated from other cults. Among the Vaiṣṇavas here differences of caste, creed and sex have no religious significance.

6. Gujarat

The Western Satraps and Maitrakas were the earliest known rulers of the Gujarat region. They were succeeded by the Pratihāras (750-850), Paramāras (972-1055) and Cālukyas (970-1185). Moslem rule began in the 13th century. The impact of their regimes is varied and complex.

Early rock-cut monuments in the area contain panels only of the river-goddesses, Gaṅgā and Yamunā. No cult deity is represented there. There is also no inscriptive evidence of Vaiṣṇavism. The earliest surviving temples in Gujarat are small structures, simple in plan and design. A temple of Varāha at Kadwar near Prabhāsa Paṭān in Junagadh District dates from 650-700. A Viṣṇu temple of the tenth century at Sander (Mehsana District) shows the Solanki style in its earliest stages.1680 A temple of Pradyumna is mentioned in the Lāṭa region in Pādatāditaka, a play by Śyāmalaka. The temples at Dwārakā and Dakore are reputed as hallowed by the presence of Kṛṣṇa. But the identity of ancient Dwāraka, the city built by Kṛṣṇa, is the subject-matter of debate. One view is that it was at Junagadh at the foot of Mount Girnar. Another locates it in Jamnagar District and dates a rebuilding in the 5th century.1681

The people of Gujarat, where Jainism had considerable influence, are predominantly of the Vaiṣṇava faith. Saṅkara’s māyā-vāda does not appear to have appealed to them. They

† D. Sankalia, Antiquity of Modern Dwāraka, p. 212.
ASV—62
seem to have preferred abundance of life to renunciation, the cult of Kṣṇa to that of Rāma. But the Bhagavadgītā is studied more than the Bhāgavata. The path of devotion with ample provision for prapatti and karmayoga under the guidance of preceptors, is largely followed by people of all classes—businessmen, farmers and labourers. The lyrics of Narasimha Mehta, a Vaiśnava saint of the 14th century, have had immense influence on the people. Vallabhācārya's teachings are also popular. In recent times (19th century), a Vaiśnava cult founded by Śrīman-narāyan in which the concept of God as Puruṣottama is important and where Rādhā finds a place, has exercised considerable influence.

7. Madhya Pradesh

The region in and around Madhya Pradesh is Central India. The Śungas, Ikṣvākus, Guptas, Gūrjara Prārāhas, Western Cālukyas and Rāṣtrakūtas were among its ruling dynasties.

There is evidence of the prevalence of Vaiśnavism in this area from the 2nd century BC. To this century belongs Heliodorus, son of Dion of Takṣasila and a Yavana ambassador from Antalkidas to Kaśiputra Bhāgabhadra. He erected a Garuda pillar at Besnagar (ancient Vidiṣa) and recorded an inscription on it. There must have been a temple of Vāsudeva of which this is the dhvajasthambha. Another Garuda column, octagonal in shape, in a narrow Vidiṣa street, states in an inscription that it belongs to a temple of Bhagavān, built by the devotee, Gautamiputra (c 140 AD). In the Udayagiri hills, one of the rock-cut caves (401 AD) is Vaiśnava.

1682. N A Thoothi, Vaiśnavism of Gujarat, pp 60-75, 87
1684. Brahmavidyād, XXV Pts 3-4, pp 513-4
1685. Ibid. XXV Pts. 1 2, p. 3.
CONCLUSION

The Gupta emperors were Vaishnavas. They erected many monuments to their faith at Devagiri and other places. The Daśāvatāra temple is the work of skilled artists. At Udayagiri, the images of Varāha and Anantaśayin are of unsurpassed splendour. Near Irān (in the neighbourhood of Sagar) is a Mahāvisṇu temple built by Candra Gupta II. In it is a colossal image of Visṇu with those of Varāha and Narasiṃha on the right and left sides. An inscription here (484) in Brāhmi records the construction of a Nṛsiṃha temple with a Garuḍa-dhvaja in the front. Figures of Garuḍa adorn this column both in the front and at the rear. The Garuḍa, holding a serpent in both the hands, has the emblem of cakra behind the head.

An earlier inscription of Samudragupta (c. 330-75) in the same place records the erection of a Visṇu temple not found now. Its plan has been reconstructed. A Girnar inscription (455-8) of the reign of Skandagupta mentions the building of a temple to Visṇu under the name of Cakrabhṛt by Cakrapālita.

The installation of an image of Visṇu as Anantaśvāmin and Citrakūṭasvāmin, and the endowment of a village for the Deity are known from a Gadhwā inscription (467-8). Fifty years earlier (423) it is recorded at Gaṅgdhār that Mayūravarman, minister of Viśva-varman during the times of Kumāragupta, built a Viṣṇu temple. Mention may also be made of the temples

1687 S K Bhuyan Commemoration Volume, p. 118.
1689, Brahmavidyā XXVI Pts 1-2, pp. 4-5
1690 Ibid. pp. 6-7.
1691 Ibid. p. 6.
of Janārdana at Iran (484) and of Bhagavat at Khooh (496 and 513). The latter two do not seem to belong to the Gupta regime.

The temples at Khajuraho near Gwalior (950-1050), patronised by the Chandellas, are noted for their artistic beauty. Among the sculptures there the figures of Viṣṇu and Lākṣmi and of Balarāma and Revatī deserve special mention.

This brief survey shows the prevalence of Vaiṣṇavism in this area from very early times and the patronage it received from kings at some times. But there is no evidence of a community of Vaiṣṇavas; nor have temples of great antiquity survived.

8. Rajasthan

The Rajasthan region till recently was split into several small States like Mewad, Bhīnnamālā, Valabhi, Jodhpūr and so on. It has a chequered history.

The Ghosundi inscription (1st century B.C.) in a place formerly in Udayapur State refers to a temple with a stone enclosure and called Nārāyaṇa-vāṭika. It was dedicated to Saṅkarśana and Vāsudeva. A stone from a shrine known from the Morawell inscription mentions the images of pañca-vīras of the Viṣṇis there. Here may be a reference to the Vaikhānasa concept of pañca-vīras, which seems hardly known outside South India. These inscriptions also testify to the worship of stone images from this early period.

1692 Ibid pp 8-10
1693 Ibid. pp 11-12. See also Charudeva Sastri Felicitation Volume, p 542
1694 Brahmāvidyā XXV, Pts 3-4, pp. 514-5.
To the reign of Skandagupta (455-67) belongs a Junagadh inscription referring to a temple of Viṣṇu under the names of Sāṅgīn and Cakrabhṛt. An almost contemporary inscription at Mandor represents the life of Kṛṣṇa in figures. One of 686 refers to Vāmana. A Jodhpur inscription of 868 invokes Hṛṣikeśa. Ādiśeṣa, Keśava, Vāsudeva, Gokula and Narasimha are mentioned in a Mandor epigraph of before 1100 A.D. The Daulatpur plates, inscription and the Sāmvedi copper plate of Chañmāna Ratnapāla (c 1264) show Viṣṇuva leanings. There are references to Viṣṇu as Anantavāmin and as protector, Kṛṣṇa's līlās are depicted in paintings at Jodhpur (1248). Inscriptions referring to Viṣṇu are found also at Ekalūga, Śrīgārga, Jaisalmer, Pushkara and other places. The temple at Osian is noted for its picturesque sculptures on Kṛṣṇa's life. Temples at Kekinda, Kīradu and Sādri depict the same theme. The historical poem, Jaivansh (c. 1800) of Sitaram Chaturvedi, describes a temple of Kalkin now found in Jaipur. The Kṛṣṇa cult was popular with many ruling princes, as seen from the devotional lyrics of Mīrā, Vījaya Singh, Rāj Singh, Nāgrīdās and Bānl Themi. The people were also devoted to Kṛṣṇa. Many illustrated manuscripts of the Bhāgavata are preserved in the art galleries of the region.

1696 Ibid XXVI Pts. 1-2, pp. 4-5
1697 Indian Historical Congress XVII. Session. R C. Agrawala, "Viṣṇavite Gleanings from the Medieval Inscriptions of Marwar".
1700 International Congress of Orientalists. Summaries of Papers, p. 22
1701 Vide Asṭādhyāyī, IV. 3. 98. and Mahābhāṣya, Kāśikā and Nyāsa on this sūtra
9 East Punjab

The Punjab from which East Punjab in India and West Punjab in Pakistan were carved out when India was partitioned in 1947, was in ancient times an ideal Hindu colony, the bedrock of Vedic culture. The rivers of the region are mentioned in the Vedas. In historical times it is known that the eminent grammarian, Pāṇini (c. 800 B.C.), was born at Salatore near Attock in West Punjab, Patañjali (150 B.C.) who wrote a great commentary on his work, belonged to this region. Both of them refer to the worship of Vāsudeva and Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pāṇini is said to have studied at Pāṭaliputra in Magadha. It is reasonable to hold that the cult of Viṣṇu under the name of Vāsudeva was prevalent then in the Punjab and Magadha. The records of Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador at the court of Chandragupta Maurya, show that it flourished in these regions in the 4th century B.C. An inscription of Dionysos confirms this. The Mathurā region was its stronghold in later pre-Christian centuries. Later, in the 5th century A.D., the Tūsam inscription records the construction of two reservoirs for the house (temple) of Kṛṣṇa under the name of Bhagavat. An undated praśasti from Pehowa mentions the construction of a Viṣṇu temple by the princely Tomara family.

Under the influence of Islam, Sikhism and modern reform movements like the Arya Samaj, the religious situation in the Punjab has drastically changed, and there is not much evidence of Vaishnava influence today.

1702 International Congress of Orientalists, Summaries of Papers, S Jaiswal, "The worship of Saṅkarṣaṇa-Baladeva". pp 132-3


1704 Buddha Prakash, Aspects of Indian History and Civilisation, p. 181.
10. Kashmir

Kashmir saw the luxuriant growth of Hindu culture in the past. Every branch of learning was cultivated. It was the home of many disciplines like poeties and the Tantra. Āgamas of all kinds and the Pāñcarātra in particular could have originated here. The early Ahirbudhnya and Paśkara Samhitās and Lakṣa-tantra contain evidence suggesting that they were compiled in Kashmir. The nyūha cult under the name of “Valkunṭha-caturmūrti” flourished in early times in Kashmir.

The Āgama-prāmāṇya of Yāmuna (9th century) mentions a Kaśmira-gāma-prāmāṇya. Śrī-vaishnava tradition does not mention such a work by Yāmuna, though the context is suggestive enough. It will be, however, prudent to take it as the work of someone else until more evidence becomes available. In the meantime, the context indicates that in the 10th century the authority of the Pāñcarātra was admitted in Kashmir on the ground that the Ekāyana recension of the Veda was its basis. Utpala and other writers on the Spanda system quote from named Āgama texts.

Kashmir Vaiṣṇavism was a synthesis of many cults like the Vedic Pāñcarātra, Saṅvata and Bhāgavata. Its popularity is attested by the arguments of Jayanta Bhaṭṭa and Puṣkaraṅga in favour of the Pāñcarātra. Among the rulers...

1705. AhŚ, XXVI. 78, XXIX 28; Lt XLVI 38; PauŚ. XXXI 107-12. Consult the chapter on ‘Pāñcarātra Texts’ earlier in this volume.
1707. Agama-prāmāṇya, p. 78. This passage is quoted in N.P. p. 180. Van Buitenen takes it as the name of a work of Yāmuna.
1708. Spandaprādkīṣa, pp. 2, 40.
1711. Nyāyamāñjarī-granthi-bhaṅga, pp. 112-3.
of Kashmir, Pravarasena II (c 555), Candrañida (r. 712-20), Muktapāda, Lalitāditya (r 724 60), Jayāpida Vinayāditya (r 775-806) and Utpala Avantivarman (r. 855-83) were Vaiṣṇavas. They built temples to Viṣṇu under the names, among others, of Jayasvāmin, Avantīsvāmin and Govardhanadhara.17 The cult continued to flourish in Kashmir till its occupation by Muslims in 1339. Kṣemendra, the well known Sanskrit writer, was a Vaiṣṇava and a pupil of Bhāgavatācārya Somapāda, though his father was a Saiva. He called himself Vyāsadāsa.17

11. Uttar Pradesh

The region comprised in Uttar Pradesh was ruled over at various times by Mauryas, Guptas, Maukharis, Harśavardhana, Gahadawalas and others.

One of the earliest references to Vaiṣṇavism in this area is found in the inscription on the famous victory pillar of iron erected at Meherauli near Delhi by King Candra. About his identity there is difference of opinion, though there is a tendency to identify him with Candragupta I.17

It is said that images of Kṛṣna used to be made at Prabhasa, southwest of Allahabad.17

Shrines dedicated to Rāma, Kausalyā and others are found in Ayodhya, but they are of recent origin. The only famous

1712 P. N Kaul, History of Kashmir, pp 183-4
1713 Brhatkathāmañjarī, pp 19-20, AIOC, XXII Summaries of Papers. R Dattatray, "Vyāsadāsa, a name of Kṣemendra ", pp. 27-8
1715. R, G Bhandarkar, Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism, p. 64.
CONCLUSION

The temple of some antiquity in the State is that of Badrinnath 10,000 feet on the Himalayas. This temple is closed for six months when it is snow-bound. The arca of there is a Nambyuliris Brahmin from Kerala. It is said that the temple was reconstructed by Sankara and that from his days the arcakes have been Nambyuliris.

The Vaishnavas in this region are mostly followers of Ramananda, or they belong to subsects owing allegiance to him. They engage themselves in nāma-saṅkṛtana, and go on pilgrimages to sacred rivers like the Ganges and the Yamuna.

12 Bihar

Within modern Bihar lie the territories of ancient Vaidall and Mithila and the kingdom of the Pālas. There were dominated by Buddhism for long. Its influence on Hindu cults is not easy to assess. Most of the monuments in this area are Buddhist.

The Gupta and Maukhari kings patronised Vaishnavism. The Guptas ruled from Pataliputra, and their coins had the emblem of Garuda. King Anantavarman (r. 550) of the Maukhari dynasty inscribed in a cave in the Barabar hill in Gaya District that he installed an image of Viṣṇu as Kṛṣṇa. The Apsad inscription (672) near Gaya mentions that Adityasena built a temple of Viṣṇu. A feudatory of Dharmapala (769-815) founded a huge Viṣṇu temple at Subhashtali. The Valgudar inscription records the installation of the image of Nārāyaṇa at Krimlia during the reign of Madanapala (1143-62).

1717. R. Satyanathayor, History of India, 1, pp. 291, 292, 293.
1719. Buddha Prakash, Indian History and Civilisation, pp. 294-5.
Gayā is one of the most sacred places for Hindus where they make offerings to the manes. The holy footprint of Viṣṇu, Viṣṇu-pāda, in a temple there is worshipped by Hindus all over India. No śrāddha ceremony is complete without reverential mention of Gayā, its imperishable banyan tree (akṣaya-vāṇa), the footprint of Viṣṇu and the Lord at the temple under the name of Gadādhara.

At Ranchi there are temples to Rādhārāṇī, the beloved of Kṛṣṇa. The temple at Jagannāthpur is said to be the oldest.

13. Bengal

Bengal was under the Guptas in the 6th century, but became independent under Saṅkha. There followed periods of anarchy, until the Pāla dynasty rose. Even then, however, power rivalries and conflicts continued, and the rulers had little time to patronise religious cults. Moreover, Buddhism had a dominant influence, so much so that there was a fusion between it and Hinduism. Still, a little evidence is available about Vaiṣṇava influence.

A Bāigrām copper plate (448) in Bogra District refers to a temple of Viṣṇu under the name of Govindasvāmin. Sāmantasena's son, Vijayasena (c. 1100), wanted to avoid friction between Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism and for this purpose built a temple to Pradyumnesvara. His grandson, Lakṣmaṇasena, became a Vaiṣṇava.

Some centuries later, Vaiṣṇavism became dominant in Bengal under the influence of Caitanya, who was inspired by the worship of Kṛṣṇa at Puri. He sponsored the worship of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in which there is a great deal of bridal mysticism. The jīva is conceived as a lover representing Śakti whose one

1722. R. C. Majumdar, The Age of Imperial Kanauj, p 425,
form is Rādhā. It was influenced by the earlier cult of the Sahaja-yāna of the Buddhists which advocated living in accordance with Nature. Unfortunately, it degenerated into licentious living.

In the Caitanya cult, it has limited applicability. A jīva has to feel itself to be a woman with reference to another jīva, and can have full freedom in love. This was treated as the parakīya aspect which, when practised, would become spiritual love as Rādhā-bhāva. The justification for this doctrine seems to be based on the love of married gopīs for Kṛṣṇa.

Caitanya himself does not appear to have advocated this kind of life for the devotees of Kṛṣṇa. His followers have expressed varying opinions. Jīva Gosvāmin held the relations between the gopīs and Kṛṣṇa to be eternal. The gopīs were wives of their husbands only through yoga-māyā. Therefore, there is no parakīya aspect here. Rūpa Kavirāja and Rūpa Gosvāmin concede this. Baladeva Vidyābhūṣāna and others argue that love must not be directed to a human being, as it cannot then become rasa. Any deviations from the teachings of the masters tending to bring discredit to the cult, must be attributed to ignorance about them.

The cult of Gauḍa Vaiṣṇavism of the Caitanya school has spread far and wide throughout India. Branches of its Mutts are active in important cities, carrying on propaganda and performing nāma-saṅkīrtana. In recent times, the ‘Hare Kṛṣṇa’ movement as sponsored by the International Kṛṣṇa Consciousness Society and other organisations has spread abroad.

Brick temples began to be built in Bengal from about 1700 A.D. At Bishnupur in Bankura District there are a group of such temples. 1723

1723. Archaeological Remains, I, p. 189
14. Assam

Assam was known as Kāmarūpa in the past. The Pralambas, Pālas and Senas ruled over it up to the 13th century. Tantrik Buddhism and the Śākta cult were dominant there.

The Vaiṣṇava movement became significant only under Saṅkarāṇanda (1449-1568?). He was a poet, musician, singer and painter. Though a Śākta by birth, he became a Vaiṣṇava after extensive travels up to Rāmeśvaram, a meeting with Caitanya at Pāri and a study of the Bhāgavata under Jagadīśa Miśra. He began to worship a wooden image of Viṣṇu under the name of Madana gopāla and resolved to bring the people together by congregational prayer. In his prayer-house which he called Nāma-ghar, the object of worship was a book of prayers and not an image of Viṣṇu. All were allowed to participate in the prayer, including Moslems. The devotees were asked to render service to the holy book 1724.

Saṅkarāṇanda's philosophy has for its central concept eka-śaraṇa or unswerving and exclusive devotion (to Kṛṣṇa). It is based on the Gītā and the Bhāgavata Brahman is identical with Puruṣottama, Paramēśvara, Nārāyaṇa and Vāsudeva. The sentient and the insentient are not different from Him. 1725 The line of succession in preceptorship is not merely from father to son and from the older to the younger: it can also pass to some one deemed fittest to hold it.

His works include Bhaktaratnākara in Sanskrit, Kāmarūpi renderings of the Mārkaṇḍayapurāṇa and parts of the Bhāgavata, and Bhāktipradīpā in Kāmarūpi based on the Gauḍapāraṇa.

Among Saṅkaradeva's disciples was Mādhavadeva (1489-1590), a puritan who stressed devotion to God as the guiding

1724. Cultural Heritage of India, IV. pp 201-4.
1725. Vaiṣṇava Movement in Assam.
star of mankind. Later, Ananta Deva and Gopala Deva preached dasya and vatsalya as indispensable to Vaṣṇavas. Gurudeva Dāmodara (16th century), a saint from Assam and Cooch Behar, regarded Brahman as perfect, personal and impersonal, qualified and unqualified. He realised this in the manifested form of Kṛṣṇa 1727

Frequent earthquakes and heavy rains seem responsible for the absence of ancient temples in Assam. Some idols however can be found here and there. There are two dvārapālaṇakas at Badanga resembling Nara in the Nara-Nārāyaṇa panel at Deogarh. Images of Harīhara and Viṣṇu, belonging to the eighth century, are at the State Museum. After the ninth century, many Viṣṇu images were made of basalt, sandstone and other kinds of stone. One of them (12th century) has Lākṣmi on one side and Sarasvati on the other. In them Viṣṇu is named variously, as Keśava, Aćyuta, Hṛṣikeśa, Vāmana and Mādhava. At the State Museum can be seen various Narasimha idols of the 12th century of the Sthānaka variety and a fine Varāha discovered at Sibsagar 1728

15 Orissa

In the past, Assam had close cultural links with Orissa. Vaṣṇavism was patronised here under the Guptas. Under Choda Ganga Deva it struck firm roots. Kṛṣṇa was worshipped as Vāsudeva in the early days, as Gopāla-kṛṣṇa later, and still later, probably under the influence of Jayadeva's Gīta-govinda, as Rādhā-kṛṣṇa 1729

1726. Assamese Literature, B K Barua.
1727. Dr. R. C. Goswami in "AICC XXVIII Summaries of Papers", p. 159.
One peculiar feature of Orissa Vaishnavism is that it fused together the cults of Rama, Krsna and Buddha and evolved the cult of Jagannatha in the temple at Puri.

Distinguished religious teachers like Ramanauja, Narashimha MunI, Narahari Tirtha, Caitanya and Saankaradeva have visited this famous temple. Earlier Saankara appears to have made an attempt to introduce the Saivite from of worship, but not with much success. Some other teachers sought to make the temple exclusively Vaishnava. The Natha cult of Gorakshanatha exercised influence on the yoga aspect of the worship here (Bhairavi was worshipped in the sanctum along with Jagannatha in the early days) Ultimately, we have a syncretist cult of Buddhism, Tantrik features, Saivism and Vaishnavism. This is borne out by many peculiar usages here. The idol is made of wood and is worshipped by Sabaras. No class or caste distinctions are observed in the temple. There is no prohibition of eating food touched or taken by others.¹⁷³⁰

A study of the development of the temple suggests that in its earlier phases it was dedicated to Siva and other deities. Jagannatha is comparatively late. The sculptures are notable for depicting erotic poses: this must have developed in feudal times from about the 10th century till the 13th.¹⁷³¹

16. Overseas

When Hinduism spread beyond the seas in the early centuries of the Christian era Vaishnavism also found strongholds there. Inscriptional evidence shows that the worship of Vishnu according to the Agamas prevailed in foreign countries with Hindu colonies or under Hindu influence. Trailokyasara was worshipped in Kambuja during the reign of Jayavarman

¹⁷³⁰ R.K. Maitra in J.N. Banerjea Volume, pp. 230. Also see D.M. Padhi’s article in “AIOC XXI Summaries of Papers”

¹⁷³¹ Buddha Prakash, Indian History and Civilization, pp. 323-6.
CONCLUSION

With the help of those proficient in the Pancastra—
pancastraarcana cunicula. A Kambuja inscription of Yasovarman
(r. 889-900) testifies to services in a Visnu temple being regulated
by Vasnava Agamas. The acarya is required to be proficient in
Pancaratra and Vyakaraana. The terms, ‘Bhagavata’, ‘Sattvata’
and ‘Visnava’, are treated as synonyms. A Khmer inscription
of Kambuja (1073) refers to one Kavijvarapandita as observing
the rules of the Pancaratra. Inscriptions in other areas of
Kambuja mention the image of Visnu in a temple and also
Varahavatara,

In Kambuja Visnu is known by several names such as
Hari, Acyuta, Narayana, Upendra and Krita, Sri was also
worshipped. Images of Visnu are found with Garuda and
Lakshmi. At the capital, Angkor Thom, Suryavarman II
(1112-52) and his preceptor, Divakara Pandita, were responsible
for constructing the magnificent Angkor Vat a temple of Visnu
on the Dravidian model and representing the finest Khmer
architecture.

In the Indo-china peninsula of Champa later known as
Annam, inscriptions refer to Visnu under the names of
Narayana, Hari, Govinda, Kirti and Varaha. His descents
as Rama and Krishna were paid the greatest homage. Another
name of His was Tribhuvanakranta. His images are
represented with four arms and riding on Garuda. Lakshmi is

1732 B R Chatterji, Indian Cultural Influence in Cambodia,
pp 39-167.

1734. Ibid. p. 18. Such images are found in Java also.
1737. R. C. Majumdar, Ancient Indian Colonies in the Far East, I.
Champa, p. 193.
known as Padma and Sri. In 731, King Vlkrántavarman installed her image.\textsuperscript{1738}

In Burma Viṣṇu is known as Nārāyaṇa. The images of the ten descents of Viṣṇu are found in temples at Nat-hlaung Kyaung.\textsuperscript{1739}

Suvarṇadvīpa (Sumatra) inscriptions refer to the temples of Dieng and Larājongrang. At the latter place are found panels depicting the Rāmāyana. There are references to hymns like the Viṣṇu-paṇjara (which assures protection of all parts of the bodies of those who recite it and from different directions).\textsuperscript{1740}

"There is a Syrian tradition," according to an eminent historian, "vouching for the existence of the Krishna cult in Armenia in the second century B.C."\textsuperscript{1741}

This brief survey of the spread of Vaisnavism throughout India and in foreign countries gives some idea of its wide range and influence. Traditionally it has never been confined to any small region. The main home of the early Hindus is described in our ancient works as Jambudvīpa. It is said to have had nine divisions: Ilavīta, Harivāra, Kśipuruṣa, Bharata, Bhadrāśva, Ketumāla, Kuru, Raśvaka and Hiṁāmaya.\textsuperscript{1742} Viṣṇu is stated to have been worshipped under different names in these divisions: as Saṅkarṣāṇa in Ilavīta, as Hayagriva in Bhadrāśva and as Narasimha in Harivāra.\textsuperscript{1743}

Everywhere and at all times, the central concept that the Ultimate Reality is Viṣṇu with beneficent and auspicious

\textsuperscript{1738} Ibid. pp 194-5.
\textsuperscript{1739} N, R Ray op. cit. pp 22-3.
\textsuperscript{1740} Upendra Thakur, Some Aspects of Ancient Indian History and Culture, II, pp. 110-1, 223, 233, 243
\textsuperscript{1741} R. Satyanatha Iyer, History of India, I, p. 193.
\textsuperscript{1742} V. P II. 2. 12-14.
\textsuperscript{1743} C. R. Krishnsmachariulu: Cradle of Indian History, p. 48.
CONCLUSION

qualities has never been lost sight of. The Āgama mode of worship has been followed wherever temples of Viṣṇu have been consecrated, though the rules of the text may not always be strictly observed and there may be a few variations in the procedure of worship. Except in many temples in South India where the Vaikhanasa system prevails, the Pāñcarātra has been adopted. Many religious practices of the Hindus in India and in ancient colonies which are not traceable to the Vedas or the Smṛtis, are based on the Āgamas. The cult was not merely popular with the masses: it also attracted the patronage of rulers, noblemen and wealthy merchants who built temples and provided for their maintenance. It should also be noted that the patrons were almost always tolerant, showing no hostility to other cults, nor even denying them some contributions.

VAIŚṆAVISM AND MUSIC

The contribution made to music by Vaishnavism needs to be noted. The theory of sonic creation conceives of absolute sound (nāda) as Brahmā, from whom all sound emanates. Before becoming audible speech, sound has to pass through some stages. The Tāntrikas and musicians have been worshippers of nāda. This is one way of approach to God, Vide:

नादं वसामि बैकुण्ठे
योजिनां हुद्ये न च
मन्नक्ता यत्र गायन्ति
तत्र तिष्ठामि नारदः

Those who take to music are declared to be the body of Viṣṇu:

काब्राज्ञापार्थे केशवेतकार्यभिर्विद्विलालि च
शब्दसूतियत्वत्तदद्विविद्विश्वासंहास्यतुः

V.P. I, 22. 86.
It is even asserted that music excels all other forms of worship of God:

\[ जपकोटियुणं ध्यानं ध्यानकोटियुणो लयः।
\[ लयकोटियुणं गानं गानतपतरं न हि॥

Indian music is based on Sāmaveda. Its distinctive features are found in all Indian languages and all over India, though there is a division between Karnatic music in the south and the Hindusthani system in the north.

**Tamil**

In the Azhvārs' poetic Tamil compositions, we have some of the early Vaishnava songs on Viṣṇu. Some of them state that they are to be sung. Those who sing them are assured of reaching the Lord. Nathamuni (c. 900) collected the poems of the Azhvārs and set them to music. But for a long time past, they are merely recited both in temples and houses, except in Srirangam and one or two other places where the Araiyars sing and dance to the accompaniment of musical instruments.

Among later compositions are the kirtanas of Uttukkādu Venkata Subba Aiyar in praise of Kṛṣṇa, which are sung in bhajanas as prayer-offerings. The Rāma-nāṭaka-kirtanas of Aruṇācala Kavirāya (c. 1750) stand in a class by themselves. The principal incidents of the Rāmāyana (largely according to the Tamil version of Kamba) are depicted in songs set to rāga and tāla. Each kirtana contains a proverb. Though the work is claimed to be musical drama, its songs are sung in concerts and used in dance performances.

1744. Nāciyār Tirumozhi, XII. 10; Periyā Tirumozhi, II. 8-10; IX. 9 2, 10; Tiruvāymozhi VII 1. 11.

1745. Periyā Tirumozhi, III. 3, 10; III. 4, 10.
CONCLUSION

Telugu

The earliest Telugu composer of songs glorifying Viṣṇu was Appamācārya of Tālapākka (1424-1504) in Cudappah district (of Andhra Pradesh). He was the first composer to divide songs into pallavi, anupallavi and carana. Most of his compositions are in honour of Viṣṇu enshrined as Veṅkatēśvara of Tirumalai. His grandson, Annaya, also wrote in a similar strain musical pieces marked by śṛṅgāra and conveying Vedāntic meanings. The Tirumalai hills are claimed to be the Vedas in the form of granite, and non-Vaishnavas are strongly denounced. He also praises Rāmacūṇja and Viṣṇvaksena.

Kancarla Gopanna (c. 1650), famous as Bhadracāla Rāmaḍā, was a Tahsildar; he was imprisoned for 12 years by the Moslem ruler for spending tax revenues on serving the Lord and His devotees. During his prison term he composed many songs in Telugu primarily on Rāma and Śītā. Rāma is said to have miraculously secured his release by paying off his dues to the king. Among these are a hundred known as Dāsarathi-sataka.

Tyṅgarāja (1759-1857), the most famous composer in Karnatic music, was the son of a Telugu Brahmin, Rāmabrahmam, who had settled down in Tiruvālyānu near Tanjēvēr. He is said to have had a vision of Rāma, after repeating His name in japa for ninety-six crores of times. A master of musical tradition and innovation, he expressed his ardent devotion in numerous Telugu and a few Sanskrit songs. Though a devotee of Rāma, he was not lacking in devotion to other avatāras or other gods. It is stated that he composed 24,000 kīrтанas, though only a fraction of them have survived. He also wrote two operas, Ṛauka-carita dealing with the devotion of gopis to Kṛṣṇa, and Prahlāda-hṛkṣṭi-vijaya on the Lord’s descent as Narasimha to bless His devotee, Prahlāda.

His contribution to Vaishnavism through devotional music is rich, indeed magnificent. Throughout the Tamil country, his
songs are popular both with singers and listeners. The day of his death is commemorated by a musical festival at his birthplace. On specific occasions, some of his songs are sung in chorus.

Two contemporaries of Tyāgarāja were great composers—Muttuswāmy Diksita and Śyāmā Sāstrī. They were not devotees of Vīṣṇu. But Diksita has composed some beautiful songs about Vīṣṇu.

Meraṭṭūr Venkataramaṇa Bhāgavata (c. 1800), a Tamilian, composed in Telugu the opera, Prahlāda-carita. It is enacted at Meraṭṭūr in Taṇjāvūr district. This work is in the dance-drama tradition. Its theme is the Lord’s descent as Narasimha to protect Prahlāda.

Padas are songs in Telugu expressing devotion to God with an accent on bridal mysticism. Annamācārya, already referred to, and Kṣetrayya have enriched the repertoire of songs with many compositions of this kind. In dance concerts, Kṣetrayya’s paddas are often used.

Malayālam

King Svāti Tīrūnāl (1813–47) of Travancore, an ardent devotee of Vīṣṇu, composed songs in Malayālam, Sanskrit and Telugu, praising Him under the name of Padmanābha, to whom the temple at his capital, Trivandrum, is dedicated. In them he calls himself the dāsa (servant or slave) of Padmanābha.

Kannada

Narahari-tīrtha, third in descent from Madhva, composed songs in Kannada praising Krṣṇa. His followers sang these and came to be known as “Haridasas”. They are divided into groups known as Dāsa-kūtas. Sripādarāja, himself also the

head of a Mutt, composed Bhuramaragita, Venugita and Gopigita for musical rendering. Kanakadasa and the famous Purandaradasa were the disciples of Vyasaraya (16th century). Kanakadasa, a shepherd, became a devotee of the Lord (Venkatesvara) as enshrined in Tirumalai. Purandaradasa, a rich merchant, became a mendicant on account of devotion to God. To him are attributed more than two lakhs of songs. He occupies an important position in the development of South Indian music.

Sanskrit

Narayana-tirtha, an ascetic saint, composed in Sanskrit the Krsna-lilantarangi, a collection of songs in praise of Krsna. The musical setting is perfect, and they are marked by devotional fervour. Svati Tirunal, Muttuswami Dikshita and Tyagaraja also composed songs in Sanskrit glorifying Visnu.

Devotional music in South India in the four linguistic regions has been developed as the means for worshipping God, on the basis of the commendation in the puranas of singing the names and glory of God, as this is pleasing to God. They offer illustrations from the epics and the puranas.

Music is declared an element in the worship of God by the Agamas, and temples use music as part of the ritual. It is interesting that there are stone pillars in some temples serving as instruments of music. Among such temples are those in Tirumallurukanalai, Azhvar Tirunagari, Simhasalam and other places. The notes of the musical scale and of the conch can be produced by striking at the pillars. At Tirumalai, Bhadracalam and Urvandrum songs are rendered as part of worship. At Kancipuram in the Varadaraja temple is sculptured a figure of Krsna playing on the flute. A sage is shown as playing on the vina at Tirumayyam.

Maharashtra

In Maharashtra, the worship of Visnu under the name of Vithala or Vitoba was popularised by Nemadev (c. 1270),
Ekanāth and Tukārām (1608). In their songs in Mahārāṣṭrī (and sometimes in Hindi) they teach the singing of the names of God as the way to salvation. They refer to the nine kinds of bhakti. Tukārām (b. 1608) wrote many songs: as they are in the abhaṅga metre, they are known by that name. His devotion to God (as Viṣṇu) was fervent and exclusive.

Gujarāti

In Gujarat, the influence of Vallabha is seen in the devotional lyrics on Viṣṇu. Narasimha Mehta (c. 1400) was at first a worshipper of Śiva. Through his grace, Mehta went to Dvārakā and had a vision of the rāsa-dance. After this, he became a Vaiṣṇava and began to write on the sports of Kṛṣṇa. In his Suratasaṅgraha he describes himself as a messenger of the gopīs and Rādhā. His Śrīgārāmālā is full of bridal mysticism. Similar are other works like Vasantanapado and Hindolanapado. His description of an ideal Vaiṣṇava in his song, Vaiṣṇava-janato, was a favourite with Mahatma Gandhi who looked upon it as the authentic description of the traits of a Hindu devotee of God. Dayārāma (c. 1760) wrote many Garbis, mystic compositions expressing devotion to Kṛṣṇa.

The disturbed political conditions in Gujarat in the 12th and 13th centuries on account of Moslem rule were unfortunate for the Hindus. The Jain rulers about this time also did not help them. It was Narasimha Mehta’s songs that stirred up the religious spirit of the people and inspired a renaissance of devotional religion centering round Kṛṣṇa that has not exhausted itself till now.

Hindi

In central and northern India the Rāmānanda cult with its stress on devotion and its accessibility to all without distinction...
of caste or creed was popular and prominent. Devotees and composers like Sūrdās, Kabirīdās, Tulasīdās, Mirābāl came under its influence. Deep devotional fervour marks their compositions.

Sūrdās, blind Valabnavapoët (16th century), is said to have composed 125,000 padas on Viṣṇu (primarily as Kṛṣṇa). The surviving ones are full of literary elegance, Kabir is said to have been a Brahmin by birth brought up by a Muslim weaver in Benares. He does not seem to have had faith in any particular tradition. He was against idol worship, but his works suggest the influence of Āzhvāra. He refers to Mahārāṣṭra saints like Nāmadeva and Bithalā.

Mirābāl (c. 1600), said to have been a Rajput queen, chose to worship Kṛṣṇa, calling Him Girdharā. Her songs are popular both in the north and south, and are sung even by followers of Nanak and Kabir. Her songs and those of Kabir generally form part of the nāma-sankirtana in bhajanās 1749.

Haridāsa-svāmin, regarded as the divine descent of Lalita, one of the eight friends of Rādhā, lived at Bṛndāvana. He was blessed with a direct vision of Kṛṣṇa whom he called Śyāmasvāma. For him music was the means of worship. He greatly influenced singers like Balju Bāora and Tansen and contributed to the development of musical tradition in North India. 1749.

Bengali

Vidyāpati (c. 15th century), the famous poet of Mithila, composed songs on Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. 1750. Candīdās of Bengal (14th century) was influenced by Jayadeva’s Gītā-govinda. His

1749 “AIOC. Summaries of Papers”, Dr. K.K. Brahmachari on “Haridāsa-svāmin”, p. 311.
Krṣṇa-kīrtana depicts the divine love of Radha and Kṛṣṇa on the analogy of human love.

Govinda Dāsa (1537-1612), a follower of Caitanya, wrote songs in the mixed dialect of Brajabāuli. They deeply influenced his contemporaries. Of other composers in a similar strain mention may be made of Yadunandana Dāsa (c. 1537) and Jagadānanda (c. 1650). Their works are called padas. Kīrtanas were composed in Manohar Saha tune, set to music by Ganga Nārāyaṇ Cakravartī. They were sung to set tunes and they resemble South Indian bhajana songs.

The Gītā-govinda of Jayadeva (11th century), a musical and lyrical Sanskrit dramatic poem, was primarily responsible for the growth of the Radha-Kṛṣṇa cult. In the most elegant and melodious Sanskrit, helped by rhyme, alliteration and assonance, it depicts the love of Radhā and Kṛṣṇa. In depleting their sports, the poetry becomes highly erotic, though it suggests that this is only symbolic of longing for and union with God. In everyone of its twelve cantos, the unit for singing to set tunes is a group of eight stākas. The poem is also known as aṣṭapadī. It is used in bhajans, particularly those which celebrate Radhā’s marriage with Kṛṣṇa, and in dance concerts.

**Assam.**

Saṅkaradeva composed devotional songs called Bargeet in a mixture of Māthīli and Assamese. His disciple, Madhava-deva, wrote Harajari-ghoṣa. All these are sung as Nāma-sankīrtana in the Nāma-ghars established by Saṅkaradeva.

**Orissa**

Chanda and janana are the main forms of popular music in Orissa. They have influenced the bhajana form of worship.

1752. _Ibid._ p 496.
CONCLUSION

The former is a literary form, mixed up with popular music. The latter, addressed to God as Jagannātha, conveys the pain and suffering experienced in separation from God.

SUMMING UP

Our survey of the Āgama literature has shown that many customs and forms of worship of the Vaishnavas and even of Hindus generally cannot be traced to the Vedas: nor can they be pronounced anti-Vedic. Manu declares that the Smritis are also authoritative when they do not oppose or transgress Vedic declarations and injunctions. The Āgamas play a similar role. Uncompromising champions of the Vedas have to be sympathised with for failing to understand the spirit of the Āgamas.

Incidentally, we may refer to a problem raised by some scholars—that the Vaishnava Āgamas, though not later than the Śākta ones, are dependent on them. The Āgamas belonging to the different cults derive ultimately from the Vedas. The Aṣṭareya Brāhmaṇa accords the highest position among the gods to Viṣṇu who is also identified there with the sacrifice. Śiva too has a significant position in the sacred rites. These two seem to be treated in the Vedas as not inferior to each other. Potency (Śakti) must have been deified and treated as an important deity along with Viṣṇu and Śiva.

The principles governing the three types of Āgamas exalting one or other of these three, are common to them all. In view of the exclusiveness of each cult, it is reasonable to hold that these principles were derived from a common source. The epics show that in many respects Viṣṇu and Śiva do not have disparate traits. Inscriptions, edicts and grants in favour of a

1754. Ibid pp. 120-32.

particular cult cannot prove that other cults had no followers in those regions. Moreover, the cults professed also could change from time to time on account of historical exigencies such as the patronage of princes and the rise of eloquent and charismatic teachers. It is prudent to hold that the cults rose from a common source and developed independently, though not without exercising influence on one another.

The Āgamas are sometimes attacked on the ground that the concept of the idol is not Vedic and that idol worship does not have any Vedic support. This view is obviously untenable. In Vedic rituals, there is no worship as such, because the gods are invisible. Adoration requires a concrete form for the deity, and this has assumed the shape of the idol. The Vedas also have some descriptions of the forms of the deities. Moreover, the study of the practical side of the Āgamas will show that idol worship arose out of the necessity to enable people of all ranks to worship God. It is the failure to understand this that lies at the basis of such criticism.

The universal tendency to resort to concrete symbols is well brought out by Carlyle: "In the symbol proper, there is ever more or less distinctly and directly some embodiment and revelation of the Infinite. The Infinite is made to blend with the finite, to stand visible and, as it were, attainable there. By symbols accordingly is man guided, made happy, made wretched. He everywhere finds himself encompassed by symbols. The universe is but one vast symbol of God." 1758

We have attempted only a study of one aspect of Hindu religion and culture. In India, culture, religion and language are extremely varied. Yet each of these has influenced the others. Separating them completely from one another is almost

impossible. They have preserved individuality, while permitting assimilation of external elements.

In all the varieties of Hindu religion and culture, and in the variety of languages spoken, there is a golden thread of unity. The Hindu ethos is unmistakable. The Vedas represent the most ancient source for everything Hindu, religious or secular. The many recensions of the Vedas, the lengthy epics and purāṇas, the varied Kalpa-sūtras, the numerous Dharma-sūstras, the upavedas and the diverse systems of thought will be perplexing to those lacking interest and actuated by prejudice and self-complacency. Through all these however runs a golden thread connecting them so as to place each in its respective place, revealing to the scholar the unity in diversity. The efflux of millennia, the terrible onslaughts of foreign hordes bent on annihilating the native culture, and intimate political and industrial contacts with the West have not impaired this unity. Herein lies the secret of the continuity of Hindu tradition.

The study of one aspect of this tradition may create the impression that it is the only one that is important and worth studying. This is not because the others are not brought in here, but because all are but integral parts of one tremendous whole which seems vast and incomprehensible like the infinitude of God Himself. Hence this study is of a part only of that infinity which seems to defy comprehension.
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GLOSSARY

abhaya: pose of the hand of the icon conveying freedom from fear for the devotees.
abhicara: rite done for a malevolent purpose.
abhigamana: morning worship.
abhyavaharika: relating to food preparations and their offerings.
acamana: sipping water with the utterance of mantras.
acamanlya: one of the kinds of attendance (upacara).
acarya: spiritual preceptor, director for guiding temple construction and installation ceremonies.
adhikarana: section in the Purva mimamsa sutras and Brahma sutras treating a particular topic.
adhyaman: stage in the manifestation of Sakti.
adhyaryu: sacrificing priest following the yajurveda.
adhyavasa: preparatory rite to invoke the presence of the deity in an icon before worship.
agneya: belonging to Agni, a term used by the Vaikhanasa texts to refer to the Pancaratra Agama.
ahnika: routine of work to be carried out during the day.
asvarya: lordship
aksarsana: attracting an absent person into one's person by mantras.
aksasutra: a string of rosary seeds.
amurta: not having corporeal form.
anganyasa: nyasa done on a limb of the body.
angulinyasa: nyasa done on fingers.
antaryaga: mental (or inner) worship.
antaryamin: inner controller.
anuyaga: partaking the food offered to god.
aparaha: the fourth part of the day time.
aprakrtta: non-material, not a product of matter.
aradhana: worship of God.
arani: piece of wood for kindling fire.
aratrika: waving of light before the idol.
areca: idol for worship.
areaka: priest officiating for offering worship to God in temple.
arghya: water offered to the deity or guest as the first item of attendance.
arthavada: glorificatory passage not to be taken literally.
asana: posture: sitting posture of the idol.
avabhrtha: ceremonial bath in the concluding session of a sacrifice performed on the last or ninth day of festival in the temples.
avahana: invoking the presence of the deity.
avatara: divine descent of God.
bahiryaga: external worship.
bala: strength.
balibera: name of one of the idols in temples used for offering the daily oblations.
bhagavata: a devotee of God.
bhogasthana: places of enjoyment.
bhogopakarana: means of enjoyment.
bhupura: common edging in the yantra.
bhutasuddhi: The process of mentally purifying the elements constituting the human body and creating a pure one.
blja: essential syllable in a mantra.
bindu: concentrated and undifferentiated part of Sakti just about to create.
brahman: the priest of the Atharvaveda.
brahmandakosa: the fifth stage in creation representing the evolution of the Samkhya categories.
carya: name of the fourth division of Agama text, action.
caturatmya: group of the four vyuha deities constituted together for worship.
cicchakti: sakti manifested through the self.
devalaka: those who earn their livelihood by worshipping God.
dhruvabera: Idol which is permanently fixed in the garbhagrha of the temple.
dhupa: offering of incense.
dhvajarohana: mounting the flag in the flag staff marking the commencement of the festival.
dhvajasthamba: flag staff.
dhvajavarohana: bringing down the flag in the flag staff marking the conclusion of the festival.
diksa: initiation.
diksita: one who gets initiated.
dipa: light waved in the presence of an idol.

ekantin: exclusively attached to a single deity.
ekantidharma: the trait (nature) of the ekantin.
gatha: verse not belonging to the Vedas.
garbhagrha: sanctum sanctorum.

havis: offering, especially of food preparation, to the deity.
hotr: priest of the Rgveda.
hrdyaga: mental worship.

iṣya: act of worship.
jagrat: waking state.
japa: mental repetition of mantra or the name of God.
jivakosa: last stage of creation representing emergence of all animate beings.

jnana: first part of the Agama text containing the knowledge of ultimate Reality.

kainkarya: service to God, elders.
kalivalya: self realisation.
kala: pure manifestation.
kalpadevalaka: those who earn their livelihood by worshipping God after getting initiated.
karanyasa: nyasa done on one hand with another.
karmabera: Idol receiving daily worship.
karmadevalaka: those who earn their livelihood by worshipping God without getting initiation.
kalasa: pitcher.
katihasta  hand pose of the icon, the hand touching the waist.
kosa:  form assumed by Sakti.
kriya  third division of the Agama text—dealing with the
        construction of temples and installation of idols.
kumbya  utterance to ensure good conduct
kutashta purusa  purusa in the collective sense of all selves.

lilavibhuti  manifestation for sport.
mahotsava  annual festival in temples
manasayaga  inner worship.
mandala  circular design to concentrate divine powers.
manipravala  admixture of gem and coral, referring to the use
        of Sanskrit and Tamil expressions in Vaisnavite
        writings.
mantra  spiritual formula
mantra nyasa  nyasa bringing fitness to worship.
marane  rite to kill the unwanted person.
matrika  letters forming part of mantra
mattrkapltha  pedestal for mattrkas.
mayakosa  second stage in creation marking the beginning of
        material creation
mudra  hand pose
mula bera  principal idol fixed permanently in the garbhagrha
        of the temple
mulaprabhpti  primordial matter.
murta  having corporeal form.

nada  indistinct sound possessing light.
nadi  tubular duet.
nadika  duration of time equivalent to that of 24 minutes.
nalvedya  offering of food preparations to the deity.
nigada  words used simply to address (call) another.
nirmalya  remnant of sandal, garland and others already used
        for God.
niskala  partless
nityavibhuti  highest place of glory of God.
nityodita  ever manifest.
niyata: inner controller.
nyasa: self surrender, mental process of infusing potency into the object by touching it.
panckala: five fold division of the day.
pancaratrika: follower of the pancaratra tradition.
pancasamskara: five fold consecration.
para: supreme form of Visnu.
parathyajana: worship offered to the deity for the sake of others, done in temples.
paricaraka: assistant to the priest in the temple.
parisecana: sprinkling of water around the food served for eating.
pasa: bondage.
pasu: living being.
pati: Lord.
purusartha: aim, pursuit in life.
pausaka karma: rice conducive to welfare.
pavitraropana: decorating the idol with pavitra, a garland of nice threads of various colours.
pinda: consonants occurring between bija and other letters.
pistapasu: effigy of the animal made of flour.
prabandha: any literary composition, Nalayiradivyyaprabandha in Vaisnavism
prajna: state of deep sleep
prakara: enclosure in a temple.
prakasa: illumination or manifestation.
prakrtikosa: a stage of Sakti in which the gods get their consorts
pranapratistha: installation of life in the yantra or idol, God's taking His place there
prapatti: self-surrender.
prasutikosa: a stage of Sakti out of which the deities issue forth.
pratima: idol.
pratas: the first part of the day time.
pratistha: installation of the idol.
pratyabhijna: recognition.
pradurbbhava: descent of God Himself
pradurbhavanta: descent of parts or portions or anything which belongs to God.
prayasectta: act of expiation
pundra: the ornamental mark worn by a devotee.
purascara: preparatory rite.
purvahna: the third division of the day time
puspayaga: worship of God with flowers.
putraka: second kind of aspirant requiring initiation.
sadguna: group of six qualities.
sadhaka: third kind of aspirant requiring initiation.
sakala: having parts
sakti: potency.
saktikosa: the stage or body of Sakti which is concerned with suddhasarga.
saktipata: descent of God's grace.
salokya: state of moksa in which the self coexists with God.
samadhi: undisturbed resting of the self in God.
sangava: second part of the day time.
samhara: withdrawal of speech.
sambaranyasa: nyasa done to create dissolution.
samkranti: the time of transit of the sun from one to the next division of zodiac
samipya: fellowship with God.
samjna: name of the deity occurring in the mantra.
sampradaya: tradition.
sampreksana: consecration
sammyama: performance of good deeds for the benefit of the Brahman
santa: inactive.
santika: rite for removing the evil.
santodita: periodically manifest.
sarupya: transformation of the body, divine in appearance.
satkaryavada: theory that the effect has prior existence in the cause.
sattvata: follower of the Pancaratra.
samayin: the first kind of student who begins to get initiated.
saumya: gentle, Vaikhanasas refer to themselves by this word.
sayam: the last part of the daytime
sayana: reclining posture of the idol.
sayujya: intimate union.
aesa: subordinate to God
seva: service.
snapana: giving bath to the idol.
snapanabera: idol getting bath.
spanda: vibratory movement.
srastinyasa: nyasa done to create potency
sthitl: standing posture of the idol.
sthitinyasa: nyasa done to secure potency.
svadhya: study of one's Veda.
svapna: giving bath to the deity.
svarthayajana: worship for one's self, done in the house.
svayamvyakta: a holy place or shrine which manifested by itself.
subhasraya: idol, seat of the suspicious one (God)
suddhasattva: pure sattva without any tinge of rajas and tamas.
susuptl: deep sleep
taijasa: dream state.
tanmatra: subtle element.
tapa: marking the upper part of the arms with heated emblems of conch and discus
tejas: splendour, might.
tirodhanasakti: God's power to make the self loss the real knowledge.
turlva: transcendental stage
turlyatita: the stage beyond transcendence.
uccatana: rite to ruin an adversary.
udgatr: priest of the Samaveda.
udita: active.
unmesa: awakening of Sakti.
upabrahmanam: supplementary to the Vedas.
upacara: attendance.
upadana: collection or gathering of the materials for worship.
upanayana: investiture with the sacred thread.
utsava: festival.
utsavabera: bera used during festivals.

varamudra: hand pose representing the grant of boon.
vibhava: divine decent
vibhuti: prosperity of God.
vidvesana: rite to control the enemies.
vimana: structural part of the temple containing the main shrine.
vimarsa: self consciousness of the Supreme Being.
virya: virility.
visarga: aspirate sound.
visarjana: sending away (of God).
visva: waking state
vyuha: self division.

yajamana: rich man who undertakes the work of construction of temples.
yantra: metallic plate containing diagrams with the letters constituting the mantra of the deity written on specific places in the diagram.
### ERRATA

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