The Āgama Encyclopaedia

Volume III

Vaikhānasa Āgamas

Prof. S.K. Ramachandra Rao
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Further, Indian temples are to be considered only in the general framework of temple culture, which include not only religious and philosophical aspects but social, aesthetic and economic aspects also.

The volumes named Āgama Encyclopaedia deals with the temple-culture and Āgama framework, the sectarian division of the Āgama into Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava and Śākta, and the topics selected from the Āgama texts follow. Thus, the entirety of the Āgama, literature in so far as it is relevant to the temple-culture is brought within the scope of The Āgama Encyclopaedia.
THE
ĀGAMA
ENCYCLOPÆDIA
(Revised Edition of Āgama Koṣa)
Volume III
Vaikhānasā Āgamas
THE ĀGAMA ENCYCLOPAEDIA
(Revised Edition of Āgama Kośa)
Volume III
Vaikhānasa Āgamas

Prof. S.K. Ramachandra Rao

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Introduction

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The volume deals with the general problems relating to the idea of Āgama and the broad details of the tradition that is known after Āgama. In the historical perspective Āgamic tradition and the Vedic tradition were initially distinguished, but later the two fused. The circumstances that favoured the separation and integration have been explained. The role that Tantra played in crystallizing the Āgama tradition has been elaborately explained and illustrated. And more importantly the volumes deal almost exclusively with the essential details of temple-culture in India. Without an adequate appreciation of this context, other aspects of Āgama cannot become meaningful. In one of the appendices, a fairly exhaustive account of Tantra has been given, for this has provided the major dimension to the Āgama, especially of the Śākta pursuit.

The volumes which were originally published in the period 1989-1994 by the Kalpatharu Research Academy, Bangalore are being reprinted now, and I am grateful to my friend Shri Sunil Gupta of the Indian Books Centre, Delhi for publishing a revised edition of the volumes.

Bangalore
June, 2004

S.K. Ramachandra Rao
Chapter I

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The Vaikhānasas are a small community of temple-priests, spread over the villages and towns of Āndhra Pradesh, Karnātaka and Tamiḻ Nādu. The community is confined to South India, and even in South India, it is not to be found in Kerala or in the coastal region of Karnātaka. The members of the community belong to the Taittiriya division of Kṛṣṇa-Yajurveda among the brāhmīns, and have retained common customs and traditions, although spread widely in the three states mentioned above. They are endogamous and closely knit. It is undoubtedly an ancient community, heavily ritualistic in orientation and entirely Vedic in affiliation.

Although the Vaikhānasas are now generally classed among the Śrī-vaiṣṇava groups, they have always retained their independent identity and are markedly different from other Śrī-vaiṣṇava groups in the customs followed as well as in the philosophy adopted. They do not recognise Rāmānuja (1017-1137) or the earlier Ālvārs in their guru-paramparā; nor do they worship these Saints in their temples, much less sing the Tamiḻ hymns of the Ālvārs during any sequence of worship. In fact, a Vaikhānasa ācārya, Śrīnivāsa-makhin (1059 A.D.) has written a
commentary of his own on the Brahma-sūtras, known as *Lakṣmī-Visiṣṭād-vaita-bhāṣya*, based on the Vaikhānasā scriptures. Although the expression ‘Viṣiṣṭādvaīta’ has been employed, the philosophical and religious positions taken here are quite different from those taken by Rāmānuja in his Śrī-bhāṣya. The title of Śrīnivāsa-makhin’s work has been explained thus:

लक्ष्मीविशिष्ट: नारायण: अद्वैत यत्र।
मते ततॊ लक्ष्मीविशिष्टाद्वैतम

The characteristic Vaikhānasā viewpoint is that the pathway to final emancipation is not devotion alone, but iconic worship (samūrtārcanā) done with devotion (bhakti). It does not equate ‘bhakti’ with ‘upāsanā’, but points out that ‘upāsanā’, which is synonymous with ‘yajana’ (worship as a sacrifice), signifies a different, and in fact a superior approach. Worship (bhagavat-samūrta-yajana) is held to be more effective than even the wisdom concerning Brahman (brahma-vidyā), as shown by Śrīnivāsa-makhin in his treatise “Uttama-brahma-vidyā”

The Vaikhānasas have been an independent and distinct religious community even before the Śrī-vaiṣṇava group was formed under the leadership of Nātha-muni (824-924 A.D.) Yāmuna (died 1038) and Rāmānuja (1017-1137). Indeed, it is likely that the Vaikhānasā worship conducted in the shrines which the Ālvārs visited provided the impetus for the Vaiṣṇava movement which the Ālvārs spearheaded, and which Nātha-muni adopted. The Tamil songs of the Ālvārs suggest the superior merit of iconic worship in temples. The Vaikhānasas may thus be credited with having institutionalized the iconic worship (samūrtārcanā) of Viṣṇu, who was essentially a Vedic god.
It is not surprising, therefore, that in the Viṣṇu temples in ancient shrines like Tirumala Tirupati, Mahābalipuram, Śrīkākulam, Amarāvati, Vedādri, Dharmāvaram, Cola-simhapuram, Vijayanagar, Tiruccirapalli, Rāmanāthapuram, Pīthapuram, Kākināḍa, Vinuṇḍa, Khādri, Uttaramerūr, Taṇjāvur, Tirukkurun-gudi, Madurai, Darbhasayanam, Koṇḍavidu, Nellūr, Tirumāsai, Seṇji, Vellūr, Veṅkatagiri and Kārvēṭinagar, the worship is done according to the Vaikhyānasā śrāvaka prescriptions. It is also to be noted that many of the shrines associated with Rāmānuja and the Āḻvārs (like those in Śrīperumbūdūr, Poonamalli, Vānāmalai, Aṭaharkoil and Tiruvāli-tirunagara) continue to have Vaikhyānasā priests, although Rāmānuja favoured the Pāncarātra mode of worship.

The Vaikhyānasās carry on their worship entirely with Vedic mantras, and have no place in their worship for the recital of Tamil prabandhams. They are also strict with their adherence to the Vedic sacraments, and they also insist on the performance of fire-rituals, at home and in the temple, as ordained by the Tait-tirīya-brāhmaṇa texts. The belief that the sage Vikhanaśtra not only wrote the Kalpa-sūtra, which deals with the householder’s religious duties and responsibilities, but also taught the Daivika-sūtra, which deals with iconic worship, and which was amplified by his four disciples (Marici, Atri, Bhṛgu and Kāśyapa) refers to the equal importance that the Vaikhyānasās give to the Vedic sacraments and rituals on the one hand, and worship of icons at home and in temples on the other. In their view, the two are complementary to each other.

This was not the view of the Śaiva or of the Pāncarātra votaries. They recognized that the Āgama approach was
at variance with the Vedic. The former which was meant exclusively for temple-worship was the need of the times when Vedic culture was fast becoming obsolete. The very expression ‘Āgama’ appears to have been coined to distinguish this approach from ‘Nigama’ (which was the term for the Veda). It is to be noted that the Vaikhānasas texts do not generally employ the expression ‘Āgama’, although in more recent years the term Vaik-hānasāgama is being used to distinguish it from Śaivāgama, Pāncarātrāgama and Śāktāgama. The Vaikhānasas know their scripture only as ‘bhagavac-cāstra’. And their implicit acceptance of Vedic authority was well known even to the ancient smṛti-kāras like Baudhāyana (e.g. Dharma- sūtra of Baudhāyana, 3,3,17, ‘śātra-parigrahās sarvesām vaikhānasanām’). Iconic worship was not for them a later substitute for the Vedic ritual, but was itself, in their view, a Vedic ritual. Hence the sūtra prescription:

‘तम्मादग्नी नित्यहोमान्ते विष्णुनित्यार्चाच गृहे देवायतने भक्त्या भगवन्तं नारायणामर्गच्छियेत्।

That is also why the Bhāgavata-purāṇa (11,27,7) spoke of three varieties of worship (tri-vidho makhah’): Vaidika (meaning probably the Vaikhānasas, as Vallabha’s commentary Subodhini suggests), tāntrika (referring probably to the Pāncarātra), and ‘mixed’ (miśra, procedures for the common folk like nāma-sankīrtana).

The same purāṇa again speaks of two approaches ‘veda’ and ‘tantra’. The commentator Vīrārāghava explains that the reference is to the practices prescribed in the Veda and in the Pāncarātra texts (‘ubhābhyām veda-pāncarātroktābhhyām’). It is probable that the latter is the employment of the ‘eight-lettered’ (aṣṭākṣari?) and ‘twelve-
lettered’ (dvādaśākṣarī) mantras (cf. Mahābhārata, Āsvamedhika-parva, ‘anu-gītā’, 109, 89). There is an intriguing verse in Viṣṇu-purāṇa, which has been cited and explained by Śrīnivāsa- makhin in his Tātparya- cintāmaṇi (cf. Uttama-brahma-Vidyāsāra, 62).

यज्ञविर्यज्ञपुरुषो वासुदेवश्र नात्वतैः।
वेदान्तवेददिशिकिष्णु: प्रोच्यते यो नतोजस्मि तमू॥

Godhead here is described as what the sacrifices (viz. the Vedic ritualists) worship as yajña-puruṣa (viz. the personification of sacrifice), the Sāättvatas (viz. the Pāṃcarātras) regard as Vāsudeva, and the knowers of the final import of the Veda (viz. the Vaikhānasas) as Viṣṇu. Śrīnivāsa-makhin distinguishes between the ‘sacrifices’ (viz. the knowers of the Veda, ‘veda-vidbhih vaikhānasaiḥ’ also a group among the Vaikhānasas, devoted to the icon less rituals prescribed in the Veda, ‘amūrtār-canā) and ‘the knowers of Vedānta’ (viz. worshippers of iconic representations of Viṣṇu, ‘samūrta-bhagavad-yajana’), who are also Vaikhānasas.

The distinction between the two groups of Vaikhānasas, the fire- ritualists and the icon-worshippers, made by Śrīnivāsa-makhin probably refers to the evolution of the Vaikhānasa community from the Kalpa-sūtra stage to the ‘Bhagavac-cāstra’ stage. The texts recognize that Godhead may be worshipped on an altar (sthāṇḍila), in water (salīla), in the solar orb (sūrya-maṇḍala) or in ones own heart (hrdi). The worship may take the form of offerings to the fire (huta), repetition of the sacred mantras (japa) and contemplation (dhyāna). But superior to all these is worshipping an iconic representation (arcanā), because it involves special devotion (bhakti) in addition to the
offerings (as in huta), repetitions (as in japa) and meditation (as in dhyāna).

(Bṛgu’s Khilādhikāra, 20, 16-23)

It is also better suited to the common folk. That is why the Vaikhānasa moved from the first stage (Veda) to the second (Vedānta) of Vedic culture. They continued to perform Vedic rituals (prescribed in the Smārta section rather than in the Śrauta), but valued iconic worship more. Their scene of activity shifted from the sacrificial hall to the temple. But they did not sever their connection with the sacrificial background. Worship was also looked upon as a sacrifice (yajana), for the etymological shades of meaning of the word ‘yajana’ includes worship of gods (‘saṅgati deva-pūjāyām yajanah’). Indeed among the various kinds of sacrifices, worship of gods is distinguished by its possibility even in the absence of a sacrifice:

तदर्चनं हिन्द्रा प्रोक्तमूर्त्ति च समूर्तम॥
अग्नी हुनमूर्त्ति स्यात् समूर्ति बेरपूजनम॥
Sacrificial rituals (like agnistoma) will be effective only during the lifetime of the performer of those rituals (agnihotri), and their rewards are confined to the performer and his immediate family. But the temple constructed or an icon installed will bestow benefits not only on the donor and the priest but on all the people who visit the temple and worship the icon. Further, every sacrifice has its own specific reward to confer upon. The performer and it is incapable of occasioning other benefits. Iconic worship in a temple, however, will fulfil all the desires of the devotees (sarva-kāma-prada), and it is capable of bestowing the benefits of all the sacrifices (sarva-kratuphala-prada), (ibid, 1st patala)

करोति श्रुतितानां च भोज्यं पाकक्रिया शिखिः।
तथैव कामान्त भूतेश्: स ददाति यथेष्पितम।
कल्पदुमादिव हर्मीदिष्टं तदवायते॥

(प्रकृणाधिकारे ३५, २३-२९)

I will have occasion later to point out that the correspondence between the sacrificial ritual and iconic worship was worked out by the Vaikhānasa texts: the ‘house-hold fire’ (gārhapatyāgni) which is preserved at a
particular place and protected from conditions of its disappearance was the symbolic significance of the main and immovable icon in the sanctum (dhruva-bera). The “āhavanīyāgma” which is lit from the ‘gārhapatyāgni’ and taken out and used for daily rituals is like the moveable and representative icon for which any routine worship is offered (kautuka-bera for nityārcanā): and another fire, known as ‘dakṣiṇāgni’ corresponds with the third icon (processional, autsava-bera) which receives special and occasional worship (viśeṣārcanā). This is how the sacrificial cult was transformed into the cult of iconic worship: the ‘fire-triad’ (tretāgni) became the ‘icon-triad’ (bimba-traya).

The ground was now prepared for the development of a full-fledged temple-culture and a new slant was given to the Vedic idea of sacrifice (yajña) when iconic worship also was accepted as a yajña. The details of a yajña of the old type were woven into the fabric of worship in a temple. The daily tending of the household-fire (agnihotra-paricaryā) was now substituted by daily worship in the temple. Special worship during the five special occasions (pañcappārvārcanā), and during the four rainy months (cāturmāsyaārcanā) were the new versions of the old ‘darśa-pūrṇa-māsa’ and Āgrayaṇa. If Soma-yāga was the annual sacrifice performed for several days and with great zeal and gaiety, the temple now had its annual ‘kālotsava’ (or brahmot-sava) spread over nine or ten days and conducted in splendour. The idea of five-fires (pañcāgni: sabhya, āhavaniya, anvāhārya, gārhapatya and āvasathya) was retained in the new conception of five iconic representations (“pañca-mūrti: Viṣṇu, Puruṣa, Sayta, Acyuta and Aniruddha, and ‘pañca-bera’: dhruva, kautuka,
snapana, utsava and bali). The Vedic terminology, like mystic preparation (dikṣā), fire-priests (ṛtviks), offerings in the fire (havis), worship conducted three times (triśavaṇa), circumambulation of the fire (parikrama or pradakṣiṇā), the ceremonial bath signifying the final phase of a long ritual (avabhṛta), was retained in the new context.

The passage of the sacrificial age into the age of temple-worship can clearly be seen in the Vaikhānasa texts, which however argue that iconic worship was an integral part of the Vedic culture, and that it was not in the nature of an innovation. And it would appear that the Vaikhānasa sages, whose mention is found in books as early as RgVeda (8, 70, 3 and 9, 66) Śukla-yajurveda (8, 38), Sāma-brāhmaṇa (Tāṇḍya, 14, 4, 7 and 14, 8, 28) and Taittiriya-samhitā (7, 1, 4, 3), had a doctrine of their own besides a life-style that was peculiar to them (as we learn from the later smṛti-texts). For instance, Manu-smṛti which counts the Vaikhānasa-sūtra among great authorities (6, 1) explains that the expression Vaikhānasa referred to the hermits and anchorites who had a special Philosophy of their own (6, 21, ‘vaikhānasa-mate sthitah). Other smṛti-writers like Baudhāyana (11, 6, 17) and Gautama (3, 25,-34), who also accept the authoritative character of the Vaikhānasa-sūtra, and regard the Vaikhānasas as forest-dwelling hermits (cf. Govindasvāmi on Baudhāyana-dharma-sūtra; ‘Vaikhānaso pi vānaprastha eva, samjñāntara-karanaṃ samyagvyavahārārtham’) mention the Śrāmaṇaka-fire (Śrāmaṇakāgni) as their characteristic ideology. Haradatta explains the Śrāmaṇaka method of kindling the sacred fire, which Gautama and Baudhāyana also prescribe (‘śrāmaṇakena agnim ādhiyā’) as what was in accordance
with the Vaikhānasa doctrine (Vaikhānasam śāstram śrāmaṇakam’).

That the Vaikhānasas had an ideology of their own in addition to a doctrine has been mentioned by the commentator of Manu, Kullūka-bhaṭṭa (6, 21, ‘Vaikhānaso vānapraṣṭhah, taddharma-pratipādaka-śastra-darśane sthitah’). The śrāmaṇaka-method of worshipping fire may probably have involved elements of iconic worship, which fact distinguished the Vaikhānasas from other hermits like Vālakhilyas and Vātaraśanas.

It is not relevant for our purpose here to discuss about the nature of the śrāmaṇaka-fire or the method of kindling it. It is sufficient to note that it was associated not only with some austerity or penance, but with the name of the sage Vikhanas. We read in Vaikhānasasmārta-sūtra (9, 5):

तपसा श्रमणमेतमूलं तस्मादेतद्विधानमेतदगृहं च।
श्रमणकमित्यः भगवान्।

The suggestion is that it was Vikhanas that coined the name ‘śrāmaṇakāgni.’ This fire was not the usual physical fire that was used at home (laukiṇa), but the one consecrated by Vedic rites (cf. ‘śrāmaṇikena vaisikena na laukiṣkety arthaḥ’, Mitāk-sāra on Yājñavalkya-smṛti, prāyaścitta section, 45). It was the fire born out of the Vedic hymn (as the variant form śravaṇika suggests: ‘śrāvaṇam śrutih, tatra bhavah śrāvaṇiko-mārgah’, Bālama-bhaṭṭa), and identified with the worshipper (cf. āgniṇ āpy ātmasāt kṛtva, Yājñavalkya, op. cit, 54, comm. on it: ‘agnin āt-manī samāropya’). Further, there are references which point out that the Vaikhānasa worship was for one fire (cf. ‘ekāgnir aniketah syāt’ Āpastamba-dharma-sūtra 1, 2, 21, 21; also ‘śrāmaṇakam nāma vaikhānasa-sūtram,
tad uktena prakāreṇa ekāgnir ādheyād' Satyāṣādha-śrautasūtra 2, 7, 5) and that this worship would eventually be followed by ‘no fire’ (‘śrāmaṇa-keṣaṇāgnim ādhāyāhitāgnih vrksa-mūlikah ārdhvaṃ śadbhya māsebhya anagnir aniketanah’ Vāśītha-smṛti, 9, 7, 8). The Vaikhānasas prescription of the abstract worship of one fire as the deity (ekāgni) would probably have led to the doctrine of ‘ekāyana’ and to the formation of the ‘ekāntinah’ group (or the bhāgavatas).

THE VAIKHĀNASAS

The employment of the expression ‘Vaikhānasas’ is an ancient one, suggesting the great antiquity of the Vaikhānasas as a group of religious practitioners, although what precisely were their practices cannot easily be ascertained. The expression occurs in the Brāhmaṇas and Smṛti manuals and also in the two great epics (Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata). The early references describe the Vaikhānasas as hermits, aged householders who resided in forest-retreats engaged in austere sacrificial rites as prescribed in the Vedic texts of the Brahmaṇa division. In the Sāma-brahmana, the Vaikhānasas are mentioned as sages who were dear to Indra (viz. Viṣṇu): (cf. Tāṇḍita- mahā brāhmaṇa, 14,4,7)

It is usual for the expression Vaikhānasas to be taken as

वैखानसा वा ऋषय: इन्द्रस्य प्रिया आसन

synonymous with ‘vānaprastha’, the third of the four classical stages of life (the other three being the life of the student or brahmacārī the life of an active householder
or grhaṣṭa and the life of a wandering renunciant or sanyāśi). We read for instance in Trikāṇḍa-śeṣa: The vānapraṣṭha is one who voluntarily gives up his active participation in community life and retires with his wife to a hermitage removed from the township. The celebrated play ‘Śākuntalam’ by Kālidāsa refers to the Vaikhānasā as a life of austerity and vows (vrata). And Manu prescribes that the religious life of Vaikhānasā should consist among other things of satisfying ones hunger only with wild roots, berries and fruits, which have ripened of the their own accord and have fallen on the ground on their own (dharmam vaikhānasāśrayam):

पुष्पमूलफलावर्तिणि कक्षार्तितेतु सदा।
कालपक्वेः स्वयंशीरोपर्वेंखानसमते स्थितः॥

Hārīta’s manual adds that the Vaikhānasā should not use the plants and herbs that are useful to the townsfolk and that he must cover himself only with birch-bark (valkala) and have only kuśa-grass for his girdle.

ग्राम्या ओषधी: परिवर्जयेतु॥

The epic Mahābhārata (Ānuśāsanika-parva) describes the Vaikhānasās as hermits (vānapraṣṭhas) who are given to extreme forms of penance:

तेषु वैखानसा नाम वानप्रस्था: शुभेश्चर्गे।
तीव्रेण तपस्या युक्ता दीर्घिन्मत: सुतेजसः॥

In Devī-bhāgavata, the vaikhānasā hermits are mentioned as those who eat little and have perfected their austerities; but the text points out, significantly enough, that even they, knowing as they do the emptiness of normal transactional life, are still involved in it (1, 19, 18):
वैखानसों य मुनयो मिताहारा जिततताः।
तेजस्विः मुख्यत्ति संसारे जानतोषियं ह्यसत्त्यातः॥

But the distinguishing features of the Vaikhānasa way of life is given in the early texts as tending the sacrificial fire known as ‘srāmanakāgni’ (in the place of ‘tretāgni’ which the normal householders tend). In Vaśiśṭha’s manual, the prescription for a Vaikhānasa is that he must instal the fire according to the srāmanaka procedure.

श्रामणकेनागरिनमाधाय आहितायिन: बृक्ष्मूलिकः॥

and Yajñasvāmi, commenting on the above statement, explains that ‘śrāmaṇaka’ means the Vaikhānasa-scripture:

श्रामणकं नाम वैखानसं शास्त्रं तदुत्तेन विधिना॥

The word ‘śramaṇa’ refers to the mendicant who devotes himself to active spiritual exercises (tapoyoga) and leads a life of restraint and discipline. However, he does not abandon his belongingness to the Vedic fold (as, for instance, the sanyāsi does); he continues to tend the sacrificial fire, but with no material or secular interests in view, and with no violence of any sort attending his devotions. The details of ‘śramaṇakāgni’, the sacrificial fire tended by the śramaṇa (or śramaṇaka) are also given in the Vaikhānasa-sūtras, which will be dealt with later. According to Bodhāyana, the Vaikhānasa hermit lives feeding himself with roots and fruits; in a forest, and does not enter the township; he tends the śramaṇaka-fire, and worships the gods, the manes, the sages, animals and human beings; he treats all living beings as his guests. He is engaged in penance, and carries out the scriptural injunctions with great care and zeal:
The Vaikhānasa thus refers to a distinct code of conduct adopted by some hermits in fulfillment of the requirements of the third stage of life, namely Vānaprastha. The Vaikhānasa-sūtras, which are extant, provide details of this code of conduct. The householder, who has performed the Soma-sacrifice (gṛhastra soma-yājī), and who has seen children and grand-children should retire from normal domestic life, having entrusted his children with the responsibility of running the household. He enters into the hermitage in a forest-retreat (vanāśrama) along with his wife and resolves to serve the god Nārāyaṇa as inspired by the god himself (‘bhagavad ājñayā bhagavat-prityartham śrīman-nārāyaṇa kaiṅkarya-rūpam’). He becomes a hermit (vanāśrami munih) and observes the ten niyamas or restraints (bath, cleanliness, study of scriptures, penance, generosity, daily worship, periodical fasts, celibacy, the prescribed observances and vow of silence) and the ten yamas or constraints (truth, non-cruelty, rectitude, forgiveness, restraint over senses, loving kindness, care, softness, non-violence and sweet outlook). He performs without fail ‘the tending of the śrāmaṇaka-fire’ both morning and evening: and he also performs other rituals like darśa-pūrṇamāsa, cāturmāsa, Nakṣtreṣṭi and Āgrayaṇeṣṭi. He eats only once a day, fasting at night
("rātrau nāśnīyāt"); and eats only wild roots, berries and fruits. He looks upon his wife as a mother, with no lust whatsoever; and although he lives with his wife, he sleeps apart from her ("patnīm vinā ekah śayīta: mātr-vat nīśkāmāh prekṣeta"). He is self-restrained. He does not accumulate wealth in any form ("dhānyadhana-saṅcayam na kurvīta"). He has compassion for all creatures and leads a life of purity and serenity, without caring for pleasures or profits. Among the hermits, the old texts distinguish two classes: those who live with their wives (saptnīka), and those who do not (apatnīka). Further, four classes are enumerated among the former; (1) the 'audumbaras', the hermits who tend the śramaṇākāgni alone; (2) the 'vairiṇcas', the hermits who worship Nārāyaṇa and live austere lives; (3) the 'vālakhilyas', the hermits who wear matted hair on their heads, and don garments made of birch-bark, and worship the Sun as the sacrificial fire (arkāgni); and (4) 'phenapas', the hermits who live like mad men, eating only the worn out and fallen leaves, and sleeping on bare ground; they observe 'cāndrāyaṇa-vrata' and long only for emancipation.

The class of hermits who do not have wives has innumerable sub-divisions. There is another classification of hermits, given in the texts pertaining to the Aruṇa-ketuka rite as prescribed in Yajur-veda. At the beginning of creation, five types of sages came into existence: (1) the 'arunās', who abide in God and are disinterested in all else; (2) the 'ketava', who have lofty natures and are foremost among devotees of God; (3) the 'vātaraśanas', the naked and fasting ascetics, (4) the 'vaikhānasas', who exercise control over their senses, and (5) the 'vālakhilyas' (Tarttirīya-āranyaka, 1,25,23)
The later-day Vaikhānasas trace their descent from this early group of hermits, who were well within the Vedic fold and who combined sacrificial rituals with an ascetic and austere way of life. Among the Kalpa-sūtras, which were auxiliary texts to the Vedic corpus prescribing the code of conduct for the lay folk, the Vaikhānasas had their own Kalpa-sūtras; and these have come down to our own day. For the Vedas personified, the chandhas are regarded as the feet, while the Kalpas are likened to the hands, as all the action (both secular and religious) is possible only through them. Each of the four Vedas had its own divisions, and each division had its own specific Kalpa-sūtra, which was meant to guide the daily life and occasional conduct of the lay folk affiliated to that division. The Kalpa-sūtras deal with all actions pertaining to religious life, and the actions are grouped under three major divisions: principal sacrifices and related rituals (śrauta), domestic duties and rites (smārtā or gṛhya) and social divisions and responsibilities appertaining to them (dharma). There is also an additional division known as ‘śulba-sūtras’ which deal with the preparation of the fire-altar, its measurements, and implements used in a sacrificial rite. When the text deals with all four divisions, it is
known as ‘complete’ (pari-pūrṇa). But it is seldom that the same text comprehends the entire range of conduct, personal, domestic and social. Those that deal with domestic rites and responsibilities, called grhya-sūtras, are frequently met with. There are also śrāuta-sūtras.

Associated with Ṛgveda are the two factions with śrāuta and grhya-sūtras known as Āśvalāyana (followed generally by the folk who style themselves as pañca-gauda in northern India and pañca-drāviḍa to the south of the river Godāvari) and Sāṅkhāyana (followed in some parts of North India and Kerala). Yajurveda has two major divisions: Śukia and Kṛṣṇa. The former has Kātyāyana-śrāuta-sūtra (Kāṭhya-sūtra or Pāraskara-sūtra), which is followed by groups of people known as Kāṇvas and Mādhyandinas, mostly in South India. The Kṛṣṇa-yajurveda has three major factions: Taittirīya, Caraka and Maitrāyaṇīya. The Caraka faction has a kalpa-sūtra known after Caraka (current in Kāśmir). The Maitrāyaṇīya faction has Mānava which is very ancient (followed in parts of Gujarāt and Mahārāṣṭra) and Varāha (followed in parts of Āndhra-Pradesn, Tamil-Nādu, Kar-nātaka and Gujarāt) śrāuta and grhya-sūtras. The Taittirīya faction has as many as six Kalpa-sūtras: Āpastamba (followed mostly in Tamil Nādu and Āndhra Pradesh), Bhāradvāja (followed in some places in Tamil Nādu), Vādhūla (followed in Kerala) and Vaikhāṇasa (followed in Āndhra Pradesh, Karnātaka and Tamil Nādu). The last kalpa-sūtra is ‘complete’ in all details.

The division known as Rāṇayaṇīya belonging to the Sāmaveda has Drāhyāyaṇa-śrāuta-sūtra (followed by groups among pañca-gauda and pañca-drāviḍas), the division known as Kauthuma has Lāṭyāyana-śrāuta-sūtra
and Gobhila-grhya-sūtra (followed in parts of North India) and the Jaiminiya division has its own kalpa-sūtra (followed in parts of South India, especially in Kerala, Karnātaka and Tamil Nādu). The Atharva-veda has only one division that is extant, viz. Śaunaka, and it has Vaitāna-śrauta-sūtra and Kauśika-grhya-sūtra (followed by groups in Kāśmir and Gujarāt). Among the dharma-sūtras, Āpastamba (affiliated to the Taittirīya division of Krṣṇa-yajurveda and followed only in South India now), Hiraṇyaka-keśi (affiliated to the same division and followed in parts of the Western ghāts known as Koṅkaṇa) and Bodhāyana (affiliated to the same division, and followed in South India) are in vogue. Likewise, only three Śulba-sūtras are extant now, and all three are affiliated to Yajurveda which is the Veda dealing with sacrificial rites: Āpas-tamba, Bodhāyana and Katyāyana. It is unlikely that the other Vedas had any Śulba-sūtras affiliated to them, because the śulba-sūtra is relevant only in the sacrificial context.

It would thus appear that the Vaikhanāsa-Kalpa-sūtras illustrate the ‘complete Kalpa-sūtra’, comprehending the śrauta, grhya and dharma sections. There is no separate section known as sulba-sūtra, but the matter usually covered by this class of texts is dealt with in detail in two sections (śrauta and grhya) of Vaikhānas-Kalpa-sūtras. Known as Vaikhānas-bhagavac-cāstra’ the compendium is made up of 32 chapters (praśnas), seven dealing with Grhya (or Smārta), three with Dharma, together with another chapter known as pravara-sūtra dealing with the genealogy of the seers who initiated families (vamśa), and twenty-one chapters dealing with Śrauta. This is the basic scripture for the Vaikhānasas, and all other definitive texts
are derived from this source. Nṛṣimha-vājaṃeyya-yāji, (whose period is uncertain but who is believed to have lived around the fifth or sixth century A.D.) has prepared an elaborate and excellent gloss on the seven Grhya-sūtra chapters, the three Dharma-sūtra chapters and the pravara-sūtra chapter. The gloss provides the main framework for the Vaikhānasa-āgama.

Vaidyanātha’s Varnāśramacāra-kāṇḍa and the celebrated Smṛti-ratnakara make a two-fold classification of the eighteen Kalpa-sūtra manuals that were once prevalent. The first group of nine manuals (Bodhayana, Āpastamba, Satyāsaṅgha, Gārgya, Agastya, Sākalya, Āśvalāyana, Śāmbhava, Kātyāyana) are described as general or ‘earlier-sūtras’ (sāmānyā-sūtras or pūrva-sūtras), because they are derived directly from the four Vedas and they deal only with the sacrificial rites in the domestic and public contexts. The other group of nine manuals (Vaik-hānasa, Śaunaka, Bhāradvāja, Yājñavalkya, Jaimini, Vādhuḥ, Mādhyandina, Kauṇḍinya and Kauśika) are known as non-general or ‘later-sūtras’ (asaṃānyā or aparā-sūtras), because they expound the philosophy of the Vedas and the Upaniṣads, and deal with daily conduct and worship of deities like Viṣṇu:

बोधायनीयापस्तर्नेष्वरे प्रस्तुतां गाण्यसमागमत्य
शाकल्याश्रवणां शांभवविच तत्त्वायनमिति नवानि
पूर्वसूत्राणि।
वैखानसीयं शौनकसं हार्द्धाः याज्ञवल्क्यं जैमिनीयं
वाधूलं माध्यमदिनिं कौणिडविं कोषीष्टकियमिति
नवान्यपरसूत्राणि।

(आनंदसं-हितायाम, ६, २-३)
The basis of this division is not very clear. The expressions ‘pūrva’ (‘earlier’) and ‘apara’ (‘later’), which occur in the passage quoted above may indeed refer to the chronological sequence in which the texts were compiled. But the words ‘sāmānya’ (‘general’) and ‘asāmānya’ (‘non-general’), which are employed usually as synonyms of ‘pūrva’ and ‘apara’, probably describe the contents of these texts. The nature of Kalpa as an accessory to the Vedic corpus (vedāṅga) is defined as an orderly arrangement of the sacrificial rites prescribed in the Vedic hymns:

कल्पो वेदहितानां कर्मणामानुपूर्व्येण कल्पनाशस्त्रम्।

It is probable, therefore, that the śrauta-sūtras belong to an early period, as they contain details of sacrifices like Soma-yāga, Bṛhaspati-sava, Dyādaśāha, Satra, Vājapeya, Rājasūya,

Sautrāmanī, Ahīna and Āsvamedha, which were prevalent only in very olden days. And the performance of these sacrifices was motivated by desire of wealth, cattle, progeny, victory, food and other material benefits. Incidental to these major sacrifices were several preparatory, sacramental and purificatory rites which rendered the performer eligible for the benefits. In course of time; however, the performance of major sacrifices became difficult and rare, while the associated preparatory, sacramental and purificatory rites continued to play an important role. Instead of the sacrifices, worship of deities became popular. The later Kalpa-texts are found to prescribe the preparatory, sacramental and purificatory rites along with the worship-rituals and as relevant to the latter. Perhaps it was in this sense the earlier ‘general’ character of the Kalpa-sūtras was lost.
Whatever the significance of the division, the Vaikhānasa-kalpa-sūtras constitute an important group of texts, which have undoubtedly a Vedic and ritualistic orientation while also advocating the iconic worship of Viṣṇu. We see here the transition from the Kalpa to the Āgama. Viṣṇu was no doubt the most prominent of the Vedic gods, identified frequently with Indra and Agni. He was also regarded as the very personification of sacrifice (‘yajño vai Viṣṇuh’). The worshipper was asked to contemplate on Viṣṇu as the fire that was occasioned by the friction (meditation) of the fuel (the worshipper’s own self):

मन्थमात्मानं विष्णुं जन्यपगिन्त च ध्यायन।

(1, 10,5)

The worship of Viṣṇu was tantamount to the performance of a great Vedic sacrifice. The Vaikhānasa-kalpa-sūtras, therefore, prescribe the worship of Viṣṇu in the household as well as in the temple, along with the Vedic rituals that were necessary and sufficient. It is not surprising that the Vedic rituals were gradually subordinated to the worship of Viṣṇu; but the Vedic rituals were never entirely given up.

The Vaikhānasas are probably the only group of Āgama adherents who rely heavily on Kalpa-sūtra. It is true that among the Śaivāgama devotees, the ‘ādi-śaivas (or ‘Śiva-dvijas’) affiliate themselves to the Bodhāyana-kalpa-sūtra (which, like the Vaik-hānasa text, belongs to the Taittiriya branch of Kṛṣṇa-yajur-veda); but the Śaivāgama has grown independently of the Kalpa-sūtra, whereas the Vaikhānasāgama is still very much within the Kalpa-sūtra framework.
The Vaikhānasa-kalpa-śūtra, as was said earlier, has three distinct divisions: Śrauta, Smārta (Gṛhya) and Dharma, with the Śulba-śūtra prescriptions accommodated in the first two divisions. The first division begins with the setting up of the ritual fire (agnyādhāna) and goes on till the ritual known as Soma-samsthā. It deals with all types of ritualistic actions which are daily (nitya) or occasional (naimittika) in character, and with several types of sacrifices (yajña-yāga); there are also prescriptions provided for expiations (prāyaścitta) for major and minor lapses in the rites. The Śrauta-texts, however, were not valued high, because all the sacrifices that they prescribe are motivated by selfish desires (kāmya):

योडित चिन्ते तस्य सर्वसुकृतं भवति।
नित्यकर्मयज: श्रेय: स्यातुः श्रौते: स्मार्तेष्च।
सर्वभ्य: कामेभ्य: दर्श्यवूर्णमासा।
योडित्यान वीर्यकामो यज्ञे।
वाज्यपेयेन ब्राह्मणो राजन्यो विधिकामो यज्ञेत।
अतिराज्येण ब्रह्मवर्णकामो यज्ञेत। etc.

According to the Vaikhānasa creed, it is imperative to suppress the selfish desires; and religious conduct must be resorted to for its own sake. It is, therefore, that the Vaikhānasa-āgama shelved the śrauta-sūtras to the background. But to preserve the Vedic affiliation, the Gṛhya-sūtras were stressed.

The Gṛhya-sūtras relate to life in the household and deal with the eighteen sacramental rites for the individual (saṁskāra), which are meant to cleanse the physical constitution and render it fit for spiritual progress. They range from ‘niṣeka’ (ṛtu-saṁ-gamana, copulation in the
proper season) and ‘garbhādhāna’ (impregnation) to ‘samāvartana’ (return from study) and pāṇi-grahaṇa (marriage); and also with the rites beginning with those connected with birth and ending with the rites regarding death and cremation (‘jātakādi-smāśānānta’). Among the sacraments is included ‘Viśnu-bali’ which is unique for the Vaikhānasas, and which will be explained later. The texts also deal with the installation and worship of icons at home (grhārca-bimba-pratiṣṭhā, arcanā) and other details pertaining to religious observances (like seven-fold pākayajña, nava-graha-yajña etc.). These are regarded as divine sacraments (daivika) in contradistinction to the eighteen saṃskāras which are meant only to provide the twice-born status to the individual (brāhma).

The dharma-sūtras which are complete in three chapters (praśnas) deal with religious life and conduct of different groups and castes of people, responsibilities and duties in different states of life (āśrama), the characteristic conducts of hermits and renunciative and such matter. There are also details concerning the eight-fold technique of yoga and other spiritual practices. The pravara-sūtra concerns itself with the lineage of the several sages with special reference to the Vaikhānasa community. In essence, the Vaikhānasa-kalpa-sūtra provides the essential code of conduct for a Vaikhānasa in his personal, familial and social settings. The text is intended to enable him to discharge his duties and responsibilities with ability and wisdom, which are occasioned by the association of relevant Vedic mantras with all actions. The definition of a Kalpa-sūtra given by the Vaikhānasa commentators emphasizes the value of the recitation of Vedic hymns in all rites and rituals.
The employment of Vedic passages during the performance of religious rites and rituals is intended mainly to bestow special merit and power to the acts done. J Gonda's perceptive analysis rightly sees in such employment of mantras the desire to exert an influence on the unseen, to give expression of the efficient's will and desire, to indicate the character in the mantra and to consecrate the ritual acts themselves (cf. Some Notes on the use of Vedic Mantras in the Ritual Texts of the Vaikhānasa, by J. Gonda,). Not only does such employment of mantras serve to perpetuate the Vedic elements in later religious communities, as Gonda observes, but provides new application for the mantras. The religious scene was shifted from the sacrificial enclosure to the temple precincts; but the Vedic mantras continued to be employed. The priests continued to perform the Vedic rites in their own homes as they were done in the olden days; and the Vedic rites were incorporated in the worship sequences in the temple. The purpose of the Vedic rites was essentially to obviate the sins acquired by ignorance, and to bestow peace and tranquillity here and hereafter.

The Vaikhānasa texts bearing on Kalpa-sūtra were noticed by the German indologists as early as 1896 (cf. Über das Grhya und Dharma-sūtra der Vaikhānasa, Leipzig). T. Gaṇapati Śastṛi published the text in Devanāgāri characters in 1913 (Trivandrum Sanskrit Series). The Vaikhānasa-grhya-sūtra along with the Dharma

**WORSHIP OF VISHṆU**

The Vaikhānasas are distinguished by their uncompromising devotion to Viṣṇu as the Vedic God par excellence. Their Grhya- (smarta-) sūtra (praśna 4, khaṇḍa 10) prescribes that after the customary offerings made to the sacred fire (Agni), Viṣṇu must be worshipped in the homestead, morning and evening, for thereby all gods may be deemed to have been worshipped. It quotes the ancient scripture (Bahvṛca-śruti and Aitareya-brāh-mana,
1,1,1) to the effect that the fire-god (Agni) is the lowest of the gods while Viṣṇu is the highest; and that between them, all other gods are accommodated:

अथामानी नित्याहोमाने विष्णोत्नित्याचार्य सर्वदेवसर्चा भवति। (१५)
अग्निन्देवानामवमो विष्णुः परमस्तदनगरेन सर्वा अन्या देवता इति ब्राह्मणम् (१६)
तस्माद गृहे परम विष्णु परिवह्य सायं प्रातःहोमानेर्विवर्यति। (१७)
(विमानार्धनाकल्पे,)

अग्निन्देव देवानामवमः विष्णुः परमः तदन्तरेण सर्वा अन्या देवता। तस्मात्यपरं नापरमस्ति किनिवित् यस्मात्प्राणीमात्रो
न ज्यायोस्ति कश्चिचत् वृक्ष इव स्तव्यो दिवि
तिष्ठत्वेऽकस्ते नेदं पूर्ण यूघ्येन सर्वाम्।}

Among the several gods eulogized in Ṛgveda (like Indra, Agni, Viṣṇu, Varuṇa, Vāyu, Parjanya, Prthvī, Brhaspati, Saviṭṛ, Sūrya, Aśvins, Rudra and Uśas) it is only Viṣṇu that continued to receive adoration by multitudes, even after the Vedic period made way for the classical age of epics and purāṇas. The credit for holding fast to the Vedic image of Viṣṇu when the Āgama took shape must go to the Vaikhānasas. The Vedic Rudra had to travel a long way and undergo a metamorphosis before he could reappear as the Śiva of the Śaivāgamas. Likewise Viṣṇu had to pass through several stages of transformation before he emerged as the Nārāyaṇa of the Bhāgavatas and
the Vāsudeva of the Pāncarātras. The Vaikhānasa school retained Viṣṇu in his Vedic context and advocated the worship of Viṣṇu with the six Vedic hymns addressed to Viṣṇu (ṣaḍ-vaiṣṇavam). Their books admit that Nārāyaṇa and Vāsudeva are expressions which are synonymous with Viṣṇu, but prefer to retain the expression Viṣṇu, as it is the only expression recognised in the Vedic corpus. An analogous situation is cited as a justification. ‘Vahni’ and ‘Agni’ both mean the fire-god, but when the offering in fire is made, the proper announcement would be ‘Agnaye svāhā’ and not ‘Vahnaye svāhā’.

The Viṣṇu of the Rg-Veda is celebrated for his three gigantic strides encompassing all the worlds (‘trīṇi padā vi-cakrame viṣṇuh’ 1, 22, 18), for having created the three worlds with his three steps (‘eko vi-mame’, 1, 154, 3), for sustaining the three worlds (‘eko dādhāra bhuvanāni viśvā’, 1, 154, 4) by his unsurpassed prowess which all creatures praise with one voice (‘viṣ-nornukam vīryāṇi prāvocam’, 1, 154, 1), and for helping humans live (‘jīvase no rajānsi’, 6, 69, 5) by his three strides which are filled with divine and immortal nectar (‘yasya tri-purṇā madhunā padāni aksiyamānā svadhayā madhanti’, 1, 154, 4). He pervades all existence and remains beyond it (1, 155, 5). He abides in the highest realm (‘tad viṣṇoh paramam padam’, 1, 22, 20), beyond the ken of all mortals but ever perceived by the wise sages whose vision stretches across the heavenly firmament (‘sadā paśyanti sūrayah, divīva caksur ātatem’, ibid). He is a friend of the good folk (‘sa hi bandhur itthā’, 1, 154, 5), and a compassionate protector (‘viṣṇur gopāḥ’, 3, 55, 10), notwithstanding his highest and most august eminence (‘viṣṇu sukṛte sukrīttarah’, 1,156, 5).
He is not only associated with the most popular god of the Rgvedic corpus, Indra, as his trusted friend (‘Indrasya yuyyas sakhā’, 1, 22, 19) who helped him vanquish the fierce demon Vṛtra (6, 20, 2; 7, 99, 5; 8, 100, 12 and 4, 18, 11), but also identified with him (1, 155, 1). There are hymns addressed to Indra and Viṣṇu (indrā-viṣṇu) together, and to Viṣṇu in his Indra-form as well as to Indra in his Viṣṇu-form. In fact, the dark blue body-colour of the classical Viṣṇu is derived from his incorporation of the nature of Indra, the lord of the blue-sky and of the dark clouds (hence also words like ‘indrā-nilā’ for sapphire or emerald, ‘indrā-gopa’ for the blue-coloured insect cochineal, ‘indrā-varuṇi’ for the wild bitter-gourd which is dark-blue in colour, and ‘indrābha’ for the blue-hued fowl). In later legends, Nara and Nārāyaṇa, Arjuna and Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa preserve this old association between Indra and Viṣṇu. Indra is called Hari, and Viṣṇu Upendra in the purāṇas.

Viṣṇu also represents solar energy in the Vedic context. In fact, the ancient commentator Yāska derives the expression Viṣṇu from the fact of the sun pervading the entire universe with his rays (‘atho yadvistit bhavati, tad viṣṇur bhavati, viṣṇur višate vā vyāśhoter vā’, Nirukta, 12, 18, 2). Viṣṇu’s three strides symbolize three-fold movement of the sun. According to an old authority, Aurnavābha, cited by Yāska, they represent the rising sun in the morning, the midday sun and the setting sun in the evening. According to another old master Śākapūṇi, also cited by Yāska, they stand for the passage of the sun through the earth, mid-region and the heavenly region above. The three steps of Viṣṇu signify fire on earth, lightning in the mid-region and solar light in the high
heavens. The solar orb it is that is regarded as ‘the highest abode of Viṣṇu’ (viṣṇoh paramam padam’, according to Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa (3, 7, 1, 17). The identification of Viṣṇu with the sun (or solar orb, āditya-vaṁśa) was preserved in the classical period in several legends and also in the description of Nārāyaṇa as seated in the centre of the solar orb (‘dhyeyas sadā savīr̥-maṇḍala-madhya-vartī’), in the association between lotus and Viṣṇu, and in the syncretic image of Sūrya-nārāyaṇa.

Numerous references also indicate the association and identification of Indra with the sun. Indra is said to become effulgent when he assumes the form of the sun, and when he performs the yajña (Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa, 3, 4, 2, 15: ‘eṣa vaṁśad vā eṣa tapati’). And Viṣṇu comes to where the sacrifice is being performed in the form of the sun (Ṛgveda, 1, 155, 6; ‘pratyetyāhavam’). And the sacrifice (yajña) which is personalized by the fire-god, Agni, is regarded as Viṣṇu himself (‘yajño vai viṣṇuh’), or as the altar of Viṣṇu (‘viṣṇos stūpo si’, Yajur-veda). Agni’s identification with Viṣṇu and Sūrya is evident from numerous references in Ṛgveda (e.g. ‘Viṣṇur itthā paramasya vidvān’, 10, 1,3, and ‘mūrdhā’ bhuvo bhavati naktam agnih tataḥ sūryo jāyate prātar udayan’, 10, 88, 6, and also 5, 38, 1 and 3, 27, 12). Agni is eulogized as the very form of Indra, Sūrya and Viṣṇu:

त्वमग्न इन्द्रो वृशभः सतामसि
लं विष्णुरुगायो नमस्यः!

(2,1,3)

This illustrated Yāska’s view that the one divinity is recognized and adored in diverse forms owing to the many great powers that the divinity possesses (‘māha-bhāgyād
devatāyāh eka ātmā bahudhā stūyate’, Nirukta, 7, 4, 5). He also points out that one god appears in three forms: as Agni on earth, as Vāyu or Indra in the mid-region and as Sūrya in the heavenly realms (Nirukta, 7, 5, 1 and 2, cf. also Bṛhaddevatā, 1, 69 and 70, “tisra eveha devatāh ..... tat sthāna-vibhāgena tatra tatreha dṛśyate’). The ritual of sacrifice (yajña) was the early technique by means of which the devotee entered into communion with the divine presence. The ancient precursors of the human devotees worshipped the yajña-divinity (viz. Viśṇu, as personification of yajña) through the yajña-ritual (‘yajnena yajñam ayajanta devāh’, Puruṣa-sūkta). The ritual of sacrifice gave way to the ritual of worship at a later date. Indeed, the Vaikhāṇasa commentators interpret a hymn in the Rgveda (1, 155, 1) as justifying the iconic worship of Viśṇu:

प्रावप्र: पान्तमन्धसो धियायते
महे शूराय विष्णवे चार्चते।
या सानुनि पर्वतानामदथ्या
महस्तस्यतुर्वर्तेव साधुना॥

This hymn, addressed to Indra and viśṇu together (Indrā-viṣṇu) and composed by the sage Dīrghatama-aucathya, entreats the performers of sacrifices (adhvaryavah) to offer worship (prārcata’) to the great hero who is fond of praises (viz. Indra) and to Viṣṇu, who are both invincible and who settle upon the lustrous mountain-tops (‘sānuni, parvatānām’ viz. the radiant clouds), as a rider would ride upon a well-trained steed (‘arvateva’). The expression ‘pra-arcata’ is used significantly in the sense of worship (‘arca pūjāyām’), and
can hardly have any other connotation. Śaṅkara’s interpretation of the word as meaning ‘acquire well’ (‘prakṛṣṇa saṃpādayatha’) is altogether unjustified by etymological considerations, besides being irrelevant to the context. The reference to this hymn in Brhad-devatā (4, 20) also brings out the idea of worship with a view to attain to the ‘mansions of Viṣṇu’. The expression ‘arcata’ (meaning ‘pūjaya’) is taken to prescribe daily worship (nityārcana) and the prefix ‘pra’ to suggest that worship must be done with knowledge of the greatness of Viṣṇu and with a sense of deep devotion, in the prescribed manner (‘prakṛṣṇa, jñāna-bhaktyādī-viśiṣṭa-dharma-purassaram’). Śaunaka’s Rgvidhāna also brings out this sense (‘Śaunaka’ ham pravak-ṣyāmi, nityam viṣṇvarcanam param, pavah pāntam andhaso dhyāyeyardhārcavidhānatah’). By the time Aitareya-brāhmaṇa (affiliated to Rgveda) came to be compiled, Viṣṇu was already a deity that was worshipped, but Taśtrīya-brāhmaṇa (belonging to the Krṣṇa division of Yajurveda corpus) is still preoccupied with sacrifices of various kinds (the first kāṇḍa dealing with agnyād-hāna, gavāmayana, vājapeya, soma, nakṣatreṣṭi and rājasūya, and the second kāṇḍa with agni-hotra, upa-homa, sautrāmaṇi, brhaspati-sava and vaiśya-sava, the third kāṇḍa, which was later added, being exclusively devoted to the details of nakṣatreṣṭi). The Vaikhānasas, who affiliated themselves to this later faction, found a way of reconciling the worship of Viṣṇu with sacrifices of various types.

If we look at the Vaikhānasas-kalpa-ṣūtras (the srauta and grhyya sections), the ritualistic outlook is still predominant, with devotion to Viṣṇu being only a backdrop. But the Vaikhānasas community that emerged in due course
reversed the emphasis. It took into consideration the identification of the primaeval spirit (puruṣa) with Viṣṇu (cf. Śatapatha brāhmaṇa, 12, 3, 4, 1), who also revealed himself as the entire universe (ibid., 13, 6, 1, 1), the equation of the highest, absolute and all-pervading Brahman with Viṣṇu (Taittirīya-āranyaka, 10, 11), the association of several groups of hermits (haṁsa, paramahāṁsa, vālakhilya and vaikhānasas) with the worship of Viṣṇu (cf. Mahābhārata, 12, 325, 4 and 12, 336, 14) and the importance that the pursuha-sūkta (ṚgVEDA, 10, 90) acquired. The cult of Viṣṇu was already on the scene, but in an amorphous and sporadic manner. The Vaikhānasas crystallized this cult and gave it a direction. They were the group of sages that was especially dear to Indra (viz. Viṣṇu), according to Chandoga-brāhmaṇa:

चैखानसा वै ऋषयः इन्द्रस्य प्रिया आसनृ।

It is small wonder, therefore, that they were devoted with steadfast zeal to Viṣṇu as the ‘yajña-puruṣa’ well within the Vedic framework. The non-performance of prescribed sacrifices would amply be compensated by this devotion. We read, for instance, in the Vaikhānasasmiṛta-smṛtasaṁśūtra (4th praśna, 12th kānda, 118-119):

तं बल्पुरुशं ध्यायनं पुरुषसूक्तेन संस्तुतं प्रणामं कुर्यात्।
यज्ञेषु विहीनं तत् सम्पूर्णं भवतीति श्रुतिः।

Marici’s Vimānārcana-kalpa (95th paṭala in the edition of 1926) mentions that Viṣṇu may be approached by one of four ways: recounting the greatness of Viṣṇu by repeated eulogy (japa), sacrifices in the fire (huta), iconic worship at home or in a temple (arcana) and unswerving contemplation (dhyāna):
A statement from the Vaikhānasasūtra to the effect that all Vedic rites, austerities and sacrifices prescribed in the Vedas are only variant forms of worship of Viṣṇu, is cited with approbation:

अथ भववत्समाहयणं (समाराधनं) चतुर्विंशं भवति जपहुतार्थः ध्यानमिति।
सावित्रीपूरव वैष्णवमृचं, अस्ताक्षरं वा भगवतं ध्यात्मा अध्येत स जयः।
अगुणहोत्राशि होमे यज्ञवते तदृहं होमः॥ (पूजा)
गृहे देवायतने वा वैदिकेन
मार्गण प्रतिमादिशु पूजयेत तदर्चयमू।
निष्कालसकलिविभारग्च ज्ञात्वा
अष्टांग योगमार्गेण परमात्माः जीव आत्मा चिन्तयेतृ
तदृ ध्यानमिति।

The view of the ancient sages (like Bhrigu) that by worshipping Viṣṇu, the god of gods, in ceremonial splendour again and again, one would achieve the benefits normally derived from the performance of sacrifices, is also mentioned:

उत्सवे देवदेवेशं यं सेवने ते सवें पदे पदे।
यज्ञः फलं लभेन्त्रति भृगवादयो वदनिः॥

The worship of gods is of two kinds: iconic (sa-mūrta) and aniconic (amūrta). The latter consists of oblations in the fire, while the former is the worship offered to Viṣṇu
in an icon installed at home or in a temple. The two, according to the sage Atri, have marked correspondences. The setting up of the fire (agnyādhāna) is like unto the installation of the icon (pratiṣṭhā); and the several sequences in the sacrifice are like the sequences in iconic worship; even as the sacrifice concludes with a ceremonial bath, so does the worship which is conducted with splendour and zeal:

देवार्चनं हित्योद्धरपत्रमूर्त्तं च समूर्त जयम्।
अमूर्त गार्हपत्यादि सर्वं राजस्व छुट्य ज्योम्॥
तत्रत्वा योगादानिं सर्वं सुदे विश्वनासिपति।
तत् सूत्रोत्तविधानेन सर्वमानारं पूर्वकम्॥
अस्मिन्नं कर्मणुण्ट ताधिन्द्रन होमकर्म समाचरे॥
समूत्रमालये बिषगं निष्ठं विभिन्नवर्धनम्॥
अग्निधानं प्रतिष्ठा स्वास्थिरिति पर्वार्चार्यादिका।
वामशत्रुभुतान: स्वातुत्त्वस्त्तदिधानात॥
विष्णोरत्नु समूर्त य: पूजनं भक्तिश्रयरेष॥
अतीतद्वियं स गच्छेदूणं तद्दश्यं परमं पदम॥

(Samūrtārcanā, Chap. 27)

The Vaikhānasas threw their weight in favour of the iconic worship of Viṣṇu, but took care to retain their affiliation with the Vedic tradition in its entirety. Their scriptures which assumed in course of time the form of an independent sāstra, claimed that they were derived directly from the Vedic corpus, that they contained the essential import of the Vedas, and that no blame could be attached to them nor any blemish found in them. The worship of Viṣṇu which their scriptures advocated was in fact what the Vedas themselves suggested, and what the Vedic folk themselves pursued:
The ancient law-givers knew that in the worship of Viṣṇu, the Vaikhānasas were only following the lead given by the great sages of yore like Vasiṣṭha, the ascetics like Sanaka, and by the section of the ancient followers of the Vedic tradition who were adherents of the cult of Viṣṇu: (Vṛddha-Hārita-samhitā, I 1,8):

शौतं महारिषि: प्रोक्तं वशिःष्ठान: पुरातने:।
वैवानसैंश्च भूजवाने: सनकावैसैश्च योगिष्ठ:।
वैष्णवेविद्विक: पूवे: यद्याचारितं पुर।।

(Hārita)

वेदान्तवेदिदिम्बिविद्धप: तद्वैवानसमूःत्रिष्ठ:।
याज्येवदज्जःपुरुषं विष्णु:............।

(Vṛddha-manu)

The Vaikhānasas must be credited not only with having institutionalized the iconic worship of Viṣṇu within the Vedic framework, but also with having worked out the relevance of such worship and having spelt out its implications. Bhṛgu’s Kriyādhihikāra, for instance, contains a long discussion on different kinds of worship and their relative merits. Three major approaches to divinity are recognized: (1) worship which is aniconic and purely mental (mānasī); 2) worship which is also aniconic but which consists of offerings in the ritual fire (homa-pūjā);
and 3) worship which is iconic (bera-pūjā). Mental worship is visualization of Viṣṇu in one's own heart, going through all the sequences of worship by merely conjuring up the vision of the articles and the acts. However, when Viṣṇu is visualized for worship, it is the iconic form that becomes effective and instrumental. He is well-bedecked with all auspicious ornaments, and is four-armed, carrying conch and discus; he is lustrous like a pure crystal. The devotee causes the eight petals of his heart-lotus open up by the recitation of the sacred syllables, praṇava (OM) and the vyāhrtis (bhū, bhuvah, suvah), instals on the petals attendant-divinities (lords of the directions). The devotee imagines himself as the Prakṛti, surrounded by the rays of the sun, in the midst of which the solar orb is visualized. And in the centre of the solar orb, the full-moon with cool nectar oozing out of it is visualized. In the centre of the moon, the circle of fire enclosed in a triangle and surrounded by garlands of blazing flames is imagined. In the centre thereof is conjured up the vision of light without smoke, without blemish, excellent and auspicious, subtle like a fine filament and yellow in hue. In the midst of the light is imagined a square seat, made of gold and studded with gems. Viṣṇu is visualized as standing on this seat. The devotee then begins the mental worship.

The second variety of worship is performed in the ritual fire that has been set up. In the midst of the burning fire a circle of light is imagined, and in the centre of that light Viṣṇu as the fire-god (Agni) in the latter's iconographic particulars is visualized. Then oblations are offered to the fire.

The third form involves the iconic representation of Viṣṇu which has been duly installed, and which is offered
flowers and other articles of worship. This is regarded as the best form of worship, because the icon that is beautiful to look at will also engage the mind and delight the heart, and the feeling of loving devotion (bhakti) may easily and naturally be evoked. Viṣṇu is easily approached by this means.

मानसी होमपूजेति बेरपूजेति सा त्रिधाः।
हल्ल्युण्डरीकमुकुलमुख्युक्तम् प्रणवेन तु॥(७)
ञ्च च चः ह्वच अवर्धितेव चतुरुद्धिदिगीवरान्न।
प्रतिष्ठाप्याचर्चेतस तु मनः पूजेति चोदिता॥ (८)
दलेश्वरसु संस्थाय द्वारिःतशिकसरेभ्यः।
अन्यातु देवान्समभव्य्च्य आत्मान्त प्रकृति स्पर्शत॥(९)
रसिमालालकृत्रूण्डल्वा तन्मध्ये रविन्द्रमल्लम।
तन्मध्ये शाळिसिंबं च सवल्यूषशीलतलम्॥(१०)
तस्य मध्यगतं द्हायेतु त्रिकोणं वहिमंदलम।
तुल्यरीख्यं सुरे: सव: ज्वालामालासमाहृतम॥(११)
तस्य मध्ये प्रभा द्हायेप्रीत्यूमा निकलो शुभं।
नीलामुखवेद्वर्तवीं पीता भास्वत्यनूर्मां॥(१२)
प्रभापद्धागूं पीठ चतुरश्रं हिरण्यां।
नानामणिभूणाज्वालालकुशेभ्यं शूभमुण्डलम॥(१३)
तस्य मध्यगतं द्हायकं चारायणमनाम।
शुद्धस्फटिक संकाश्च संचर्टकर्दर्शं पर॥(१४)
आसनाद्वुपचारणि मनसा तस्य भावश्वत॥
एवा तु मानसी पूजा होम पूजा तु कद्वयते॥(१५)
अग्निहोरादिोद्वेषु सूत्रोत्सन विधानत:।
द्हायार्दगिन्यंमः तस्य द्हायेमध्ये प्रभा शुभम॥
( १६ )
प्रभामध्यगतं ध्यायदाशीनं वा जनार्दनम्।
तपरहाटकसंकाशं चतुर्हस्तं हितिशीर्षकम्। (१७)
सप्तहस्तं त्रिचरणं तुष्प्रेक्ष्यं सप्तजिह्वक।
सुक्स्मुणी चाक्षमालां च शक्तिं दक्षिणपतिणिषु॥ (१८)
चामर्य व्यजनं चैव घृतपात्रं तु वामनः।
ध्यात्मा यथोक्त हविषा यजेतूः तद्धोम्पूजनं॥ (१९)
एषा सा होपूजना च बेरपूजायुवोच्यते।
उत्क्रप्यमाण प्रतिमां हातकादिमयं परः॥ (२०)
प्रतिष्ठाप्यायार्चैतु सा बेरपूजेति चोदिता।
वधोपयोग श्राद्धवत् कर्तुपुष्पादिपूजनं॥ (२१)
चक्षुः प्रीतिकरणाणमनसो हृदयस्य च।
प्रीत्या संजायते भक्ति: भक्तस्य सुलभो हरि:॥
तस्मात्त्राण्यवायनं बेरपूजा विशिष्यते॥
Chapter II

THE VAIKHĀNASA COMMUNITY

The Vaikhānasas as a community are temple-priests. They regard themselves as ordained by birth to be priests, and they are enjoined not to follow any other avocation in life. Their careers are meant to be devoted to the worship of Viṣṇu in one of his major forms. Even in the present period the members of the Vaikhānasa community, barring a few instances, eke out their livelihood solely as priests in temples; and they continue to observe, with considerable rigour, the rites and rituals prescribed in the Vaikhānasa-sūtra and follow the Śāstra injunctions with remarkable fervour. They combine the fire-rituals of the Vedic tradition with the iconic worship of the Āgama variety. They go through the eighteen sacramental rites (saṃskāras) in life, and perform, when conditions are favourable, twenty-six yajñas (five mahāyajñas, seven pāka-yajñas, seven havir-yajñas and seven soma-yajñas). And they style themselves as ‘vaidikas’, because they accept the ultimate authority of the Vedic corpus, and employ Vedic mantras in all rituals, daily or occasional.

Śrīnivāsa-makhin’s Daśa-vidha-hetu-nirūpaṇam (about 1050 A.D.) brings out the characteristic features of the scriptures which guide the Vaikhānasa community:
(1) अखिल जगत्कारणभूतेन विखनसा प्रणीतत्वातः।
The scriptures are given by Vikhānas* who is the creator of the entire world (viz. Brahmā)

(2) सर्वभूताणामादिमित्वातः।
The scriptures of the Vaikhānasas were the earliest of the sūtras, belonging as they do to the Taittirīya branch of Kṛṣṇa-yajurveda, and provided the model for other sūtras;

(3) प्रधानादिकस्मु श्रुतिमार्गानुसारित्वातः।
The scriptures of the Vaikhānasas accept the Vedic authority in all actions and rituals and even in the preliminary sipping of water for purification (suddhācamaṇa) they enjoin the adoration of the four Vedas (‘Ṛgvedah priṇatu’ etc.);

(4) समन्त्रकसर्वविधावत्वातः।
All the rituals and rites are invariably accompanied by Vedic mantras, and even a preparatory rite like the washing of the hands for a ritual follows the recitation of a Vedic mantra ‘in-droham ubhābhyām’;

(5) निषेकादिसांस्कारात्वातः।
The sacramental rites (saṃskāras), beginning with the copulation of the parents before the birth of the child (niṣekā) and ending with the funerary rites in a crematorium (smaśāna) are all prescribed to be conducted according to the Vedic injunctions, and accompanied by Vedic mantras;

(6) अष्टादशश्रीरसंस्कारात्त्वातः।
The scriptures of the Vaikhānasas insist on the purification of the mental and physical constitution of the
members of the community through the administration of the eighteen sacramental rites;

(७) सांगक्रियाकलापत्वात्

The Vaikhānasa-kalpa-sūtra is complete in all details and is self-contained; it gives no room for the adoption of injunctions from other sūtras on the maxim ‘when no mention has been made in this sūtra on any particular issue, one should follow another sūtra where such a mention has been made’ (‘anuktam anyato-grāhyam’);

(८) मन्वाधः: स्वीकृतत्त्वात्

Other sūtra-writers like Manu have accepted the contents and style of the Vaikhānasa-kalpa-sūtra;

(९) अखिलजगद्गदकारणभूतश्रीनारायणेकपरत्वात्

The scriptures are devoted firmly and exclusively to the worship of Viṣṇu, who is the sole author of the universe;

(१०) तत्स्तुत्रोक्तयथार्थमौषधानवतामेव
भगवत्प्रियतमत्वोपपतेश्च

Viṣṇu himself is said to have declared that those who follow the Vaikhānasa-sūtra are dear to him. A verse in Varāha-purāṇa puts into the mouth of Viṣṇu the view that the aśvattha-tree, the red cows, the tulasī-plant and the sage Vikhanas (the ancestor of the community) are the four things that are dear to him; and that among the four, the sage Vikhanas is the dearest;

अश्वत्थ: कपिला गाव: तुलसी विखना मुनि:।
चत्वारी मत्रिया राजन् तेषां वैखानसो वर:॥
Whoever were the early Vaikhānasas, the community that bears that name traces its descent from Vikhanas, a word that normally refers to Brahmā, the creator, but in a special sense signifies Viṣṇu himself, from whose navel Brahmā sprang forth. The Vaikhānasas are those who follow the injunctions of Vikhanas, and thus are in a sense his descendants. The scriptural lore that the community lives by is the Vaikhānasa-śāstra or Vaik-hānasa-sūtra. We read in Ānanda-samhitā (Marīci) that the sage Vikhanas who prepared the Vaikhānasa-sūtra according to a branch of the Yajurveda was Brāhma himself:

अदितिकाले तु भगवानोऽभ्य तु विखना मुनि:।
यजुः: शाखानुसारेण चक्रे सूत्रं महत्तरम्॥

But Kriyādhikāra (Bṛgu) identifies Vikhanas with Viṣṇu, or with the first sage who appeared as an aspect of Viṣṇu (viz. Brahmā), and says that the sūtra was taught by this sage (36, 28 and 29):

विखना वै विष्णुः: तज्जा वैक्षानसा स्मृता:।
विष्णुवंशजजर्ज विखना मुनीनां प्रथमो मुनि:।
तेनेपदिष्टं यत्सूत्रं तत्सूत्रेष्यूतम स्मृतम॥

Brahmā, the creator, who was the offspring of Viṣṇu, was the first sage, and was called Vikhanas because he dug into his own mind ("manasah khananāt") for creating the scriptural lore:

विखना इति प्रोक्तो मनसः: खननात् सुतः:।
ब्रह्मण: सुविशेषेण मुनीना प्रथमो मुनि:॥

In Mahābhārata (Śanti-parva’) also we read that Brahmā, the creator, was called and he was also a sage,
because he dug into his own heart (i.e. did penance) with
his own thoughts and entered into a state of profound
absorption by the power of yoga, before he acquired the
ability to create:

विश्रोषेणाखननातू यस्मातू भावनामुनिसृष्टये।
तस्माहिंद्रिखनसो नाम स आसीदण्डजः प्रियः॥
सङ्क्षुं स तू समुद्वुको ब्रह्मयोनिमयः प्रभुः॥
खनित्वा चातमांसमान धर्माविद्गुणसंयुतम्।
ध्यानाविविश्य योगेन हसीद्रिखनसो मुनि:॥

Digging up or into’ (khanana) appears to be in the
background of the expression Vikhanas. Several shades of
meaning have been projected. Ānanda-saṁhitā speaks of
Viṣṇu ‘digging up the essential import of the Upaniṣads’
before he gave the scriptural lore of the Vaikhānasas.

वेदान्ततत्त्वमीमासाखननं कुत्वानू हरिः॥
नामुन विखनसं चक्रे तत्पदान्त्योगतः॥

‘Digging into the meaning of the Veda’ or intense
inquiry into the thrust of the Vedic corpus was said to have
been accomplished by the first sage, who was therefore
called Vikhanas.

खननाद्विखनन मुनि:॥
खननं तत्त्वमीमासंभावाहु।
निर्मायर्थानु खननादििति न: श्रुतम्॥

‘Digging out the hidden meaning of the Vedas’ and
revealing them to the human beings, according to Ānanda-
saṁhitā, were the tasks that Viṣṇu accomplished, and
therefore he became known as Vikhanas: and his offspring
who was the progenitor of all was known as Vaikhānasa.
When the word Vikhanas, in the background of the expression, is interpreted as referring to Brahmā, the creator, a distinction is made in Nṛsiṁha-purāṇa, between the older Brahmā (agraja) who was born out of Viṣṇu’s mind with only one head and who became the author of the Sūtras, and the younger Brahmā (anuja) who was born out of Viṣṇu’s navel, with four faces, for producing the worlds and denizens in them. Vikhanas, who was the ‘older’ Brahmā, became the ‘younger’ Brahmā after six incarnations. The sages Bhṛgu, Marīci, Atri and Kāśyapa are said to have received the cult of Viṣṇu from the first Vikhanas (viz. the ‘older’ Brahmā).

Another meaning that is suggested while interpreting the Aruṇa-ketuka passage of the Yajurveda (beginning with “Apo vā idam āsan salālam eva”), where several classes of sages, including the Vaikhānasas, are said to have appeared soon after creation, is interesting. The word ‘vi-khana’ is actually a modified form of ‘vinakha’, even as ‘Kaśyapa’ has as its original form ‘paśyaka’ (‘seer’). The expression ‘vi-nakha’ is a double negation of the word ‘kha’ which means sense-organs: ‘na-kha’ means one who is devoid of sense-organs; ‘vi-nakha’ means one who has sense-organs which are tranquil;

न विद्यते खानि इंद्रियाणि येषा ते नखा:।
न नखा: अनखा:। नन्दुवेन सोम्येण्णिधवत्वं फलितम्।

The Vaikhānasas sages who were the progenitors of this community are reputed to have been peaceful in their
aspect, self-possessed, evolved and sāttvika in their food-habits, according to Mahābhnārata (Śānti-parva):

एते वैख्यानसानां तु ऋषीणां भावितात्मनामुः
वंशकर्तार उच्चन्ते सात्विकाहार्योजिनामुः।

The approach of the Vaikhānasa-worship is described as ‘peaceful’ (saumya). Thus, the expression Vikhaṇas (with its derived form Vaikhānasa) has many shades of meaning: (1) the great god Viṣṇu himself, (2) the creator Brahmā who appeared from his navel-lotus, (3) the great sage who was ‘mind-born’ and who was instructed by Viṣṇu himself in the matter of worship, (4) the sage who was the progenitor of the lines of the Vaikhānasa devotees, (5) the divine author of the sūtras known after him, and (6) the hermit who was in the third stage of life. It is probable that the Vaikhānasa community was so called because of the involvement of all these aspects. More importantly, the Vaikhānasas are distinguished by their adoption of the Vaik-hānasa-sūtra, which is devoted in all its parts to Viṣṇu and which was initially communicated by Viṣṇu himself to the sage Vikhanas:

आदिकाले तु भगवान  जया तु विख्याता मुनि।
यजुः शाखानुसारेण चक्रेष्व सूत्रं महत्तरसः।
तत्सूत्रविध्यनुप्राणात स्मृता वैख्यानसास्तु ते।
यत्सूत्राद्युतानांधवेषु भगवानं विष्णुव्रयः॥

(Pura-tantra, cited by Nṛsimha-Vājapeya-yāji)

विख्याते मुनयेष्व पूर्व सूत्रं भगवतेरितं।
तत्स्मादद्विगत: सूत्रं लोके वैख्यानसं स्मृतम्॥

The sage Vikhanas (or the primordial Vaikhānasa) is adored by the community in its daily prayer as one who
is sustained by Viṣṇu (acyuta-saṁśraya), who is engaged in severe austerities (tapogra-niṣṭha), and who is the knower of the highest principle (brahma-darśin). He is described as an expert in the worship of Viṣṇu (Viṣṇu-pūjā-viśārada), as four-armed and seated upon a tortoise-seat holding in his hands the sacred water-pot, rosary and ascetic’s staff. He is worshipped as present on the right side of Viṣṇu’s main icon. The detail of Vikhanas given by Nṛsiṁna-vājapeya-yājin (Śrī-bhagavad-arca-prakaraṇa. anukramanikā, 3rd khaṇḍa) are as follows:

ॐ वैखानसायां चच्चुतं सथ्याय तपोग्रनिष्ठाय च
ब्रह्मादीशि न्याय स्वाहा
हेमाचार्यं स्फटिकसदृशं विध्यूदन्त्वतिभाजं
विव्यानाथं सत्यसहायवन्तं दोष्टुत्तकम्।
विं बीजतं विखनसंहं प्राप्तवन्तं भजामिः॥

कृम्भासं समासीं मुिलाचैं विभूषितम्।
आचर्यं भवणसैंं विनष्पुषाकाविशारदम्।
कमण्डलमलाभिर्वर्षुङ्ग सुजीवाणितम्।
धुरस्य दक्षिणे भागे विखनो मुनिमाश्रयो॥

ॐ विखनसे नमः। �ॐ तपोयुक्ताय नमः। �ॐ
सिद्धिदाय नमः।
ॐ सर्वदीर्घे नमः॥

He is also described as having Viṣṇu as his father and Lakṣmī as his mother, and sages like Bhṛgu as his disciples:

नारायणं पिता यस्य माता हरिप्रिया।
भृगवादिमुनयं शिष्यास्तस्मै विखनसे नमः॥
Atri gives the story of how the Brahmā obtained from Viṣṇu the Vaikhānasa-sūtra. At the beginning of creation, Viṣṇu taught the creator Brahmā the method of worship according to the Vedic corpus. This teaching was a thousand crore of verses in extent (‘sahasra-koṭibhiś ślokaiḥ saṅkhyātām bahu-vistaram’). But this elaborate worship manual disappeared in course of time. Then Brahmā went to the Naimiśa forest as an ascetic with matted hair on the head, clothed in saffron garments and holding a mendicant’s staff in hand, and began to perform severe austerities. He meditated for long years on Viṣṇu and by the power of penance perceived the agama (scripture explaining the worship procedure) elaborately as it was once taught by Viṣṇu (apaśyad Viṣṇūktam āgamam vistarāt tadā). He was now known as Vikhanas or a great sage. He abridged the elaborate teachings, retaining the most essential aspects (‘saṁkṣipya sāram ādaya’) and taught this version, which was like a well-carved gem (śāṇollikhita-ratnavat), to his sons, Marīci and others, who were hermits. This version was one and a half crore of verses in extent.

धाता विखनसो नाम मरीच्यादित्स्तुतामुनीन्।
अबोधयदिदं श्रास्त्रं सार्थकोटि प्रमाणातः॥

The sages who received this abridged teaching were four in number; and as they were the offsprings of Vikhanas, they came to be recognized as Vaikhānasas: Marīci, Bṛgu, Atri and Kāśyapa. They recast and further condensed the teaching in four lakhs of verses (‘catur-lakṣeṣu granthesu saṁkṣipya samhitāḥ’). And they were responsible for the formation of the Vaikhānasa community.
According to Ānānda-saṁhitā, the arrival of Brahmā in the Naimisa forest of Vikhanas was on a Monday, when there was full moon and lagna was simha, during the bright half of the Śrāvaṇa month, in the era which began with Svāyambhuvamano.

Bṛgṛu’s Prakīṁḍhikara (30th chapter, 19-76) gives another account of how the Vaikhānasa community was formed. Before creation, Brahmā had gone to sleep, and when he woke up he wanted to create the worlds. But owing to the effect of slumber, he had forgotten the Vedas, which were indispensable for creation. He tried in vain to create, and tried in vain to recall the Vedas. Worried and helpless, he at length contemplated upon Viṣṇu in his own heart, for Viṣṇu was the very personification of the three Vedas. He worshipped Viṣṇu, and begged for the gift of Vedas (‘veda-bhikṣāṁ prayaccha me’). As soon as he worshipped Viṣṇu, Brahmā’s mind became clear, and heart peaceful; he could recall the Vedas with all their accessory disciplines. Because he recovered the Vedas that were lost, by digging into his own heart, Brahmā was called Vikhanas, or Vaikhānasa:

Then he was able to create the entire world in accordance with the Vedic way. When the world was created, he brought forth ten seers (Dakṣa, Marici, Bṛgṛu, and others) and imparted to them the Vedic wisdom. This was the origin of the Vaikhānasa scriptures, the teachings of Vikhanas to his mind-born offsprings (hence called Vaikhānasas). The seers in their turn compiled in order to secure the welfare of all mankind the scriptures consisting of injunctions for domestic rites (grhya-sūtra), prescriptions for Vedic sacrifices (śravaṇa-sūtra) and guidelines for social organisation (dharma-sūtra), (‘vedānugāni ūśastrāṇi ca kātur
loka-hitaisinah’). Those who listened to the teachings and followed them constituted the first Vaikhana community. They held in the highest esteem the fire-god (Agni), the teachings imparted by the Vaikhana seers, the god of gods Visnu, the immortal Vedic lore, the sacred mantra Gâyatri, the devotees of viṣṇu, and the wise sages:

आगिधिकारं शास्त्रं विष्णुदास्त्रं शाश्वताः
गायत्री वैष्णवा विप्रः सदैवे बहुपावनः॥ (७९)

Kriyâdhikâra (Bhrigu-samhitâ) provides a more elaborate account of how the Vaikhana mode of worship was instituted (ch. 36). When Viṣṇu at the beginning of the Kalpa was absorbed in meditational slumber (yoganidrâ) upon the milky-ocean, Brahmâ appeared in the lotus, which sprang forth from Viṣṇu’s navel. Brahmâ, four-faced, contemplated upon Viṣṇu as soon as he appeared, whereupon Viṣṇu directed him to create all the worlds and all the creatures in them, and gave him the Vedic lore to help him in the creation. Brahmâ created all things, all beings, and all the gods, and worshipped Viṣṇu with the Vedic hymns. However, he became proud of his ability to create, and arrogant. Viṣṇu, in order to correct him, brought forth two demons Madhu and Kaitabha, who assaulted Brahmâ and snatched from him the Vedic lore, which they then hid in the depths of the ocean.

Brahmâ with his power gone became grief-stricken, and wondered how he should worship Viṣṇu now that the Vedic hymns were no longer available to him. Viṣṇu advised him to worship him for five days with the repetition of the twelve-lettered and eight-lettered mantras (“Om ‘namo bhagavate Väsudevâya’ and ‘Om namo nārāyanâya’). This became what is known as the pâńca-
rātra method of worship. Then Viśṇu assumed the form of a great fish (Matsya), and diving deep into the ocean killed the demons Madhu and Kaitabha. He brought the Vedas up, and gave them to Brahmā, who was overjoyed and began worshipping Viśṇu again with the Vedic hymns (viz. in the Vaikhānasā way).

Arrogance entered Brahmā’s mind a second time, and Viśṇu, in order to correct him, created the demon Somaka, who attacked Brahmā and took away the Vedas from him. Distraught, Brahmā again approached Viśṇu and asked him how he should be worshipped, now the Vedas having again gone out of his possession. Viśṇu advised him to worship without any mantras and in accordance with the Tāntrik procedure. This is known as the Āgneya mode of worship. Viśṇu assumed the form of a wild boar (Varāha), and killed the demon Somaka with his sharp fangs. He brought back the Vedas and gave them to Brahmā.

Brahmā was happy, and he began again worshipping Viśṇu with the Vedic hymns. Thus the Vaikhānasā mode of worship came to stay:

पूज्यामास विधिवत्युन्नवेदोदिताध्वना।
यहममनैः क्रियते तद्वैक्षानसमीरितम्॥

The story not only highlights the intimate association that prevails between the Vedic hymns and the Vaikhānasā worship, but traces the origin of the community to Brahmā who worshipped Viśṇu with the Vedic hymns. It was Viśṇu himself that provided Brahmā with the Vedic lore by digging up and bringing to light the Vedas that were hidden in the dark waters. Thus Viśṇu it is that truly can be called Vikhanas, and all those who recognize the value of the Vedas that Viśṇu dug up are like his offsprings,
Vaikhānasas. The ancestor of the Vaikhānasas was the sage, who appeared as an aspect of Viṣṇu, and who was the first of the sages. He reduced the teachings of Viṣṇu to a sūtra-form, which is the basic scriptural background for the community.

There is also an account (given in Ānanda-saṁhitā, 17th Chap.) that Vikhanas, who was a sage, performed austerities in Totādri for several years before he moved to Badari in the Himālayas to meet and serve the divine sages Nara and Nārāyana who were the incarnations of Viṣṇu himself. He, along with his wife Yogaprabhā, is said to have established a hermitage near Badari and settled down there for some time.

Nara and Nārāyana then asked Vikhanas to enlighten mankind with regard to iconic worship according to Vedic tradition. So he began wandering about the country, spreading the knowledge about worship. It was in the course of these wanderings that Vikhanas arrived in the Naimisa forest and taught Vaik-hānasas-scriptures not only to the four sages Atri, Bhṛgu, Marici and Kāśyapa (who later became authors of the Vaikhānasa texts), but also to five others Vasiṣṭha, Aṅgiras. Pulaha, Pulas-tya and Kratu:
The Vaikhānasas, tracing as they do their descent from Viṣṇu himself, regard themselves as Viṣṇu-devotees by their very birth (garbha-vaiśṇava-janmanāṁ’), not needing any other initiatory rites (dikṣā) during their lives to make them Viṣṇu-devotees. The sacramental rites that are prevalent in a Vaikhānasa-household include a symbolic ceremony, unique to this community, known as Viṣṇu-bāli (or garbhacakra sāṁskāra). Prescribed to be performed during the bright half of the eighth month of pregnancy (garbhadhāyaśtame masyeva śukla-pakṣe’, Nṛsimha-vājapeya-yāji on Vaikhānasa-smārtasūtra, 3, 13, 115; cf. Bhṛgu, Kriyādhikāra, 36, 42) in order to protect the individual within the womb of the prospective mother (‘asyāḥ garbha-samrakṣānārtham’), it is a sacrament which follows ‘sīmanta’ (the ritual before child-birth). The significance of this ritual is that an offering (bāli) is made to Viṣṇu (‘viṣṇu-devātako bālid upāhriyate asmin’); and even inside the mother’s womb, the foetus acquires the status of a Viṣṇu-devotee (‘grab-hasthaśīśoh garbha-vaiśṇavatva-siddhyartham’). The ceremony involves a fire-ritual and offering to the pregnant lady the sacrificial sweet rice-pudding (pāyasa) in which the emblem of Viṣṇu (cakra) has previously been dipped and a part offered to the fire. While the woman is drinking the remainder of rice-pudding, the following mantra is recited:

त्वत्सुतो भाग्यवान् धन्यो गर्भवैष्णवसंजितः।
अप्राकृतो महात्मासः गर्भचक्रेण लाभितः॥

(Vaikhānasa-Sūtrāṅkramaṇīkā, Part-2)
The belief is that during this ritual Viṣṇu himself will brand on the arms of the individual to be born the marks of conch and discus which he carries in his own hands. Thus the person is a Vaiṣṇava even when he is born, and he is regarded as the offspring of Viṣṇu (viz. Vaikhānasa):

नारायणः स्वयं गर्भे मुद्रां धारयते निजाः।
तत्कर्स्तेन चक्रेण शाङ्खेन प्रथितौजसा॥
करोति चक्रशंखांक शिशोवें बाहुमूलयोः॥
वैखानसेन सूत्रेन स्वादं गर्भवैष्णवः॥

(Kriyādhikāra, 36, 43 and 44)

निसर्गवैष्णवः शुद्धम् जन्मनां चार्यसंज्ञिता:॥
विख्या इति वै विष्णु: तन्न्वा) वैखानसा स्मृता:॥

(ibid 36, 28)

Śrīnivāsa-makhin’s Tātparya-cintāmaṇī on Vaikhānasa-grhya-sūtra (3, 13) explains that when the sacrament is said to accomplish the protection of the womb (‘garbharakṣaṇārtham ayam saṁskāra uddiṣṭah’) the significance of protection is the bestowal of the status of a Vaiṣṇava-devotee concurrently with the dawn of consciousness in the child that is still within the womb:

रक्षणं तु शिशोः ज्ञानोदयस्मकाल एव
वैष्णवविचारस्पादनम्।

The practical import of this ceremony is that the child born as a Vaikhānasa is already sanctified and initiated by Viṣṇu himself and does not need any other sacrament or initiatory rite to make him a Viṣṇu-devotee or a qualified priest. He acquires the right to be a priest by his very birth.
This is in contradistinction to the priests of other communities (as for instance the Pāñcarātras), for whom during boyhood a formal ceremony of branding the arms with heated metallic images of Viṣṇu’s conch and discus (tapta-mudrāṅkana) is conducted. In some groups, there is the ceremony of ‘cold branding’ (śitala-mudrāṅkanā, the metallic images of conch and discus dipped in water mixed with white clay) on the eleventh day after birth. A Vaikhānasa not only does not require this ritual, but is prohibited from going through it at any cost. The texts insist that a Vaikhānasa, who gets this ritual of external initiation done to him by his own choice, in ignorance, out of greed, or under duress or force, ceases to be a priest and becomes disqualified even to enter the temple or to touch the icon of Viṣṇu; and ceremonies of expiation (prāyaścitta) are prescribed for overcoming this disability:

श्री वैखानससूत्रस्थत्तपत्रुप्य भवेद्यादि।
आलयं न विशेष्यप्रचारू पूजनं नैव कारयेत।
अज्ञानार्था वलामोहद्यदि चक्रांकितो भवेत्।
वैखानससूत्रस्थरो नैववय: अनहः सर्वकर्मसु॥
अज्ञानार्थलोभावा मोहद्वा परपीडनात।
तत्पुंजाद्वा भवेद्यादि प्रायस्चित्तं विधीयते॥

(Ānanda-samhitā)

मत्युग्रणां न चिध्वि दीक्षिताबिच्छिन्द्यारित:।
(Kriyādhihikāra, 36, 38)

अहमेव गुरुस्तेषां गर्भवैष्णवज्ञमनां।
तापादि पंचसंकारक्रियां नार्हिन्ति मामकाः।

(ībid, 36, 51)
Every Vaikhānasa is naturally a priest, and his right to worship Viṣṇu at home or in a temple is inalienable from him, so long as he lives in accordance with the Vaikhānasa-sūtra. Formal initiation into priesthood is usually of three kinds: mental (following purification of the mental constitution), vocal (following recitation of appropriate mantras in mystic arenas like cakrābja-mandala), and physical (consequent upon ceremonial branding of God’s emblems on the arms by a guru). A Vaikhānasa recognizes the value of the first two mudrās but rejects the third as repugnant to the Vaikhānasa canon (cf. Kriyādhikāra, 36, 54-56).

Texts like Prakīṇādhikāra (kriyā-pāda, 30th Chap, 5-11) distinguish between the Vaikhānasa and the Pāñcarātra modes of worship. The former is claimed to be in accordance with the Vedic tradition (which does not recognize initiatory techniques like branding), while the latter follows the Tantra ideology which accords importance to the initiated masters and external consecrations. The worship conducted according to the Tantra is conducive only to the welfare hereafter (kevalam āmuṣmika-phalapradam), and is beset with misfortunes here and now (aśrī-karam). The worship done in the Vaikhānasa way is Vedic in orientation, pacific (saumya) and conducted for the welfare here as well as hereafter (aihikāmuṣmika-phalapradam):

वैष्णव द्विविध शास्त्र मुनिभि: परिकीतितम।
वैखानसं वैदिकं स्याद्वैदिकरतिः हि:॥

(ibid, 36, 54)
पांचरात्रमथाग्न्यं अवैदिकमतात्त्विकम्।
तापादि पांचसंस्कार दीक्षाविधि: समर्थितम्॥
अश्रीकरं प्रोक्त कवलमुष्मिक फलप्रदम्।
सौम्यं सर्वत्र संपूर्णं ग्रामादिर्घी विशेषत:॥
वैखानसं पांचरात्र वैदिक तन्त्रधर ે
ऐहिकामुष्मिक फलप्रद सौम्यं प्रकीर्तितम्॥

The Vaikhānasas also distinguish themselves from temple-priests who take up the profession of worshipping gods only to eke out their living (devalakas)- They cite the view of Hārīta that the Vaikhānasas who are the brahmmins devoted entirely to Viṣṇu and engaged all the time in his worship cannot be considered as professional priests.

१८४).

The member of the Vaikhānasa community, whether a celibate or a householder, will become a priest with a sense of duty and obligation and not with a view to earn money. His worship of Viṣṇu is like the performance of a daily ritual:

ब्रह्मचारी गृहस्थश्रुच विप्रो वैखानसस्थात।
कुरत्नो निजकर्माणि विश्वगमे भजति ते॥

The expression ‘devalaka’ does not refer to a caste or community, but to the motivation which prompts the priestly profession. The ‘devalaka’ is a hireling, who expects the worship that he undertakes to be compensated by monetary rewards:

Even a brahmin who worships in a temple for the sake of the money that he gets would be regarded as a
‘devalaka’, if he continues this practice for as long as three years. He would then be declared ineligible to perform the normal rituals of a brahmin. The argument is that a Vaikhānasa is born only to be a worshipper, and that he can, or should, take up no other avocation in life; any other brahmin would consent to be a worshipper because of the benefits that are likely to accrue.

Samkarṣana-samhitā, a Pañcarātra text, distinguishes between three classes of devalakas: ‘karma-devalakas’ (who worship only because of monetary benefits), ‘kalpa-devalakas’ (the priests who are acquainted with the Pañcarātra method of worship, but have not been properly initiated), and ‘suddha-devalakas’ (the priests acquainted with the Āgama, but worshipping goddesses like Bhadra-kāli for the sake of livelihood).

अनंद-सम्हिट (4, 79 ff) gives a different account: Viṣṇu-dharmottara declares that even a Brahmin, learned in all the four Vedas, would be an outcast if he worships God for the sake of others and for the money that he gets:

देवार्चनपरो योजय पराथ विन्तकांक्षया।
चतुवद्धरो विप्र: स चण्डालसमो भवेतु॥
The Vaikhānasas texts prescribe that a priest, whether a celibate or a householder, must be spiritual in orientation, and must be engaged in the study of the scriptures. He must have an excellent conduct, be truthful and honest, wise and acquainted with yoga practices. He must undertake worship only out of devotion, and with no other consideration:

अध्यात्मगुणसंयुक्तो विप्र: स्वाध्यायसंयुतः।
वृत्तवान् सत्यवादी च ज्ञानशीलश्च योगविदृः
गृहस्यो ब्रह्मचारी वा भक्तवार्तिनामार्थत।।

(Kriyādhikāra, 9th Chap 23-24)

His mornings are spent in worship, and after his lunch he should spend his time in studying the Vedas or the accessories to the Vedas (vedāṅga):

शोजनानन्तरं वेदांगान्यथ वा पढ़तः।

He must also perform all the rituals prescribed in the Vedas (viz. the Brāhmanas) and must follow the code of conduct which is most proper, for if one does not fulfil the obligations that appertain to his caste and status in daily life, all his rituals would be useless. If one worships without devotion, such worship too would be ineffective: and without devotion everything would be inane:

नित्याचारविहीनस्य समस्ता निष्फला क्रिया:।
विगुणभक्तिविहीनस्य यथा सच सुनिष्फलम्॥

VAIKHANASA VIEWPOINT

Vaikhānasas are distinguished, as said earlier, by their acceptance of Viṣṇu (in his Vedic context) alone as the
object of worship. Although they are now recognized as a sect among the Sri-Vaiśnavas, like the Pāncarātras, they do not recognize Rāmānujacārya or the Ālvārs as their gurus or guides; nor do they subscribe to the Visiśṭādvaita philosophy. In the Vaikhānasa mode of worship there is no room for the adoration of the Bhāsyakāra (viz. Rāmānuja) or the Ālvārs, and there is no sequence in which the Prabandha passages (or Tamil hymns of the Ālvārs) are recited. The worship is conducted entirely with the hymns selected from Rgveda and Yajurveda, and with the accompaniment of the fire-rituals prescribed in the brāhmaṇa texts, mostly belonging to the Krṣna division of Yajurveda. The tāntrik involvements like ‘internal worship’ (‘antar-yāga’), the employment of ‘seed-syllables’ (bijāksara), and the sequence of projection of the deity from ones heart onto the icon are conspicuous by their absence in the Vaikhānasa worship.

The Vaikhānasa texts recognize that Godhead in the formless aspect (nirākāra) may be worshipped on a seat (sthāndila), in the solar orb, in water (jala), in the sacred ritual fire (aupasanāgni) or in ones heart (hrdi), but more significant than this aspect, according to these texts, is the one with form (sākāra). The iconic (arcā) representation of Godhead not only provides a convenient prop (sālamba) for the devotee, but is in reality possessed of the divine presence. The icon acquires a worshipful status only when it is duly installed and consecrated (pratiśthā), and once consecrated divine presence abides in it for ever (‘pratiśthāyā pratisimāsu sarvādā sannidhāna-sambhavāt’). The etymological meaning of the expression ‘pratiśthā’ (‘installation and consecration’) is that the divine energy is infused into the icon (‘bimbe sakti-sthāpanam’). This
is accomplished by the great power of meditative absorption possessed by the ācārya who officiates. Thus, iconic worship is not merely symbolic for the vaikhānasa: the icon is really a divine manifestation, which is augmented and made effective by worship:

तदाराध्नं द्विविधम् अमूत समूर्तिमिति। अग्नि हुतं
अमूर्तम्।
प्रतिमाराध्नं समूत। तच्छेष्ठं। यजमानभावेन्
अविचित्र्ण्य भवति।

(Vimānārcanā-kalpa 1, 1, 1)

साकारं च निराकारं हरेरात्म्यं द्विधा।
प्रतिमाराध्नं मुख्यं साकारमभिधीयते॥
स्थानंर्ले च जले चैव हृदये सूर्यमण्डले।
आराध्नं निराकारमर्मं: साकारभूमिम्॥

(Kriyādhikāra 9th chap)

It is, however, recognized that for final liberation, it is the accomplishment of the formless Brahman that becomes necessary, but before one is able to attend to the formless Brahman, worship of an icon, which is Brahman with form, must be resorted to. This is an expedient in view of the normal limitations of the human mind. Accustomed as we are to perceive and respond to the things that have sensible form and shape. we find) it difficult, indeed almost impossible, to entertain the thoughts of an indeterminate Absolute, unless great perseverance and unremitting practice facilitate our efforts. Further, the idea of the sacred is easily implanted in our minds, and the sense of devotion settles in our hearts, when the icon that is properly installed and consecrated is worshipped
elaborately and in accordance with scriptural sanctions. And the icon in such a case houses the divine presence, and makes for our good here (aihika) and prepares for our ultimate emancipation (āmuṣmika). That is why the texts counsel that iconic worship must be resorted to by all, especially by those who are involved in the transactional world:

सगुणे ब्रह्मणि बुद्धि निवेश्य परशापनिगुणं
ब्रह्मार्थित्य
मोक्षे नित्यं यत्तुं कुर्यादिति विज्ञायते।
(Commn. on Vaikhānasa-Smārta-sutra, 8,11,113)

सालम्बं सगुणं श्रेष्ठं सकलं कौतुकार्जनं
सकामानां समुचितं संसारास्मिना सदा॥
(Kriyādhikāra, 7,12)

आवाहं कौतुक कम्भितत्र विधिवदर्मयेत्।
सकामाकामयोधयं ऐहिकाप्रियप्रद॥

(ībid1)

Although the Vaikhānasa texts align themselves against the Tāntrik tradition, there is at least one particular detail of worship which they share in common with the latter, and that is the assumed identification of the, devotee with the deity during worship. The Tāntrik position rejects as impossible the communion of the human with the divine unless the worshipper identifies himself with the worshipped. The worshipper is said to pass through three phases (1) he regards himself as wholly belonging to the deity, without however a direct encounter with the deity (‘tasyaivāham’); (2) then, an encounter does occur and the devotee can confide with the deity: ‘I am thine’
(‘tavevāham’); and finally (3) the culmination of the encounter results in the feeling that the worshipper himself is the deity, and thus the deity does not exist apart from him (‘tvamevāham’). In the Vaikhānasa texts, it is prescribed for purposes of invocation (āvāhana) that after the worship of the enclosure-deities (āvarana-pūjā) and the worship of door-guardians (dvāra-pāla-pūjā), the priest should station himself in front of the icon (behind the screen), and reciting the ‘ātma-sūkta’ should enter into a state of meditative absorption, when he will become in fact Viṣṇu himself. Then follows the sequence of symbolic and ritual ‘placement’ (nyāsa), after this identity of self with Viṣṇu is transferred to the main icon.

Derived from this facility with which the priest can identify himself with the Deity during a worship sequence is the notion that the priest has an enduring divine presence within him. We read, for instance, in Bhṛgu’s Kriyādhiḥkāra (36, 59-60) that Viṣṇu has two forms: the icon and the priest. The icon acquires divinity after invocation (āvāhana), while divinity abides always in the priest. He is therefore to be regarded as a mobile god:

रूपद्वियं हरे गौत्रात्मक एव च।
बिम्बं त्वावाहनादूध्व सदा सत्तिन्दितोर्जचक॥
अर्चकस्तु हरि साक्षाच्यर रूपी न संशयः॥

The ‘Ātma-sūkta’ (Vaikhānasa-samhitā, mantra-prasna, 5, 49; Arcanā-sāra-samgraha, and Kāṣyapa’s Ācara-kāṇḍa) is a collection of nine verses in the triśūṭha metre. Its employment is peculiar to the Vaikhānasa worship. It is recited while invoking the form of Viṣṇu in his cosmic aspect (sa-kala), and it is meant to enlarge the consciousness of the worshipper to cosmic dimensions so that his own
constitution may accommodate Viṣṇu's 'sakala' form. It is a procedure by means of which the priest's self identifies itself with the highest of selves, viz. Viṣṇu. The hymn is called Ātma-sūkta not only because it begins with the words 'ātmātmā' but also because it concerns itself with transforming the individual self into the cosmic spirit.

आत्मात्मा परमान्तरात्मा महान्तरात्मा।
यशोदिरात्मा स तु नोन्तरात्मा।
व्यावेषि विशिष्यं सकलं विभिन्ति।
यो व्यक्तपुण्यः स तु न: प्रधानः॥१॥

“(1) That which is the self of the self, the supreme self, the inner self, the inner self of the earth, and the primordial self, is indeed our inmost self; it pervades the universe and sustains all things. As if the merit manifests itself, it is our chief.

प्राण: प्रणीति: स उदान आदि
वर्षदो वराहो व्यानश्च मे स्वात्।
तपसां च मूर्ति: कपिलो मुनिन्द्रो।
यश्चापानो ह्यशीषा न:॥२॥

(2) The outward breath (prāṇa) is our guide (praniti); the upward breath (udāna) is the primordial and boon-bestowing boar (varāha); the spreading breath (vyāna) is the form of Kapila, the sage who is the personification of penance; the downward breath (apāna) is the horse-headed deity, Hayagrīva.

यत्सव अश्नात्यजर: समग्र।
श्रीवं ऊर्जयुक्त स तु मे समान:।
बलं आसुरं यत्सततं निहत्ता।
(3) My digestive breath (samāna) is that which devours everything, even the goddess of prosperity (Sri) with her energy; my strength vanquished at all times evil forces, and my intellect is verily the Brahmā, and Īśvara is my protector.

सविता च वीय इन्द्रज्ञ धातुः।
रसयुतं भूता भूता: उदरं नभो वा।
भूमिर्यथापिनिर्वृक्षेः प्रशमि:॥४॥

(4) Savitr (the aspect of Sun-god) is my sex-energy, the moon is the watery ingredients in my body; the five basic elements (bhūtatas: earth, water, fire, air and ākāsa) are the constituents of my body; the sky is my head, the mid-region is my belly; and the spreading earth constitutes my feet; I am indeed the ruler of all things.

अस्थिरीणि मे स्मृतध पर्वताभ्या।
भूजगवध कशा दिहि ये चरतः।
द्वी नेत्रसङ्गो पृथुपश्चसिन्मुख्यो।
संधिरं च सारं सकांच च तोयम्॥५॥

(5) My bones should verily be called the mountains; my hairs are the serpents that move about in the heavens; my two eyes are the wide earth and the high sky; and my blood is the essential watery content of the universe.

स्नायवो मे आसन्त्रदीभृगुम हृदयमस्तु।
सव अन्ये मुनयासागभूताः।
वेदा मे आस्थं जिह्वा मे सरस्वती।
दन्ता मरतु उपजिह्वा उपश्रूति:॥६॥
(6) My sinews are the rivers on the earth, my heart is Bhrgu himself (the Vaikhānasāsa sage) and my limbs are all the other sages; my mouth represents the Vedic lore and my tongue is the goddess of speech, Sarasvati; the wind-gods (maruts) are my teeth, and my epiglottis is the revelation of the sacred texts.

वृषणौ मित्रावरुणाबुपस्या: प्रजापति:।
आङ्ग्रा मे वेदा: श्रुतिस्मृती मेधा धारणे।
स्वेदं मे वष मूतकोशं समुद्रम्।
पुरीवं काज्जनम्॥७॥

(7) My testicles are the twin gods Mitra and Varuna, my sex organ is the creator Prajāpati; my entrails are the Vedic hymns;

my intellect (medhā) and retention (dhāranā) are the revealed texts (sruti) and the texts subsidiary to them (smrti); my perspiration is indeed the rains, and my bladder is the ocean itself; my faecal matter is gold.

सावित्री गायत्री मर्यादा बेदी।
हल्युण्डरीक विलं विगते प्रविष्ट:।
संकल: सलस्मी: सत्वभूतिकांगे।
वत्सः पुण्यं मय्यधिष्ठानमस्तु॥८॥

(8) The hymn in the gāyatrī metre addressed to the
sun-god (Savitr) is the sacred precincts and the altar; and into the pure lotus of my heart has entered Viṣṇu in his cosmic aspect (sa-kala), along with the goddess of wealth (Srī), in all his glory; may all that is filled with merit in me provide for Him a foothold.

सवषां देवाणां आत्मक:।
(9) May I contain in myself the essence of all the gods and all the sages, may I be a personification of austerities (tapo-mūrti) and of all merit (punya-mūrti)."

The purpose of the ritual of invocation (avahana) of the supreme, transcendental and all-prevading Viṣṇu (the etymological meaning of the word Viṣṇu is ‘pervader’) in the heart of the devotee or in an icon is to facilitate contemplation of the Deity in one place; even as the fire which spreads all over the forest blazes forth especially in some places. Invoked by appropriate mantras in the icon, or meditated intensely and devotedly in the heart, Viṣṇu makes his presence felt in the icon or in the heart, and receives the worship offered (cf. Kriyād-hikāra, 7, 36-38).

Vaikhānasa-worship is essentially Viṣṇu-oriented, but Viṣṇu is worshipped in his comprehensive and pervasive aspect (in accordance with the root-meaning of the word, ‘viṣ! vyāptau’); and when Viṣṇu is invoked for worship, his presence includes the presence of all the other gods as his retinue (sa-parivāra). Hence worship of Viṣṇu means worship of all the gods (‘viṣnor arcā sarva-devārcā bhavati’) (See for the names and placement of the principal gods in the Viṣṇu shrine under the entries ĀVARANA and PARIVĀRĀLAYA in the Āgama-kośa Volumes). The Vaikhānasa insistence that Viṣṇu be worshiped as Viṣṇu (and not as Vāsudeva) underlies the significance of the comprehensive and pervasive character of Viṣṇu.

A ritualistic application of this significance can be seen in the custom prevalent in the Vaikhānasa temples
of having three icons in addition to the main and immovable stone icon in the sanctum (dhruva-bimba). The main icon represents in reality Viṣṇu, possessed of all the powers of divinity and properly installed as a worshipful deity (arccā). Even as the Vedas speak of ‘the three strides’ that Viṣṇu took (‘trīṇi padā vi-cakrame Viṣṇh’), the main icon in the temple also makes three strides represented by three other icons, thus making for pervasion and comprehension: kautuka-bera’ which receives all daily worship (nityārcana); ‘snapana-bera’ used for occasional rituals (naimit-tikārcana), and ‘autsava-bera’, used for the sake of the people who are motivated by worldly desires (kāmyārcana).

The symbolism of the four icons (catur-mūrti) is interesting. The main icon is Viṣṇu, who being all-pervasive, does not move about. When the presence of Viṣṇu crystallizes itself for the sake of receiving worship from the devotees, the spirit of the main icon moves out into the ‘kautuka-bera’, which rests on the seat of worship (arcā-pitha). This is the first stride. Then, as the sequences of worship necessitate such rites as administering a bath, the spirit of the main icon moves into the ‘snapana-bera’ which is placed in the enclosure for bath (snapana-maṇḍapa) which is outside the sanctum. This is the second stride. And the third stride is represented when the ‘autsava-bera’ is taken out in procession (utsava) along the corridors of the temple-enclosures or on the streets of the township. The spirit of the main icon now reaches beyond the confines of the temple.

नित्यप्रधानपूजार्थ कौतुक संप्रकल्पयेत
स्नपनं स्नपनार्थं चाप्युत्सार्थं तथौत्सवम्॥
To these three is usually added another icon known as ‘bali-’hera’ for the sake of distributing food daily to the attendant deities located in the enclosures.

When the same moveable icon is used for daily worship, occasional rituals, processions and food-offering, it is known as ‘bhoga-bera’.

The system of using four (catur-mûrti) or five icons (pañca-rûnti) in temple-worship does not look upon them as separate or independent deities, but recognizes the main and immovable icon which is confined to the sanctum as the only worshipful form of Vishnu (arcâ-mûrti), and as the original form (âdi-mûrti) for the other three or four icons. And there is also the supposition that the ‘kautuka-bera’, which is used for daily worship (nityârcana), is an emanation of the main icon, and next to it in importance. The texts speak of them together as forming one unit. Hence also the insistence that the ‘kautuka-bera’ must be an exact replica of the dhruva-bimba:

ध्रुवकौतकयोरैः ध्रुवार्चनमुदाहातमः।

(Kriyâdhikara, 8, 146)

ध्रुवबेरानुसूर्पच कौतुकं परिकल्पयेत्।

(ibid, 3, 21)

From the ‘Kautuka-bera’ proceeds the ‘snapana-bera’, even as from the ‘snapana-bera’ proceeds ‘autsava-bera’. When ‘bali-bera’ also is recognized (in the pañca-mûrti system), it is derived from the ‘autsava-bera’.

According to Kâśyapa’s Jñâna-kânda the, differentiation of the worshipful image in terms of three icons is of the
same kind as the conception of ‘triple-fire’ in the sacrificial context (Yathaikasmin grhe tretāṅgīn kalpayati tathaikasmin vimāne kautukamautsavamarceti trīṇi berāni kalpayet, chap.54, TTD ed. 1960, p.95). The dhruva-bera is like the ‘aupasanāgni’ or the fire worshipped at home. The seat on which the icon stands is the pot in which the fire is placed (agnyāyatana). Even as the one fire is used to light the other fires, (gārhapatya and āhavanīya), the spirit of the deity is invoked into the kautuka-image and autsava-image from the dhruva-image:

यथा गार्हपत्यादृश्या आहवनीयाविस्तरितं जुगहोति।
तथा धृवबेरात् कौतुक विम्बा हिंदु समावाहार्च्यताः॥

(काश्यपये ज्ञानकाण्डे)

Bṛgṛu’s Kriyādihikāra (9, 7-9) compares the system of having five icons for one deity to the ritual of having five different fires, or to the conception of five vital currents (parāṇa, apāna, vyāna, udāna and samāna) in the same body:

यथा कर्मणं एकस्य कल्पिता पंचवह्यः।
यथा चैव कालीरस्य बायुपंचककल्पनम्।
तथावेकविशालस्य पंचबेराणि कल्पयेत्॥

(क्रियाधिकारे, ९, ७, ९)

He too recognizes the system of three icons: dhruva, kautuka and autsava, and likens it to the custom of having three ritual fires.

अन्यथा नार्योदेशो विद्यामुनो स्नापनोत्सवकोतुकान्।
त्रेतागिरिनिव कर्तुस्तदेकैंक तत्समं विद्धः॥

(यज्ञाधिकारे, १७, ९)
He further provides the option of having only the dhruva-icon for worship, like the ‘aupasanagni’. He also mentions that the worship of the dhruva-icon alone is suitable for those who are engaged in the world without any desires (‘dhruva-berārcanam proktam nirāsī-karmakariṇām’, 7, 11) while the worship, of the kautuka-icon is fit for the worldlings who are motivated by desires (‘sakāmānāṃ samucitam saṃsārāramiṇāṃ idam’, 7, 12).

Analogous to the four-fold or five-fold iconic representation in worship, there is the four-fold (catur-mūrti) or five-fold (pañca-mūrti) aspects of the Godhead. Corresponding to the main icon (dhruva-bimba) is the primary aspect of the deity known as Viṣṇu. And Viṣṇu’s four aspects that become relevant not only during worship but also in the stages of emancipation that result from worship: Purusa, Satya, Acyuta and Aniruddha. If Viṣṇu is considered as the primary and comprehensive divinity (ādi-mūrti), then the four aspects are regarded as ‘vyūhas’ (which however is a later expression) thereof (emanatory forms), and this is the notion of ‘catur-mūrti’. If, on the other hand, Viṣṇu is also counted along with the other four, we have the ‘pañca-mūrti’ conception, which is the more popular one. In Marici’s Vimānārcaṇā-kalpā (89th paṭala) we find that these five forms, like the five icons, are likened to the five ritual fires (sabhya, āhavanīya, anvāhārya, gārhapatya and āvasathya), the five primary elements (earth, water, fire, air and ākāśa) and the five vital currents (prāṇa, apāna, vyāna, udāna and samāna).

Mahābhārata (Āśvamedhika-parva, Anu-gitā section, ‘Vaiṣṇava- dharma’, Nakulopākhyaṇa, 92) (Nṛsimha-vājapeya-yāji’s gloss) mentions this five-fold division, and distinguishes it from the four-fold division of the
Pāñcarātra (into Vāsudeva, Saṅkar-śana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha). Yudhiṣṭhira asks Kṛṣṇa how Godhead is to be worshipped and what the views of the Vaikhānatas and Pāñcarātrikas are in this regard. Kṛṣṇa answers:

श्रुणु पांडव तत्सर्वमर्चना क्रममात्मनः।
स्थिरं ले पदकं कृत्या साष्टपत्रं सकर्णिकं॥
अष्टाक्षरविधानेनाष्टवा ह्रदाश्शक्षरे॥
वैदिककैरथवा चन्द्रः मम सूक्षम वा पुनः॥
स्थापितं मां तत्सर्वसिद्धार्थियत् विचक्षणः॥
विष्णु च पुरुषं सत्यमच्युतं च युधिष्ठिरं॥
अनिन्द्यं च मां प्राहुःविद्यासविलो जना:॥
अन्येऽचन्द्र विजागन्ति मां राजन् पांचरात्रिकः॥
वासुदेवं च राजेन्द्र संकर्षणादापि वा॥
प्रहुमून्तः चानिनिन्द्यं च चतुर्मूर्तिः प्रचक्षयेतः॥
ताराचान्याश्च राजेन्द्र संज्ञाभेदेन मूर्तयं॥
विद्वानर्थान्तरा एवं मामेवं चार्थ्येदं बुधः॥

(cf also Prakīrṇādhikāra: 33,18-20)

भवति मूर्त्यस्तस्माच्चतस्तो विश्वेन्द्रिन्ते॥
चातुराचान्यादार्थस्तस्तस्त सूर्यः॥
विष्णुश्रृवः महाविष्णुः सदाविष्णुरिति क्रमातू॥
व्यापी नारायण इति तत्रामानि तत: क्रमातू॥
विष्णुर्महाविष्णुः पुरुषो महाविष्णुः सत्यः॥
सदाविष्णुरच्युतः स्वाद व्यापिनोज्जोगरितुः॥
धर्मादिभिर्महागुणोशचतुर्थं भेद ईरिति:॥

Thus Vaikhānasa viewpoint with regard to the five forms appears to be an ancient one, but the statement in the epic that the Vaikhānasa and Pāñcarātra viewpoints are
the same ('anarthāntara') is rather hard to substantiate, although the Vaikhānasas writer Śrīnivāsa-makhin quoted these verses approvingly (without, however, including in the citation the last verse quoted here) in his gloss Tātparya-cintāmani on Vaikhānasas-gṛhya-sūtra ('Dasa-vidha-hetu-nirūpana').

The viewpoint which is peculiar to the Vaikhānasas may briefly be stated here. Iconic worship is the royal road to emancipation from the worldly bondage of misery, and emancipation consists of the individual soul directly experiencing the presence of the supreme self, viz. Viṣṇu:

तदाराधनेन संसारार्थविनिमेयने जीवात्मा परमात्मान
नारायणं पशुति। नित्यं गृहे देवायतने वा भक्त्या
भगवनं नारायणमर्च्छेत् तद् विषयः परं पदं
गच्छतीति विज्ञायते।

(वैखण्डस्तल्पवृत्ति)

The individual soul (jīva), when it frees itself from phenomenal fetters, enters into the sphere of Viṣṇu (known as Vaiṣṇavānḍa) in four successive stages, each stage being designated a plane of Viṣṇu-experience (Viṣṇuloka). The lowest of the stages is 'Āmoda', where the presiding aspect of Godhead is called Viṣṇu; and the individual soul experiences the pleasure of residing with Godhead in the same plane (sālokya). The next stage is 'Pramoda', where Mahā- viṣṇu presides; and the individual soul experiences the great delight of residing in close proximity with the Godhead (sāmipya). The stage higher than this is 'sammoda', where the presiding aspect is Sadā- viṣṇu, and where the individual soul experiences the
joy of obtaining the same form as that of the Godhead (sārūpya). The highest stage is Vaikuṇṭha-loka where Vyāpīnārāyaṇa presides, and where the individual soul experiences the union with Godhead (sāyujya).

The four aspects of Viṣṇu with reference to these four planes of ‘Viṣṇu’s sphere’ are designated Puruṣa, Satya, Acyuta and Aniruddha respectively. These are distinguished by the dominant and divine traits which the aspects reveal in each plane and which the individual soul shares: virtue (dharma) in the first, wisdom (jñāna) in the second, sovereignty (aiśvaryā) in the third, and dispassion (vairāgya) in the fourth. The four planes of the Viṣṇu’s world are regarded as the four quarters (pāda) of Brahman: āmoda’ represents one quarter of Brahman, ‘pramoda’ one half, and ‘sammoda’ three quarters, while Vaikuṇṭha-loka is the full Brahman symbolizing the ‘highest foothold of Viṣṇu’ (‘tad viṣṇoh paramam padam’) which is reached when Viṣṇu (the first plane) ‘makes three strides’ (‘trīṇi padā vi-cakrame viṣṇuh’).

In temple-worship of the Vaikhānasa system, the four aspects of Viṣṇu are visualized as four forms located around Viṣṇu in the immediate enclosure: Puruṣa to the east, Satya to the south, Acyuta to the west and Aniruddha to the north (‘prāgādi catur- dikṣu’). The forms are also differently conceived. Viṣṇu in the center is dark-coloured and wears golden coloured garments. He is well bedecked with all auspicious ornaments and is adorned with the Śrīvatsa mark on his right chest. He is four-armed, carrying conch and discus in his upper hands and showing the gesture of protection in his right normal hand, the corresponding left hand holding the hip (kaṭyavalambita). He has the goddess Śrī on his right side and the
goddess Bhū on his left. All the other aspects are four-armed and carry conch and discus.

Puruśa who is shown to the east of Viṣṇu faces the eastern direction (prāṅg Mukha); he is fair-complexioned, wearing yellow garments. The variant forms Śrī and ‘Medini’ (Bhū) are on his sides. Satya who is shown to the south of Viṣṇu faces the southern direction (dakṣiṇābhimukha), and is collyrium-hued; he wears red garments and is flanked by Dhṛti and Pausnī. Acyuta is located to the west of Viṣṇu, and he faces west. He is golden coloured, and wears dark blue garments. He is accompanied by Pavitṛ and Kṣoṇi” Aniruddha is to the north of Viṣṇu, and he faces the northern direction. His body-colour is like that of coral, and he is seated upon the coils of a serpent with five, seven or nine hoods. His consorts are called Pramoda-dāyini and Mahī.

The four forms correspond to the four iconic variants of the main images in the sanctum (dhruva-bīrība) which represents Viṣṇu. Puruśa is symbolized by the kautuka-icon, Satya by the autsavaicon, Acyuta by the snpanaicon and Aniruddha by the bali-icon. During actual worship, however, Aniruddha is omitted, and the kautuka, autsava, snpana and bali images are taken to represent Viṣṇu, Puruśa, Satya and Acyuta respectively. The aspect of Aniruddha is imagined to be present in the bali-altar, in the sacrificial fire-pot (agni-kuṇḍa), in the temple (vimāna) and in the priest (arcaka).

In spite of the conception of Viṣṇu as having aspects (mūrti) and iconic forms (bera), as accompanied by consorts (devīs) and as surrounded by a retinue of gods (parivāra), the Vaikhānasāsa outlook is in the real sense idealistic. It holds Godhead to be inscrutable, immutable,
indefinable, without qualities or aspects, and supporting all things. It pervades everything even as butter in milk, oil in the gangly seed, fragrance in a flower, juice in a fruit, or fire in wood. He must be conjured up in mind, and must be invoked within the heart. Even as the fire blazes forth by the friction of the arañi-sticks, Viṣṇu appears in the heart of the devotee by constant contemplation. This is his ‘sa-kala’ form, the absolute materializing itself by the devotion and visualization of the devotee.

सर्वाधारं सनातनमप्रभमाधिन्यं निर्गुणं निष्कलं क्षीरे
सप्तिले तौलं पुष्ये गद्यं फले रसं काष्ठे
अग्रिन्मिव सर्वव्यापिन परमात्मानं मनसा
संकल्पवाहणेदावहानमुद्रासनं विष्णोरयुक्तिमित्रत्वशा
द्वारणया व्याप्ते बहुर्मद्धनात्संत्रिहितोभवति
तथैव ध्यानमथनेन भक्तस्य हृदि विष्णु: संत्रिहितो भवति।

(Vimānārcanā-Kalpa, 31 st paṭala)

काष्ठेपालगीत्वनात्संत्रिहिते निष्कल्पको
विष्णुभक्तमथनेन भक्तस्य संकल्पनात्संकलोभवति

(ibid, 80th paṭala)

It is in order to facilitate contemplation that icons are to be worshipped, Śaunaka, the author of Rgvidhāna, is credited with the following counsel: “A beautiful image of Viṣṇu, with a smiling countenance and graceful looks, must be got prepared in metal; the image must be delightful to the devotee. Then it must be worshipped and meditated upon. By this means, the devotee, freed from defects, will enter that very form of Brahman”. 
सुरूपां प्रतिमां विष्णोः प्रसन्नवदनेष्कणां
कृत्यात्मान: प्रीतिकरोः सुवर्णरंजतादिधिः॥
तामर्येतां प्रणमेतां भजेतां विचिन्तयेत्
विशत्यपास्तदोषस्तु तामेव ब्रह्मरूपिणीयम्॥

(This verse has been cited as ‘Bhārate’ in Śrīnivāsa- makhin’s Tātparya-cintāmaṇi, comm. on vaikhanaśa-grhyasūtra, 4, 10, Vol. II, p. 620).
Chapter III

VAIKHĀNASA ĀGAMA

We read in the concluding portion of Marici’s Vīmānār-canā-kalpa (100th paṭala):

“Even as Viṣṇu became the primordial source from which emanated the forms Puruṣa, Satya, Acyuta and Aniruddha, he transformed his Vedic nature into the sage called Vikhanas. And even as Puruṣa, Satya, Acyuta and Aniruddha are only his variant forms albeit derived, the sages Bhrgu, Marici, Atri and Kāśyapa were the variant forms of the first sage Vikhanas. To Vikhanas, Viṣṇu taught at the very beginning of creation the doctrine subsequently celebrated as Vaikhānasa-sūtra, which comprehends all the Vedas and contains the secret teaching of the Vedic lore. And Vikhanas in his turn briefly communicated this doctrine to the four sages (Bhrgu and others). What Vikhanas taught was in extent one and a half crores of granthas (a grantha being thirty- two letters of a verse in anuṣṭubh metre). The four sages in their turn prepared their own treatises, known as ‘Adhikāras’ (Bhrgu), ‘Samhitās’ (Marici), Tantras’ (Atri) and ‘Kāṇḍas’ (Kāśyapa), altogether extending to four lakh granthas”.

It is impossible now to form an exact idea of the original doctrine that the sage Vikhanas received or communicated. The only text (or rather group of texts) in aphoristic style which is ascribed to the authorship of
Vikhanas and which has come down to us, in however redacted a form, is what is known as Vaikhānasa- kalpa-sūtra. While it is hard to ascertain the age of the compilation of this text, it is no doubt an ancient one, and what is more important, it is comprehensive, dealing as it does with all the aspects of ‘kalpa’ (Śrauta, Smārta or Grhya, Dhar-ma and Śulba). By common consent, this text is held to be the source for all the later Vaikhānasa texts and manuals. The texts ascribed to the four sages who were disciples of Vikhanas have, unfortunately, not survived in their entirety. There are some prose and poetical works in the names of Marici and Bhṛgu, which are popularly studied and frequently printed (like Marici’s Vimānārcana-kalpa and Bhṛgu’s Kriyādhikāra and Prakīrnādhikāra), while most of the other texts are known only through citations and extracts from them by later commentators and glossators like Nṛsimha-vājapeya-yājin and Śrīnivāsamakhin.

There is truth in the traditional view that the Kalpasūtras of Vikhanas provided not only inspiration but also material for the later Vaikhānasa writings. A distinction is thus drawn between the Sūtra (by Vikhanas) and the Śāstra (by his disciples):

प्रौढवशस्त्रि शास्त्रस्य सार्थकोटिप्रमाणतः
उपादिशत्स्म भगवान् अस्मथ्य चैमिशो वने
इति संक्षेपः प्रोक्तं महत्वं सूत्रशास्त्रे

(Prakīrnādhikāra, 30, 93-94)

A kalpa-sūtra is different in its orientation and approach from the Āgama texts, and when the Vaikhānasa-bhagavacāstra (viz. Āgama) was constituted, it had to
contain details which the kalpa-sūtra did not contain, or elaborate the details which were only suggested in the kalpa-sūtra. The requirements of Āgama appear to have necessitated the composition of Śāstra-texts by the four sages (Bhrigu and others), in addition to the Kalpa-sūtra by their master, Vikhanas. For instance, the entire Vaikhānasa literature of the post-kalpa-sūtra period may be said to have stemmed out of a statement in the Sūtra-text of Vikhanas:

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तं यज्ञपुरुषं ध्यायनू पुरुषसूक्तेन संस्तूपं प्रणांम कुर्यादज्ज्ञेषु विहीनं
तत्संपूर्णं भवतीति श्रुति:। ह्रिजातिरतत्त्वितो नित्यं गुहे देवायतने वा भक्त्या भगवतं नारायणमेष्येत्तद्विष्णोः
परमं गच्छतीति विज्ञायते॥
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(Vaikhānasa-grhyā-sūtra, 4, 12, 8-11)

“One who does not perform the great sacrifices would compensate for this omission, according to scriptural authority, by contemplating upon Viṣṇu who is the very personification of the great sacrifices, eulogising him with hymns like Puruṣa-sūkta, and by worshipping him. Therefore, the twice-born one must worship day and night with devotion, in his own home or in a temple, Viṣṇu, the great god. He will thereby reach the highest world of Viṣṇu.” The commentator (Nṛsimha-vājapeya-yājaṁ) explains that sacrifice (yājña) which involves only offerings into fire and tending the ritual fire, is actually worship of God without an icon (amūrtārcaṇa) and has its rewards, which are alternately obtained by worshipping Viṣṇu in an icon, and by meditating upon him as having a perceptible form. Godhead is in reality only existence, consciousness
and bliss. But he can be obtained by sacrifices as well as by iconic worship.

The text also lays down that the daily worship of Viṣṇu would mean in effect the worship of all the gods (who are eulogized and fed in the sacrifices, through the fire-god Agni):

अथाग्नौ नित्यहोमान्ते विष्णोनित्याचा सर्वदेवाचा भवति।

(ibid. 4,10,1)

Agni is the lowest of the gods, being only a messenger (dūta) of the other gods, and Viṣṇu is the highest, being the very spirit of the sacrifice (yajña-puruṣa) and the inner lord of all. The tending of the sacred fire (homa), which is to be performed daily in the household of a twice-born one, is followed by the worship of Viṣṇu. Then the lowest and the highest limits of divinity are comprehended, and the commentator points out that this worship would serve as a ritual of expiation (sarva-prāyaścittārtham) and as conducive to the welfare here and hereafter (āhikāmuṣmika-phala- siddhyartham). This would make the performance of great sacrifices (prescribed and elaborated in the Śrauta-sūtras) unnecessary and redundant. This highlights the role of iconic worship as a substitute for the performance of sacrifices, and justifies the emergence of Bhagavaccāstra (viz. Āgama) out of the main body of Kalpa-sūtra, which was fast becoming irrelevant and impracticable.

It is interesting that the same text prescribes that the icon of Viṣṇu must be duly installed at home for daily worship (morning and evening) after the customary ‘fire-tending’ (homa) is gone through:
In the context of a ‘gṛhya-sūtra’, which relates to conduct, religious as well as social, within the household, it is natural that iconic worship at home should figure importantly. The expression ‘gṛhe’ (“in the house”) in the aphorism means, according to the commentator, ‘sva-gṛhe’ (“in one’s own residence”). It does not refer to the temple, which is the public place of worship, although in the passage quoted earlier from the same text (4, 12 and 8-11) worship is prescribed to be done at home or alternately in a temple (‘gṛhe devāyatane vā’). There can be little doubt that temples as “abodes of spirits and gods” (devāyatana) were there, when the kalpa-sūtras were compiled; but the kalpa-sūtras do not contain prescriptions for worship in a temple. The section on ‘daily worship’ (nityārcanā) (ibid., 4, 2) refers only to worship at home, which was an adjunct to the fire-rituals and not a substitute for them.

The pressures that occasioned the rise of the Āgama may now broadly be indicated. The environment in which the Kalpa-sūtra complex was prepared was when sacrifices (mostly from Yajurveda) and rituals (mostly from the Brāhmaṇa texts) were prevalent. The dharma-sūtra section which was an adjunct to the Śrauta and Gṛhya sections of the kalpa-sūtra recognized the division of the society into ‘twice-born’ groups (dvi-jāti) and groups which did not undergo the sacraments of the ‘second birth’. Sacrifices and rituals were relevant only to the ‘twice-born’ groups, and naturally the Śrauta and Gṛhya sections of kalpa-sūtra
had meaning and applicability only to these groups. But the age of the great Vedic sacrifices was fast fading, and the relevance of the Śrauta-section of the kalpa-sūtra was becoming obsolete.

The Vedic culture of sacrifices had to fight for its survival; and greater reliance came to be placed on the derived texts known as smṛtis than on the revealed Vedic corpus (śruti). Naturally, the Gṛhya-sūtra section (which became known as ‘Smārta’, “based on smṛti books”) of the kalpa-sūtra assumed greater importance.

It is revealing that among the twenty or so kalpa-sūtras that have come down to us (most of them, however, in an unsatisfactory condition), more than half do not contain the Śrauta section at all; if they did contain once, the section has disappeared subsequently. And none of the extant kalpasūtras, excepting two (Kātyāyana and Bodhāyana), bother about the Śulbasūtra section, which principally deals with sacrificial altars (vedi, citi), their measurements, and the implements and vessels used in sacrifices (yajñāyudha). Barring five of the kalpasūtras we are acquainted with, all others have the Gṛhya-section, rather elaborately.

The concept of sacrifice (yajña or yāga) was redefined as giving up ones wealth in the name of the deity (‘devatāṁ ud-diśya dravya- tyāgah yāgah’). And in the place of the great sacrifices of olden days (like Āgrayaṇa, Āsvamedha, Vājapeya, Soma and so on), the Gṛhya-sūtras prescribed a group of “five great sacrifices” (pañca-mahā-yajña), which every twice-born householder was to undertake. We have it on the authority of Taïttirīya- āraṇyaka (2nd prapāṭhaka, 10th anuvāka):
The five ‘great sacrifices’ in the names of gods (deva), ancestral spirits (pitr), animals and birds (bhûta), fellow human beings (manuṣya) and the Veda (brâhma), were not all of them really sacrifices in the sense of Vedic sacrifices, but only some aspects of daily conduct where the idea of ‘giving up ones possessions’ figured prominently and which took ritualistic forms:

(1) The ‘deva-yajña’ is defined as offering faggots to the fire-god. In the earlier great sacrifices, several articles and eatables (purodâsa, etc.) were poured into the fire in an elaborate ritual, and reciting hymns from the Vedic corpus. But the idea of ‘deva-yajña’ is the offering of even a single faggot into the fire, with no other rituals attending on this act (‘yad agnau juhoty api samidham tad deva-yajñah santiṣṭhate’).

(2) The ‘pitr-yajña is likewise the mere offering of water to the ancestral spirits, with the utterance of ‘svadhā’ (‘yat pitṛbhhyah svadhā-karoty apas tat’).

(3) The ‘bhûta-yajña’ is offering food to birds (like crows) and animals, after the midday ritual known as ‘vaiśva-deva-bali’ and before his own lunch (‘yat bhûtebhyo balim harati tat’).

(4) The ‘manuṣya -yajña’ is partaking of ones food with other human beings (like learned folk, guests, visitors and the indigent people) (‘yad brâhmaṇādibhyonnam dadāti tat’).

(5) The ‘brâhma-yajña’ is the study or recitation of ones own branch of the Vedic corpus (sva-śakhā) (‘yat svādhyaḥyam ad-hiyitaikam api ṛcam yajus sāma vā tat’).
Svādhyāya strictly means careful study of the entire Vedic section to which one belongs. But as a ‘yajña’ included in this group, it would suffice even if a single hymn is studied or recited.

It can be seen that these so-called “great sacrifices” enjoined upon a householder have more of social significance than ritualistic involvements. The shift of emphasis from the Śrauta section to the Gṛhya signifies not only that the sacrifices were receding to the background but that iconic worship was becoming more important and popular.

The Vedic yajñas are broadly grouped into ‘Śrauta’ (the ‘Soma’-sacrifices and the ‘havis’-sacrifices) and the ‘Gṛhya’ (‘pāka-yajña’) divisions. The householders are enjoined to perform the yajñas of the second division. They are supposed to tend the daily fire (agni-hotra), if they are “keepers of the sacred fire” (āhitāgni). But the worship is conducted in the morning to the Sun (Sūrya) with offering of milk, and in the evening to the fire-god (Agni) with ‘havis’ offering. Agni was the icon of the Sun. From the “household-fire” (gārhapatyāgni) the ritual fires like ‘ahavaniyagni’ and ‘dakṣināgni’ are kindled and formal worship is conducted to them. If the ‘household-fire’ is the ancient prototype of the main and immovable image (dhruva-bimba), the other ritual fires derived from it are representative in nature and function (kautuka).

It was now but a short step for iconic worship to come out of the domestic confines into the public places of worship. The details of iconic worship, complete with rituals and hymns, became the focus of attention in the books designated as Bhagavaccāstra which were in effect successors of the Kalpa-sūtra-texts.
The Vaikhānasa-ग्रhya-sūtra which prescribes the worship of Viṣṇu at home also suggests the details of worship in brief:

षडगुलादहीनं तदूपं कल्याणित्वा.........पूर्वपक्षेऽ पुण्ये नक्षत्रे प्रतिष्ठां कुर्यात्।

The first part of the sentence refers to suitable iconometry (not less than six angulas in height) followed by the principal issue in iconography (‘tad rūpam’); then the details of the ritualistic installation of the icon (pratiṣṭhā) are, although all too briefly, mentioned. The commentator explains that the form (rūpa) of Viṣṇu to be installed may be one of the twenty-four iconic varieties (caturvimsatimūrti) or one of the ten incar-natory forms (avatāra), or any other aspect of Viṣṇu. The icon which is divinely auspicious must be ‘got made’ by the sculptor according to canonical prescriptions (‘divya-maṅgala-vigraham śāstrānurodhena śilpa- śāstroktā-vidhinā kārayitvā. The two requirements in iconic worship, thus, are that the particular iconic representation must be permitted by the Vaikhānasa scriptures (viz. the Kalpa-sūtra), and that the preparation of the icon must be approved by the sculptural scriptures (viz. Śilpa- śāstra). The Āgama combines the two types of scriptures, one providing the visualization of the iconic form and the other giving the details of the preparation of the icon for worship. What was necessary to render the Āgama self-contained and complete was the prescription about how iconic worship needs to be conducted and what philosophy underlies it.

The same ग्रhya-sūtra furnishes further suggestions for the construction of an Āgama along with the ideological presuppositions:
The Godhead is ‘formless’ (niṣkala, which term means, according to the commentator, ‘filled with lustre’, tejomaya, ‘inscrutable’, acintya, and ‘of the nature of pure existence, consciousness and bliss’, saccidānanda- rūpi) and abides in the heart-lotus of the devotee. For worship, however, the Godhead is visualized in the solar orb (arka-maṇḍala) or in the sanctified water-pot (jala-kuṁbha), or in an icon (arcā-bera). When the Godhead is visualized in the icon, a human form with distinguishable limbs (sakala, explained by the commentator, ‘kalābhiḥ kara-caranādyaiḥ saha vartamānav’) is ascribed to him. Viṣṇu’s form for contemplation (‘dhyātvā’) and worship (‘praṇamet’) is four-armed, carrying conch and discus, pacific in countenance (‘saumyam’, which is explained by the commentator as ‘pleasant in aspect, like the moon’, ‘somavat-priya-darśanah’), rosy pink in complexion and wearing yellow garments.

Along with the iconic form of the deity, the text suggests the technique of visualization, contemplation and worship rituals. In a subsequent aphorism, the four aspects of Viṣṇu (previously explained), viz. Puruṣa, Satya, Acyuta and Aniruddha, are also spelt out. Thus the Gṛhya-text provides the main framework for an āgama to work upon. Between the Gṛhya-sūtra insistence upon ‘agnyādhāna’ (‘setting up of the ritual fire for daily devotions’) and the Āgama (Vaikhānasa-bhagavaccāstra) prescription of iconic
worship in a temple, we have the ideology of ‘kriyā yoga’ which figures prominently in the Bhāgavata tradition.

The word ‘kriyā-yoga’ occurs in Bhāgavata (11th skandha, 27th adhyāya). Uddhava requests Kṛṣṇa to enlighten him about ‘kriyā-yoga’, which is another term for the worship of God:

क्रियायोगं समाचक्ष्व भवदाराधनं प्रभो।
यस्मात् त्वा यथार्थं सात्वत: सात्त्वत्तर्भ॥

The rest of the chapter is devoted to a detailed account of iconic worship which comprehends the Vedic elements as well as the tāntrik elements. In fact, the account begins with the statement that worship is of three kinds. Vedic, Tāntrik and ‘mixed’, and that one could choose from among them whatever appeals to him:

वैदिकस्तात्रिकं मिश्र इति मे त्रिविधं मखः।
त्रयाणामीपितेनेव विधिना मां समर्च्येत॥

‘Bhāgavata’, which is the name of the purāṇa which eulogizes Viṣṇu, is also the term for a devotee of Viṣṇu. And the Vaikhānasas are primarily Bhāgavatas (cf. Kriyādhiṅkarā, 30, 136- 150), even as the Pāṇcaratrās are. The ‘Vedic’ kind of worship mentioned in the above work answers to the Vaikhānasa variety, while the ‘tāntrik’ kind signifies the Pāṇcarātra variety. We have it on Marćci’s authority that the Viṣṇu-devotees are of two types: Vaikhānasa, which follows the Vedic tradition, and Pāṇcarātra, which follows the non-Vedic tradition (‘vaiṣṇavam dvividham vaikhānasam pāṇcarātram iti; vaikhānasam vaidikām..... pāṇcarātram tu avaidikam’).

There has been a division among the bhāgavatas (or ekān-tins) from very early times into Vaikhānasa and
Pāṇcarātra. This division has been mentioned even in Mahābhārata. While the bhāgavatas extol intense loving devotion (bhakti) or total surrender (prapatti) to god as the principal means of reaching Godhead, a difference in approach between the Vaikhānasas and Pāṇcarātras has been noted. Śrīnīvāsa-makhin, for instance, in his Tātparya-cintāmaṇī (Daśa-vidha-hetu-nirūpaṇa’) points out that total surrender for a Vaikhānasa means the uninterrupted invocation and worship of puruṣa and other forms of Viṣṇu preceded by ‘praṇava’ (viz. Oṁkāra) for the three ingredients of the sacred syllable signifies Viṣṇu (0-kāra), Lakṣmī (u- kāra) and their devotee (ma-kāra) in unison, while for a Pāṇcarātra it means an occasional invocation, and without Vedic mantras. The Vaikhānasa approach is ‘vaidika’ whereas the other approach is ‘tāntrika’ or ‘non-vaidika’ (because of its non-employment of Vedic mantras).

The expression ‘kriyā-yoga’ means the ritualistic actions that the worship of Viṣṇu involves; even as the title of
a Vaikhānasa work, *Kriyādhikāra* (of Bhṛgu) does. The same expression occurs in *Agni-purāṇa* (dialogue between Nārada and Brahmā) as distinguished from Jñāna-yoga, which is inward and internal: ‘kriyā-yoga’ is defined here as outward-oriented:

न्यायोगस्तु योगस्तु यस्तु साधनमात्मना।
यस्तु बाह्यार्थस्तंद्वोऽ: क्रियायोगः स उच्चयेत्॥

The same text explains that ‘kriyā-yoga’ consists of acts such as building a shrine to Viṣṇu (‘kārayati mandiram’), making an icon that is suitable and beautiful (‘pratimām lak-śana-vatīm ca kuryāt’), and worshipping everyday (‘ahanyahani yogena yajato yan mahā-phalam’). Kriyā-yoga refers primarily to ordering one's life in accordance with the values of iconic worship. It is an individual responsibility, and is done with a sense of duty and commitment. However, it does not relate itself to the temple as an institution, or to iconic worship as a domestic rite. It is not a detail of the Kalpa-sūtra, but it brought iconic worship out of the Gṛhya-confines and paved the way for Āgama (or Bhagavaccāstra, as known to Vaikhānasas).

Bhṛgu’s *Prakīrnadhikāra* (35, 1-13) speaks of the benefits of Kriyā-yoga (‘atha vakṣye viśeṣena kriyā-yogāśritam phalam’): by building a temple, it says, one obtains the rewards of performing a sacrifice everyday; by even desiring to build one, he gets rid of sins of seven lives; by causing an icon to be installed, he achieves imperishable worlds; and so on. And the account ends by claiming that iconic worship is the best form of worship, for its benefits are not confined to the donor or the priest but spread to all other devotees and survive for all time.
There is another outlook in the Kalpa-sūtra which facilitated the rise of the Āgama, and this pertains to the hierarchy of saints and devotees. An individual born of brāhmaṇa parents is a brāhmaṇa, but he is so only by birth and not in spirit (jāta-mātra). It is only when he undergoes the sacrament of upanayana that he becomes really a brāhmaṇa, but his status as brāhmaṇa depends upon the daily performance of sandhyā (or sāvityadhyayana). He is naturally superior to the brāhmaṇa who is so only by birth, but inferior to the brāhmaṇa who is a ‘śrotriya’ (one who studies the Vedas, who has undergone the sacrament of marriage, and who performs the pāka-yajñas).

But a ‘śrotriya’ is inferior to the ‘āhitāgni’, who studies the Vedic branch to which he belongs and tends the ritual fire at home. And he, in turn, is inferior to the
‘anūcāna’, who performs without fail the ‘havir-yajñas’. The ‘bhrūṇa’ who performs the elaborate Soma-yajña is superior to the ‘anūcāna’

The ‘bhrūṇa’, who is the best among the ritualists, is inferior to the ‘ṛṣi-kalpa’, who besides having the advantage of all the prescribed sacraments, is restrained and disciplined in body and mind (‘saṃskārair upto yama-niyamābhyām’). And the ‘ṛṣi’, who not only has studied all the four Vedas along with their auxiliary texts, but also engages himself in austerities and penance (‘sāṅgacaturveda-tapoyoga’). And surpassing even him is the ‘muni’, who is devoted to Viṣṇu and is ever in perfect equipoise (‘nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇo nir-dvandvo munih’).

Thus, the Kalpa-sūtra (cf. Vaikhānasa-grhya-sūtra, 1, 1,9-16) by formulating this hierarchy (‘pūrvāt pūrvāt parato varīyān’) highlighted the value of devotion (bhakti) in contradistinction to the need for ritualistic rigour in the spiritual practices at home. The ideal of the ‘muni’ was also the goal of the Bhāgavata career. The muni or bhāgavata is not concerned with his own salvation, but works for the welfare of others (called ‘lokasaṅgraha’ in Bhagavad-gītā which is eminently the definitive text of the Bhāgavata cult), Śrīnivāsa-makhir in his Daśa-vidha-hetu-nirūpaṇa (prologue to Tātparya-cintāmaṇī, comm. on Vaikhānasa- grhva-sūtra, T.T.D. ed., Vol. I, p. 36-37) quotes at length from Purāntantra (Chap. 47) to the effect that the Vaik-hānasas worship in temples for the good of all people, for timely rains, for abundant food, and for the glory of the ruler and the ruled; and that this is regarded as “work” (karma or kriyā). The citation also distinguishes between ‘worship at home’ (grhār-cā), which is done for securing individual or familial welfare, and ‘worship in
the temple’ (ālayārcā), which is done for the good of the public, and defends the superior merit of the latter.

आलयार्चाः गृहार्चिति चोथं श्रुतिमोदितम्।
आलये पच्छ्वृत्तिना अर्चनं तवर्धिनं भवेतु॥
आलयार्चविधिः सोष्यं वैदिकः सर्वसिद्धिलः।
सर्वलोकहितार्थां प्रोक्तोज्ञमाध्यभिविशेषेण॥
आलयार्चनकर्मेऽदेविकं भगवत्प्रियम्।
अनुष्ठेऽदिवजरेष्ठेऽ तदृखानसूत्रिभिः॥
ये वैद्यानसूत्रेष्मा संस्कृतास्तु स्माद्धिशेष्वतः।
पूजा वैद्यानसूत्रेष्टे स्थाद्धिशेष्वतः
सर्वसंपत्तः चाव सर्वाशुभविनाशनम्॥
तद्यामवासिनाः तदूद्धिकामुत्थितक्रियम्।
वर्षं पुष्टं श्रेष्ठं राजराज्यविश्वर्धनम्॥

(पुरातनः)

The priests who worship in temples are expected to do their work out of single-minded devotion and as a duty admitting of no diversion or interruption, all their life, and not for material benefits or monetary rewards. It is said in the Paushkara-samhitā (cited, ibid., p. 42):

विप्रा वैद्यानसाख्या ये ते भक्तासत्तवमुच्यः।
एकानितं सुसत्तवं देहानवं नान्यात्मनः॥
कर्तव्यमिति देवेशं संयजनं फलं विना।
प्राप्युक्तं च देहाने बासुदेवतमिवज॥

and in Prakīrṇādhikāra (30, 117-118)

फलाभिसन्धिरहित सर्वं कर्माखिलं कृतम्।
ब्रह्मार्पणाधिया कुर्यात् स भवेःद्वेश्वरोत्तमः॥
And because of this disinterested devotion that iconic worship involves, the texts proclaim that iconic worship is the best form of religious practice and that it is the only avenue to final emancipation:

Prakīrṇādhikāra,35,13

And all people have unrestrained eligibility for this form of worship, and the only requirement on the part of the worshipper is great devotion.

For iconic worship which could be commonly resorted to, temple is the most suitable place. But the temple must be properly constructed, and the icon appropriately installed in it and effectively consecrated. And since the details of regular worship would be beyond the scope of the common devotees, competent priests would be required. And to guide the priests and help them in the worship rituals, an Āgama is indispensable. It is claimed that in the present age (Kali-yuga) Āgamic worship alone is indicated, and not Śrauta and Smārta worship which were prevalent in the previous ages (Kṛta-yuga, Tretā-yuga and Dvāpara-yuga):
We read in Prakirṇadhikāra (35, 25) that if the Vedic sacrifices are prescribed because they wash away the host of sins and fulfil all our desires, the worship of Viṣṇu will produce the same benefits, because Viṣṇu personifies in himself all the sacrifices:

यज्ञा नराणां पापौध्यालना: सर्वकायदा:।
यथैवेवेज्या जगद्धातु: सर्वयज्ञमयो हरि:॥

Even to make an endowment for a lamp in the temple of Viṣṇu will undoubtedly accomplish the benefits of a sacrifice:

दीयं प्रवचन्ति नरो विष्णुरायतने हि यः॥
सदक्षिणस्य यज्ञस्य फलं प्राप्तोत्यससश्च॥

(op.cit., 35, 83)

And if one goes round a temple of Viṣṇu every morning and evening, and prostrates before the deity again and again, he would obtain the rewards of a sacrifice.

भक्त्या प्रदक्षिणं कुर्यान्तिव विष्णवालये नर:॥
सायं प्रतात्तथ देवेशं नमस्तत्रथ चिन्तयानु॥
यः प्रणामं मुहः कुर्यात्स तु यज्ञफलं लभेतु॥

(op.cit. 35, 300-301)

Indeed, the expression ‘ut-sava’ (ceremonial worship on special occasions, accompanied by procession etc.) became a later synonym of yajña’ (‘ut’, best; ‘sava’, sacrifice), and utsava in temples were eulogized as more beneficial than all the great sacrifices like ‘aśvamedha’; one utsava, in fact, is said to be tantamount to a thousand aśvamedha sacrifices:
VAIKHÂNASA LITERATURE

According to the commonly accepted norm, the collection of texts dealing with religious devotions and spiritual practices, entitled to be designated as an ‘āgama,’ should not be less than a lakh of granthas (a grantha being 32 letters in an anuśṭubh verse) in extent and not more than a crore and a half:

लक्षाधिकृक्षु बहुभि: सहस्रैस्तु शतान्विते:
सार्थकोटिहर्यतान्ते च तत्त्व तन्माख्यमागमस्व॥

(Pauśkara-samhitā, 39,11)

According to Marīci’s Vimānārcanā-kalpa (101,1), although the teachings of the sage Vikhanas was in extent a crore and a half (‘sārdha-koṭi-pramāṇam grantnam dattavān’), the texts prepared by his four disciples (Bhrghu and others), which were collectively known as Vaikhānasa-sāstra, were four lakhs of granthas in extent (‘catur-lakṣa grantham prādadur etad vaikhānasam sāstram’). The Vaikhānasa texts thus would meet with the requirements of Āgama- description, although the entire literature mentioned in Marīci’s work is no longer available to us.

An early edition of Marīci’s Vimānārcanā-kalpa by Raghunātha Cakravarti-bhaṭṭacārya and Setu-mād-
havacarya (publ. by the Mahant Prayag-dasji of the Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams at Madras in 1926) contains 101 patalas, the last patala devoted to the enumeration of the post-kalpa-sutra Vaikhanaasa literature. The author, Marici, was one of the four disciples of the sage Vikhanas to whom the compilation of Vaikhanaasa-kalpa-sutra is ascribed. The enumeration follows a general description of the Vaikhanaasa literature as derived from the Vedic lore, as being the very essence of the import of all the Vedas, as authoritative and unimpeachable, as resorted to by the adherents of the Vedic tradition, and as the doctrine concerning the worship of Vishnu, taught by the sage Vikhanas (who was none other than Vishnu) for the good of all beings, relying on the scriptural authority.

वैखानसमाधानां सर्वबैठेदेशूद्वृतं सर्वबैठादर्शसंसारभूतं
अप्रत्यक्षमनिन्दितं वैदिकसृपसेवितं विष्णूराधानं
सर्वभूतहितार्थाय शाब्दं प्रमाणमवलंब्य विष्णु
विखनस उत्कम्।

(p. 521)

The text proceeds to say that the sage Vikhanas taught this doctrine to Bhrgu, Kasyapa, Atri and Marici (author of the text), who in their turn prepared the Vaikhanaasa texts named Tantras, Adhikaras, Kandhas and Samhitas respectively, totalling in all four lakh grantha. The text further provides a breakdown of the texts prepared by these four sages:

(1) Atri prepared four Tantras, entitled Purva-tantra, Atrya-tantra, Visnu-tantra and Uttara-tantra; the works are covered in 88 thousand granthas.

(2) Bhrgu prepared thirteen Adhikaras called Khila-tantra, Puratantra, Vasadhikara, Citradhikara, Manadhikara,
Kriyād-hikāra, Arcādhikāra, Yajñādhhikāra, Varṇādhhikāra, Prakīrṇād-hikāra, Pratigrhyādhhikāra, Niruktādhhikāra and Khilādhhikāra. It may be noted that the first two texts enumerated here bear the titles of tantra. The total bulk of all the works is given as the same as that of Atri’s works (viz. 88,000); but in other accounts, it is given as 64 thousand, which fit into the total tally of four lakhs.

(3) Kāśyapa’s works were three Kāṇḍas, named Satya-kāṇḍa, Tarka-kāṇḍa and Jñana-kāṇḍa; and altogether they extend to 64 thousand granthas.

(4) Marīci wrote eight Samhitās: Jaya-samhitā, Ānanda-samhitā, Samjñāna-samhitā, Vīra-samhitā, Vijaya-samhitā, Vijita-samhitā, Vimala-samhitā and Jñanasamhitā; they extend to one lakh and 84 thousand granthas.

The enumeration ends with the statement that the source of all these four classes of texts is the Vaikhānasa- sūtra (viz. Kalpa-sūtra):

एतेषां चतुर्विधानां मूलं तद्हेक्षानसूत्रम्।

Works of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Number of Works</th>
<th>Total Granthas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atri</td>
<td>4 tantras</td>
<td>88,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhṛgu</td>
<td>13 adhikaras</td>
<td>64,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marīci</td>
<td>8 samhitās</td>
<td>1,84,000</td>
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<td>Kāśyapa</td>
<td>3 kāṇḍas</td>
<td>64,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,00,000</strong></td>
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While the enumeration is certainly not fictitious, as evident not only from the works available in print or in manuscript, but also from numerous cross-references, notices in the later commentarial literature and availability of chapters from many of the enumerated works in manuscript form, the extent of the works by the four
authors becomes uncertain owing to conflicting accounts. For instance, about the number of Bhṛgu’s works, Marīci gives the figure as thirteen, but Yajñādhikāra, (by Bhṛgu himself) puts it as eleven:

भार्गवं यन्मया कृतं तदेकदश्चधा मतम्।

(51, 13)

And another work, Vāśādhikāra (also by Bhṛgu), says that Bhṛgu wrote only eight works. Ānanda-samīhitā (17, 45), Vāśādhikāra (1) and Samūrtārcanādhistikāra give the total extent of Bhṛgu’s works as 64,000 granthas, while Vīmānārccanā-kalpa puts it at 88,000 and Yajñādhikāra at 50,000. The problem becomes difficult to resolve because very few of the Vaīkhānasas works are available in print, and we are not sure of the manuscripts that are available, as a large number of them are incomplete and fragmentary.

It is agreed by all writers that the original architects of what may be called the Vaīkhānasa-Agama were four in number, and that they derived their authority from the sage Vikhanas, whose disciples all of them were. There is a statement in Gāruḍa-purāṇa, incorporated also in Prakīnādhistikāra (34, 9-10), which mentions that these sages, by the command of Brahmā wrote the Vaiṣṇava scriptures and worshipped Viṣṇu on earth; Marīci in Mandara, Atri in Śrīnivasa, Kāśyapa in Viṣṇudhīś-ṭhāna and Bhṛgu in Śubhakṣetra. It is difficult to identify what these places were, excepting Śrīnivasa which might be the present-day Tirumala:

पुरा चतुर्मुखः देशांच्छत्वारो मुनयोगमला:।
प्रणीय वैण्णवां शास्त्रं भूमावभवच्चयव्याप॥
मरीचिर्मिन्दिरे विष्णुमर्चयमास केशावम्॥
सर्वदेवोत्तमं देवं (आदेशाद ब्रह्मणो विष्णु।)
कार्ययो विष्णवधिष्ठाने शुभक्षेत्रे भूमुःन्ति: (शुभक्षेत्रे
ह्रहं भूगु: )॥

Prakīrnadhikāra (34, 9-10) adds this verse in the name
of Bhṛgu before the second:

यत्र वैखानसं शास्त्रमाध्यत्य परमं शुभम।
अर्थायामो जगद्द्वानिं अहम्मये ते त्रय:॥

Nothing prevents us, however, from accepting the
historicity of either the sage Vikhanas or of his four
disciples who were also sages. But we are not sure if the
four sages started their own lines of thought, or if there
were contributions to Vaik-hānasa-Āgama from their
disciples. We know of one Hārīta, whose views are
frequently cited in the commentarial literature and who
claims to have been a disciple of Bhṛgu. There is also a
Śaunaka, the author of a “Samhitā” from which the
commentators quote (with regard to sequences like
“kumbha-prokṣaṇa”); and we understand that some texts
cite the authority in these words: “iti Vaikhnāse Śaunaka-
samhitāyām”, suggesting that the work belonged to the
Vaik-hānasa scripture. However, this work is no longer
available. Among the works of the four Vaikhnāsa sages
we have mentioned above, are some texts designed as
“uttara-tantra” (“later treatises’). Bhṛgu’s Yajñādhikāra,
for instance, says that Bhṛgu wrote only eleven works, but
mentions an “uttara-tantra” (not included among the eleven)
as Bhṛgu’s work. It is likely that this was composed and
added by a disciple of Bhṛgu. The same text (Yajñādhikāra,
51, 24) mentions that Marici’s Vimānār-canā-kalpa was an
“uttara-tantra (probably to Ānanda-samhitā)” (“yat-
vimānārcanākalpam tantram uttara-saṃjñakam’

It may have been in the nature of an additional text, prepared later by Maṅci himself or by a disciple of Maṅci, for we do not find this name among the eight Saṃhitās that are ascribed to Maṅci. Likewise, we find an “uttara-tantra’ named Bhagavad-arca-kalpa or viṣṇu-yāga-vidhi, by Kāsyapa.

शोषं भगवद्वर्ण्यां: कल्पमुत्तरसंज्ञकम्।
विष्णुयागविधिधीवेति तदेव परिकीर्तितम्॥

(ibid, 51, 29)

But this is not among the three or five Kāḍas that are ascribed to Kāsyapa. The description that this “Kalpa” was in the nature of an appendage (‘śeśam’) and that it was prepared later (“uttara-saṃjñakam’”) suggests that it was written by a disciple of Kāsyapa and passed for a work of Kāsyapa.

Maṅci is credited with having written the bulk of Vaik-hānasa-āgama, the extent of his writings being one lakh and eighty-four thousand granthas (according to Vimānārcana- kalpa reckoning). But the eight works of his that go by the name of “Saṃhitās’ (Saṃhitāṣṭaka) total only a lakh of granthas, according to other sources (“lakṣa-granthena Māriciḥ’). It is probable that he wrote additional “adhikāra’ works (viz. books on specific topics). The list of eight works of Maṅci:

1. Jaya-sarhhitā
2. Ānanda-saṃhīta (called “Anantākhya” in Saṃūrtarcanādhihikāra, 27, 28)
3. Saṃjñāna-saṃhīta
4. Vīra-saṃhīta (probably the same as ‘Para-saṃhīta’ mentioned in Yajñādhihikāra
(5) Vijaya-samhitā
(6) Vijita-samhitā
(7) Vimala-samhitā
(8) Jñāna-samhitā (probably the one called “Kalpa-samhitā” in Ānanda-samhitā, 17, 40-42)

We now have access only to one (or two) of these “samhitās”. Ānanda-samhitā in one hundred and one chapters is available and has been printed, (ed. with Sanskrit comm. by Bhaṭṭar Pārthasārathi Ācārya, in Telugu ch. Īgāvāripaḷem, 1924 ). Jaya-samhitā is also said to be available. But the well-known work of Marīci is Vimānārcaṇā-kalpa, a prose work in a hundred chapters, which is often mistaken for Ānanda-samhitā (which is a poetical work). It deals with the worship of Viṣṇu in iconic form, in all its ritualistic and devotional details (viz. Kriyā-yoga). This book has been printed several times, in Devanāgarī and Telugu characters, and is expensively used by the Vaik-hānasa priests.

According to Yajñādhiṅkāra (51, 13), however, the number of works Marīci wrote is eleven, but we are at a loss to know what the other three works were.

Bhrūgu is reputed to have written eleven, thirteen or fourteen works (according to different authorities), all of them, barring two, known as “adhikāras” (or “adhikaraṇas”, viz. works on specific topics). Yajñādhiṅkāra by Bhrūgu himself, gives the number of works as eleven (“bhārgavam yan mayā kṛtam tad ekādāṣadhā matam’, 51, 13), all of them covered in 50 thousand granthas:

1. Khila (also known as Khila-tantra)
2. Purādhiṅkāra (also known as Purā-tantra)
3. Mānādhiṅkāra
4. Arcanādhikāra
5. Varṇādhikāra
6. Niruktādhikāra
7. Prakīrṇadhikāra
8. Yajñādhikāra
9. Vāsādhikāra
10. Kriyādikāra
11. Uttara-tantra to which are added two more (in Vīmānārcanā-kalpa):
12. Citrādhikāra
13. Pratigṛhyādhikāra;
and Vāsādhikāra (1, 45) adds:
14. Khilādhikāra

giving the total extent of Bṛgu’s works as 64 thousand granthas (Bṛguṇā catus śaṣṭi-sāhasram samudāhṛtam”). Ānanda-samhitā says that Bṛgu’s works are contained in half the number of granthas that Marīci wrote (viz. one lakh):

लक्ष्यग्रन्थेन मारीचं तदर्थं भृगुणोदितम्।

This number agrees with what Yajñādhikāra gives (viz. 50 thousand), and probably Bṛgu originally wrote only eleven works. Even in the list of eleven works, the last one (uttara-tantra) was obviously a later addition (as the expression “uttara”, meaning “the later” suggests).

Four only among Bṛgu’s works have survived in their entirety: Kriyādikāra (in 39 chapters), Prakīrṇadhikāra (in 37 chapters), Yajñādhikāra (in 51 chapters) and Khilādhikāra (in 43 chapters). The commentator Śrīnivāsamakhin quoted extensively from Purā-tantra (Purādikāra). It is said that Bṛgu’s Vāsādhikāra (51 chapters), Arcādikāra (38 chapters) and Niruktādikāra (36 chapters)
are available in manuscripts in the Vaikhānasa families in Tirumala-Tirupati. Excerpts from other works like Māṇḍhikāra, Citrādhikāra and Vāsādhikāra survive in compilations such as Pratiṣṭhānukramaṇi ("Vaikhānasa-bhagavaccāstramālā, Nallur, 1979). According to an account in Yajñādhistikāra (51, 43-48), the mantras and the sequences of worship are dealt with in Uttarād-hikāra; the names, vānas and letters in Varṇādhistikāra; the enclosures and icons in Vāsādhikāra; the sages, the chandas and the deities in Kriyādhistikāra; the details of daily worship in Niruktādhistikāra; the festivals and ceremonial occasions in Yajñādhistikāra; whatever has not been considered in the other texts in Khiladhikāra; the iconometric particulars in Māṇḍ-hikāra; general considerations of worship in Arcanādhistikāra, details of fire rituals in Purāntantra, incidental observances in Prakīrṇādhistikāra; and general practices in Uttara-tantra.

मन्त्राश्चैवोपाराश्चं उत्तरोत्तकवदाचर्यत॥
नामवर्णाश्चराधीनवर्णाश्चिदिकरणोत्तरस्त॥
ऋषिष्ठतोधिधेवादशं क्रियाधिकरणोत्तरस्त॥
नित्यार्थं निरुक्तोत्तरं यज्ञो चोतस्व ईर्षित॥
अगुन्यकार्यिष्टेऽथ पुरातनोत्तकवचर्यत॥
यद्यवस्ते सुस्वनुकं तत् क्रियाधिकरणोत्तरस्त॥
मानोन्मानप्रभ्यानानि मानाधिकरणोत्तरस्त॥
अर्ँचपरिच्छेदं चेताभ्यंजनविधिः तथा॥
कर्मोधेषे च सर्वन प्रकीर्णो विधानत्॥
अर्थस्याधिकरोत्तकविधि: सार्वत्रिको भवेत॥
तत्रोत्तरेऽथ विधय: सर्व सार्वत्रिक्या मतः॥

(यज्ञाधिकारे, 51, 43-48)
Four works called “Tantras’ are ascribed to the sage Atri:
1. Pūrva-tantra (probably the same as Pādma-saṁhitā mentioned in Samūrtārcanādhikara)
2. Ātreya-tantra (called Mahā-tantra in’Ānanda-saṁhitā)
3. Viṣṇu-tantra
4. Uttara-tantra.

While Ānanda-saṁhitā gives the total bulk of Atri’s works as 88 thousand granthas (“aṣṭottarāsiti-sāhasra- grantha-saṅkhyaātriṇocye”), Samūrtārcanādhikāra places it at 28,000 (“aṣṭā-viṁśati- sahasrāni grantha-saṅkhyaā mayā śrutā”). The only work of Atri that has come down to us is Samūrtārcanādhikāra (in 40 chapters), which is sometimes identified with Uttara-tantra. However, looking at the name of the text and considering the specific subject which it deals with (viz. iconic worship), it answers more to the description of an “adhikāra’ than that of a “tantra’. But it is a fairly large work, extending to about two thousand granthas.

Kāsyapa’s works are, according to Vimānārcāna-kalpa, three in number (“tri-kāndeśvapi”):
1. Satya-kāṇḍa
2. Tarka-kāṇḍa
3. Jñāna-kāṇḍa But Ānanda-saṁhitā (17, 42-48) adds,
4. Karma-kāṇḍa (which is said to be another name for Tarka-kāṇḍa)

while Vāsādhikāra counts five works of Kāsyapa (“paṇcakāṇḍam iti smṛtam’, also Yajñādhikāra, 51, 17, “paṇcadāh kāsyapiyam sūd adhikara-prabhēdatah’) adding to the first three:
5. Santāna-kānda, and

The total number of granthas that Kāsyapa wrote is estimated to be 28 thousand in Ānanda-samhitā (17, 48, “aṣṭāvimsati-sāhasram Kāsyapenaṅdhikam kitam”) which ascribes only three works to his authorship (if we identify Karma-kānda with Tarka-kānda) or four (if Karma-kānda is an independent work). But Vāśādhikāra, which enumerates five works from Kāsyapa’s pen places the figure at 64 thousand (“catus śodasa-samkhya tu Kāsyape”), which is also the figure given in Vimānārcaṇa-kalpa for his three works. Among Kāsyapa’s works, only Jñānakānda (in 108 chapters) which is a prose work is available, and the book runs to 3,800 granthas.

The Vaikhānasa Āgama is to be considered as complementary to the Vaikhānasa-sūtra. There is a statement in the Pūrva-tantra (cited by Srīnivāsa-makhin) which says that the Sūtra did not deal with temple-worship at all, and that even the worship at home was but briefly discussed in the Sūtra. The four sages, realizing the great importance of temple-worship, followed the directions given in the Sūtra for worship at home and prepared the Āgama texts, for the good of mankind.
We have a brief enumeration of texts and their extent, given by Nṛsimha-Vajapeya-yajin in the first section of his Pratiṣṭhā-vidhi-darpana, which may be taken as traditional and authentic.

(Text, ed. by R. Parthasārathi Bhattācarya, in Telugu
(Text, ed. by R. Parthasārathi Bhattācarya, in Telugu characters, Madras, 1948)

The texts now classed under Vaikhānasā Āgama contain elaborate discussions on the construction of temples, the types of shrines, consecration of temples and installation of icons, daily worship and the materials required for it, the Vedic hymns that must accompany the various sequences of worship, occasional rituals, and ceremonies demanded by unusual situations, and expiation-rites for lapses of various kinds. While Viṣṇu is the only deity recognized by the Vaikhānasas, there is provision in the Āgama for the worship of other gods, but only as subordinate to Viṣṇu and not as independent divinities:
There are separate texts which pertain only to the
details of daily worship (like Bhagavad-arca-prakarana of
Nṛsimha-vājapeya-yājī), and some manuals are devoted
only to discuss the details of great utsavas (like
Brahmotsavānukramanikā). Some short books deal with
periodical purification of the temple-precincts
(samprokṣana), expiations for omissions in the daily or
occasional worship (prayascitta), and installations and
consecrations (pratiṣṭhā).

The Āgama books provide also valuable information
concerning temple architecture, and iconography of Viṣṇu
images and other divinities; iconometry is also dealt with.
And because Vaikhānasa Āgama aligns itself unequivocally
to the Vedic tradition, we have here interesting accounts
of major and minor Vedic rituals and ceremonials which
are accommodated within the framework of iconic worship.

Among the later works which illustrate and explain the
position of Vaikhānasa-āgama, the important are the
commentarial works of Nṛsimha-Vājapeya-yājī (whose
commentary on the Śmārta section of the Vaikhānasa-
kalpa-Sūtra and parts of Sakalāgama-sāra-saṅgraha like
‘pratiṣṭhā-vidhi-darpaṇa’ Madras 1948, are available), and
the works of Śrīnivasa-makhin (more frequently Śrīnivasa-
dlksita) like Lakṣmī-viśistādvita-bhāṣya, on Bādarāyana's
Śārīraka-sūtras, uttama-Brahma-vidyā (defending iconic
worship as the royal road to liberation), and Vaikhānasa-
mahima-mañjari (explaining the significance of
Vaikhānasa-kalpa-Sūtra). Śrīnivāsa-makhin was a priest
in the temple of Venkatesvara on the Tirumala hills. His
works have been published by Sri-Vaikhana-s-grantha-
malā (printed in the Hindu-ratnakara Press, Madras in
Telugu characters before 1931). Vaikhānasa-grhya-sūtra
with the same writer’s commentary called Tātparya-
cintāmani, has been published by the Tirumala- Tirupati
Devasthanams Series in two volumes (ed.by R.
Pārthasārathi Bhattācārya 1967). Vaikhānasa-kalpa-sūtra
has also been commented upon by several writers like
Sundara-rāja (Prayoga-vṛtti), Sañjīva-yājin, varada-rāja-
sūri, Bhāskara-bhaṭṭa, and Kodaṇḍa-rāma-pāka-yājin.
(After the age of the great sages Bṛgu, Atri, Marīci
and Kāsyapa, who prepared the definitive texts of the
Vaikhānasa-sāstra, we have other treatises which dealt
with specific topics. But their dates cannot be ascertained.
Keśavācārya, an early writer, prepared a gloss (vṛtti)
on Vedanta-sūtras of Bādarāyaṇa from Lakṣmi-visisṭādvaita
standpoint; and he also wrote an independent work entitled
Arcanā-navanīta on iconic worship. Another author of
great merit was Nṛsimha-Vājapeya-yāji, disciple of
Varadācārya and son of Mādhavācārya, has been mentioned
earlier. His disciple, Bhāskara-bhaṭṭacārya wrote
commentaries on Daivika and Mānuṣika sūtras and on the
Khila-mantras of Rgveda. Among the later writers was
Sundara-rāja who wrote Prayoga-vṛtti on Vaikhānasa-
sūtra, already mentioned.

However, the most prolific writer was Śrīnīvāsa-
Makhin (also known as Śrīnīvāsādhvari, or Śrīnīvāsa-
dikṣita), who was hailed as ‘sarva-tantra-svatantra ‘ and
‘Kavi-kula-tilaka’. He was also celebrated as the Vedānta-
deśika of the Vaikhānasas. His works have already been
referred to Later, Ananta-nārāyaṇa prepared a gloss on
Vedānta-sūtras entitled Vārtikagrāhini. His student’s student
was another Śrīnivāsa-makhin to whom the work Uttama-
brhma-vidyā is sometimes ascribed. There is some
confusion about the two Śrīnivāsa-makhins and about the
works that they wrote. There is however a view that there
was but one Śrīhivasa-makhin, who wrote all the above*
works, and who was an arca in the Veṅkaṭeśwara shrine
upon the Tirumala hills.)

The basic idea of the Āgama is that when God is
worshipped in a temple according to the Vaikhānasa
scriptures and procedures, six times, three times, two
times or at least once during twenty-four hours, it will
make for all prosperity in the world:

पट्कालं वा त्रिकालं वा हिर्कालं कालमेव वा।
आलये भगवत्पूजा सौम्येन विधिना कृता।
सर्वसंपत्तकरी सा स्वाज्ञगततामिति शासनम्॥

(Prakṛṇādhikāra 30,101-102)

And it was Vaikhānasa Āgama that justified in great
detail and with zeal the value of iconic worship. Kāśyapa’s
Jñāna-kāṇḍa (28th chap.) contains this explanation of the
installation of icons for worship: “Godhead, the supreme
spirit is immutable and allpervasive, like the sky; he has
no aspects whatever. But through the knowledge and the
devotion of the devotee, he abides in the devotee’s
interior. There is the scriptural authority also in this
regard. The devotee must conceptualise this Godhead as
having a form; and having made an icon (bimba) , he
should instal it with devotion and with Vedic hymns. The
Godhead, thereupon becomes established in the icon, out
of compassion for the devotee. By worshipping such an
icon, the devotee obtains the highest foothold of Viṣṇu,
which is everlasting, without beginning or end, beyond
sensory apprehension and hard even for the gods to think of. The basis of this worship is proper installation”.

अथ विष्णुदेवेश्वरस्य प्रतिष्ठाविधिः व्याख्यातः । सोजयः
सर्वव्याख्याताकाशोपमः निष्कलः परमात्मा ज्ञानेन भक्त्यं च
युक्तस्यान्तः सनिहितो भवति । ’आत्मः गुहायां निहितोऽस्य
जन्तौरिति श्रुतिः। तत्स्मादृ भक्तिमता तेन सकलं संकल्पणं
भक्त्यं मन्त्रेश्च प्रतिष्ठापिते बिष्ये भक्तानुक्रमया सकलं
तद्विष्ये समाविष्टः देवः प्रतिष्ठितो भवेत् । अव्यक्तं शास्त्रं
अनादिर्व्याख्यातं मनुष्यतीन्त्रियं देवदैवमण्डलिकः यदेणां पदं
तत्प्राप्तिकलं तदर्थं तस्य मूलं प्रतिष्ठा ॥

(काश्यपीये ज्ञानकाण्डे)

Bṛgu’s Prakīrṇādhikāra (37, 126-144) has a more elaborate explanation of why iconic worship is to be resorted to. The human body is an instrument for spiritual perfection. Having procured it, one should perform only meritorious deeds, calculated to secure the grace of God. This will not only result in liberation from worldly fetters finally, but also in the fulfillment of all desires here and now. The icons are conducive to the welfare of the world when worshipped with devotion and according to scriptural sanctions. Sometimes scriptures speak of contemplation (dhyāna), which is independent of material props like the icon. But this is difficult, because of the natural weakness of our instruments of experience and enjoyment, and for the people involved in the active world of transactions. A person who wants to get a plant or a fruit which is perched on top of a precipice, should employ some expedient which does not involve risk. Likewise, a devotee planning to obtain God’s grace must follow a method (krama) and exert himself accordingly.
The idea of worshipping God in this formless aspect is of course attractive; but it is filled with difficulties and disadvantages. The sense organs are by nature constituted to apprehend only gross objects, which have names and forms. Formlessness is subtle, and even if one achieves it, he cannot retain it even for a short while, let alone for long. It is impossible for any one to contemplate on God without a form. When all forms are denied, where can the mind abide? The mind, from which forms are withdrawn, will either tire or fall asleep. Therefore, the intelligent man should devote himself to God with form, but should remember that there is something beyond the form.

Indeed Viṣṇu appeared with form (four-armed etc..) at the beginning, for the sake of bestowing grace on the devotees; one should worship Viṣṇu only in that primordial form, as accompanied by Hṛi and Śrī. Worship, eulogy, or contemplation of God with form, according to scriptural prescriptions, will help reach that God (viz. without form).

विष्णुध्यानपरा: सन्तो विष्णवचर्चनपरायणामः
ते विष्णुमदया ज्ञेया न हि तानू बाध्यते कलि:॥
यत एवमतो लब्धवा शरीरं कर्मसाधनम्
शुभं कर्मेन्त कर्तव्यं तत्रसादाय मानवः॥
प्रसादितेःस्मिन्सर्वं सर्ववर्ज्ञां श्रमकर्मशः॥
सर्वेः हस्तगता: कामा मुक्तिश्चाहन्ते कर्निमता।
कार्यार्थं मूर्त्यस्तस्य लोककल्याणकारका:॥
अत: साकारमेवेष्टा भक्ते वम सिद्धिमानुयात॥
इदं च शाश्वमवलम्ब: पूजयोहिष्णुमथियम्॥
यथायानं केवलं प्रोक्तं श्रावं क्रिचदनाश्रयम्॥
न तत्रेद्यदौर्बल्यात् कर्मस्थत्याधिकारिता॥
The Vaikhānasa Āgama, like any other Āgama, is a collection of texts and manuals meant primarily for the use of priests, who specialize in both kinds of worship, viz. at home (grহārcā) and in the ten,ple (ālayārcā), and’ who are told that there is greater merit in the latter, which is as effective as a hundred sacrifices performed.
Even the very act of worship in a temple is said to be dear to Viṣṇu (‘ālauci-kamedam vaidikam bhagavat-priyam’). The major thrust of the Āgama books, therefore, is to provide clear, comprehensive and elaborate guidance for the priest in the daily and routine worship in a temple (nityārcanā) as well as in the occasional and special worship (naimittikārcanā). The Vaikhānasa Āgama books are distinguished by their attention to the minutest details in the worship-sequences. And the prescriptions are precise, unequivocal and practical. Even minor and inadvertent deviations or omissions from textual prescriptions are carefully considered and appropriate expiations suggested. There is a frequent insistence on meticulous adherence to the scriptural injunctions in all matters of worship and ceremonial observances. The possibility of pollution occurring in the temple-premises or to the icons in worship engages the Vaikhānasa writers, who prescribe elaborate and concise rituals of purification (saṃprokṣaṇa). Ancient usages are sought to be strictly adhered to:

यादृशी वर्तते पूजा या बिम्बानां च संस्थिति:।
न किंचित्तात्मतिक्रम्य पूर्वोऽत्ता तु समाचरेत्॥
(३४, १०-११)

तस्मात्सर्वप्रयत्नेन पूर्वराचरितं चरेत्।
अन्यथा चेतु कुक्षाणो देवायेवापराध्यात्॥ (३४, १३)
(प्रकृणाधिकारे)
The responsibility of conducting the worship not only without lapses or interruption but in strict accordance with scriptural norms and old usages, devolves on the priest. For, regular and proper worship it is that makes for the welfare of the people; and any error in worship will be counterproductive. Thus the priest would have to be extremely vigilant and knowledgeable. If the worship becomes deficient or gets interrupted, owing to any reason, the texts lay the blame squarely on the priest; and urge the priest to discharge his duties diligently and resolutely, even when he is in distress or stricken with disaster:

अर्चकः प्रणिधिर्यस्मात् राजः राज्यस्य कल्याने।
तस्मात्समाहितः कुर्यंद्यथा पूजा न लुप्ताते॥
आपदायि कष्टायां पूजामेतां न लोपयेत॥
यदैव लुप्ते पूजा येन केनापि हेतुना॥
अप्रेमर्चकमियादोषः आद्वेषोपवराध्यति॥

(अन्नव २७, ८३-८४)

But the texts also point out that it is the duty of the ruler of the land and the people of the locality to keep the priest above want, and provide him with all conveniences for decent living. For a priest is a householder, and has his share of cares and worries. Worship is what he does, because it is his family-calling, and tradition does not permit him to take up a secular means of livelihood. The Vaikhānasa believes that he is born to be a priest, and that he must conduct the worship without being motivated by material rewards of any kind:

विश्रां वैखानसाख्याय ये तु भक्तकासस्ततवमुच्यते।
If he takes up worship as a hireling, he becomes defiled and degraded into a devalaka and would have to be purified before he can enter the sanctum or touch the icon (See for details, APPENDIX: NOTE ON TEMPLE PRIESTS). It becomes, therefore, necessary to make proper arrangements for the priest, and for regular worship, even before the temple is built and consecrated. Giving of monthly remuneration, or making periodical gifts to the priest is frowned upon by the Āgama. Obligating the priest by such temptations would only help make him a devalaka. Worship in a temple where permanent arrangement is not priority made for the priest to live in comfort is described as ‘demoniacal’ (‘āsurī sā bhavet pūjā’) and the donor would fail to procure the merits of building a temple. It is important to recognize that the temple would be of no value without an icon installed in it, that the icon continues to be powerful only as long as it is properly and regularly worshipped, and that such worship needs a priest, who is happy and content:

यस्तु द्यादार्चकाय भृत्यर्थ केवलं धनम्
अन्यद्वायस्थिः स्वस्तु न हरिस्तेन तुष्यति
लोभान्मोहादार्थाः ज्ञानाश्च आद्येङ्द्रवच्च को धनम्
वेतनार्थ तथा द्यादार्चमानो विमूढ्यथे
उभी तो नरकं याते यावच्चन्द्रविधाकर्मे
वित्तार्थ वूजयेद्यास्तु नियम्यायवधिं हरिम्
स ै देवलको नाम सर्वकर्मविहिंस्वतः।
अदत्ता वसुधामग्रे पूजनार्थमथर्चायके।
निर्माति ब्राह्मण भूयो यज्ञानस्तु देवलम्॥

(प्रकृतां धिकारे, ३५, ४७७-४८९)

तस्मादायेन भूम्यादि स्थिरदानेन सादरम्।
रुद्धाधिकार एवायं प्रवर्तावर्चनेऽर्चकः॥
प्रतिष्ठाते तु विधिवदर्चके त्वकालिते।
आसुरी सा भवेत्यूजा कर्ता नैवाण्यात्फलम्॥

(तत्तैव, २७, ८६-८७)
Chapter IV

VAIKHĀNASA PHILOSOPHY

The Vaikhānasa is essentially a religious system, and does not set about to project an independent philosophical viewpoint of its own. However, that it was both a way of life (dharma) and an outlook (darsana) was known to the medieval smriti-writers. For instance, Kullūka-bhaṭṭa commenting on Manu-smṛti (6.21) speaks of the ‘dharma’ as well as the ‘darsana’ of the Vaik-hānasas:

वैखानसो वानप्रस्थो तद्वर्धप्रतिपादक शास्त्रदर्शने स्थितः

An attempt to reconstruct a Vaikhānasa philosophy in harmony with its Vedic affiliation and its advocacy of iconic worship was made by Śrīnivāsa-makhin (or Śrīnivāsa-dīkṣita) in his commentary on the celebrated Śārīraka-sūtras, the Vedāntic prasthāna. Known as Lakṣmī-Viśiṣṭādvida-bhaṣya’, this commentary aligned itself to the position of Viśiṣṭādvida but with several differences. This author was also a prolific writer and was known as ‘Sarva-tantra-svatantra’ and ‘Kavi-kula-tilaka’. Another work of his was Vaikhānasa-mahima-maṇjari; still another work, Pāramātmikopaniśad-bhaṣya, is also attributed to him. Later, there was a Vārtika, probably on the Bhāṣya on “Śārīraka-sūtras. Later still, appeared another work
Uttama-brahma-vidyā by some Śrīnivāsa (identified frequently with the ‘Bhāṣya-kāra).

All these works brought out the characteristic Vaikhānasa philosophy. But the most significant and succinct attempt to present the Vaikhānasa philosophy was Mokṣopāya-pradīpikā. We do not know when this work was composed; nor do we know anything more than the name of its author, Raghupati-bhaṭṭacārya (better known as Vāsudeva, Vāsudevāpara-nāmā). In the book, an influence of the classical Viśiṣṭadvaita thought can be discerned not only from the selection of topics (like “arthapañcaka,; tattva-traya; and siddha-sāddhyopāya’) but also from the importance given to the ‘mūla-mantra’.’dvaya’ and ‘carama-sloka’. But the author relies entirely upon the Vaikhānasa scriptures, and deals with these matters in an independent manner.

The book in Sanskrit prose has twelve sections (generally called prakaraṇas;) of unequal length, and claims to be merely a compilation of passages from the works of Śrīnivāsadīk śitendra” (viz. Śrīnivāsa-makhin, mentioned above). But references to the original passages have not been given. It would appear that most of the matter has been gathered from Lakṣmī-viśiṣṭādvaita-bhāṣya, Uttama-brahma-vidyā and Vaikhānasa-mahima maṁjari. The course of explanations, a very large number of Vedic and Upaniṣadic statements has been cited, some of them for the first time, but sources have again not been indicated. An edition in Telugu characters was brought out by Divi Veṇkataśramahācārya in Vaikhānasa-bhagavaccāstra-granthamālā series in 1948 (Nallur) based on an earlier edition of 1905, which was in grantha characters and was printed in the Lakṣmī-vilāsa Press at Trichūr (Tri-śirah-pura).
The book begins by briefly recounting the origin of the Vaikhānasa scriptures, and tracing the long line of Vaikhānasa teachers from the age of the four sages (Bhrigu and others) until comparatively recent times. The author claims, curiously enough, that Viṣṇu communicated to the sage Viṅkānas along with the Vaikhānasa-Śastra, also the ‘mūla-mantra’ and ‘dvāya’ (which are corner stones of Śrī-Vaiṣṇava worship). As his authority for this unusual claim he cites a passage from Brah-māṇḍa-puṇāṇa. It is however to be noted that Vṛddha-hārita-samhitā, which is a Pāncarātra text, mentions three types of worship - ‘Śrauta’ (or Vedic), ‘smārtas’ and ‘āgama’ (worship by ‘mūla-mantra’). Here the Vaikhānasa approach which is Vedic is clearly distinguished from the agamic (viz. Pāncarātra) approach which employs the “mūla-mantra’ and ‘dvāya’

श्रौतस्मार्तग्रंथेश्वरिणीैविविधं पूर्णं स्मृतम् (११, २६)
मन्त्रेनर्षक्राष्टार्थो तद्विव्यागममुच्छये। (११,७७)

If is probable that the author of Mokṣopāya-pradipikā was among those who attempted a rapprochement between the Vaikhānasa and Pāncarātra approaches.

The second section, entitled ‘Artha-paṅcaka’ inquires into the nature of five coordinates: (1) the objective which is to be achieved (prāpya, viz. the Brahma); (2) ‘the person who seeks to achieve that objective’ (prāptṛ, viz. the individual inner soul or jīva); (3) ‘the method by which it can be achieved (prāpya-tyupāya); (4) the benefit or purpose for which the achievement is undertaken (phala); and (5) what comes in the way of such achievement (prāpti-virodhi).

Brahman (paramātman) is explained as both ‘niṣkala’
(devoid of forms and qualities) and ‘sakala’ (with form). The latter aspect is distinguished by its association with Lakṣmī (viz. Prakṛti, to be explained later). The importance of the ‘Sakala’ aspect for devotion is to be seen in the expression Lakṣmī-viśiṣṭādvaita which is the Vaikhānasa variety of Viśis-ṭādvaïta. Brahman is one, and his two aspects (niṣkala and sakala) are really indistinguishable (advaita). But for purposes of devotion, the sakala aspect is expedient.

The individual soul (pratyagātman) is one of three classes: the immutable (nitya, like Ananta, Sanaka and others), the emancipated (mukta) and the bound (baddha). The first class of souls are never in bondage and thus the question of freedom from it does not arise. The second class consists of those who were once bound but got themselves freed by devotion and worship (bhagavad-upāsanayā mokhsāmagataḥ). The last class includes all those who have bodies in order to exhaust the effect of good or bad deeds owing to beginningless ignorance (anādyavidyā).

The method of reaching the godhead is worship of god with a sense of total surrender (prapatti-pūravaka-bhagavad-ārād-hanam).

The reward of such sādhanā is emancipation (mukti). What interferes with this attainment is transgression of Vedic commands and smṛti-prescriptions (śruti-smṛtyatilaṅghanādi)

The second section deals with the three Reals (tatvātraya). A scriptural passage is quoted ‘dvāv etāu pākṣi, acaram carantau’ and explained that the two ‘birds’ are the god and the individual soul (paramātma-pratyagātminānau) and that the expression ‘acaram’ meaning “un-moving”
refers to Prakṛti, in contradistinction to the two ‘birds’ which are “moving” (carantau). Marici also is quoted to describe Prakṛti as the māyā of Viṣṇu who is Puruṣa. (‘māyā prakṛtir māyi viṣṇu, prakṛtipuruṣāv etāv anādi) However, prakṛti is of two varieties, material and eight fold (the five elements, manas, buddhi and ahamkāra), and ‘spiritual’ (the individual souls). The distinction between them is the absence of life or consciousness (acetana) in the former, and its presence in the latter. The ‘material’ prakṛti is three-fold: The things made up of three guṇas (sattva, rajas and tamas), the principle of time and matter as pure existent (śuddha-sattva), which is knowledge (jñāna). When the three guṇas are in perfect equilibrium, it is dissolution (pralaya); when they are not balanced, it is creation (srṣṭi) and maintenance (sthiti) of the world: The book speaks of Īśvara as the support for Prakṛti and Puruṣa (which are dependent, asvatantrau): the former is Isa, while the latter constitutes the category of ‘Īṣitavya’. Īśvara is the absolute and transcendent (param) Brahman, who is both the material and efficient cause of all, and who is called Nārāyaṇa.

The three “Reals” in effect are: (1) Īśvara associated with Lakṣmi (Lakṣmī-śiśṭa-īśvara-tattvam); (2) Prakṛti and (3) Puruṣa. It is the first Real that is known as Viṣṇu (or Nārāyaṇa). Those who are devoted to him as the only independent Real are Vaiṣṇavas (“nārayāṇa-parāyano nirdvandvo munih”). The Vaikhānasas, who worship this aspect of godhead, are rendered competent by their very birth (because of the prenatal sacrament of viṣṇu-bali) to adopt the expedient of total surrender (Prapatti). This has been explained by Śrīnivāsa-makhin in his Vaikhānasamahima-maṇjari.
The expression ‘Nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇa’ indicates that Nārāyaṇa himself is the ‘ready’ expedient (siddhopāya), which is already present and has only to be perceived, in order to attain to the highest state, viz. emancipation. Expedients are of two types: ‘ready’ (siddha) and to be brought about’ (sādhya). Nārāyaṇa answers to the first type. Many are the alternative expedients that belong to the second type: “knowledge of Brahman” (jñāna), ‘worship’ (upāsanā), ‘surrender’ (prapatti), ‘self-dedication (ātma-samarpaṇa)’, “ritualistic action’ (karma) and so on.

According to the Vaikhānasa texts, worshipping Nārāyaṇa with intense devotion (samāràdhana) is the most effective expedient, and this takes one of four forms: ‘japa’ (recitation of mantras), ‘huta’ (fire-sacrifices), ‘arcanā (iconic worship) and ‘dhyāha’ (contemplation). ‘Huta’ (or homa) is worship of god in his aniconic aspect (‘amūrtāngyāhutih proktā’) while ‘arcanā’ is worship in his iconic aspect (‘samūrtā berapūjanā’). Arcanā is said to be most effective for all. The texts say: ‘unremitting effort for emancipation must be put forth, first by focussing attention on the sakala aspect of Brahman and later by holding on to the ‘niśkala (absolute and transcendental) aspect.

सगुणे ब्रह्मणे बुद्धि निःवेष्य परशात्तिर्गुणा
ब्रह्मात्रित्य मोक्षे नित्यं वत्तनं कुर्यात्

This takes into consideration the natural frailties and limitations of ordinary aspirants. It is because constant attention to the Absolute is impossible that godhead is invoked in an icon and worshiped.

सदा ध्यातुमश्वैक्यन्त्रायमन्तिमादिप्रतीवावाहार्थार्थे
Further, iconic worship is effective in bringing about emancipation in this very birth. The two forms of Brahmān, ‘saguṇa’ and ‘nirguṇa’, are ‘with identifiable parts (sāvayava) and ‘without (niravayava). Saguna is with form, viz. with an iconic form. Śaṅ-dilya-upaniṣad distinguishes between contemplation which is saguna (contemplation on an iconic form) and contemplation which is nirguna (contemplation upon the real nature of self, ātma- yāthātmam). Nṛsimha-vājapeya-yājin’s commentary on Vaikhānasā- sūtra noted above explains:

इदानीं असिनिन्य जन्मन्येव मोक्षोपयमाहि। ‘सगुणेः ब्रह्माणि बुद्धिः निवेश्य’ इति। योगी सगुणे पूर्वोक्तलक्षणे साकारे ब्राह्माणि बुद्धिः मनः: प्रथमं निवेश्य तदौपं तदगतमानसः सन् एवंविधं परं ब्रह्मोति ज्ञात्वा पश्चात् तदनु निगुणं पूर्वोक्त लक्षणान्वितं निराकारम् कारणगम्यं अव्यक्तं ब्रह्मात्मित्वं मनः: स्वप्राप्यतिवं तदौपं ध्यात्वा नित्यं आयोक्ष्यातां एवं मोक्षे यत्तः उद्दौल विन्यत्रत। तस्य योगिन इহ जन्मन्येव मोक्षो भवते॥

Worship with a sense of surrender (prapadana), which is most beneficent, is of two types: ‘vaidika’ and ‘tāntrika’. The former is what is accomplished by Viṣṇu himself in a sacrament even before one’s birth and which renders the person a devotee of Viṣṇu by his very birth, whereas the latter is the result of a tāntrik ceremony conducted by a human master during one’s life. The former is inherent and inalienable, while the latter is artificial and transient. The Vaikhānasa thus has the most superior and natural eligibility (adhikāra) for ‘surrender’ as an expedient.

By adopting this expedient, the individual soul (jīvātmā) will perceive the supreme self (paramātmā). The scripture speaks of the devotee perceiving the glory of godhead
only by his grace (‘dhātuḥ prasādāt mahimānam’). And whatever form of god-head that the devotee sees is what godhead itself reveals. Whatever is ‘shown’ by the God is ‘seen’ by the devote. God shows his form of his own accord and draws the devotee to his own realm.

However, the Vaikhānasa viewpoint does not reject ritualistic worship as irrelevant or as unimportant. The sense of ‘total surrender’ does not invalidate the scriptural prescriptions for daily and occasional rites and rituals; on the other hand, it heightens their value. For instance, a bath is prescribed for purification before a religious act but for one who is too ill to take a bath, ‘thinking about Viṣṇu’ (‘smaranaṃ viṣṇu-cintanam’) is said to be as effective. If, however, one takes a bath ‘thinking about Viṣṇu’ the effect is doubled. If, likewise, one can ritualistically worship also with a sense of total surrender (prapatti-pūrvāraḍhanā), he will reach the highest state of Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu’s realm has four grades: Āmada, Pramoda, Saṃmoda and Vaikuṇṭha-loka. The grades are in accordance with the approaches of the devotees. One who engages himself in ritualistic iconic worship along with a sense of total surrender will be eligible for the highest grade. Hence Marīci counsels:

समूर्तिवेधनमेव कार्येदेन्यथा न परमपदप्राप्तिः।

Emancipation (mukti) from the fetters of mundane existence (samsārāt) is the objective (phala). In accordance with the expedient adopted, this is four-fold: sālokya, sāmipya, sārūpya and sāyuṣya. Actually, however, only sāyuṣya is regarded as mukti:

लोकेषु विष्णोर्निवसति केचित्
Marici explains that the individual finds himself fettered to worldly life because he is deluded by God’s māyā. To get free from this bondage, he should seek refuge in God himself, and worship him with devotion, when thus worshipped the compassionate god will withdraw his māyā from the devotee. Then clear comprehension of reality will alight. The devotee follows this up with worship conjoined with his duties relating to his state and stage in life.

By doing so, the individual, who has till then been neck-deep in the sea of sāṁśāra will perceive the supreme self, Nārāyaṇa the godhead, who will conduct him to the divine realm from where there is no return to this worldly existence.

The highest attainment, viz. the emancipation (mokṣa), is identified with ‘sāyujya’, where the individual soul abides in intimate contact with Brahman whose nature is highest bliss (‘paramā nanda-rūpinā brahmaṇā saha atyantāvasthānam eva mokṣaḥ’, Nṛsimha-vājapeya-yaṭī). According to Marici, the devotee who is eligible for
emancipation (viz. who does not have to return to this world to exhaust his karmas) will rest in the bright realms (arccirādi-mārga), enter into the divine pathway (devayāna), and passing through the higher reals reach the Brahma-Vault (bahrma- kaṭāha); and breaking through it he will get rid of his stains and give up his subtle body; now he’ enters the realm of Viṣṇu.

एतेषु देवतास्थानेषु विश्रम्य देवयानामांगण भूरादीन ग्राम्य ब्रह्मकटांभित्वा ततो विरजां प्रविष्ट्य कृंतस्यसदेहपरित्यागां पूर्वोक्तवैष्णवाणं गच्छतीति विज्ञायते।

There is no confusion in the Vaikhānasa texts about the role that iconic worship has in accomplishing emancipation. If is the direct cause (sakṣāt-kāraṇa) of emancipation. Śrīnivāsa-makhin’s commentary on the Śārīraka-sūtra (3,3,24) ‘‘api sam-rādhane pratyaksānu-mānabhyām’ makes it clear that the highest achievement is impossible by any means other than worship.

भजनेन विना केनाप्ययमात्मा न लभ्यते।
प्रत्यक्षादिप्रमाणेन चायमथीस्वगम्यते।

In fact iconic worship is itself recognized as the liberating wisdom (para-vidyā). We read in the Bhāṣya-

विद्याशब्देन भगवदाराधनमेवोच्चहे।

The statement in the Munḍakopaniṣat that one who is engaged in action is the most superior among the knowers of Brahman (‘kriyāvān eṣa brahmavidam variṣṭhah’) is interpreted to extol the worshiper (‘kriyā japāmūrtārdhana- samūr-tārdhana-dhyāna-kriyā’). This interpretation has been defended in the tract Uttama-brahma-vidya.
A word about the *Lakṣmī-viśiṣṭādvaita-bhāṣya* of Śrīnivāsa- makhin, which crystallized the philosophical position of the Vaikhānasas. The title of the work suggests the doctrine that Viṣṇu alone, and only as distinguished by Lakṣmī (Lakṣmī-viśiṣṭa-Nārāyaṇaḥ) is the highest reality (eka eva para-tatvah). The non-duality (advaita) refers not to Viṣṇu per se, but to Viṣṇu associated with Lakṣmī. It is possible that the author took his clue from the prescription in Vaikhānasa-sūtra:

तस्मात्स्या श्रीया सार्ध पूजयेत्युष्टोत्तमम्।

Lakṣmī is not therefore to be regarded as an independent reality (tatva), but as inseparable from Nārāyaṇa. We have the description in the Vaikhānasa scriptures that Śrī (Lakṣmī) and Śrīśa (Nārāyaṇa) are related to each other as moon and moonlight are:

श्रीश्रीशयोष्टु संबन्धः चन्द्रचन्द्रिकयोरिव।

The word ‘Narayana’ is taken to signify the ultimate refuge or support of the entire host of all the individual souls (‘nara- śab-dena jīvāriām samūhah procyate budhaih; teśām ayana-bhūtatvān nārāyaṇa ihocyte;...). The individual souls (jīvas) are numerous and are by nature ‘non-destructible’ (‘na riṣyati, na naśyati iti narah’). If ‘pranava (om-kāra consisting of three units ‘a’, ‘u’ and ‘ma’) signifies Brahma or Nārāyaṇa, it is because the utterance inclines the individual soul towards Nārāyaṇa (‘nārāyaṇa-praṇaṇatvāt’; the word ‘praṇaṇa’ for inclination has become camouflaged as ‘praṇava’, even as the word ‘paśyaka’ for seer has become ‘kaśyapa’). The first unit ‘a’ represents Viṣṇu (‘akāro vai Viṣṇu’) the second unit “u” represents Lakṣmī or Prakṛti, and the third unit ‘ma’ represents the individual soul (from ‘mana avabodhane’, ‘to know’; the
jīva possessing the faculty of cognition), who is the servant of the deities represented by the two earlier units (‘makāras tayor dāsah’). When Bhrigu’s Vāsādhikāra lays down:

श्रीमवरायणमयचित

The worship of Nārāyaṇa as distinguished by Śrī or Lakṣmī is what is suggested, and not Nārāyaṇa alone or Lakṣmī separately. Lakṣmī (as ‘y’ in prāṇava) comes between the transcendental Nārāyaṇa (as ‘a’ in prāṇava) and the individual devotee (‘ma’); she it is that conducts the individual soul to the supreme self (viz. Nārāyaṇa), and showers on the individual soul the grace of Nārāyaṇa.

While the Vaikhānasa ideology emphasizes worship (arcanā) as the royal road to emancipation, it does not belittle the roles of inward orientation (saṅkalpa) and contemplation (dhyāna). Arcanā is not merely ritualistic and mechanical worship; iconic worship prepares the mind to transcend mind’s own limitations and helps divine visualizations. The “niśkala” aspect of Viśṇu continues to be projected even while the ‘sakala’ form is being worshiped. The devotee must move from the ‘gross’ (sthūla) to the ‘subtle’ (sūkṣma). It is in this context that Kāśyapa’s Jñāna-kāṇḍa (55th Chap.) points out that worship of icon is necessary for all of us who live ordinary lives, while worship without an icon (viz. dhyāna) is suitable for the evolved souls with strong minds. By constant attention to the icon, seeing it again and again and offering various services to it by way of ritualistic worship, devotion develops. Without devotion, whatever is done by way of worship becomes ineffective. Iconic worship is indeed meant to generate devotion.
And iconic worship is to be resorted to by us not only to attain the ultimate release from phenomenal fetters but also to fulfill our normal aspirations in daily life. If Viṣṇu (Puruṣa) is the aspect that becomes all-important with regard to the former objective (viz. mukti), Lakṣmī (Prakṛti) presides over the latter (viz. bhukti). The two must be worshiped together. In order to facilitate our devoted attention to the worship, it is necessary to instal a beautiful icon (where the icon itself is Viṣṇu, and its beauty is Lakṣmī). Iconic beauty is what is in accordance with the śilpa-śāstra prescriptions (sa-lakṣaṇa):

निरालंबाराधनं संकल्पधनिनां श्रेष्ठा श्रमिपिणाम। सालंबं
सम्प्रदायं सानिष्ठानं भुजितमुक्तिकल्पप्रदल्वात्। अभीक्षणदर्श्नात्।
परिचर्या भक्तिभवति। नृणामधक्षणां कृतं सर्वं निष्कल्पं।
तस्माद स्वस्तिहेतुविवात सलक्षणं परमपुरुषवंतं कृत्या श्रीया सहैव
संस्थाप्य प्रकृतिपुरुषवाच्छियते॥। सालंबाराधने कौतुकसम्पत्तं
सर्वं उत्ते सम्पदति विज्ञायते॥

(काश्यपीये ज्ञानकाण्डे, ५५)

Marici’s Vimānārcana-kalpa (paṭalas 85 ff) contains a fairly elaborate account of the philosophical position of the Vaikhānsa. A brief statement of it is given here, in Marici’s own words.

The word for the real, ‘tattva’ (that-ness), means the mode of Brahman’s being. The Brahman is the supreme self, Nārāyaṇa. To comprehend this mode is jñāna or gnosis; those who possess this gnosis are known as ‘Brahman-knowers’. Thus the supreme self (viz., paramātman or Brahman) is the object of knowledge, the ‘knowable’, (jñeya) while the individual soul (viz, jīvātman)
is the ‘knower’ (jñāti). The Vedic corpus constitutes the body of this knowledge (jñāna)

The Brahman (viz. the supreme self or Nārāyaṇa) is dual natured ‘unaspected’ (nishkala) and ‘aspected’ (sakala). The former is all-inclusive; it leaves nothing outside it. It pervades all things in and out, like ghee in milk, oil in the sesames-seed, fragrance in the flower, juice in the fruit and fire in wood. Being all-pervasive it is like ākāśa. Within the body it abides devoid of body but pervading the body. Viṣṇu is so called be cause he permeates the entirety of existence. He is both visible and invisible, perfectly bright and pure, immutable, unthinkable, immeasurable, bereft of qualities, unmoving, unoriginated and unending, unchanging, without a second, unexplained and beyond the instruments of cognition. Because of being extremely subtle, he is impossible to be described as either real or unreal - so say the Brahman-knowers.

He is, in this nature, the supreme abode, the supreme light, he is possessed of all powers in all ways; he comprehends all the gods, all the religions; he is the support of all things and eternal. He is beyond the differentiation of knower-knowable-knowledge. He is the solid mass of consciousness, although he moves through the states of wakefulness, dream, deep sleep and beyond, experiencing gross and subtle objects, as an individual being. He is the self of all beings, hidden in the heart-recess; he is located on the tip of the individual life-force which is found in the void inside the heart-lotus, (patāla 85).

The “aspected” nature of Viṣṇu becomes manifest when the devotees churn him within their own hearts by contemplation and devotion. Although really ‘unaspected’,
he assumes the ‘aspected’ form, even as the fire blazes forth from the wood when churned. And like the sparks that emanate from the burning fire, he shines forth in a variety of forms (Brahmā, Śiva etc.); like the different articles (pot, plate etc.) that come out of clay that is introduced into the potter’s wheel, he appears variously, in accordance with the forms that the devotee’s mind conjures up.

Indeed Viṣṇu is all things and all forms; he is the soul that permeates all the bodies; and he is responsible for the origination, preservation and dissolution of all things. The sacred text declares that the god of fire (Agni) is the lowest of the gods while Viṣṇu is the highest, and that all the other divinities are comprehended within these limits. Viṣṇu is the main form, the supreme spirit, the Puruṣa, the creator, the preserver and the destroyer of everything.

The individuals are different from him (paṭala 86).

Viṣṇu’s power-and-splendour is Śrī (viz. Lakṣmī), who is eternal, with out beginning or end; her form is unmanifest and inscrutable. Her bliss is everlasting. She constitutes the primordial ‘nature’ (mūla-prakṛti), the power behind all phenomena (‘śakti’). She is the emenatory power (māyā), and the possessor thereof (māyi) is Viṣṇu. These are the eternal Prakṛti and Puruṣa; from them proceed the wordily processes.

All the modifications of nature originate from Prakṛti. Prakṛti is the cause of actions, and also the performance of actions by beings. Puruṣa is the cause of pleasures and pains experienced by the beings. Puruṣa, abiding in Prakṛti, experiences the qualities that result from Prakṛti (paṭala 86).
Prakṛti is two-fold; ‘living’ and ‘non-living’. The ‘non-living’ again is eight-fold; manas (mind), buddhi (individuated awareness), ahamkara (ego) and the five primary material constituents (bhutas: earth, water, fire, air and ākāśa). The ‘living’ is the individual soul (jīva). The puruṇas are ever associated with the prakṛti. The individual souls abiding in the prakṛti are embodied spirits (kṣetrajñas), and are numerous. They too are eternal, but owing to beginningless ignorance they obtain different kinds of bodies in accordance with the good bad actions done in prior lives, and in order to enjoy the fruits of such actions in the present life.

The individual soul (jīvātmā) is collyrium-hued and ever pure and filled with knowledge; he is eternal and is of atomic size. He is all-pervasive but enters the body and performs actions good and bad. His actions are two-fold: those which are confined to the transactional world (aihika) and those which lead him out of it to salvation (ānuṣmīka). The former consist of ordinary functions like eating, drinking, going, coming, lying down and clothing oneself. The latter involve meritorious deeds like non-injury, charity, virtuous conduct, service to others and worship of god. By these actions, one at death moves over to other worlds in accordance with the actions, and enjoying there the fruits of those actions, enters the ākāśa-realm.

Having risen out of the body and entering into the ākāśa-realm, he (the individual soul) becomes air and enters the fire; becoming smoke he enters into water; having become water he gets into the cloud and when it rains on the earth he enters the plant-world. Then he gets into food and from food the semen and blood (the male
and female sources of life). Then the individual soul enters the appropriate body, and after a period of development within the mother’s womb, gets born. Thus the reciprocal relation between the soul (kṣetrajña) and body (kṣetra) becomes established and the individual becomes involved in transmigration without end (saṁsāra) as one of the numerous kinds of beings (paṭala 93).

Once the soul and the body come together, there is a bondage forged in the shape of love of the opposite sex, and deluded by god’s māyā, he indulges in desires, hatred, greed, lust, arrogance, envy, violence and so on. This makes for repeated births and sufferings. Because this bondage is caused by God’s māyā, one should seek to get rid of it by taking refuge in god and worshipping him with devotion.

And god, being compassionate towards his devotees, is easily pleased by the devotion and releases the devotee from the fetters of his māyā. Then the soul obtains perfect gnosis (samyaj-jñāna), and while discharging the duties connected with his station in life worships god. As a result of this worship, the individual soul, immersed as it is in the ocean of saṁsāra, has the vision of god (Nārāyaṇa). Thereupon god will bestow divine realms of residence for the soul. And thus the soul’s mission is fulfilled (paṭala 94).

From godhead proceed the golden ‘egg’ in which are contained all the other ‘eggs’ (symbolic of realms of existence). On top of all these ‘eggs’ is the Vaiṣṇavāṇḍa, which is hard for anyone to think of and hard even for any god to perceive, and which can be experienced only by persons who are pure, wise and emancipated. Here are four Viṣṇu-realms: āmoda, pramoda, sammoda and
Vaikuṇṭha, each above the preceding. In the amoda-realm the godhead abides as Viṣṇu, in pramoda as mahā-viṣṇu, in sam moda as Sadā- viṣṇu and in Vaikuṇṭha as sarva-vyāpi-Nārāyaṇa (paṭala 81).

Mokṣa is emancipation from all traces of bondage in samsāra. This consists of the obtainment of one of the four conditions as a result of worship; ‘residence in the same realm as god’ (salokya), ‘abiding in close proximity to godhead’ (samipya), ‘obtainment of the same form as god’ (sarupya), and ‘getting united with godhead’ (sayujya). These four conditions are obtained in reaching the four Viṣṇu-realms respectively: āmoda, pramoda, saṁmoda and Vaikuṇṭha. The last condition is everlasting bliss, complete fulfillment, uninterrupted association with godhead and entrance into the supreme light. (paṭala 94).

Taking complete refuge in godhead takes one of four forms: continuous recounting of god’s glory (japa), fire-oblations (huta), iconic worship (arcana) and intent contemplation (dhyana). The first is the repetition of the Viṣṇu-hymns in the Rgveda or of the eight-lettered mantra (aṣṭākṣara) as a means of settling ones mind on godhead.

The second is putting into the sacred fire the prescribed offering in the traditional manner. Worshipping at home or in a temple the iconic representation in the Vedic procedure is ‘arcanā’. Understanding the distinction between the ‘unaspecte (niṣkala) and ‘aspected’ (sakala) natures of godhead, when the individual soul (jīva) contemplates upon god as the supreme self, in the manner prescribed in the eight-limbed yoga is ‘dhyāna’.

Among them, the iconic worship is the best, as it is the means to achieve all ends. Here, god himself assumes a fivefold form. The five primary material elements
(bhūta), ākāśa etc. are also the five forms of godhead, even as the five ritual fires (sabhya, āhavaniya, anvāharya, gārhapatya and āvasathyā), and the five vital currents (prāṇa etc.) are. The five forms of godhead are: Viṣṇu, Puruṣa, Satya, Acyuta and Aniruddha. Of them, Viṣṇu is the primordial form (ādi-mūrti) and the other four are only the variations thereof.

Brahman is ‘four-footed’, say the Vedic corpus. The four ‘feet’ are dharma, jñāna, aiśvarya, and vairāgya. From Viṣṇu as the primordial form (ādi-mūrti), the other four forms proceed with emphasis on these four ‘feet; puruṣa is distinguished by dharma, Śatya by jñāna, Acyuta by aiśvarya, and Aniruddha by vairāgya. The four forms correspond to Viṣṇu, Mahā-viṣṇu, Sadā-viṣṇu and vyāpi-nārāyaṇa. Viṣṇu’s aspect is puruṣa, Mahā-viṣṇu’s aspect is Satya, Sadā-viṣṇu’s aspect is Acyuta and Vyāpi-nārāyaṇa’s aspect is Aniruddha.

These five forms must be properly understood through the instructions of a teacher, must be contemplated upon according to the eight-limbed yoga method, and must be invoked and worshipped (paṭala 95).

The body extends to 96 angulas (in one’s own finger measure) and the life-force (prāṇa) normally extends to a further twelve angulas, but becomes equal to the body’s dimension by the technique of prānāyāma. Above the anus, to a height of two angulas is the middle of the body (deha-madhya). In it is a golden-hued triangle, which is the realm of Agni. In its centre is the ‘Person-of-sacrifice’ (yajña-mūrti) with the usual iconographic details of Agni (tawny-coloured, two-headed, four-horned, six-eyed, seven-armed, three-footed and clothed by yellow garments.

Above it, nine angulas mark the place of the bulbous
root of individual existence (kanda-sthāna). In its centre is the wheel with twelve spokes. There mounted on the life-force (prāṇa), the individual soul (jīva) moves about prompted by merit’ and demerit, even as a spider moves about in its web.

Above the navel is the kuṇḍalinī-power, at the side of the bulbous root above mentioned. It spreads on all sides, and is made up of the eight-fold ‘nature’ previously noted. It is coiled like a serpent, and sits blocking the upward channel (the sushumṇā) with its hoods symbolizing Brahmā and Rudra.

Above the navel, at a distance of a long span (vitasti, twelve aṅgulas) is the ‘heart’ (ḥṛdaya), where everything is founded. Inside the heart is the solar orb. A thousand-flamed fire burns there; and in the centre is Viṣṇu’s figure with the usual iconographic details (bright like the rising sun, golden-hued, adorned with śrī-vatsa, four-armed carrying conch and discus in the upper hands, the gesture of protection in the lower right hand and the left holding the hip, pacific in countenance, well-bedecked with auspicious ornaments and accompanied by consorts).

Above this, at the tip of the nose is the lunar orb, brilliant like a pure crystal filled with white rays and with nectar oozing out. In the centre of this orb is Nārāyana, whose complexion is that of pure crystal, who is four-armed, who is adorned with śrī-vasta and who wears yellow garments. With a beatific countenance, he is accompanied with consorts and with the retinue of gods.

Above this spot, on top of the head and at the head of the suṣamnā channel is the gateway of liberation (mukti-dvāra). There is in it the lotus-of-the-head (śirah-padma) with its sixteen petals facing downward and with
its stalk upward oriented. Here must be contemplated Vāsudeva, who is the master of this realm and who is flooded with a thousand of the streams of nectar (paṭala 90).

Then the heart-lotus (hṛdaya-kamala) which is twelve aṅgulas in extent, which has sprouted from the bulbous root (kanda), and which has liberating wisdom as its stalk, the eight accomplishments (siddhi) as its petals, prakṛti as its inner tube and knowledge as its filament, which is normally facing downward is now opened up by the practice of prāṇāyama and becomes upward-oriented. Then in the inner tube of the lotus a great fire which emits sparks all-round and fills all sides with light will heat up the entire body, from feet to the top of the head. In the midst of this fire is the glorious form of Viṣṇu, the supreme self and abiding in the heart. He is flanked by Śrī and Bhū on his sides. He is golden-hued, draped in yellow garments, lotus-eyed, four-armed (carrying conch, discus and the gesture of protection, with the remaining hand holding the hip), adorned with the śrī-vatsa jewel, pleasant in countenance which is lit up by a pure smile.

The devotee perceives this form of Viṣṇu by the power of contemplation and with the eye of wisdom. Viṣṇu, who is all-pervasive now becomes manifest, churned by contemplation, in all his splendour. This is the ‘aspected’ nature (sakala) of Viṣṇu. The devotee must visualize, invoke and worship him. The Vedūc hymn ‘pra vah pāntam’ enjoins that one must resort to the daily worship of Viṣṇu, (paṭala 91).
Appendix I

AN ACCOUNT OF THE ORIGIN OF VAIKHĀNASĀGAMA
(Excerpt from Bhṛgu’s Prakīrṇādhikara, Chap. 30)

श्रुणवन्तु मुनः सर्वेष शास्त्रमहात्म्यमुत्तमम्।
यावच्छःक्ति प्रवक्ष्यामि ज्ञातं गुरुकृपापाबलात्।।१।।

पुरा चतुर्मुखो ब्रह्मा सिसुकृषुरखिं जगतैः
सुप्तोत्थिताधिचरं कालं प्राक्रामीत्सर्गकर्मणि।।२।।

विस्मार्य यदा धारता निद्रयाक्रान्तमानसः।
वेदान्तसर्गप्रधानांस्तु सूचिनेव प्रवत्तते।।३।।

चिन्तातुरस्तदा ब्रह्मा मूलं कर्तव्यकर्मणि।
बहुधा ध्यायमानस्तु लेभे कारण स्ततः।।४।।

स्वशक्त्या यद्विषे य्वात्त्वर्खे चच्रे विमूढ्थी:।
न हि तत्कारणं लेभे वेदविस्मरणं तु यत्।।५।।

चिराच्चिन्तातु तु तां त्वक्त्वा स्वस्थचित्तं: प्रज्ञापति:।
हृद्यवामृषे पुरुषं परमेण समाधिन्त।।६।।

चिन्तयामास वै विष्णुमुग्यजु: सामस्तपिणाम्।
तुष्टावः च तदा ब्रह्म हरिप्रव्यमानसः।।७।।
ननांम च तदा विष्णुः शंकचक्रगाढाधरस्।
अर्थयामास देवेशं पाद्वैवविग्रहे: सम्:॥८॥
मुहुर्मुहं: प्राणमयाय मूर्धा देवं जगत्वत्तिम।
निर्याजकरणालेशादेवस्य विमलान्तर:॥९॥
तुष्टाव जगदीशां नारायणम् विधि:॥
जितं ते पुण्डरीकाक्ष नमस्ते विश्वभाषन॥१०॥

(Then follows the prayer of Brahma in 21 verses)

तमसाक्रान्तचित्तस्य विस्मृता निगमा मम।
अवेदविहितं सगों मया कर्तुं न शक्यते॥१॥
प्रसीद परमेश्वान वेदविश्वा प्रयच्छ मे।
इति चिन्तयतस्य बभूवाजाविलं मन:॥२॥
ततस्तु भगवान् ब्रह्मा बदराशिरमाप्तवान्।
सस्मार निखिलानूः बेदानुः
सांगानुपपनिपदरागम्॥३॥
पुराण्यायमीमांसाधर्मशाश्वाणि सर्वश:॥
चतुःपदश्चाच्छविविद्यास्थानानि यानि च॥४॥
अन्तहितानां खननात् बेदानां तु विशेषत:।
स बिभु: प्रोच्छते ब्रह्मा विखना ब्रह्मविद्धिः॥५॥
बेदानसशच भगवान् प्रोच्छते स पितामहः।
जगत्वत्सशेषेण बेदडुह्तेन वर्तना॥६॥

(The text continues and mentions that Brahmā created ten sages Dakṣa, Marīci and others and taught them the Vaikhānasa branch.)

तां तु बेदानसिं शाखामेतानध्यायमुनिः।
(Then the text mentions nine disciples Bhṛgu, Āṅgiras, Marīci, Atri, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Vaśiṣṭha and Dakṣa (‘the nava-brahmās’))

एते विखनसः शिष्यः श्रुतिस्मृतिविद्धानतः।
तत्रिष्यास्तु महात्मानो मुनयस्तत्ववदशिनः।।६३।।
बेदानुगानि शास्त्राणि चक्रुलोकहितेषिणः।
केचिदृ गृहाणि वै चक्रु गृहश्रीतात्मकानि तु॥ ६४॥

धर्मशास्त्राणि केचित्तु पुराणानि च केचन।
इतिहासांस्तथा कथान् प्रोचुर्वन्ये महर्षयः।।६५॥
आदिकले तु भगवान् ब्रह्मा तु विखना मुनि:।
यजुः शाखानुसारेण चक्रें सूत्रं महत्तमम्।।६६॥

वर्णाश्रमचारयुतं श्रौतस्मार्तसन्विचित्मः।
यत्सूत्राद्यन्तमश्चे भगवान् विष्णुरवर्यः।।७०॥

यष्टव्यो श्रीयते यस्मात् सर्बसूत्रोऽत्तरम् तु तत्।
वेदे वैष्णवस: सूत्रे यो धर्मः परिकीर्तितः।।७१॥

सर्व: स धर्मोऽनुष्ठेत्यो नाभकार्य विचारणा।

.............॥७२॥

एतहैवानसं सूत्रमन्यसूत्रान्नर्पेक्षितम्।
( एतहैवानसं सूत्रं सर्ववेदार्थसंग्रहः )॥७३॥
Appendix II

The following excerpt from Bhrgu’s Yajñādhikāra (Ch. 51) provides an insight into the Vaikhānasa outlook with regard to its own Āgama-status. Even as the Veda was later divided into four Books, so the Vaikhānasa-sūtra became the four-fold śāstra.

विष्णुस्तन्त्रं हृदया प्रोक्तमर्चनार्थं तु वैदिकम्!
प्रथमं सौम्यमन्यतं तदाग्नेयं तात्त्विकं भवेत्॥

वैखानसेन सूर्येण निषेकादि क्रियान्वितं॥
ब्राह्मणे: क्रियामानं यत्तु सौम्यं वैदिकं मतम्॥

विधिस्तु वेदमूलश्च दीक्षायुक्तश्च तात्त्विकं:॥
स चोत्तो द्विविधो मार्गं: शुद्धमिश्रविभेदत:॥

शुद्धं भागवतं प्रोक्तं पंचरात्रमथेतत्र॥
सूतैर् सात्तंत्रवांपि कृतं वच्छुद्वितात्त्विकम्॥

तेषां शारीरसंस्कारस्तत्तत् तन्त्रेषु कीर्तिता:॥
न तेषां वेदमयं द्वृत्तादिनं प्रवर्तते॥

ल्यक्तात्मसूत्रविभिन्नतासुदृढार्थदर्शिभ:॥
दीपकितं: क्रियमानं यत्तममधमभिशायते॥

केवलं भुवित्रं शुद्धं मिश्रं मुक्तेयकं साधनम्॥
भुवित्रमुक्तिप्रदं सौम्यं इति पूर्वजदर्शनम॥

सौम्यं नामायणं: प्राह वेदेभ्य: सामसुभितम्॥
तस्माद् बहुं विरादं तस्मात् एव विखना मुनि:॥
Then follows an enumeration of the works by the four sages Atri, Bhṛgu, Marici and Kāśyapa. There is also an account of the content analysis of Bhṛgu’s works.
Appendix III

The following excerpt from Vaikhānasa-ṛghya-sūtra-tātparya-cintāmanī of Śrīnivāsa-makhin (11th Khaṇḍa, 1st Sūtra) gives a detailed account of the procedure of contemplation (dhyāna) according to Bhṛgu’s Yajñādhikāra (27, 12-38)

अन्तः गृह्यः—
‘आसनं स्वस्तिकं कुर्यात् दक्षिणं पाद्यूर्धवत्।
वामपादमधरः तथा जान्वनते बुधः॥
अंगुष्ठो दौः निगृहृवेऽशिरसं च वृषणावपिः।
पीडयते निवातस्यः प्रदीप इव निफलः॥
अन्तः वामं न्यसेत्याणामन्नत्याज्ज्वोऽत्तान्त्यूर्धवः।
किंचिदुब्रह्मितमुखं दत्ते दन्तान्तस्यप्रशोणः॥
नासायश्चक्ष्यश्चचेतःचेतस्येदासं बुधः।
प्राणायाम्यो विधिना रेचपूर्वकुकुम्भकः॥
बीजं तद्दान्ये न्यस्य प्रणवारपिः वेष्ट्येत्।
बलत़्वाचारदिबीजं स्यात् उकारं कुर्ति भवेत्॥
मकारं चैकनादनमेव प्रणवमुच्यते।
शुद्धस्फटिकसंकंशांतर्धचंद्रसमाकृति॥
ततो वारिणि कुंभस्ये ध्यायेऽहारुणाधस्यंलम्॥
आदिबीजं सुसन्यस्य प्रणवेष्टिः वेष्ट्येत्॥
आत्मसूक्त ततो जप्या पौरवं सूक्तमेव च।
नारायणानुवाककं हि भृपुक्तें तथैव च॥
हदये सूक्तानूः जल्व व्रणवस्य शतं पुनः।
समाहितमना भूताः ध्यां सम्यक् समाचरेत्॥

विषये भव्यस्य सर्वेष्यः प्रत्याहार्येन्द्रियाणि च।
एकाग्रतः मनः कृत्वा ततः पश्येत् समाधिना॥

पद्यकोशप्रतीकाः विश्वस्यात्सने पृथ्वी।
हदये सिद्धिनिश्चिकामध्ये परमात्मा व्यवस्थित:॥

अप्रमेयममं नितं सर्वाधार सनातनम॥
निर्गुणं निष्कलं शुद्ध परमात्मानव्ययम॥

श्रीरे सर्पिस्तिले तेलं पुष्ये गन्धः फले रसः।
काष्ठे गिन्नविव सर्वेऽ भ्यापिनं पुरुषोपत्तम॥

मनसा सकलं ध्यात्वा हदये पद्मध्यमे।
ध्यात्मैवात्र ततो मनः तस्मातु गुंभजले हरिम॥

सुवर्णावर्ण रत्नास्यनेत्रपाणिपरं तथा।
शुक्रपिघ्नामबर्धरं विष्णुं तं प्रणवात्मकम॥

किरीट हारकेयूर प्रलंबं ब्रह्मासुभ्रिणम्।
शंखचक्रधरं देवं श्रीवत्सांकं च तुभुजम॥

परात्यतरं देवं देवादिपरिष्ठु जीः।
ध्यात्म त्रस्मनसं कुंभे सम्यगावह्येदगुरुः॥
सूच्यग्रोतोदमात्रनु नासित तद्रहितं कृतं।
कृतं आवाहते देवं कृतं उदास्यते पुनः॥

tasmadavahah vishnogoyuktamiti manahate.
sarvatra vyapinsastha sarvasmatu paramatah.

एकत्र स्मरणं यत्तृत्तु आवाहनमिति स्मृतम॥
अरण्यां संस्थितो बहिरेकत्र ज्वलितो यथा।।
तथा ध्यानेन भक्तस्य हृदि विष्णु: प्रकाशते।
मन्द्रावाहते बिंबे स्थले कूचे जले तथा।।
भक्तानुकंपया स्थित्वा पूजा गृहणाति केशवः।
वदन्त्यावाहनं केचन्द्रेरादित्यमण्डलात्।।
देवेन सह तत्कुंभे ध्यायेद्वयो यथाविधि।
आसानादिभिरभ्यचेत् अध्यात्माचमानान्तके:।। इति
Appendix IV

An extract from Bhṛgu’s Khilādhikāra (adhyāya 1) explaining the three methods of worship: mental (mānasi), sacrificial (homa-pūja) and iconic worship (bera-pūjā), and also highlighting the superior merit of the last method.

नारायणस्य भूतानामातन: परमात्मन:।
लीलया जगदुत्तपरिस्थितिसंहारकारिण:॥
देवदेवेशितुविषयो: लक्ष्मीशस्य जगतपते:॥
उपायक्रियविध: प्रोक्त: पूजया: श्रुणुत ह्रिजा:॥
मानसी होमपूजा च बेरपूजेति सा त्रिधा।
हदेये हदेयेशानं जगदीशं परातपरमू॥
ध्यात्मा तु हद्यान्तस्यं हेमवर्णमजं विभुम।
कुञ्जकायं मनस्सम्यकं कृतसनानजपादिक:॥
रक्षिमालासहत्वां मण्डलं विपुलं रेवः।
तदन: श्रीतलाभिस्तु रक्षिमभि: सोममण्डलम्॥
तत: स्पुलिद्युकलिलज्ञालिभिब्हिमण्डलम्॥
तस्य मध्ये सुखासीनं तपाहातकसनिभम्॥
चतुर्द्गलमात्रांकुं शुकपत्रनिभाबरम।
हारकेयुरककटककडमग्रोपशोभिमि॥
कौस्तुंभोद्रासितोरक्षं श्रीवस्ताळिकंहरमन।
उद्गमकाजीविलस्यपुत्रोपशोभिमि॥
रत्ननेत्रधरं रत्नपाणिपादनखं शुभम।
शहुरक्रथरं देवं चतुर्बहुधरं परम॥
तद्दृत्तेव मनसा नैरंतरे चिन्तयेत।
ध्यात्मवर्धयेन्द्रे सा पूजा मानसी स्मृता॥
अग्नीनाधाय विधिविद्यपुष् द्विजातिभि:॥
इन्यते यज्ञपुरुष: सर्वदेवयो हरि:॥
ओ यज्ञरूपी तस्याचा होमपूजेति कथ्यते।
कृत्या यत्रश्रितमा विष्णोऽयथा लक्षणामादरात्॥
संस्थाय पत्तु विधिना देवागरेरथ वेश्मानि।
नित्यमाराधनं भक्तव या पूजा वेरपूजनम्॥
आलये वेरपूजा च ग्रामध्ये प्रकटिता।
सा तत्र चासिना सर्वमागिनहोत्रं ह्विजनमानम्॥
शुच्छैन्यं यथाजनान्गाँ न प्रज्वलति कहिष्ठित।
तद्दमोऽद्भवते द्विजेरजगिनः इत्यहुवेद्यार्गा:॥
अगिनहोत्रेण नां धाता प्राहारलयं हरे:॥
अगिनहोत्री लघुते स्वर्ग नेत्याह च श्रुति:॥
सद्गतिदेवपूजा च दानं यज्ञ इति स्मृति:॥
यज्ञेश्वेते ध्विधिवस्तेरपूजा विशिष्यते॥
यजमाने मृतेस्वेषा शाश्वतं भूवि तितित।
तस्यागिनहोत्रस्याधारै वक्ष्यामि श्रुणुत म्हिजा:॥
ऋग्वज्ञुस्सामसु पराः तत्तक्रमानुस्रूपः॥
सौभा: फलाकर मन्त्रा: विष्णोराराधने स्मृता:॥
(शान्तिकं पौष्टिकप्राप्ति निष्कृतिष्वाधिष्ठचारिकम्।
एवं चतुर्था सम्प्रोक्तं पुरा तु हरिपूजनम॥
पूजनोपायम् अस्तु मार्गंभेदश्चतुर्विन्ध: )॥
Appendix V

CONDUCT IN TEMPLE

The Vaikhānasa texts are among the factors that developed and crystallized what may be called ‘temple-culture’. Besides providing valuable information about temple architecture and sculpture, the texts also deal with the details of town-planning around the temple. Further, they focus attention on the proper atmosphere that must prevail in a temple. An important aspect of this atmosphere is the conduct of the devotee who visits the shrine. The following excerpts from Bhṛgu’s Prakīrṇādhikāra (Chap 20 and 36), enumerate the several prescriptions and prohibitions that the devotee must keep in mind. They apply to men-devotees as well as women-devotees, although the expression used generally indicates the male.

1. Entering a shrine or moving about in its precincts in a vehicle or with footwear is improper

(अपचाराः...)

चालैवे पादुकैवापि गमनं भगवद् गृहे॥

(36,1)

2. Before entering the temple, the devotee must go round it in the customary circumambulation (pradakṣīṇā, keeping the shrine to the right), and this must be done with deliberation, and not in a hurry.
3. The temple is a form of the Godhead; and its towers must never be trodden with feet.

4. Before going round the shrine in customary circumambulation, one must prostrate or bow before the shrine.

5. Only while going round in circumambulation, one may step on the shadow of the entrance tower (gopura), superstructure over the sanctum (vimāna), enclosing wall (prākāra), or the banner-post in front of the shrine (dhvaja), and never otherwise.

6. While entering the shrine, one must not wear his sacred cord the wrong way viz. hanging by the right shoulder, apasavya or hanging by the neck like a garland (nivīta), or wound round the ear. He must wear his lower garment (dhoti) well tucked up (kaccha), and the ends of the cloth must not hang behind him like a tail (puccha). He must never enter the shrine naked or wearing only a piece of loin-cloth covering his genitals (kaupīna).
7. He must, while entering the temple, also wear an upper cloth (uttariya) neatly and pleasantly. He should not cover his body with stitched garments (viz. shirt, coat etc.) or with blankets. Nor should he wear a headgear (viz. cap, hat, turban etc.). He should not carry any weapon in his hands.

8. One must not enter a temple empty-handed: he must carry some offering to the deity (viz. cocoanot, plantains, flowers etc.). He must not be eating food brought from outside or chewing betel-leaves while going into the temple or while he is within the temple-premises. His forehead must not be blank (viz. he must wear a mark in accordance with his religious affiliation)
9. If he eats in the temple the food given to him as ‘prasāda’ (already dedicated to the Deity), and throws away what remains over in the premises of the temple, it is improper and thoughtless.

यो भुक्तवा देवतागारे निक्षिप्योचिष्टमत्र तु।
गच्छेदन्यत्र वा प्रास्त्यात् सोंपिन्न मूढो विपट्यते॥

(36, 336)

10. A person in physical or mental distress should not enter the temple. If he has disorders of the vital currents, he should take care to see that he does not evacuate his bowels or expel flatulence, while in the temple. One who is sick must not enter a temple.

आतो मृतिशीत् गेहं देवस्य परमात्मनः॥
वायुभूते शारिरेश्चिनु वायुसंचारकर्मणि।
मलायुविस्रंगस्तु देवसुहे विशेषत:॥
पातेष्ठुपूर्वर्गं सत्यमणि वेदान्तपारागम्।
इति देवगृहं गातुं व्याधिः नैव चाहिः॥

(36, 548-552)

11. One whose mind is confused, agitated or not at rest cannot worship the Deity in the temple. Indeed, it is only one whose mind is pure and steady that is fit to perform any religious act.

मनोजनविशिष्ठं वस्त्र न सास्त्रं फूजितुं हरिः॥
वस्त्र्येव निर्मलं चित्तं सोहं सर्वेषु कर्मसु॥

12. No one should stretch his legs across or sleep at the doorstep of the temple; nor should he be inebriated near or inside the temple. One must always be alert, awake; humble and erect while within the temple-premises
13. It is not proper for any one to go to the temple or be in its precincts crying in anguish or weep in devotion. If prayers are offered out of grief, it is a blemish of the mind. The person who feels distressed within the premises of the temple does not know the nature of God’s presence or the purpose of his visit.

14. The heart that is free from passions, the speech that avoids lying, harshness, slander and deceit, and the body that abstains from causing violence of any kind are necessary for worship in a temple.

15. Having entered a temple, one should never commit an act of violence, which may cause suffering to any living being. Non-violence, virtuous conduct, meditation, control of the senses, penance and service to the elders are considered the six gateways to Dharma.
16. The person who gossips in a temple, and chatters without restraint does a wrong thing. One should not talk needlessly. There are other places in plenty where one may discuss wordily matters; and there are other times for it. Why should one indulge in such talk in a temple? Having entered a shrine, he should think of god, and meditate at least for a moment, if not for some hours. If he does not do so, he would waste a great opportunity. He would be like one who is deluded or pervert. Which wise man will abandon the food that is prepared and ready, and begs about for a few crumbs? Who will ignore the treasure at hand, and go about begging? While in a temple, the devotee should not think of anything else.

17. Standing in God’s presence in the temple, one must
never utter a lie. God is of the nature of truth, and truth must not be sought to be hidden from God.

न हि देवगृहं गत्वा शास्त्राध्यानं सत्यम् तस्मात् न गृहः

(36,389)

18. The temple is no place for discussions on scriptural issues. Engaging oneself in such activities, one would only insult and offend the Deity. Reading, writing and similar preoccupations are equally improper in a temple. Nor should one indulge in unrestrained and argumentative talk.

न हि देवगृहं गत्वा शास्त्राध्यानं सत्यम् तस्मात् न गृहः

(36,416, and 320)

19. One should not quarrel in a temple on any account; the temple is not the place for it.

न हि देवगृहं गत्वा विवेदनं सत्यम् तस्मात् न गृहः

(36,468)

20. Having gone to a temple, one should not eulogize himself or be arrogant. Disregarding the elders or the Deity, should one talk without restraint about himself, it is a sin which he may not be aware of.
21. Talking to another person in a contemptuous manner within the temple premises is not correct. The wise ones will not make a distinction between slighting others and killing them. One should avoid talking ill of others in front of God; nor should one praise another person either, in a temple, for any reason. God is the highest and most supreme reality, and who can be higher than God or more praise-worthy? A mere human being should not be praised or honoured within a shrine. Doing so will not make for happiness.

(36, 561, 564-5, 569-70)

22. One should not greet or bow before another person while in a temple; God is the lord of all, and we are all subordinate to Him.
23. Having gone to a temple, one should never sit with his back to the Deity. The devotee should be facing God all the time, and when circumambulating, one should move keeping the Deity to his right.

)n हि देवग्रहं गत्वा पृष्टीक्रत्यासनं चरतः।
देवाभिमुख एव स्वाद भक्तः सवर्त्तमा नरः॥
न पूष्ट दर्श्येत्यन्तातु देवाये हितचिन्तकः॥
पाश्ववस्तु चरस्येव निवर्तेतालयं प्रति॥

(36, 593-594)

24. There are sequences of worship in a temple, when the Deity in the sanctum is screened off; tradition does not allow the Deity to be exposed to public view on such occasions. No one should desire to see the Deity during these periods. Should one force his way, because of his office or power, he will come to grief. Likewise, when the doors of the shrine are closed after the last sequence in worship, no one, however influential, should ask for the doors to be opened for him. One should have the humility to visit the shrine only after the doors are opened at the appointed time in the morning. Devotees must have the darsana of the Deity only when sequences of worship allow it.

यस्तवधीकारगर्भों देवागारसुपाप्प्रिवः।
अकोते सेवितूं चैचुष्ठोपि यास्यति दुर्गङ्गितम्॥
उत्कृष्णेव तु कालेषु सेवते मतिमयं।
अन्त्यार्चनावसाने यत् कवाटो बध्यते ततः॥
पुनराध्यातं यावतज्ञृष्णे च भविष्यति॥
तावश्चैव हरिः सेवेदकालः स विशेषतः।
अवार्ष्णाकालेत्पि भक्तानं सेवनाय तु॥
25. A person with evil conduct will never prosper; living beings are afraid of him, and offend him. It is only a virtuous person who should undertake the activities prescribed in the scriptures (like going to a temple).

26. If the human beings, who are distracted by worldly cares, do not engage themselves in worship of the Deity, their life on earth is wasted, even as all that they do would be in vain. One who regards his preceptor as a mere human being, the Deity as only a stone image, the Vedic mantras as just a means of livelihood, the sacrifices as violence, and one who is indifferent to the priest or to the worship rituals becomes blameworthy; and his life would be of no value.
27. The following twenty-two acts are regarded as offensive in a temple:

(1) Moving about in a temple on a vehicle or with footwear.

(2) Not attending to a ceremonial function that is going on (like procession of deities), and not showing reverence to the Deity.

(3) Making obeisance with one hand only (viz. not joining the palms) and going round in circumambulation in front of the Deity.

(4) Prostrating etc. before the Deity when one is unclean and polluted.

(5) Stretching of legs in front of the Deity, or sitting on a seat (or cot) with one’s legs dangling.

(6) Sleeping or lying down.

(7) Eating food.

(8) Gossip with people.

(9) Loud talk, useless chatter, crying and quarrel.

(10) Punishment and bestowal of favour.

(11) Confidential talk with women, and obscene remarks.

(12) Elimination of flatulence.

(13) Covering oneself with blankets.

(14) Condemnation or praise of others.

(15) Honouring a powerful or influential person.

(16) Eating what is not given as ‘prasāda’.

(17) Not presenting to the Deity fruits and flowers that are seasonal.

(18) Giving away what remains over (after offering to the Deity) for use in the kitchen, or for others in the temple.

(19) Sitting or standing with one’s back to the Deity.
(20) Greeting others and not recognizing an elder (or preceptor) who is nearby.
(21) Praising oneself.
(22) Being critical of the Deity.

These and similar offences must be carefully avoided by the devotee who goes to the temple. But, the likelihood of committing countless offences inadvertently and unconsciously being there, one should ask for forgiveness (kṣamā-yācanā); and this will counteract the evil effects of the offences committed.

अपचाराःस्तथा विष्णूभविष्णूरपरिकीर्तिताः।
यानैव पादुकैर्वांगीप गमनं भगवद्गृहे॥
देवोत्सवाद्यसेवा चाप्रणामं च तदार्जनः॥
एकहस्तप्रणामः तत्पुरस्तात् प्रदख्षिणाम्॥
उच्छिष्टे चैव चारजीवे भगवहन्दनादिकम्॥
पादप्रसारणं चाञ्चे तथा पर्यक्षवस्थनम्॥
शयनं भोजनं चैव मुदाभाषणामेव च।
उच्चवेशं वृथा जल्पः रोदनां यु च विग्रहः॥
निग्रहोजृहेषुनिग्रहेषु चैव स्त्रिशु साक्षात् भाषणाम्॥
आश्रीलक्षणस्तथा चैवाध्यक्षोऽवायुविग्रहोव्याप्ताः॥
कम्बलावरणं चैव परस्परं परस्तुतिः॥
शतस्तेत्तौ गौणोपचारशुचारश्च विनीतेन्द्रधम्माः॥
तत्तत्ताकलोधद्वानं च फलादिनाम नर्जूनम्॥
विनियुक्तकाविशिष्टस्य प्रदानं व्यज्जनादित्यु।
पृष्टीकृत्यासं चैव परेषामधवन्दनम्॥
गृही मौनं निजस्तोत्रं देवतानं तथा॥
अपचाराःस्तु विबिधानीदृश्यं परिवर्जयेत्॥
अपचारालक्षणं सत्क्षणे प्रमादत्॥
क्षमस्वेत्यर्थंनेतैः निष्कृति निन्दूद्वास॥
NOTE ON TEMPLES
AND TEMPLE-PRIESTS
with Special Reference to Vaikhānasas

Temples constitute an important aspect of Indian culture; and this has been so from very ancient times. It is difficult to ascertain with precision when or how temples began to be built in the country. There are two commonly accepted limits to Indian antiquity - the literary remains in the Vedic corpus and the archaeological finds of what is known as Indus Civilisation. They do not, of course, mark the beginning of Indian culture, but indicate an already well-developed cultural milieu and social organization. While explicit references to temples may be said to be altogether absent in the early collection of Vedic hymns, we have expressions (like ‘Viṣṇos stūposi’ in Yajur-veda) which suggest the existence of monuments dedicated to Godhead, and which speak of worship in unmistakable terms (like ‘Viṣnave charcater’ in the hymn beginning with ‘pra vah pāntam’ in the Aitareya recension of Rg-veda, 2nd aṣṭaka 21st anuvāka, sūkta 16). Taittiriya-saṁhitā (2, 2, 6, 1) specifies that gods are worshipped in temples (‘devānām evāyatane yajate). And the remains in Mohen-jo-daro and Harappa include a large number of figures which were obviously icons for worship. It is true
that no temple-site has been discovered in the Indus area, but there are enough evidences to show that worship in homesteads (grhārcā) was in vogue.

But iconic worship and temples had become established and widely prevalent as early as the sixth or seventh century before the Christian era. Pāṇini’s reference to icons which were not to be sold but which served as a means of livelihood (5, 3, 99, jīvikārthe cāpanye’) and Patañjali’s explanation that icons were instituted by the Mauryas (not the rulers of the dynasty of that name) who needed gold and who provided them to whoever wanted to worship (‘mauryair hiraṇyārthibhir arccāh prakalpitāḥ; yāstvetāh sampratipujārthās tāsu bhaviṣyanti’) also point out that a professional priestly class had already emerged during that period.

Early texts of great importance like Brhat-samhitā and Artha-śāstra leave no doubt that temples figured prominently in the lives of the people in the centuries immediately preceding the Christian era. We have also inscriptional evidence that construction of temples by the rulers of the land was a common devotional act as early as the second century B.C. The builders of the temples are known to style themselves in inscriptions as bhāgavatas. Bhāgavata was the name of the cult, which involved total, collective and life-long dedication to some personalized deity. The Bhāgavatas were either devotees of Viṣṇu or of Śiva. Even Patañjali, several centuries earlier, knew of Śiva-bhāgavatas (Mahābhāṣya, ). It was only much later that the expression ‘bhāgavata’ came to denote only worshippers of Viṣṇu, within the community of Bhāgavatas. There were persons who officiated as priests in public shrines and temples, and did nothing else for their
livelihood. They were different from the class of priests who assisted the people in their normal devotional acts within households.

The stylization of temple architecture, the standardization of the modes of worship in them and the crystallization of iconographic and iconometric prescriptions relevant to the temple as well as to the worship ritual, were achieved in the Āgama texts, which owed principally to the genius of the Bhāgavatas (Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva), who were exclusively temple-functionaries and attended to all details concerning planning and construction of shrines, making and installation of icons, consecrations, daily and occasional worship, festivals, renovations and expiations. The rise of sectarian cults no doubt brought about divergent viewpoints about the main and accessory deities, but the general outlook of Āgama is common to all the sects. Devotion to Godhead is the main plank on which the Āgama of whatever sect rests; and the priest fits into the role of a properly consecrated mediator between the lay devotee and the Godhead, in all the Āgama divisions.

Āgama, in fact, is the manual which describes the priest and prescribes his functions. It explains what contributes to the potency of a shrine in terms of the spiritual power of the priest who operates, the excellence of worship rituals conducted, and the fine workmanship of the icon worshipped.

अर्चकस्य तपोयोगातू अर्चनस्यातिशायायनात्।
आभिरुप्याच्छ मूर्तीनां देव: सामिद्ध्यमृङ्ख्तिः॥

It is the priest who by his character and conduct as well as by the fervour with which he carries out the rituals
that can infuse into the icon divine presence. It is he who transforms a stone image into a deity:

अर्चकस्य प्रभावेन शिला भवति शंकरः।

It is small wonder then that Āgama texts uniformly insist for the priest proper initiation and consecration (dīkṣā), and accurate knowledge of the canonical texts of the particular division. Unless the priest partakes of divinity, his role as a mediator between the lay devotee and Godhead becomes ineffective. Initiation and consecration are techniques for rendering the priest’s nature fit to partake of the divinity in the context of worship in a temple.

The knowledge of the canonical texts becomes secondary. A priest is not expected to be a scholar or a teacher. His training is got during the rites of initiation and consecration, and no Āgama text prescribes that he must undergo a period of schooling for this purpose. More than learning, the priest is distinguished by his devotion to Godhead and sense of commitment to his calling.

It is usual in the Āgama texts to distinguish between a properly initiated priest (āraka) and one who is hired for purposes of worshipping a deity (devalaka). The former is the priest who has received initiation and has been duly consecrated; he worships with a sense of duty and does not look for material rewards for the services to the deity that he performs. Nor does he take up any other profession for his livelihood. Pauṣkara-saṁhitā describes the Vaikhānasa priest as follows:

विश्र वैवाचनसाख्य ये ते भक्तस्तत्वमुच्यते।
एकात्तिनः सुप्रतस्था देहान्तं नान्यायान्तः।
कर्त्तव्यमिति देवेशं संवज्ञाने फलं विना॥
The devalaka, on the other hand, is a hireling; and his only interest in worshipping the deity is the money that he receives in return. He is described as one who is 'desirous of money', and his services in a temple as an arcaka for three years would preclude him from all normal privileges of a twice-born:

यो देवं दृष्टार्थी बलसर्वत्रयम्।
स वे देवलको नाम हव्यक्ष्य वहिष्कहः॥

Even when he is acquainted with the prescriptions of worship according to a particular division of Āgama and is eligible to the study of the four Vedas, if he is not properly initiated, he answers to the second of the three categories of devalakas, namely 'kalpa-devalaka':

पांचरात्रविवाहान्तो दीप्ताविरहितोपर्वचकः।
चतुर्विद्वातिकारोपी कत्यदेवलकः स्मृतः॥

According to Śiva-śekhara-tantra and Saṅkarśana-samhitā, the devalaka may be a karma-devalaka (when he worships in a temple for a year, without having undergone any initiation, and without knowing the correct procedure of worship relevant to that particular deity), a kalpadavalaka (when he worships in a temple for three years, without initiation but acquainted with the correct procedure of worship), or a suddha-devalaka (when he has not received the āgama from a proper master, but has picked up his knowledge of āgama from other sources, and when he worships deities other than the one he is hired to worship.

The priest in a temple is obliged to carry out some of the details of worship in public and for the sake of lay-devotees.
But the texts warn that the priest who does so for show or money would become an outcast even if he is learned in all the Vedas:

देवार्चनपरो योपिप परार्थ वित्तकाशंया।
चतुर्वेद捐款्रो विप्र: स चण्डालसमो भवेत्॥

Atri’s *Smṛtyarthasa-ra* brings out the distinction between the dikṣita (initiated priest) and a devalaka (o hireling) thus:

वैदिकेन विधिना दम्मभतोभविविविविज़ितः।
पूजयेद्व भक्तितो विष्णु स हि देवलोको न बैः॥

The dikṣita worships the deity according to Vedic rites and with devotion; and he is free from showmanship and greed. Thus, even if he worships for the sake of others and gets money as reward for his services, he is not to be regarded as a devalaka. Bhṛgu’s Prakīrṇādhikāra (30th adhyāya, 136-150) describes the Bhāgavata as the priest who is filled with faith and devotion, and is indifferent to material gains. He is convinced that in this world of misery, devotion to Godhead is the only refuge. He regards all gods and all worlds as Viṣṇu, who indeed is not outside him. He is full of compassion for all beings, and worships God with no ulterior motive.

The temple is a public institution, and has naturally both sacred and secular aspects. Preservation and renovation of the temple-structure, protection of the property, administration of the funds, management of the personnel, conduct of periodical festivals and relation with the community are secular responsibilities, which since ancient times have been discharged by small committees of elders in the community (known in the South as sabhāiyār or
sthānattār). Regular worship in the temple is a sacred function, and has little of secular dimensions. It is discharged by the priest, who is however not hired for the purpose by the administrative assembly or by the ruler of the land. His eligibility to enter the sanctum, touch the icon and offer worship to it directly is derived not from any administrative appointment or assignment, but from his belonging to a family of priests, from his having received initiation even before his birth from his father or elders in the family, and from his acquaintance with the prescribed procedures of worship. The best of priests is of course one who is well-versed in the Vedas, pacific in nature, restrained and virtuous in conduct, pure in character and concerned only with the worship of the Godhead; calm in bearing, and with settled views, free from doubts and misgivings. It is not surprising that Vaikhānāsa texts insist that to crown all these qualities, he must belong to the Vaikhānāsa lineage and must adhere to the customs prevalent in this group. Every group of Āgama adherents would make similar prescriptions:

वैखानससूत्रेण निषेकादि क्रियान्तितानु विप्रानु।
वेदविद: श्रेष्ठानु धार्मिकानु ज्ञानतत्त्वानु॥
सौम्यानु जितेन्द्रियानु शुद्धानु विष्णोराधानु वरानु॥
ऊहापोह विधानेन ध्वस्तसंशयमानसानु॥
(प्रकृष्टांधिकारे, ९१, २-८)

It is difficult of course to find an arcaka who will fully answer to this description, although it is most desirable to have such a one as the chief of the priests and a master of ceremonies. When it is impossible to procure such a one, the Vaikhānāsa manual, Prakīrṇadhikāra (17, 7-8)
allows such a one’s son to be chosen, and if even he is not available, then the grandson; in the absence of grandson, then some descendent in the direct line. If no descendent is at hand, then the brother-disciple, disciple’s disciple or the teacher of the person regarded as among the best, may be chosen by a senior Vaikhānasā ācārya. The text warns that if this procedure is not followed, great harm will ensue for the ruler as well as the kingdom.

तद्भवे तु तत्पुत्रं पौत्रं नपारमेव वा।
तस्यैव भ्रातरं शिष्यं प्रशिष्यं गुप्तमेव वा।
सब्रह्माचारिणं वापि पूर्वाभवे तथोत्तरं।
तदनुजातिमित्रं आचार्यं ते नियोजयेत॥
अन्यथा चेन्महादोषे राजा राष्ट्रं च नमयति॥

Among the qualifications for the priest, the family to which he belongs is regarded as most important. The son of an excellent arcaka has very good chances of becoming a competent arcaka in his own right, and in his turn, not only because he is exposed to the calling from his early years but because he would properly be initiated and consecrated either in his prenatal stage or during boyhood. While the Pāñcarātra and Śaiva āgamas prescribe an initiatory rite (dikṣā) when the son of the ārcaka comes of age, the Vaikhānasas perform this rite even when the offspring is still in the mother’s womb. Known as Viṣṇubali. This rite is performed during the eighth month of pregnancy, after the sacraments of Puṃsavyana and Śimantonnayana have been gone through (for details see Bhṛgu’s Kriyādhikāra, 36, 42). This is also called ‘garbhavaishnavesti’ because the rite would confer the status of a ‘devotee of Viṣṇu’ (vaiṣṇava) upon the foetus itself, so
that the offspring would be a Vaishnava even at birth. This is why the Vaikhānasas describe themselves as ‘garbhavaishnava’; and the belief is that, during Viṣṇu-bali, Viṣṇu himself would initiate the yet unborn individual into the life and career of a Vaishnava priest. No other initiation, therefore, is indicated for a Vaikhānasa. If, by choice or under duress, he undertakes any initiation at any time of his life, the texts prescribe expiations (prāyaścitta) and purifications, before he can be an arcaka (Vaikhānasa-sūtrakramaṇikā, part 2). The right to become an arcaka is thus inherent and inalienable in a Vaikhānasa.

मक्कन्तियुक्तस्य मदौरस्य निषेकक्रमादिविराजितस्य न तपतमुद्रा न मन्नदीव्रा न गुहर्म्यव विनाऽ

(क्रियाधिकारे)

त्वत्पुत्रो भाग्यवान् धन्यो गर्भवैष्णवसंज्ञमः।
अप्राकृतो महार्क्ष्यां गर्भचक्रेण लांछितः॥
(वैष्णावसूत्रतुक्रमणिकायाः; आनन्दसहितायाः, १० अध्याय)

गर्भवैष्णवजनमनं वैष्णानसानं सर्वं क्रृष्णवर्धनाहेतुजनमनं
विष्णुवाक्यबालेनावे चक्रांकिता मताः॥
नारायणः स्वयं गर्भं मुद्रां धारयते निजाः।
तत्कर्स्थे चक्रेण शंखेन प्रभितीतीजसाः॥
करोतिः चक्रशंखांकं शिशों बाह्मूल्याः।
वैष्णानसेन सूत्रेण स्वाद्यं गर्भवैष्णवः॥
वैष्णव सूत्रमेतद्वम सर्वसिद्धिकरं परं।

(क्रियाधिकारे ३६, ४३-४५)
वैखानसाश्रय मत्युज्ञा दत्तयुज्ञर दीपिताः।
मम वैखानसस्थापि पश्यत्यत्तरं बुध्या।
न मुद्राधारणं तेषां गर्भवेष्णवजनमानं।
श्रौतस्मातांक्रियाह्नां मत्रसादेकजीविनां।
मम वाक्यबलेनेत्र वै चक्रांकितम मताः॥

(प्रकीर्णाधिकारे, 36, 42, 41)

In the circumstances, the Vaikhānasas as a community are temple-priests, and should strictly follow no other occupation. Worship is of two kinds: worship in ones own household (grhār-cā) and worship in a temple (ālayārcā). The latter is always iconic in character (bera-pūjā, samūrtarcanā), and is derived from the Bhāgavata ideology of Godhead having transcendental (para), emanative (vyūha), incarnatory (vibhava, avatāra), inner controller residing in the heart (hārda, antaryāmi) and worshipful or iconic (arcā) aspects. While anyone may engage himself in household worship, the Āgamas insist that temple-worship may be conducted only by properly qualified priests, for otherwise great harm will be caused to the ruler and the country.

The temple, as said earlier, is a public institution, and the responsibility for arranging regular worship in it (which will contribute to the welfare of the ruler and the country) is collective; it rests with the rulers and the administrators who represent the people. Every temple theoretically at least will have its own priests, whose association with the temple goes back to the days of its founding. Priesthood is generally handed down in families through generations, and the temple administrators do not normally appoint priests. The temple, the iconic
representation of Godhead, and the priest come to the
administrators as a package deal.
Considering the elaborate character of worship in a
temple, especially of the Vaikhānasa division, the priest
would require assistance in several sequences of worship,
and for this purpose he would engage attendants
(paricāraka) who are knowledgeable in matters of worship.
The priest would naturally select the attendants who also
belong to his own Āgama division. In a Vaikhānasa
temple, the priest as well as his attendants who help him
in the actual worship within the sanctum would be
Vaikhānasas, while this restriction does not apply to the
other attendants whose functions would be outside the
sanctum. Thus there, will be in a temple some attendants
chosen by the priest and others appointed by the council
that administers the temple-affairs. Bhrgu’s Prakirnadhikara
(18, 15-17) lays down:

आचार्यः स्यादुपदर्श्या देपसाग्रिध्यकारकः।
अर्चनाद्यखिलं कार्यं तत्तत्त्त्योगेन कार्येत्॥
स हि कार्यस्य निर्योगं गोप्ता धर्मस्य देशिकः।
अर्चको देवदेशस्य कुर्यमन्नत्त्सनादिपु॥
उपचारानांशस्य विधिना शास्त्रचोदितान्।
अर्चकस्य सहायस्तु किंकरं परिचारकः॥

The sanctum-attendants are answerable only to the
priest, who is their mentor, director and leader. They do
not have independent authority or responsibility in matters
of worship; they are guided at every stage by the priest.
The administrators of the temple have no hold on them,
unless their conduct interferes with the general
administration. It is the responsibility of the priest and of
none else to arrange for regular daily worship within the sanctum (nitya) and for special sequences of worship during festivals (viśeśa), or as desired by the devotees (Kāmya). And the attendants that he selects are to assist him in all these matters, and only in these matters.

When the temple is large with a complex of deities to be separately worshipped, or very popular with the pilgrims, then the number of priests and their attendants would necessarily increase. Bhṛgu in his Prakīrṇādhikāra (18, 9-14) classifies temples into nine types, and prescribes the number of priests and attendants required in each of them. According to him, the most superior temple (uttamottama) will have 20 priests and 70 attendants; the midling superior temple (uttama-madhya) 16 priests and 64 attendants; and the least superior temple (uttamādham) 12 and 50. The best in the midling variety (mad-hyamottama) will have eight priests and 40 attendants; the midling in this variety (madhyama-madhya) six and 25; and the inferior in this variety (madhyamādham) four and 16. The best in the inferior variety (adhamottama) will have three priests and nine attendants; the midling in this variety (adham-madhya) two and four; and the inferior in this variety (adhamād-hama) one priest and two attendants.

The same text enumerates diverse functions within the sanctum discharged by the attendants: trimming the lights, cleaning the vessels, bringing water and flowers for worship, providing incense and light, preparing sandal-paste, covering the icon with garments and ornaments and so on. Included among the attendants are cooks who prepare food for customary and ritualistic presentation (naivedya). All these are required to be Vaikhānasas, for
otherwise they cannot enter the sanctum or touch the main icon. When, however, the Vaikhānasas are not available the priest may engage others (non-Vaikhānasa brahmins), but they must have priory been initiated (dikṣita) into the worship-rituals according to the Āgama requirements and must be of good conduct (sad-vṛtta). They can only be attendants (paricārakas) and cannot officiate as priests (arcaka):

परिचारांस्तु वृणुयादलाभे त्वनूमित्रिणः।
दीक्षितानेव सदृशातानामोक्षविधानतः॥

(तत्रैव, २५)

There are other services in the temple, which are not restricted to the Vaikhānasa community like the temple-astrologer (daivajna), the temple-architect (vāstu-vidyā-viśārda), keeper of the garden (udyāna-rakṣaka), suppliers of flowers (puṣpāpacayakara) garland-makers (mālyopajīvi), suppliers of provision (dravya-saṁbhāraka), guards (dauvārika) and so on (cf. Yajñādhikāra, 50, 28-34)

The Vaikhānasa priests work in temples not because it is a means of livelihood but because their very existence is meant for worship, and temple-worship is for them a duty:

शास्मेतच्च सूत्रं च सर्वेशामपि जीवनं।
ये वैखानससूत्रेण संस्कृतास्तु द्विजातयः॥

(तत्रैव, ३०, १७)

The attendants, however, receive compensation for their work in cash or kind from the priest, who also arranges for their food and residence.
But the Āgama texts are not unmindful of the creature comforts of the priests who undertake voluntarily to worship in the temple for the welfare of the ruler and the country. While it is the responsibility of the priest to arrange for regular worship, it is the responsibility of the administrators to look after the needs of the priests and keep them happy. The Godhead is believed to have two forms: the icon and the priest. Divinity enters into the icon when the worship begins with the invocation of the spirit (āvāhana); but divinity ever abides in the priest. Therefore, the priest is to be looked upon as the mobile icon, and like unto a deity:

सूपहुँ धरे: प्रोक्तं विश्वमर्य एव च।
बिभ्ये त्वावाहनादृढ्वं सदा सत्प्रिहितोत्तर्यं।।
अर्चकस्तु धरे: साक्षात्वरुपम न संशयः।।
(क्रियाधिकारे, ३६, ५९-६०)

अध्यात्मन्यसंपुज्जतो योगज्यो भक्तिमाणछुचि:।
अर्चक: सुप्रसन्नता हरिरेव न संशय:।।
(ब्रह्मोत्सवानुक्रमणिकायं उद्भासनप्रबन्ध)

Because the safety, security, wealth and welfare of the country depend upon regular worship (six times, three or two times, a day) conducted in the temple, the ruler of the land or the people must see that the worship is not interrupted due to the penury of the priest. It is prescribed therefore that endowments of land are made upon the priest free of taxes so that his family may live in comfort.

अविच्छिन्ना यथा पूजा विधिना संप्रवर्तते।
तथा प्रकल्प्येदित्वानू भूमिभोगेन वै स्थिरतिम्।।
The spiritual power of the temple or of the iconic representation of Godhead in it is entirely dependent upon the priest and the fervour with which he conducts the worship. It is necessary, therefore, that the interests of the priest are well looked after. When the priest is satisfied, the first condition for the satisfaction of the Godhead is secured. If the priest suffers, worship is not conducted properly, and thereby the divine presence in the icon also suffers. Care must be taken by the ruler (or the administrators) to see that the priest is provided with a proper residence close to the temple and that he can live with comfort with his family without worry, stress and anxiety. *Bhrţu’s Yajñādhihikāra* (50, 28-37) provides details about how and where the residences for the priests and attendants are to be constructed (*D. Raṅgācarya’s ed. 1931. Telugu ch., Madras*)

For the temple which may be said to grow in the community, the root is the priest and the top of the tree
is the ruler (or the administrators). It is wise, therefore, that the root is not harmed, lest the top wither away. Alternately, the ruler (or the administrators) may be likened to the fruit of the tree while the priest is the flower; when the flower is attacked, there is no way the fruit can appear or flourish.

अग्रं बृक्ष्या राजानो मूलं बृक्ष्या पूजका:।
तस्मान्मूलं न हिंसीयान्मूलाद्यं प्ररोहिति॥
फलं बृक्ष्या राजानो पुष्यं बृक्ष्या पूजका:।
तस्मात्युष्यं न हिंसीयात्पुष्यात्साहिते फलम्॥

(तत्रैव, १०४-१०५)

If a temple becomes popular and wealthy, it is not the architecture, location or artistic excellence that can account for the fact. The only reason that can be ascribed is the divine presence in a large measure in the iconic representation of Godhead (arcca)” there. And the divine presence, according to the Āgama texts, is due largely to the rigorous and favourable worship that is conducted to the icon there without a break or flaw for centuries together by the priests who are properly initiated and who lead exemplary lives. The temple-priest is responsible for two of the three factors that are responsible for the divine presence in the icon: holiness and austerity in the life of an arcca, and excellence in the mode of worship conducted (the third factor being the intrinsic merit of the icon). The role of the priests in the temple-culture of our country can hardly be ignored or belittled.

The Vaikhānasas as temple-priests are distinguished by their unflinching and uncompromising affiliation to the Vedic tradition, more particularly to Yajur-Veda (Taittirīya
branch) which is ritualistic in approach. The available
texts of this division point out that the Bhāgavatas who
took to worship in temples are classified into two major
groups: Vaikhānasa and Pāñcarātra, the former being
Vedic in orientation while the latter tāntrik. The distinction
between the two groups is held to consist in the Pāñcarātra
worship culminating in the salvation of the devotee and
the Vaikhānasas securing the welfare here as well as
salvation hereafter. The argument, therefore, is that the
temples on secluded spots like river-banks, on tops of
mountains or in jungle clearance may adopt the tāntrik
mode, which must never be sought recourse to in the
village:

आलयार्चनविधि: सोपपि हिंधा विष्णो: प्रकृतितः।
बैखानस: पांचरात्रो वैदिकसतान्त्रिक: क्रमात्॥
विधिस्तु वैदमूलशः दीशायुक्तस्तु तान्त्रिकः।
ऐहिकामृण्यकपलो मोक्षमात्रवलप्रद:॥
कारयेद्वैदिकस्तु ग्रामाधिषु च वास्तुषु।
नदीतिरःदिश्यस्ते वा वान्नव निर्जने।
पूजयेततान्त्रिकणैव ग्रामदौ न कृतदान॥

(क्रियाधिकारे, १, १७-२१)

श्रुत्यनुकूल-मार्गेण चतुर्वेदो-वैस्तथा।
मन्त्रे: समस्तलोकेशामवेद्यक्षमिरिमिवयमः॥
तं विष्णु पूजयेत्त्रिव वृं सर्वसाधनसाधनम्।
सर्वमुक्तिप्रदं नित्यं सर्वकामशालप्रदम्॥
ग्रामाधिरायो: सम्भवचनं तत्त्रिवबस्तिनाम्।
सर्वसिद्धिप्रदं नित्यं पुत्रपौत्रविवर्धनमू।

(वज्ञाधिकारे, १, ५, ८)
We do not, however, know what the condition of the Pāñcarātra system was when the above distinction was made, but we do know that it is this system that became in course of time widely prevalent in towns and villages, while the Tirumala temple which is on top of a high mountain as well as in the midst of dense jungles has followed the Vaikhānasas system from the earliest days of its history! The point that is sought to be made clear seems to be that the Pāñcarātras rely on initiatory rites which are not Vedic in character (dikṣā), while the Vaikhānasas do not. The life of a Vaikhānasas priest is guided by the Vaikhānasas grhya-sūtras and dharma-sūtras, which are entirely within the orthodox culture; he undergoes the several sacraments (samskāras) strictly following the prescriptions of the Vedic canons, and he is enjoined to tend the sacred fire of the pious householder aupāsanāgni, at home and perform sandhyā, īṣṭi, caru-homa all through his life (Pulastya, cited in Śrī-sūtra-tātparya-cintāmani of Śrīnivāsa-makhin, on Vaik-hānas-grhya-sūtra, 3, 14).

Indeed, Viṣṇu who is the supreme god adored by the Vaikhānasas is not only a Vedic god, but is described as the personification of the Vedic sacrifice (yajña-puruṣa). The Vaikhānasas claim on the authority of Vṛddha-manu that worship accorded to the iconic representation of Viṣṇu is in reality a Vedic sacrifice, and that all their conduct based on Vedic prescriptions is a form of worship given to Viṣṇu:

বেদান্তবেদিত্যিপিত্রপ্রেত্ত্বদৃষ্ট্যান্তসূন্ত্রিকিতে:।
যাজ্ঞেয় যজ্ঞপুরুষ বিষণু...।
সর্বেষপিবেদিকাচরাতঃ: সর্বে যজ্ঞপাংসি চ।
বিষণ্পূতাবিধৈর্য্যেদাসতত্ত্বম ফলদো হরি:।।
Godhead has two aspects: ‘without form’ (nirākāra) and ‘with form’ (sākāra), Vedic sacrifices, (to the fire-god) and rituals pertain to the former aspect and iconic worship at home or in a temple is with regard to the latter. And, considering the equipment and needs of the people in general, iconic worship is better-suited. God could be worshipped mentally (mānasa), or in the sacrificial fire (homa), or yet in an icon (bera-pūjā). The approach varies according to the eligibility and inclination of the devotees. The Vaikhānasa texts hold that iconic; worship is best for common people in the present age, for the well-made icon pleases the eye, delights the heart, and encourages devotion by evoking the sentiment of love:

चक्षुषः प्रीतिकरणान्मनसो हृदयस्य च।
प्रीत्या सञ्जायते भक्तिस्वर्जस्य सुलभो हरि:॥

(क्रियाधिकारे, १, १३-१४)

tasmāt tucchānaṃ śāntaḥ bher_putchara vishistātāt.

And iconic worship done in the temple (ālayārca) is intended to benefit all people.

The belief is that when worship is done according to the Vedic style and with devotion, the divine presence in the icon is facilitated and inclines towards the welfare of devotees:

बैंदिकृन विधाने भक्त्या चावाहने कृते।
भक्तानुकम्प्या देवो बिभ्रे व्यापैव तिष्ठति॥

(उद्वेषना प्रबन्ध)

Hence the Vaikhānasa mode of worship is described as ‘pacific’ (saumya) and ‘beneficent to all people’ (śrī-
kara). It contributes to the national and spiritual welfare of the entire population. And this is why the temples in villages and townships are required to follow the Vaikhānasa worship. The priest who conducts this worship must be looked upon as the means of securing the good of the people.

There is an interesting and significant account of how the donors made provision for the maintenance of priests and other brahmins associated with the temple in the middle ages. The inscription of Sirpur (in the present day Hyderabad area) has been noticed by K.V. Subrahmanya Iyer in his *Historical Sketches of Ancient Deccan* (Madras, 1917 pp. 334-335) along with another inscription.

"The first of them is the Sirpur inscription which registers a grant of villages for the maintenance of airm-houses, the repair of breaks or cracks in the temple, the supporting of the servants of the sanctuary and brahmanas verses in the three vedas, Rig, Yajus and Saman. The record enjoins that the sons and grandsons who succeed the Brahmin donees should be such as to offer sacrifice to fire and know the six supplements of the Vedas, as are not addicted to gambling or other bad associations, as have their mouth clean and are not servants. If they did not answer or possess the above qualifications and if one dies also, such should be removed and in their places other Brahmins possessing the stipulated qualifications should be appointed. The substituted persons should be chosen from among the relations of the unqualified men and should be advanced in age while being learned at the same time. They must be appointed by their consent alone and not by an order of the king.

The second states that in place of donees (of shares
allotted for the performance of specified services in temples) who die or migrate; the nearest relatives of such persons have to receive the grant and do the service. In case the nearest relatives of such persons are not qualified themselves, they have to select others who are qualified and let them do the service receiving the remuneration provided for". 
Appendix VII

ON ICONIC WORSHIP

अचलं चलमिति द्विविधं भगवतो रूपम्। तत्र सर्वं व्योमाभं अपोहलक्षणं ब्रह्मांडेर नभिलक्षं निष्कलमचलम्। तदाराधनं निरालम्बं तत्स्तानीयं धुवरूपम्।

तस्मादचलमात्तमनो यद् भिष्म सर्वदेवतामकं सत्त्यादं शजनकं सकलं तत्चलम्। तदाराधनं सालमं तत्स्तानीयं कौतुकम्।

तस्मात् महाबेरे दोषोऽधि कौतुकसम्पदा नशयति। धुवरेर परंत्योतीस्तु। तदलक्षणमधि न दोषाय भवति। अरुपवातस्य।

यदा निष्कलं सूक्ष्मं परं ज्योतिर्निरार्यणं इति कीर्तते तदा स्थूलं: सकलस्तदा विषुलित्रित। विषु: सुवर्णवर्णरूपं रत्नाल्पणपाणिपाणिदान्त: दुर्गसिन्धुःरकारः।

किरिटकेश्वरप्रांगलंकानि: सूत्रोप्प्वल: श्रंखचक्राथर: रक्तलस्यसम्बन्धित: सुवर्णरजतताम्ब्राणामन्यतयैन सलक्षणामेंव कौतुकं कार्येत। अलक्षणे तु तत्सर्वं भस्मसादु भवति सकलवातस्य।

निरालबाराधनं संकल्पधारिनिनां श्रेष्टाश्रमिणाम्। सालंबं सम्यक् संसारनिष्ठानां भुजिमुक्तिमुक्तिफलप्रददवत्।
अभीष्ट्यादर्शनातू परिचयोंका भक्तिभन्ति। नृणामभक्तकानां
कृतं सर्व निष्कलम्। तस्मादुभक्तिहतुल्यात् सलक्षणं
परमपर्वस्फूर्तिं कृत्या श्रिया सहिष्क संस्थाप्य
प्रक्रृतिपुरुषावर्चायेत्।

सल्लाबाराध्ये कौतुकसंपत्त सर्वेशां संपदिति विज्ञायते॥
(काश्यपीये ज्यानकाण्डे ५५)।

अध्यात्मो भगवतो नारायणस्याकृतिलक्षणं व्याख्यायामः।
यस्यायत्तयेः हृद्धा खं नाथि: भू: पादौ चक्षुषारूपं
अर्धनिशाचरूपं दिश: श्रोते ज्योतिष्याहरणानि ‘उद्धयोऽवरं
भूतानीदिर्याणि। अस्याकृते: प्रमाणं कल्पितं भूगवादिधिः।
तद्वयुधिर्निर्माति च अभिमायाम। आज्ञासिद्धांमिति ज्ञाता
तद्वयुधिर्निर्मितिः कार्येत्। विधिना कारिते बेरं सर्वपापहरं पुण्यं
भूतिमुक्तिकल्फ़प्रदम्। स्वबृद्धिकालृपते अशुरं पुण्यकीर्तिविनाशश्च।
तस्माचक्षृतं समालंब्य बुध्या युक्तं प्रमाणायुतमेव मनोहरं
कार्येत्॥।

(तत्त्वे, ५०)

तस्य विश्वामत्नो विष्णुर्वर्तने निर्विधं यथा।
मानसं वाचिकं वाथ कायिकं वापि ततुत्रयम्।
कायिकं द्विविधं प्रोक्तं अमूर्तं च समूर्तकम्॥३४-३५॥
अर्थंनेषु चतुर्वेषु तावमानसमुच्चये।
विविवर्षे विशेषे देशे उपविष्टो: सुखासने॥३६॥
स्वर्तिकासन आसिनो निःसंग: संयतेन्द्रियः।
यमन्दिरिभूतेऽस: सत्राये न्यस्तलोचने॥३७॥
तद्वग्निनैव मनसा ध्यानकर्मणि निश्चलः।
ध्यायदेद्ह हत्युपुष्टिकर्षं विमलं रविमण्डलम्॥३८॥
तन्मध्ये मण्डलं सौभं्यं तदन्तस्यं तदुच्छ्वलम्।
दिव्यासन समासीं लक्ष्मीभूमिधरे परम्॥ ३९॥
स्वर्णवर्णं महाबाहुं शुक्रप्राणिनाभाम्यरम्।
हेमवर्णाविखिन्द्रेष्टु किरीटमुक्तादिधिम्॥४०॥
सवैराधिन्दित्वे: श्रीवत्सेन तु भासितम्।
कौस्तुष्ठोद्भासितोतरकं प्रसन्नवदनाम्भुजम्॥४१॥
आज्ञनेत्रास्याण्यंघि चतुर्भाहुं सुखोद्भवहम्।
अव्यक्तं निष्कलं नित्यं निर्गुणं च परात्यरम्॥४२॥
शाखचक्रंधरं साम्यं वरदाभवपाणिनम्।
चिन्तयेतु सकलं विष्णुप्रचारं सर्वकारणाम्॥४३॥
ध्यात्र्वृं विष्णूहेस्त्वर्णसेवतु तु कल्यिते।
क्रयेऽतत्राधिन्तं विष्णोपर्यन्तमानसा मीरितम्॥४४॥
ऋग्युजु: सामपर्यवर्याष्टियेवं यदू द्विजातयः।
सतुवनं परमात्मां तद्वाचिककतिदिरितम्॥४५॥
अग्निहोत्रेषु सांगेषु ध्यात्र्कृं यदू द्विजातयः।
यदाविष्णुं चार्मिनुहं तदमूर्तः तु कायिकम्। ४६॥
प्रतिमायं कुट् पूजा दत्ते: पाह्यासनादिधिम्।
समूर्तितित ततू प्रोक्तं अर्चनं मुनिपुर्णवै।॥४७॥
कृते तु मानसं श्रेष्ठं त्रेतायं यज्ञूं वरम्।
द्वापरे प्रतिमार्त्तं च कली चिन्तनुश्रुतः॥४८॥
चतुर्भारं युगेष्वेवं विशेषस्तु युगे युगे।
मनोच्छार क्रियाद्विय ध्यानभावावंपर्यंचकम्॥४९॥
( मारीचिप्रोक्तानन्दसंहितायाम्, १ )
अशाहो देवदेवस्य परस्य परमात्मन:।
स्वरूपं पंचधा शक्ये श्रुण्डवं मुनिसत्रकम्॥४५॥
परो व्यहृच्च विभवस्वांतार्यामी तथैव च।
अर्चं चेति हरे रूपं पंचधामिविष्कृतं प्रभो:॥५॥
परः स्यादखिलाण्डानम् सृष्टिमा प्रवृत्तोजकः।
व्यूहस्तु देशचलनहेतूतां मुनिपुंगवा:।
चतुर्व नामसादीनां आधिदेवतमेव हि।
विभवा मत्यकूर्मादि रक्षसां निधनाय च:।
अन्तर्प्रभु मायामाधारार्थ स्थितो ह्रि:।
पुराणपुरुषश्रीवं जगदनन्दकरकः।
तथेव सर्वजीवानां दुःखनाशनहेतवे।
सुलभान्मेज्जिष्ठे च भववर्चास्वरुप्धूकूः।
परम्याहद्यश्चैमेकलशादेव हि मोक्षदा:।
अष्टांगयोगैं धौर्याद्वैस्तपोभिरुः खसाथ्ने:।
चिराहद्विदं जीवानां मोक्षमयैव यूँ चुम्भमि।
अर्चारुपस्तु सुलभाहद्दाति परमं पदम्।
श्रीद्रमेव नमस्कारपृजामन्त्रेण चादरातः।
अर्चारुपस्य सौलभ्यं वच्चु मम न शक्यते:।
नित्यनुत्कोषोभोगत्वात्यर्घूहात्मनो हरे:।
तत्कालस्निक्रियोऽस्तक्ष्यत्वाविभवातम्:।
विशुद्धदेयोऽगसिद्देशिच्चन्त्यवादनरातमन:।
अर्चातमन्येव सर्वेषामधिकारो निरंकुः:।
(तत्रैव, १४)
Appendix VIII

DAŚA-VIDHA-HETŪ-NIRŪPAŅAM OF ŚRĪNĪVĀ-MAKHIN

वैधानस्वरूपाः तत्पर्यचिन्तामणी दशाविधेहतुनिरुपणम्।।

INTRODUCTION
Purpose of the Work

अथ सत्यत्वादित्समस्तकल्याणगुणविशिष्टाः परश्रहाणः
श्रीमन्नारायणादुप्त्रनेन विखनशश्रववाच्योऽचतुमुखश्रवहाणः
प्रणीतस्य वैधानसमृद्धस्य सर्वसूत्रोत्तमः
तत्सृस्त्रोक्तथर्मानुष्ठात्तुणां सर्वाकृष्टमते च दशाविधहेतुवो निरुपणः।
यथा–

1) अखिलजगत्कारणभूतेन विखनसा प्रणीतत्वात्।
2) सर्वसूत्राणामादित्वात्।
3) सर्वकर्मेनु मु श्रुतिमार्गांनुसारित्वात्।
4) समन्त्रविक्र्याग्रन्तिप्रतिपादकत्वात्।
5) निषेकसंस्कारवत्तात्
6) अष्टादशशास्त्रसंस्कारप्रतिपादकत्वात्।
7) सान्त्राक्रियाकलापवत्तात्।
8) मन्त्रांमेव स्वीकृतत्वात्।
9) अखिलजगदेकारणभूतश्रीमन्नारायणेकपरत्वात्।
10) अन्ततुस्त्रोक्तथर्मानुष्ठानवत्तामेव
भगवद्गीतात्तरमन्त्रोपन्नर्तत्त्राच्या इति। एवंहे तुषिष्णु: अस्य सूत्रस्य
सर्वसुन्तीत्रमेत्र एतत्सूत्रस्यमेत्र एतत्सूत्रस्यर्थभर्तीनुज्ञानादेव
वैधानसानां सर्वेन्द्र्य: श्रेष्ठतमवृह्व श्रुतिसृष्टिपुराणादिमुखेन
प्रतिपाद्यते।
तत्राती अखिलजगत्कारभूतेन विख्यानसा प्रणीतवादिति हेतुरितरुप्यते।

WHO IS VIKHANAS?

विख्याना नाम करिच्छुषि:। उत्त नारायणः नारायण एव। केवलं
मुनिमात्रस्य वैधानस्वाश्वद्वाच्यते न र्षितादानाभावात्।
परमात्मनो नारायणस्य विख्यानोवैधानसाविद्वाच्यत्वं
श्रुतिसृष्टिपुराणादिविष्णुमये।

खिलश्रूतो

धनुर्वहाणामदितिस्मुराणां ब्रह्म ऋष्भूमां विख्याना मुनीनांमू इति
श्रूयते। अयमर्थः।। वहानां अतुहुदादीनां क्रेनु: उत्तपाकाणामू।
सुराणां इत्त्रादीनां अदिति:। ऋष्भूमा--
‘साध्या विश्वे च वसवो मततो ऋषभवस्तथा।
ततैवाविविदगर्यो र्द्रो आदित्याच्ष ततैव च।
एते देवगणाश्चाष्ट्र सत्वतरगणेश्वरः।।
इति भृगुज्ञानां साध्वादीनां ब्रह्म। मुनीनां मुनिश्वाच्छानां
विख्याना:।

अन्या खिलश्रूत्या भगवतो विख्यानश्वाच्छानां
कथमवगम्यत इति सेतु उच्यते।

‘दुर्बोधा वैदिकाश्ब्या प्रकोपात्ताच्च ये खिला:।
तदृजस्त एव सप्तार्थः: समृतितन्त्रे प्रतिष्ठिता:।इति
‘धिव्याच्यातुर्वेंद्रानू साङ्गोपनिषादानू द्विजः।
न चेतुराणसद्विद्या न वेदार्थविधक्षणः।’॥
‘इत्हितासपुराणाभ्यां वेदं समुपबुंहयेत्।
बिमेत्यत्यश्रुताहृते मामवं प्रतिरिख्यति॥

इति च समरणात् इतिहासपुराणाभ्यामेवार्थनिर्णयं: कर्तव्यः।
भारते मोक्षधर्मेऽनारदस्तुत्रोऽमस्ते देवदेववेशक इत्यार्थपत्रमवधे
फौनपाचार्यावलितविख्यात्विख्यानो विखनस
वेदाङ्कार्यां अभगत्योग अभगनपरिसूद्धायां’ इति
तत्तः–
‘यज्ञस्मिन्नुपलभ्यं ते ततेःतस्तत्रस्वैर्यम्।
तहैवरः परं ब्रह्म इति वेदविदो विदुः।’इति चोक्तम्।
तथा नामसहस्राध्ये–
‘वैक्षणस्वामणायणः’
इति स्पर्धैति। पाण्डवरत्रे आत्मसंहितायाम्–
‘महाभूतेन धूतेन व्यापतं विखनसा जगत्।
तेवच शरणं गच्छ जगत्कारणमच्युतम्॥
इति शास्त्रद्वेयेण शतान्तरभिज्ञक्षोक्तम्।

वैक्षणसे आनन्दसंहितायाम्–
‘वेदान्ततत्वमीमांसाकांधम मृत्यातू हरि:।
नामा विखनस प्राहुरयत्व वैक्षणस तथा’॥
इति प्रोक्तम्। अत्र खननशब्देन सड़कल्य उच्चते।
‘सोजकामयत।
बहृस्या प्रजायेवेति स तपोक्त्यत’ इत्यादि श्रुतिभ्यः।
अवापससमस्तकामस्यापि भगवत: सृष्टिकार्यां प्रवृत्तिभूत:।
जगत्वृष्णादितिलालुभावथ भगवता समहितस्सृष्टेरनन्तरः
व्यवस्थितौ देवमनुष्यादिविविधाविविधेषसृष्टिगर्भम चतुर्मुखसृष्टि
प्रति ध्यान कृतम्। एषा चिदचिदार्तिका सृष्टि: भगवता
क्रियते। व्यवस्थितौस्तु ब्रह्मण।

समस्तसृष्टिनाम्- ‘भूतस्तु पञ्चभिः प्राणः:
स्वान्तेतश्चार्थिरं विन्दुः।
चतुर्विषाणातात्वीति सामाजाक्षास्याचिदो विदुः।
महान् कालः प्रधानं व यायाविद्या च पूर्णः।
इति पौराणिकः प्राहुः विषण्ठलानि तैस्सहः।

इति वचनानुतौ तत्त्वसृष्टिरित्यवगम्यते। ‘स्वाते’ रित्यनेन
‘मनोबुद्धिरहुक्ता श्रवीतचतुष्यर्वाच करणान्यमी’ इत्यतः
करणचतुष्यमुच्यते।

व्यवस्थितौस्तु-अण्डान्तर्वितंभूतजातसृष्टि। ‘अजामेकाः
लोहितशुकलक्षणाम्’ ‘नित्यो नित्यानां चेतनश्चेतनानां’
भित्यादिश्रुतिरिभिः। नित्यत्वेन श्रुतानां प्रकृतिपुरुषाणा
सृष्टिनाम्

प्रलयदशगायं सृष्टंसृष्टेण अविभक्तनामसृष्टेण च
परमातमनेष्वः भूतानां सृष्टिकाले परमात्मनोपज्ञानवानां
स्थूलस्पष्टवत्वं विभक्तनामसृष्टिबभावं च। ‘तत्त्वस्त्।
‘तदेवानुप्रतिविशाल। तदनुप्रविशव। सच्च त्वचाभवत’
इत्यादिश्रुते।

अतस्समस्तजगतमार्थितिभ्यसंस्महानदेवंकेन: भगवतः
परमहानो नारायणस्य वैक्षणसाधिशब्दवाच्यत्वसंभवात्
तन्त्रार्थनिन्दस्यजातस्य ब्रह्मणोपनि ‘अङ्गाङ्गादिति
मन्नोत्तकारणं भारतादिप्रतिपदिततरीत्यं च
वैक्षणसाधिशब्दवाच्यत्वमुपपद्यते।
शान्तिपर्वत्नः-
‘विरोधणाखनत् यस्मात् भावनामुनिसृष्ट्ये।
तस्माहिदिखनसो नाम स आसीदण्डजः प्रियः।’
इति तत्रेव-
‘स्त्रुष्टं स तु समुद्धत्तो ब्रह्मायोनिमयः प्रभुः।
खनित्वा चात्मनाःसत्वां धार्मिकिगुणासंयुतम्।
ध्यानसाधिशय योगेन ह्यासीदिखनसो मुनिः।’
इति
श्री भागवते-
‘न खलु गोपिकानन्दनो भवानु
अखिलद्विनामानन्तर्तप्तृकः
विक्रमसारङ्गतो विश्वगुणाये
सखः उदेयिष्वान् सातचता कुले।’
इति。
गारुढे-श्रीरक्षमाहात्ये
‘ब्रह्मार्पिद्वियंशयु सितमेघोपमेन चै।
पृष्ठस्तोतरायो विणु वस्त्रेणाच्छाया चाननम्॥
तत्तार्थको महाभागो भगवानु विखनास्तदा।
ददो प्रसादं देवानां रक्षानाधिक्युज्याः॥
इति
श्री वैष्णवसे-आनन्दसंहितायाम्
‘अन्तर्हितानां खननाद्वेदनानां विशेषतः।
स विभुः प्रोच्यते सर्वं: विखनां ब्रह्मावदिभः।
वैष्णवसंहच भगवानु प्रोच्यते स प्रितमहः।’
इति。
व्यासनिघण्टी-
‘विखनसंहच विधातारं विरिज्ञं तं चतुर्मूखम्।
‘नाभिजनमाण्डज: पूर्वों विखना: कमलसन:।
शतानन्दसंहितात्मानितिसत्वं को हस्सवा:।
पद्मासनो विखनसंहचतुर्मूख इतिरितः॥
इति च प्रतिपादित्यम्।
THE ORIGIN OF THE VAIKHĀNASAS

वैक्षाननामानुसारः विशेषतः श्रूयते। यजुर्वे आस्त्रणकेतुके
इष्टाक्षरात्माननामानुवाके सृष्टिप्रकरणं-
‘आपो वा इदमावसनू सतिलभेवा। स प्रजापतिरेकः पुष्करणं
समभवत। तत्वात्मीर्षसं कामसम्भवतं। इसं सूजेयस्मितां।
इत्यार्थार्थ तत्स तपस्यं। श्रीरमभूतं तस्य त्वमांसमानीत।
ततोरूपः केतवो वातस्रीण ऋषयं उदत्तिष्ठन। चेतुष्ठः ते
वैक्षानयः। ये बाला: ते वालाेल्यः’ इति।
अस्यार्थः। समंधिसृष्टेनात्तत्र व्यंजनसृष्टो चतुमुखः
देवमनुष्यादिविद्विधाविद्विधाशेषसृष्टं
मत्वादिरूपेणावतिरिध्वमाणस्य भगवतो नारायणस्य
परमवैदिकस्थः समंतप्रत्तप्र श्रीवैक्षानसभाववव्यस्मार्गेण
समाराधानार्थिच्च स्वात्मतुल्यः: प्रजास्मभवेयुरितिः
स्वात्मर्यादिः परमात्माम म्योनेनानुकृतवान्।
तपार्जिकावले साक्षात्कृतवाभवत्वसंपैववानुभावतिशायात्
भगवद्वित्तिःशुद्धिश्वक्कलितात् तदुपजनितिविशेषवेगच्छ
पुलिकितस्वर्येगः: श्रीरमभूतं-कप्यमकरोऽत। ‘तस्य
त्वमांसमासीतः’ मांसं मानसमिति यावत।
‘अर्थात् प्रकरणाल्लिङ्ग:गद्धीचित्राद्यादन्तिन्यः’ इत्यथार्थिः:
समीचिनार्थविद्यविधानातू ‘अक्षरसाम्याभिन्नरूपाय’ दिति
निरुक्तविधानाच्छ।
तथा च तस्य मन: परमात्मानि संस्कारसामीदिति चतुः, तेन
हेतुना तदनुग्रहसम्बन्धीत। तेनानुगृहितातु ब्रह्मणः: अरुणा:
केतवो चातरश्ना: ऋषयः उदतिष्टनौ। अरुणा: परमात्मनि
वसन्त: तत्तद्विरासः। केतव: उच्छिष्टस्वभावः।
परमात्मप्रवेणामाम्योऽर्थम्: चातरथ्ना दिग्वाससः। ऋषयः;
सर्वार्थादिर्मन: सनकादय: उदतिष्टनौ उत्कृष्ठ् समभवनृ इति।
प्रजापति: एवंविधानू स्वकार्यसाधारणानि तानू दृष्टवा
कित्वचतुर्दशादाधाम्य: पुनरि स्वकारण भगवन्त ध्यानपर्यायेि
खनेनातोषष्टत। ये नव’ इत्यादि। भगवददुहराविकसिते
प्रजापतेमनसिस वैधानसा नाम ऋषसुम्मोऽय: अत्र ये नवा
इत्यत्र आद्यनावर्याविष्टजयो भवति। ‘कर्मण: पश्यको भवती’
तिवतु खना इत्येतु नवा इति विष्णुवस्मात्मत्वायः।
‘सुपीपुरप्रहारस्त्रस्त्राणि’ कालाहलचस्त्रकेटङ्गकाच्च।
व्याससम्भविती शास्त्रकृदेशा सोपिपि च सिद्धवति वानलकेन’॥
इति, ‘बहुलं छन्दस्य’ ति चात्र प्रभासामू।
अत्र ‘अनका’ इतिचिर्ल्लिवा केचिदेवमूचि:। अनका इत्यनेन
सौम्येमिद्रवत्तमुत्तमिति।
एवच: ऐसि ‘सौम्यं जितेन्द्रियं’ ‘सुप्रसस्तरनिन्द्रियं’ इत्यादिना
भगवच्छाप्रेमचार्यलक्षणस्य प्रतिपादितल्वानु ‘वैधानस
विखनसाचार्य’ इति विष्णोराचार्येि
शास्तिपर्यङ्गन्यभिभिन्तवात्।
‘विखन सि इति वै विष्णुस्तक्ष्रा वैधानसा: स्मृताः।
विष्णोरेव समुत्त्वान भृग्वाण्ड मुणयस्तथाः॥’
इति वचनात्, ‘गुरूस्सानवृत्ति वैधानस’ इति बोधायनसूत्रे
उत्क्रमवच्च भागवतादिदिशु प्रतिपादिताचार्यपुस्तवमेतेषा
वैधानसानामेवेत्यवगयेि॥
श्री वैधानस्ये आनन्दसहितायां विखनसोत्त्ववादिकं
प्रतिपादितम्।
‘अथ सस्मार भगवानू विश्वसृष्टिय्यथममचुतः।
धाताः विश्वनिर्माणक्षुरं चतुराननम्॥
स्मरणानन्तरादेव प्रातुरातितुरः प्रभोः।
धाता समस्तजगतामुद्यतिकरणक्षमः॥
तं प्रह भगवानू विष्णुः प्रणतं पुरतः स्थितम्॥

श्री भगवानुवाच-
‘ब्रह्मानू त्यथा जगत्तबी कर्त्त्वं सचराचरम्॥
लोके विहरितमिच्छामि यदहं पद्मसमभवा।
तत्तस्ववृष्टिजगतामिच्छान्नप्रवृत्तये॥
धर्मसंरक्षणार्थाय वेदशस्त्रावर्षिद्धये।
अलसा अल्पवस्तुराशु मनुष्यास्विद्धबुद्धयः॥
ते परव्यूहविभावानात्मनः न मेंते।
सौलभ्याय तु भक्तानां सर्वलोकानुक्के।॥
अर्चावतारस्वस्य लोकेः जित्तचतुरानन्।॥
अवतारं करिष्यामि यहा लक्ष्या समन्वितं॥
लोकाचै सूज ब्रह्मानु सृष्ट्यादै मुनिसततमपु।
इत्यज्जपस्तदा ब्रह्म मूहूर्त तत्तिवस्यक्षयः॥
चिन्तयामहनां तत्कर्मणेन क्षणमेकं महामुनिः।
ऊँ न शक्तुनाथेवं स्त्रयुमिच्छानुः तथाविधम्॥
तत्स्य तदह्रं श्रुत्वा देवदेवो हरिस्वयम्।
चिन्तयामहनां हे वेदेशः स्वर्णिमलराममिः।
वेदान्ततत्तवमीमांसाधिनं कुरानू हरि।
नामा विखनसं चक्रे तत्पदावर्त्ययोगल॥
तथा चिन्तयतस्तस्य मनसो हौ बभूवतुः।
संज्ञानिधयां स्थान्यं प्राप्तलिपिः पुरतः स्थितम्॥
ब्रह्मानामवीदाल्पुर्णतमस्तुष्पत्त चन्तनेतेके (कारकं)।
ਸ੍ਰੀਕਲਪਥਮੀਂ ਭਵਤਸਤਵ ਸੁਸਤਵਨਹੇਤੁਵੇ॥
ਸੁਧਾਰਸਤਸਮੁਤਪਤ੍ਰੋਂ ਨਰਿਮਿਤੋਂਵਾਂ ਤਵਾਰਗ੍ਰਤ:॥
ਮੁਨੀਸ਼੍ਰੇਸ਼ਠੋ ਮਹਾਤੇਜ਼ਾ ਤਮਕਾਰਥਕਰਣਕਸਮ:॥
ਮਤਕਾਰਥਾਸਾਧਕਾਨੇਵ ਤਨ ਵੇ ਸਤਿਸਤਹਾਰਹੈਸੀ॥
ਹਰੀਕੰਠਸਤਸ ਤਠਕਾਰਮੰਥਾਧਾਰੁ ਕੁਤਾਬਜਲਿ॥
ਚਤਨਮੁੰਖਰਚਾਪੀ ਤਥਾ ਸਨਕਾਰਦਮੁਨੀਸਾਵਰਾਨ।
ਧਾਰੱਣਮੁੰਖਰੁਸਚਰੁਖਤਰਕਸਤੁ ਸਰਮਾਦਰਸੁਖਜ਼ਦਬਜ਼ੁ॥
ਸਨਤਕਲਮਾਰਾਵਚ ਤਥਾ ਸਨਕਾਰ ਸਨਾਤਨਮੁ॥
ਸਨਨਦਨਮਿਤੀ ਖਾਤਾਨੁ ਬਧਾਵਿਵਾਵਿਸਾਹਿਦਾਨ॥
ਤਤਸੱਤੁ ਚ ਮੁਨੀਸ਼੍ਰੇਸ਼ਠਾ ਜਤਾਨਤਿਸਥਾਵੇਤਵੈਭਵਾਤ॥
ਵਿਰਕਤਵਿਚਕਾਰਸਜ਼ਭੁ: ਕੁਤਲਵਾਂ ਪੁਦਮੁਤਤਮ॥
ਸਵੰਤਕਾਰਥਸਾਧਕਾਨੁ ਬਰਹ ਸੁਸਤਵਾਨੁ ਪੁਨੇਰੇ ਹਿ।
ਪ੍ਰਾਣਾਚ ਚਕਸੂਰਧਨਤਹਿਵਿਮਾਨਚੁ ਕਰਮਣ:॥
ਹੁਦਾਚਚਰਰਸ: ਸ੍ਰੋਤਾਰੁਦਾਨਦਾਨਤਸਤ:॥
ਸਮਾਨਾਚਚ ਤਥਾਰਪਾਨਾਰਤਕਸ਼੍ਰੋਧਾਨਮਾਨੁ ਦਾਸ॥
ਦੰਸ ਮਰਿੜਚਾਰ ਨੀਲਲੋਹਿਤਸ ਭੁਰੁਗੋੜਰ ਚ।
ਤਥਾਰਚਕਾਰਸਮਤਿਰ੍ਚ ਪੁਲਸਤਾਂ ਪੁਲਹਾਂ ਤਥਾ॥
 ਵਸਿਰਚਚਚ ਕਰਤੁਰਚਾਵਚ ਕਰਮਾਦਰਸੁਖਜ਼ਦਬਜ਼ੁ॥
ਨਵ ਬਰਹਾਣ ਏਵਾਵੇ ਬਿਨ ਸਤਨੀਰਲੋਹਿਤਮ॥
ਧਰਮਸਤੰਚਕਲਪਸ਼ਿਸਤਸਮਾਨਕਾਠਾ ਮੁਨੀਵੇਰਾ:॥
ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾਦਮੁਨਵਚਾਰੁ ਕਰਮਾਦਰਸੁਖਜ਼ਦਬਜ਼ੁ॥
ਕ਼ੀਤਾ ਵਿਖਨਸ: ਪ੍ਰਤਕਾਰਸਰਵਾਸ਼ਾਸਤਰਾਰਥਿਗਰ:॥
ਵੈਖਾਨਸਾਨੁ ਭੁਰਾਵਾ ਵਹਸਤਕਾਰੀ ਇਰੀਤਾ॥
ਜਤਕਾਰਸਾਮਗਰੁ ਸ੍ਰੋਤਸਤਹਾਰਪੁਰਾਂ ਮੁਨੀ ਤਥਾ।
ਤਨ ਹਰੇ: ਪੁਰਤ: ਕਤਵਾ ਪ੍ਰਤਕਾਰਵਾਨੁ ਕਮਲਾਸਨ:॥
ਬਰਹੋਵਾਚ--
'ਦੇਵਦੇਵ ਜਗਨਨਾਥ ਸ੍ਰੀਤੀਸਥਿਤੀਤਨਕਾਰਣ।
भगवान्वत्रेत्रभावें शृदोवर्ण मुनिसत्तमः।
जातिष्ठचन्तयतो मतस्तव्युष्टिः मुनयस्तमः।
एतेऽर्पि कृतं सर्वं जगदेत्त्वचरकरमः।
मतुम्राणाज्ञतं सर्वेषांभ्रमणं पुरुषोऽसः।
वैष्णवेवेष्वः श्रेष्ठं मुनीनां प्रथमो मुनि:।
विशेषेन्द्रनान्नजातो विष्णुवेश्वानसस्तथा।
भृगवादीनुपनीयात साहित्रीमुपदेशक्यति॥
परश्रुपेत्रेष्वासायमेव गुरुस्मृतः।
एतुत्तपकारणं सर्वं वै मम सूनवः॥
चरित्याति यथान्यां लोकिकायात्मवेदिकानू।
एभि: प्रवत्रिता सुषिदिविच्छिन्ना प्रवतन्ते॥
भवानवतर्त्वत्र मम सृंखा जनादिन्॥
शुद्धस्वस्वमुत्पन्नो निमित्तोऽवयं तयां विभोो।
ऋषिष्ठेर्षों महात्माः: त्वक्कर्मकरणामः।
तथासौ खननाह्विन्नो: ध्यानादनश्च गर्भतः॥
यस्मातसमुत्पन्नस्तो ज्ञ्योत्स्तो गर्भवेष्वः।
इत्युत्तरे भगवान् प्राह मुनिउष्टं तपोनिधिमू।

श्री भगवानुबचः
‘देवब्रह्माःणीणान्त मद्दीवाराधनं प्रति।
पद्या सञ्चयोऽदतो यस्मात्वेव मुनिसत्तम॥
तपोधनोऽभवानेव धन्योप्सि भुवदत्ते।
आत्मार्थं वा परार्थं वा नित्यानित्यकार्थिं यतु॥
ततस्वर्ण मद्दीवाराधनं कुकु।
अथाह स ऋषिस्त्तमै प्राणम् जगद्वात्मेः।

श्री विखानाः उबचः
‘भववानुगृहीतोऽहं धन्योप्सिः पुरुषोऽसः।
नात: परतरं कार्यं किमण्याहिव्रोकसाम्॥
तथापि देवदेवेशः स्वकर्मं मुनिभिस्वदा॥
उद्यायदस्तपर्यं क्रियते नियतात्म्भि:॥
सर्वेषाच्छ द्विजातिनां श्रुतिस्मृतिसवीरितम्॥
कर्तव्यं सततं देव स्वस्वकर्मं प्रयत्ति:॥
भवदराधनं विषयो कथं करं करोमयाहं॥
त्तकर्मं क्रियते चतुर्म कर्मलोपो भवेनम्॥' इत्युक्तः भगवानाः मुनिनः तत्वबेदिनः।

श्री भगवानुवाच-

‘विखनस्वं मुनिश्रेष्ठः मदारधनकर्मणि॥
स्वकर्मलोपसन्त्रासव्याकुली कृतचेतसः॥
तव कर्मणयूनसनि सतु नित्यं मदाज्जः॥
त्वद्वजजानाः सर्वेषां काले वै कृतकर्मणाम्॥
निषेकादिश्मशानान्ता: कार्या: मन्त्रसमन्विता:॥
अष्टादशः च कर्मणि शरीरिणि प्रचक्षते।
वज्राश्च विशालिङ्गं च धर्मं सैण्ववमुत्तमम्॥
वैदेव वैखानसे सूर्ये यो धर्मं परिकीतितः।
सर्वस्म धर्मांजुनुदेवो नात्र कार्यं विचारणा॥
त्वदाजैवेद भृगवाच नारायणपारायणा:॥
बदन्ति परमं धर्मं सैण्ववं श्रुतिसमतमम्॥
तद्दर्मिनिताः चे तु ते वै भगवता: स्मृता:॥
मकर्मकारिणाः तेषां कर्मलोपो न विद्यते॥
तिर्थं: कोद्यो मुनीनां तु कर्मं कुर्विनि मे सदा।
ज्ञातवं यज्ञुः साड्गाहि मन्त्रसतत्स्वं एव तें॥
मन्त्रनः तकल्पजातानि मत्तुरा युनक्रमात्॥
आर्थीय सर्वकर्मणि कुर्विते ते मदर्चनम्॥
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कृताधिकारिणस्ते तु कृतसंबन्धिनो मम।
मल्लसाद्दुभजमृत्युम्या अतिप्रियतमा मम॥
षटकर्मनिरतास्ते वै सातिकाहारतपरः॥
वैखानसेिन सूक्त्रेन निषेकदीक्षियावान्तितः॥
भवति भावितात्मानो मल्लकरणक्षमाः॥
तस्माद्वारत श्रेष्ठ भवन्त्यप्राकृता भुविः॥
सर्वं ते षेनखास्ते कैवेभानसः’ इति वेदतः॥
तस्माद्वारहृदेन्यशुद्धामस्वर्यकस्मु पूजितः॥
तत: प्राह मुनिश्रेष्ठस्तमेवं वादिनं हरिः॥

श्रीविखना उवाच—

‘भगवांमस्वर्यसादेन कर्म साङ्गव चतोदितम॥
सर्वं ते मल्लकुलीनाः भवत्येव न संशयः॥’
इति। अतौ ज्ञात्तुस्दकमार्गें वैखानसानां सृष्टिराडिकं
अनुचारकभगवद्यजनेनेतद्यां नित्यकर्मानुष्ठानपूर्णतं च
प्रतिपादितम॥

THE FIRST POINT

The Vaikhanasa āgama was brought into being by Vikhanas, viz. Vishṇu himself, who was the creator of the world.

अथ वैखानससूक्त्रश्वास्त्रयो: अखिलजगत्कारणभूतेन विखानसा
प्राणीत्वमयमुपपादते।

(विखनोवैखानसादिशश्चिद्यानां

(१) नारायणे

(२) तत्तत्त्वाधिनलिन संपूर्ते चतुरान्ते
(३) महार्षिप्रवरे,  
(४) तत्त्रामसुपुस्यनवङ्गः  
(५) भूगवादिषु वैखानसवशक्तुंशु भगवन्मानसपुत्रेषु,  
(६) वैखानसमूत्रेण अद्यादशस्तंकारवल्सु भगवद्विभयत्वमेववच्चकरे,  
(७) तत्त्रूत्रोत्कोठ्ठर्मानुष्ठात्तृषु कल्यास्त्रान्तरसंस्कृतेषु हरीतादिषु,  
(८) तत्त्रूत्रोक्त विधिना तृतीयाश्रमर्मानुष्ठात्तृषु सौभयादिषु,  
(९) विखनसा सृष्टे समस्ते जगति, च वथायथं मुख्यं वृत्त्या उपचारणव वा प्रवृत्तिर्भवतीति इत्यता ग्राम्येन प्रतिपवदितिे भवति।)

हरीतस्मृति—

'पूर्व विखनसे विषु: प्रोक्तवान् स्यामच्युतः।
भृगो: प्रोक्तं विखनसा भृगुणा च ममेरितम्।'इति

गारुडे—

'पुरा चतुरुप्खादेशांच्यञ्चत्वाः मुनयोग्यम्।
प्रणीय वैषाणवं शास्त्रं भूमावश्च्चयचर्चन्नप।
मनिचिर्मन्द्रे विषुमर्चयासास केशवम्।
आदेशाद्वहाणरो विषुं श्रीनिवासेवयर्चुः।
कर्त्याचो विष्णवपुर्हाते शुभाश्चते भृगुभुति।
गद्गथा दक्षिणे तीरे सीमित तीरे सीमित।'

तस्यान्तिक्षेत्रपि च।

तत्त्स्यः शुभाचित्त्यां भृगुणा स्थापितो हरि।।

इति चोक्तम्। पाञ्चरात्रे—
‘आदे कलिपुगे प्राये सोमकन हला त्रय’।
अवैदिकेशु लोकेशु देवतेशु मुनिकथि।
भगवन्त समासाद्य नारायणमनामयम्।
अनन्ते गड़दशृव विष्मक्षिन् पितापहः।
शश्चोरशृव पञ्चैते प्रम्वचुः शरणं गता।
क्षणमय्रघ्नुत्स्रार्चा वृक्कुदेव न शक्तुमः।
अवैदिकेशु लोकेशु किं कुर्मश्चलमाणः।
तस्मादुपायं लक्ष्मीशु वदास्मां चिरन्त।
इत्युक्तससहर्षितेभ्यः पञ्चारात्तविद्यं क्रमात।
एकैकरात्रमेकं ततं समुपदिष्टवान्।
पञ्चलक्ष्मप्रामाणेन प्रपञ्चितत्।’

इत्युपक्रमे

‘प्रथमं ब्रह्मरात्रन्तु द्वितीयं रुद्ररात्रकम्।
तृतीयमिन्द्ररात्रं यच्चतुर्व ग्रहरात्रकम्।
पञ्चमं मुनिरात्रन्तु पञ्चमरात्रं विदियते।
रात्रिसिद्धी विद्यामसि: प्रोक्तं श्रुतं तं शिवशेषच पञ्चमं।
तस्मातो वाच्यात्रस्योत्तरविद्यादिकं लक्ष्यं तिष्ठति भूते।’।
इत्ये तेन पञ्चाच्यात्रस्योत्तरविद्यादिकं निधिः परमवैदिकस्य
श्रीवैस्वानस्योत्तरविद्यादिकं प्रतिपाद्यते।
‘अथ मत्याकृति: श्रीविष्णुवृद्धिमधयमम्।
निम्नं सोमकं बेदानादत्यस्तक्षे,नोने।
तादृशं पुञ्चरीकाश्रं स्तोत्रस्यस्तोष दृष्टमृ॥
उवाच वचनं ग्रेम्या दण्डवत्राणिपत्य च।
‘तात्तक्रणं लघुः प्रोक्तं मार्गेण भवद्वर्णम्।
न प्रसीदिति तेनास्मन: कमललोचन॥
बैदिकेन त्वदमर्च मे यथापूर्वं वदाच्यु।’
WORSHIP IN A TEMPLE

गृहार्चनायत्रितेऽऽकालयार्चना भारतादिषु प्रतिपादिता दृष्टयते।

यथा—

महाभारते अश्वमेधिके ‘कथं त्वमर्चनीयोऽसि’ त्यादि।

विष्णुधामोऽत्रैः षष्ठसंख्याये—
‘यस्तु देवगृहस्यार्थ प्राकारं परिकल्पयेत्।
स तु स्वर्गं समासां विमानाधिपतिभिर्भेत्॥
यस्तु देवालयस्याये शिलादारार्थिरेव वा।
करोति तोरणं रम्यं स तु स्वर्गाधिपो भवेत्॥
यस्तु देवालयं विष्णोदहरुशैलमुद्रा तथा।
इष्टकाकलितं वापि कुर्यात्स्य फलं बहु॥
अहंयहनवशयेनेदिसहस्त्राणि करोति य:।
प्राप्तोति मण्डपं विष्णोः यः कारयति मानवः॥
केशवस्य स तस्मे कमक्ष्यं प्रतिपद्यते।
प्रतिमार्थ महाविष्णुसाधयेदुत्तमां शिलाम्॥
षष्ठौर्षसहस्त्राणि स्वर्गलोके महीयते॥’

इति।

एतेऽथ च प्राकारतारणमण्डपविग्रहशिलादीना
गृहदेवतास्वंसंवधं: श्रीवैष्णवसंहितासु प्रतिपादितः।
किंच यथा वैष्णवसानामुत्त्यादिकं
श्रुतिस्मृतिपुराणादिशु
विशेषेण प्रतिपादितं तथा इतरेऽथ विशेषेण तदा
वैष्णवसाम्यमभियस्ते यथा। तथा ‘न होते हि।

WHO ARE DEVALAKAS

अथ वस्तुनो देवलका निरूपयते।
वैष्णवसे–

‘अवैष्णवस्विप्रो यः पूजयेदालये हरिम्॥
स ये देवलको नाम ह्वयक्वयवहितकृतः॥
वैष्णवस्विते जात: पाज्यगत्रिण दीक्षितः॥
न दीक्षितो न सम्भाजो (?) लोभामोहामधर्मदर्शनम्॥'
कुर्याचे चेतु विशेषण भवेद्वेलकस्तु सः॥
पाञ्चरात्रे संकर्षणसंहितायाम्-

‘कर्मदेवलका: केचितू कल्पदेवलका: परे।
शुद्धदेवलकाः चाचाये त्रिधा देवलका: स्मृता:॥
अर्थार्थी कालीनिर्देशी यो देवं पूजयेत्स हि।
कर्मदेवलको नाम सर्वकर्मबहिष्कृतः॥
पाञ्चरात्रविधानान्तः दीक्षाविरहितोएवः॥
चतुर्वेदाधिकारोऽऽ त्रिधा देवलका: स्मृता:॥
शुद्धदेवलका: प्रोक्तः सर्वकर्मबहिष्कृतः॥
आर्थिकेन विधानेन देवलतवं न विद्यते।
तस्मात् सर्वप्रथत्तेन वैदिकेन योऽविद्यतेतु’॥

इति
शिवशेखरतने रूद्र:-

अथ देवलकान् वष्ट्रो श्रुणु देवि समाहिता।
कर्मदेवलका: केचितू कल्पदेवलका: परे॥
शुद्धदेवलकास्याये त्रिधा देवलका स्मृता:॥
अन्यस्यृष्टिकारण सत्त्वात्सरपूजकः॥
अदीक्षितः स्वयं तत्रे कर्मदेवलकस्तु सः॥
अनेनेव प्रकारण वत्सरत्रयपूजकः॥
कल्पदेवलका: प्रोक्तः स वै शैलसुते श्रुवम्॥
अनुनुसारमातमाचारितू आगमं शुद्धुूः च यः।
शैलत: तत्स्य शिष्यश्च शुद्ध्वेदेवलकावृभी॥
त्रिधा देवलकलवं तु न विष्णु विषये छदितः।
श्रद्धाल्यादिविषयंथमेतदागमसंस्मतम्॥’॥

इति
स्मृत्यनरे—
शर्व सूर्य तथा चन्द्र दुर्गादी रूढ़देवता:।
चोर्ष्येन्त पर्षव स: सदा: पतति मानवः।।
दुर्गा च भद्रकाली च बुधश्रृंगक्षेत्रपालकः।
पञ्चपूजा च इत्यते पञ्च देवलकः: स्मृता:।।
आदित्यमन्त्रिकां विष्णु गणान्यं महेश्वरम्।।
गृहे पूजा च इत्यते पञ्चदेवलकः: स्मृता:।। इति।

विष्णुधामोत्तरे—
‘चण्डकायाश्र दुर्गाया ज्येष्ठाया भैरवस्य च।
रुद्रस्य पूजका ये वे ते वे देवलकः: स्मृता:।। इति

विष्णु:—
‘देवार्चनपरोयोगिपरार्थविनिकाक्षया।
चतुर्वेदधरोविप्र-सचण्डालसमोभवे’दितिः।।
एवमेञ्ज्ञेचनेः: शास्त्रानुमोदागण्य पूजकानां
देवतानारपूजकानामेव च देवलकत्वं सिद्धान्तवीति
स्फुटमवगम्यते।

हारित:—
‘वेश्वासास्तु ये विप्रा हरिपूजनतिथयः।
न ते देवलकः: प्रोक्ता विष्णुपादाज्ञसंश्रयात्।।’ इति

स्मृत्यर्थसारे— अत्र:— वैदिकनेव विधिनां
दम्यालोभविवर्जितः।।
‘पूज्येद्वश्च्कितो विष्णु स हि देवलको न वै।।’

इति。

अन्यथा: श्रुत्युक्तमार्गिणालयार्थकानामपि देवलकत्वे
OTHER METHODS OF WORSHIP

नन-अज्ञात: कृतमपि भगवदाराधनमपवर्गप्रदेश्या विना शास्त्र अनधिकारिणापि कृतं ततू अपर्ग्रंद किं न स्थादिति चेत-न!

भगवदाराधनकारणां
यथैतं-भगवता-

'यशाराध्विधिमुत्सृज्य वर्तिते कामकारतः।
न स सिद्धिमवानानं न सुखं परां गतिम्।'॥ केन्द्र।

'श्रुतिस्मृती ममैवाज्ञा यस्तामुखं वर्तिते।
आज्ञाचेती मम द्वोही मद्विक्षोद्व न वैष्णव:'॥ केन्द्र।

'मम चापि प्रियं विष्णोद्वदवेवश्च शार्दुलिणः।
मानुषे वैविकाचारं मनसापि न लंध्येत्।'॥ केन्द्र।

अत: अनधिकारिण वर्त शास्त्राम्पत्तिमि तन्नोऽन्नक्षीतकारेण कृतमपि ततू नापवर्गप्रदम्।

इति चतुर्यर्ज्ञा सिद्धान्तेषु-

'एकत्र दीक्षितस्त्रवे सिद्धान्ते वा द्वीपोतम।
क्रिया न कुर्यादस्य कर्माणादि चतुः।'॥ केन्द्र।

आचार्यकम्पथाविष्ठ्यं पूजाज्ञ्यं मधुविन्दिपः।
मने देवे च सिद्धान्ते तदेवास्य हि युज्यते॥ केन्द्र।

CONDUCT A PREREQUISITE

इतसुत्रित्राणं कथ्मिति चेत-स्वाश्रमधर्मार्चरणे नैव भगवदाराधनकारणां सिद्धान्त। यथोत्च्याय-
स्मृतिषु -

‘बहुत्य वा स्वगृह्योक्तं यस्य कर्म प्राचारितम्
तस्य तारवति शास्त्रार्थं कृतं सर्वं कृतं भवेत्।।

इति।

श्रीविष्णुपुराणे-

‘वर्णश्रमार्थवता पुरुषेण पर: पुमान।
विष्णुराराध्यते प्रस्था नान्यस्ततोषकारकः’॥

इति।

तथार्थन्त्रः-

‘वर्णश्रमेषु ये धर्मः शास्त्रोक्ता मुनिसत्कम।
तेषु तिष्ठत्रो विष्णुपाराधयति नान्यथा।
ये यज्ञति पितुनू देवानू ब्राह्मणांश्च हुताशनम्।
सर्वभूतान्तरात्मां विष्णुमेव यज्ञति ते॥

इति।

पुराणान्ते-

‘अनिकार्यं जपं स्नानं तपस्वाध्यायमेव च।
तमेवोहश्रय देवेश्च कुरु नित्यमतन्त्रः॥
प्रातःस्वतः विधिवतू स्नात्वा नित्यं समहितः॥
यज्ञेत कर्मभिःस्ते: विष्णु देवालिस्फङ्क्तम॥

इति।

शाणिडल्यः-

‘प्रवृत्तैश्च निब्रृत्तैश्च स्वर्गीदेशकोऽक्षंदीर्घि।
आराध्यो भगवानेव वेदधर्मेष्टिनात्मः॥
स एव सर्वोपास्यो नान्यस्तसंसारदेवः॥
उभाभ्यं ज्ञानकर्मभ्यामाराध्यः भगवानू हरि:॥ इति
विखनसा प्रणीत्वात्' इति प्रथमेहेतु: निरूपित:॥

THE SECOND POINT

अथायस्य वैखनससुत्रस्य सर्वसूत्राणामादित्वं निरुप्यते। तथा
हि-
ब्रह्मकैवते-
‘यथा मुनिनां विखना आदिभूत उदाहरतः।
सूत्राणां तत्प्रणीततनु तथा श्रेष्ठतमं स्मृतम्’॥ इति।

पुरातने भृगु:–
‘वेदानां व्यासनादवर्षकृ प्रागृहं मिलितनु यत्॥
तात्तु वैखानसी शाखामिति वेदविदो विदुः॥

इत्यार्थयः
‘वैष्णवं सूत्रमेतद्धि सर्वसिद्धिकरं परम्।
आदिभूतसूत्रसूत्राणां वैष्णवतवाच्च तत्तु वै॥
मयासनुरवित तद्वकाश्यपात्रिमिरीचिधिभः’॥

इति।

सकादे च-
‘वैखानसी महाशाखां स्वसूत्रे विनियुक्तवानु॥
पद्मभू: परमो धाता तस्मिनिराधानत्रयम्॥
उत्तरवानु निगमार्थानमाचारं प्रविभागश:’॥ इति।
सूत्रार्थपर्यालोचनायाधि सर्वसूत्रादित्वस्मयावगभायते।
यथा-‘मुखादिद्वदभागिनिच्चे’ ति भगवन्मुखादधिगःसृष्टिः
श्रूयते’
एवं परमपुरुषमुखान्नजातस्योपासनाने:
कुण्डविद्यानादिकमान्त
सूत्रे प्रतिपदितम्
किञ्च नवग्रहमः सवितरुण्डलस्य चतुराश्वतमुच्यते
‘चतुरश्वत’
् वृत्त’ मित्यादिना (सूत्रे) आदाः चतुराश्वस्य सतो
रविमण्डलस्य
कालान्तरे बृहद्वकल्पनं प्रमाणेरवगमने।
एवं च सूर्यसारणिकमः न्यतमार्थ्य रविमण्डलस्य
वृत्ताकारप्रतिपक्तीः। तदद्वारे सोधायनादिभि:
वृत्ताकारतः
रविमण्डलस्योऽक्षयोऽक्षयोऽक्षयः ततः पूर्व चतुराश्वतमेव।
तवदेवासिनु
सूत्रे प्रतिपदितम्।
एवं ‘तानप्रस्थो वैखानश्शस्वस्मुदाचारो वैखानस्’ इति
वैखानसमूद्रमुद्धः तृतीयाश्रमधार्मणा सोधायनः
प्रतिपदयति।
तथा आतीतवैश्वस्मूत्रे ‘अधातस्युत्तमणां व्याख्यायायामः।
बोधायननात्मस्तः सत्याशार्द्ध द्वाह्यायपुराणां
शाकलयमाशस्वलायं शास्मथ्भिं कात्यायनमिति नवानि
पूर्वसूत्रार्गण। वैखानसः शानकायं भारद्राजमानिवैश्वयं
जैमिनीयं
वाधूलं माध्यमिन्दं हिरण्यकेशीय कौषितकमिति
नवान्यपरसूत्रार्गण। एवमेत्स्युराण्यव्याहार्यासूत्रकारणच।
एतां चतुर्वेदमूलानि। पूर्वसूत्रार्गणे शारीरारि
सामायानिन
THE THIRD POINT

अथास्य श्रीवैक्षणसूत्रस्य सुत्रान्तरपेश्चया
वैन्दिकम्यायापादं
प्रत्यक्षश्रुतिमूलकत्वमस्तीति ज्ञापिततु ‘सर्वकर्मसु
श्रुतिमार्गानुसारित्व द्वितीयो हेतुतिन्निरूपयते।
तथाहि-
शुद्धाचमनविधि ‘यत्रत्रिरामति तेन ऋष्ठ: प्रीणाति’
इत्यादिश्रुतिशुद्धाचमनुसारेण सूत्रे ‘ऋग्बेद: प्रीणा’ त्वित्यादिना
शुद्धाचमनमुक्तम्।
ननु-रोधायनेनापि शुद्धाचमनविधिरूप इति चेत्
सत्यम्।
‘आचमनविधि व्याख्यायायम्’ इत्यारथः
‘गोकर्णब्रह्मस्तेन
त्रिराममेति’ प्रथम यत्प्रथम तेन ऋग्वेदं प्रीणाति
यदहितीयं
तेन यजुवेदं यत्तीति तेन सामवेदं प्रीणाति’
त्वाचमनेन
ऋग्वेदादीनां प्रीतिभवतात्त्वुच्छम्। न तु मनः।
श्रुतिश्रुतिशुद्धविधितस्य सत्योपासनस्य
प्रधानभूतमप्रदानानादिकम्याय प्रतिपादितम्।
‘प्रातसूत्रश्रेयत्वादिनांसचमय आपो हिष्ठादिर्भिषितसृजः
प्रोक्ष्य
गायत्र्यापोभिमन्य आदित्याधिभिमुखं विविधिष्ण प्रदक्षिणं
करोति’ इत्यादि। श्रुतिमार्गानुसारित्वं को विशेष इति
चेतु-उच्चयते। श्रुतिमूलले हि प्रमाणयातिषयसम्भवः।

यथाह- 

मनु:-
‘वेदस्मृतिस्वदाःधारः स्वस्य च प्रियमात्मनः।
एतत्चतुर्थयः प्रवहः साक्षादेमस्य लक्षणम्॥
सर्वन्तु समवेश्येतदर्शिलं ज्ञानयथुषया।
श्रुतिप्रमाणयतो विद्वानु स्वधमेन निविष्ठते वेः’॥

इति।
श्रीभारते-
‘वेदप्रणिहितो धर्मः हाधर्मस्तद्विपयतः।
वेदो नारायणससाक्षात्सवयम्भूरितिः शुभम्’॥

इति।

प्रचेता:-
‘अर्मोमांस्य बहिश्शास्त्रं ये चाचाये वेदवविजिता:।
यत्तद्वृत्तृयं तत्त्वयहाद्विद्वाद्वामि विधीयते’॥

इति।

स्मृत्यन्तरे-
‘धर्मं जिज्ञासामानां प्रमाणं प्रथमं शृुतं।
द्वितीयं धर्मशास्त्रन्तु तृतीयं लोकसंग्रहं’॥

इति।

एतावता सर्वकर्मसं श्रुतिमार्गानुसारितव्रूपः तृतीयो
हेतुनिरूप्तो भवति। तथाच श्रुतिमार्गानुसारितवादस्य
सूत्रस्य
सर्वसूत्रोत्तमस्य सिद्धति इति निक्षेपितस्तृतीयो हेतुः।
THE FOURTH POINT

इदानी तावत् वैखानसत्त्वोक्तर्दाह्मनुष्ठानेन
अन्तर्स्थियर फलप्राप्तिः सत्कुलीनेन फलभूयस्वस्वमयपि
भवतीति
ज्ञापितं 'समत्रकसर्वक्रियाप्रतिपादकत्वा' दिति चतुर्थों
हेतुनिरूपयते।

tadyatha-
आत्र सूत्रे नित्यानुष्ठानविधी 'इन्द्रोज्जलमुभाघ्यामि' त्वारथ्य
करप्रक्षालनादीनि समत्रकत्वेःत्तकानि। ब्रह्मयज्ञे 'ऋष्ट्य्य
सत्यज्ञे' त्वादि विशेषः। पुण्याहेतु समत्रकत्वं स्पष्टम्।
सूत्रार्थेऽवनुमतीपालनागिनकुण्डलितानि प्रतिपद्धितमुः।
आधारविधी समत्रकत्वं सिद्धम्। अन्तथामे तथैव।
नान्दीमुखपूर्वकोपनयनादिषष शारीरे इत्ययन
स्थालीपाकादिषष 'पूर्वं' दित्यनन पूर्वं विस्तरेण
प्रतिपद्धितस्यावारविधेः: प्रयोगोत्तमर्थं संक्षेपणे प्रतिपादनम्।
अपरक्रियायम् परस्परस्य समत्रकत्वम्। तत्र छृढतु 'तूण्णी'
मित्युक्त्वत्रि समत्रकत्वं नातीति स्वयमेवास्मिनः
प्रकारान्तरेण समत्रकत्वं प्रतिपद्यतु। तत्र तत्र बर्चि
मन्त्रोपयता भावेऽति विहितत्विषये सर्वं
समत्रकत्वमस्तीत्विवमल्ले। सूत्रणात्ते विहितविषयेष्वपि
समत्रकत्वानुस्ते: तेषां समत्रकसर्वक्रियात्ति नास्ति। तत्र
अपरक्रियायमि सूत्रान्तरणपेशा दुःखश्च। बोधायनेन
अनिमुखादिषष परिवीपरिस्तरणादिक्षेपणं तूण्णीमेवोक्तम्।
अतः
शारीरे इत्ययन समत्रकसर्वक्रियाप्रतिपादनात् पूर्वं तूण्णी पूर्वं तद्वा
सर्वसुत्रोक्तमं चास्य सुत्रस्य सिद्धस्यं निरूपितं: चतुर्थों
हेतुः।
अध्यास्य श्री वैष्णवसूत्रस्य सवांत्मतेः
तत्त्वेर्गुरुत्त्वः तथा तुल्यात्मकाः
निषेधादिसंस्कारार्थामास्त्य सूत्रस्य
मुख्यते एवं एवोपपपद्धति इति ज्ञापितः
निषेधादिसंस्कारार्थानित्यताय विचारिति
पञ्चमो हेतुनिर्देशः।

यथा—

‘अथ निषेधादिसंस्कारानूः व्याख्यायाम्’, ऋशुपुराणम्,
त्युपक्रम्य ‘पाणिग्रहणा’ नीत्यनेन शरीरसंस्कारः
निषेधादिसंस्कारपूर्वकत्वेन प्रतिपादितः।
ननु-जातकोपनयनविवाहनातरभाविनो निषेधस्य
कथमादिति व विषयादिति प्रतिपाद्यते॥
तथा ‘ब्राह्मणस्य
मुखमातीः
मनसा तेव भूतानि पूर्व दक्षोऽसृज्जति
इत्यादिश्वृतिस्मृतिषु
निषेधेन विना उत्तरं दर्शिर्नाच्छ निषेधस्य
किमम्ब्रम्भादित्वां
प्रतिपाद्यते। जातकस्यादित्वं श्रीभारते चालागम्यते।
‘जातकर्मादिबिर्यः संस्कारेः संस्कृतशुचिः।
वेदाध्ययनसम्पन्नशिक्षदृशुः कर्मस्वविशिष्टः॥
शौचाचाररत्तस्मयः मित्यादिः च गुरुप्रियः।
नित्यवृत्तसत्त्वपः स वै ब्राह्मण उच्चते’॥ इति।
एवं हरिवंशे–
‘क्षण दारा: क्ष च संगर्गे: क्ष च भावविपर्यः।
यदियं ब्राह्मणसोऽसृज्जति मनसा मानसी प्रजा॥

Appendix VIII ◆ 211

THE FIFTH POINT
यद्यपि तपसो बीर्य युष्माकं विदितात्मनाम्
सुजध्वं मानसानु पुजानु प्राजापत्येन कर्मणाः।
इति निषेकं विनापि उत्तप्तत्वः श्रूयते इति निषेकस्यादित्वं न
सम्भवति इति चेतु तदस्तु।
निषेकविरहेदपि उत्पत्तिःसम्भवतीत्येवत्रोपपद्धते।
तपोबलायोगबलच्च भगवतो नारायणस्य ब्रह्मणो महर्षीणां चा
मानसप्रजासृष्टो शक्तिःसम्भवति। नान्येशाम्।
यथा–
श्री विष्णुपुराणः

'सिद्धकल्याणःशयं स्पर्शातु पूवेंसामभवनु प्रजः।
तपोविशेषेष्वेष्वाणां तदात्वन्तनत्पिरिवाम्।'
'युगे युगे भवन्येते दशाय युजिमतमः।
पुनंशेषेष्विकुर्चन्ते विहा सत्र न महात्ति।
कनिष्ठं श्वै-वेदांगयां पूर्वं नासि द्विजोत्तमः
तप एव गरीयोपभूतु प्रभावश्रेष्ठेव कारणम्।'
इति
अथ निषेकादित्वं को विशेष इति चेतु-उच्च्यते।
निषेकादित्रिक्रियावतःएव श्रोत्रियार्थं धर्मशास्त्रात्सिद्धार्थितं
ब्रह्मशास्त्रत्वच्च बोधायनादिभिरस्तम्। यथा–
'निषेकेऽगर्भसंस्कारे जातकर्मक्रियायसु च।
विनिवित्तंस्मृत्तां मनः चौर्यं वटसमाप्तनात्।
श्रोत्रियाः इति विज्ञेयः शाखावाराशक्ते च द्वीजः।
विनिवित्त गृहंते पाणिमुखौ चौर्यंविज्ञातस्तु।
प्रत्यपदानं विनिवित्तम् ब्रह्मणयां गर्भमादधुः।
निषेकायः श्रमशास्त्रान्तः सत्क्रिया ब्रह्मणास्थिताः।'इति।
यात्रवृत्ति:-
‘निषेकाद्या: समाजान्ता: तेषां वै मन्त्रत क्रिया:।
गर्भाधानमृतो पुंसस्वनं स्यदनात्पुरा’॥ इति।
मनु:-
‘निषेकादित्रमशानान्ता: मन्त्रेयस्योदिता क्रिया:।
तस्य शास्त्रोधारिकारोरसिमू भजो नायकस्य कस्यचिताव’॥
इति।
बोधायनेन—‘यतो एतम्’ मित्यादिना सूत्रोत्त विवाहपूर्वकत्वनोत्तम। आपस्तम्भन ‘अथ
कर्माण्याचाराचारी’
गृह्यान्ते’ इत्यावधि ‘उपनन्यन्य व्याख्यास्याम’ इति।
भारद्वाजसत्याञ्चाराचार्यामश्वलायनेन ‘उक्तानि
वैतानिकाः’
नीत्यार्थस्य वैववदेवपूर्वकत्वन। द्रष्टायणेन ‘अथातो
गृह्यकर्माणि, उदगयन—पूर्वकपक्ष’ इत्यार्थस्य आचारादित्वन।
काय्यायनक्ष्च ‘अथातो गृहस्थालीपातानां कर्म’ त्यार्थाय निषेकपूर्वकित्वानु। ‘अथ
निषेकादित्रस्सकारान्यः व्याख्यास्याम’
इत्यावधि निषेकपूर्वकित्वन भगवता विखनस्य
प्रतिपादितम॥
एवं च निषेकपूर्वकित्वनोत्तकत्वादस्य सूत्रस्य
सर्वसूत्रोत्तमतः
एतत्सूत्रोत्तक्तथःमानुष्टानोनावै तत्त्वंत्रिणां
सर्वंकृष्टव्यायात्मकपपधते
इति श्रुतिसृष्टितपुराणादिमुख्यन प्रतिपादितमिति निरूपयत:।
पञ्चमो हेतुः।
THE SIXTH POINT

अथेदानी श्रीवैठ्याससुत्रीवृृत्तधर्मेऽपूर्वतृणामेव सर्वेभ्यः।
श्रेष्ठसम्बन्धो सूत्रानगरभृत्ययुक्तं श्रुतिनिर्राशा दशसंस्कारवचः
क्रियाबाहुल्यं वै अशब्दशास्त्रसंस्कारस्वायत्तम्।
तथा हि-
‘अथ निषेधादिसंस्कारानूः व्याख्यास्यामः।
ऋतुस्वरूपम्युर्ध्मसूचनेन पुनः सवस्मनीम्युर्ध्मम्
ध्नू-यानं नामकरणं न्यायशीत्रम् प्रवाङ्गम्-पिण्डवर्धनं
चौलोपनयनं परायणं ब्राह्मविशेषगोपाकर्मं-समावर्तनं
प्राणिग्रहणानि। तव यथा
पुण्डरिकवादने ‘पूलवते अहं यस्य यजुर्वायकाः
अष्टदशोक्तमवरं येषु कर्म। एतत्रियो येषस्थितानि
मूढा जरायुत्तं ते पुनरेवापित्यात्। इति।
श्रीवैठ्याससे तु क्रियाबाहुल्यमयितः। तथा हि।
अष्टदशशास्त्रकारार्थाः पाकव्याजाध्या पृथक्कान्योपपादिताः।
वर्षवर्षाप्रायद्वास्तु विशेषः। पञ्चमहायज्ञसहिताः
द्विविषयः
पञ्चमहायज्ञानामेक्कर्तम्। अपरं चाष्टादशव्यायितः इति।
क्रियाबाहुल्येन किमाधिक्यमिति चेतू-उच्चं।
पुण्डरिकवादने-क्रियावानेष ब्रह्मविद्वां वरिष्ठः। इति
‘क्रियावनतः
श्रीवैठ्याब्रह्मनिष्ठाः सवयं जुहत एकथं अध्ययनतः।
तेयाभ्येतारं
ब्रह्मविद्वां वदेत’ इति च श्रूयते।
बोधायनः-
तस्मादः कर्षण क्रियावान् सतामनुपताचारस्य
श्रोत्रियस्य एव
विजेयः इति। किंचः-कर्मभूयस्तवात् फूलभूयस्तवाच
‘ययोपासनं फल’ मिति व्यायात् सिद्धवति।
अतः-अष्टादशसंस्कारप्रतिपादकवादस्य सूत्रस्य श्रेष्ठव
एतत्सूत्रिणां सर्वोक्ष्ट्वच्योपपद्यत । इति निरुपितः षष्ठो
हेतुः॥

THE SEVENTH POINT

अथ श्री वैखानससूत्रस्य इतरसूत्रायपेक्षाभावात्
स्वात्मस्यस्तीति
ज्ञापितुं साङ्गक्रियाकलापत्ववादिति सप्तमो हेतुनिरूपये।
तथाहि-अत्र सूत्रेऽि अष्टादश संस्कारः श्रीरः:
प्रसिद्धासाङ्गः
एव प्रतिपादितः।
‘अष्टादशकुर्पर्णविधि व्याख्यायामः’ इत्यारथाय
खण्डद्वियेनाद्व-कुर्पर्णमुक्तम्।
‘सायं स्थर्णिदले सहसं पिष्टेन सोमसूच्यणि करो’ तीत्यत्र
विशेषेण स्थर्णिदलादिप्रतिपादनम्।
‘शताभिषेकं पूर्वांहि पुप्पां द्विजभोजनं’ मित्यारथाय–
सायं गोमयसलिनि स्थर्णिदले प्रागानुग्रहे।
प्राचीरेखा द्विप्पचारसंख्या तत्र संलिखेत॥
उदीचिरश्च तथा रेखा द्वित्रीशतसंख्या लिखेत॥
इत्यादिना शताभिषेकप्रयोगश्च उक्तः॥
तथा–
‘धौतवस्मध्यारिणौ स्वाता’ मित्यार्थ्य।
‘दीपाद्यल्लक्ष्ते गेहे त्रीःताःतीर्थय तत्र वै।
चर्मभावे कष्ट वाचि तदहृद्य वस्त्रमात्स्ते’ दिन्ति॥
‘श्रेष्ठोमाण्डःतोर्मान्ते आत्मींति तत्र चर्मणि।
विपुजाधि व्रतवोगि तदहृद्यं चर्म सन्त्येजेत्’॥
इत्यादिना अनिध्वस्तंप्रकारश्र्य प्रतिपादितः॥
पुनर्ग्रहप्रकारश्र्यः
‘त्यागविदानेनु प्रोक्त्यपि ततस्मृतः॥
एकं न ददाति गृहात स्त्री भर्त्रनुस्स्या’॥ इत्यादिना
ब्रह्मेदधिविधिः
‘संस्कारो ब्रह्मान्तनानं सदाचारवस्तयामिः।
ब्रह्मेदोत्तरकल्ललो न सर्वाः द्विजननाम्’॥ इत्यादिना
वृषोत्तरगतिविधिः
‘वृषोत्तत्वगतिविधि वक्षये चेन प्रेतस्यकोचनम्।’
स्नात्स्य वास्तुहोमान्ते प्रेतस्यस्य विमुक्तये॥ इत्यादिभि:
एवं अनूपादनानि सर्वाणि गृहपरिशिष्टे प्रोक्तानि इति
बैद्धिव्यम्॥
अनेन अनन्तस्यरुपकल्पप्राप्तिर्दर्शिता।
अतः सूर्यन्तरलैरपक्ष्यात सर्व सूर्योत्समां स्वातन्त्र्यम् घटत
इति नित्यपस्तसध्यो हेतुः॥

THE EIGHTH POINT

इदानीं तवात् श्रुतिस्मृतिपुराणादिभि: सवॉत्तरज्ञानावगतस्य
श्रीवैखन्ससूत्रस्य अंखिलशिष्ष्यपरिगृहीतव्यस्तीति दर्शयितुः
मन्वादै: स्वीकृतत्वादिति अष्ठमो हेतु: निरूह्यते।
तथाहि—
मनुःः—'अत: परं प्रवविष्यामि धर्मं वैमानसाश्रयप्रमुः।
इत्यार्थं पुष्पमूलपलैवार्यापि केवलेवेरंवेशमुः।
कालपंक्ते—स्वयं श्रीणेवेशानसमस्यं स्थितं:। इतिः।
व्यासः
'मूलार्धे फलार्धे पुष्पार्धे हन्दर्वते:।
वर्त्तयति यथान्यायं वैमानसामस्यं स्थितं:।' इतिः।
गौतमः
'श्रामणकेनानिन्माधायः प्रायामधोजी। इतिः।
चमः
'श्रामणकेन विधानेन सायं प्रातःपृसुशेतु इतिः।
श्रामणकेनानिन्माधायः काले कुरुविन्द वेणु श्यामाकनी
वाराण्डिविंयते' इतिः।
हरितः
'वानप्रस्थो ग्राम्या ओपधी: परिवर्जयेतु। त्रेतार्ग्यां स्थाने
श्रामणकं वारिगूमाधायं वल्कलशाणाचर्मः कुशामुः
जविविलकः वा
वसानो वैमानसप्रोक्तेन विधिना वानप्रस्थो विखना भवति।
अनुज्ञातयिकोः नुप्रस्थाणिकः।' श्रेष्ठ।
वसिष्ठः
'श्रामणकेनानिन्माधायाः भित्तानिन्धृस्वालिकः।।' इतिः
ब्रेधायनः
'वानप्रस्थो वैमानसाश्रयसमुदारय' इतिः।
आपस्मबः
'एकधिनानिकेत: स्या' दिति।
अस्य धर्मकपदीः
'गार्हपत्तिदीनां त्रेतार्ग्यीनां स्थाने यस्येकोः मनः: औपासन एव
बैखानससूत्रे दृष्टवात्। पाणिग्रहणनिनिम्त्वादौपायसनस्या।
जैमिनीयसूत्रे सौमिकाचारतुमास्यप्रकरणे। 'भारद्राजपूर्वं यथा
बैखानसपूर्वं पञ्च' मेंत।
अन्तोभवत्र अन्त्रिव्याख्यानम्-
'षोड्षातिवजा मध्ये भारद्राजसूत्रिणं प्रस्तोतारं
बैखानससूत्रिणं
प्रतिहतारं वर्षेत्' इति।
कपिज्ञालसंहितायायम्-
'आजनाध्यापनयुतः शिखानुग्रहकारकः।
आचार्य इति विज्ञेयो मन्त्रंत्रपरायणः।
आश्रमे वा वने वापि पुनःरदारसाहित्।
अष्टाक्षरपरो नित्यं स बैखानस उच्चे!।
ग्राम्यधर्माणि सर्वाणि वर्जेइंद्रनवासकः।
वल्कलाजिनसंवीतः स मौनीत्यभिधीये!। इति।
पादमो द्वादशाख्षरप्रकरणे-
.................................................पुनःरदारसाहित्य।
वने वा पत्रने वापि जपेवैखानसः शुचि।।
विवृक्तः पुनःदाराध्यः स्वयमेव वने स्थितः।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।।。
THE NINTH POINT

अथेरदानीमापस्तम्भादिसूत्रान्तरनिष्ठाणां सूक्वारादारभ्य
अविचित्तत्वेन परमर्था एकातिवं नास्तीति ज्ञापितुं
वैखानससूत्रित्रां भूत् समवचतोत्तिर्दशितं
‘प्रत्यक्षमनुमानज्ञ शास्त्रज्ञ विविधात्मम्।
त्रयं सुविदितं ज्ञेयं धर्मसिद्धिमध्यभीष्टता’॥

इति मनुस्मरणनुसारेण प्रत्यक्षादिदिर्विभानमध्य्युच्च
अखिलजगदरकारणभूतः श्रीमत्तारायणेकपरवादिति नवमो
हेतुर्निरूप्यते।

अस्य सूत्रस्य नारायणाकपरले—
‘उपक्रमोपसंहारावभ्यासोपूर्वता फलम्।
अर्थवादोपपण्ती च लिङ्ग तात्त्विनिर्णये’॥

इत्युत्कानि पाद्विधानि तात्त्विनिर्णयि सति। तथा हि—
आद्यप्राप्ते प्रथमखण्डे ‘नारायणपरायण’ इत्युत्कम्। एवं
‘सदासत्यायत्तरो ध्यायोगी नारायणपरं ब्रह्म पश्यन्त
धारणा
धारायेकक्षरं परं ब्रह्मान्तोति ‘नारायणपरं ब्रह्मोति श्रुति:।
इत्युपर्ययं सत्याविविधै प्रतिपादतिम्। सन्द्योपासनादि—
पुष्याहाधाराहाराहारहोम—नान्दीमुखऽपनयन—पाणिग्रहणपर्यन्तेऽ
अन्त्यक्मणी च अतोदेवादिवेश्वणा मन्त्र: विनियुतः। एवं
आद्यप्राप्ते ‘श्रोताः ग्राहें गृही जुहुया’ दिति सूत्रोने
इधानिभान
तैतिरीयग्राहणावाक्यानुसारेण परब्रह्मान्तो विवितम्।
परब्रह्माश्वदारिधीयत् भगवानु नारायण एवेति वेदान्तेऽ
निर्णये। तथाहि—
‘सदेव सोमेदम्य आसीत, एकमेवाहिष्ठिता इत्यादिध्यः प्रतिपन्नमेव अभिनिनित्वोपादानकारणस्य “यतो वा हिमानि भूमानि जायते-तदवर्गो’ त्यादिनां जगत्कारणतः ब्रह्मशब्दवाच्यवध्वच प्रतिपाद्यते। तस्य ‘सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्मो’
त्यादिना शोधाकवाक्येन स्वरूपं निरूपयते।
सत्यवाच्यविशिष्टस्य तस्य ‘आनन्दो ब्रह्म’ इतिनिरतिश्यानन्दरूपतः प्रतिपाद्यते। एताद्वारे ब्रह्मरूपं वस्तु
‘नारायणपरं ब्रह्म’ तत्वं नारायण: पर;’ ‘एको ह वै नारायण
आसीत्’ ‘अपहतपस्या दिव्यो देव एको नारायण:’
इत्यादिवाक्ये: श्रीमन्नारायण एवेति निरूपयते।
एवज्ज ‘अध्यूणो’ इतितैततिरीवाक्यशेषस्थः ब्रह्मशब्दोऽधिपि
नारायणपरं एवेति प्रकृत्यात्मास्तन्त्रमाध्यानमपि
नारायणपरमेव। ‘अङ्गन्यथा देवता’ इति अंग्गभूतानां
ब्रह्मस्वादीनामपि वजशशालां भगवत्प्रसादलयमिति
भारतदिनांवगम्ये-तथाहि-
एवमाधाने-‘ध्यायनारायणमुपोष्य’ इति, अतिन्द्रोत्र-भूमानं
विष्णु ध्यायेत्’ इति, दर्श्यपूणमासे-‘उदित आदित्ये
ध्यायनारायण ‘विष्णुतुष्कमिति जपित्वा’ इति, सोमे
च-नारायणपरारायणस्तुणीमासे’ इति च सर्वत्रापि
अभ्यासेन
‘नारायणपराभिनोकत्वात् इदं सूत्रं नारायणपरमेव।
‘अङ्गन्यथा देवता’ इति अंग्गभूतानां
ब्रह्मरुद्वादीनामपि
यज्ञांशभाक्तं भगवतप्रसादावभयं भारतादिनासर्वगम्यते—
तथाहि—
‘ततस्ते च सुरासवै ब्रह्मा ते च महर्षयः।’
वेदद्वेत्य विधिना वेणवं क्रन्तुमारभनु।
तस्मान सत्या तथा ब्रह्मा स्वयं भागमिक्षयात।
देवा महार्षयश्चैव सवं भागानक्षयातु।
ते कार्त्तिकमथर्म्यो भागा: परमसंस्कृता।
प्राप्तगतिवर्णं सं पुरणं तमसं: परम।
श्री भगवान्—
‘ये च: कल्पितो भाग: स तथा समुपागतः।’
प्रीतोश्चै प्रदिशायपद्यमक्षमावृत्तक्षमणाम्।
यवऽर्थे चापि यस्यन्ति सर्वलोकेषु वै सुरः।
कल्पितिवर्णितं वो भागास्ते नरा वेदकल्पितानु।
यो मे यथा कल्पितबान् भागमिक्षनु महाक्रृता।
स महायज्ञाभागाहस्त वेदसुस्ते मथा कृतः।’ इति।
श्री भागवते—
‘अहं भवो दक्ष्म्योपापना: प्रजेशृष्टेश्चामुरेश्चामुखः।’
सवं वचं यज्ञमय प्रपत्रा मूर्धाविण्यं लोकधूरं
वहामः।’
इति।
एवं च भवादीनामपि नारायणानागवेन पूजाहत्वावगमात।
‘अइँ: भारवेन देवानामचैनं न निषिद्धस्यमु।
स्वतन्त्रबुद्धश वृक्षनु हि ब्राह्मणो नरकं ब्रजेत्।’
ब्राह्मणमिद्दमगिन्त् वा हरेरावणं विना।
यस्तु सम्पूण्योपिनि: स पाण्डिक्ष भवेदधुवम्।
इथयदिना अड्गभावेन तेषांचर्चनं कुर्वते
दोषाभावस्मरणाच्छ सूत्रे
तथोऽक्षः।
तथा-
‘अन्यत्र त्वा समारोप्य यदुपासा विधीयते।
सा वृत्ति: प्रच्युता प्रोक्त तव तत्वं तथेऽव च॥
त्वं सर्व समारोप्य यदुपासा विधीयते।
सा वृत्ति: सकला ज्ञेया तव तत्वं तवैः हि’॥
इति झानकाण्डे कर्षणपेनोपासनस्वरूपभेदप्रदर्शनात्
‘सर्वदेवार्या
भवती’ ति मुख्यतेन सूत्रे प्रतिपादित्वात्
प्रच्युतिफलप्रदत्वाभावाय तेषामद्गभावेन पूजनं युजयते।
आप्सामावदिसूक्ष्मे सर्वसंस्काराणां सद्वारकत्वेन प्रतिपादनात्
नारायणैकपरत्वेन सकुदपि समरणाभावत् तेषाः न
नारायणैकपरत्वम्।
ननु-किमपर्यं नारायणैकपरत्वेन सूत्रं प्रणीतमिति चतु-उच्यते।
नारायणस्य अखिलजगदेककारणत्वात् परंब्रह्म
परमात्मावदिशावदवाच्यत्वात् अपवर्गंदिफलप्रदत्वात्
समाभविधिकरहितवाच्छ नारायणैकपरत्वेन प्रणीतम्।
अन्त-
‘नारायणादुदो जायते नारायणादिन्द्रो जायते।
नारायणादुदृश्यादिदित्या: रुद्रावस्मस्वर्णैणि च भूतानि।
नारायणादेव समुद्भोज्यते। नारायणात्रलीयते’ इत्यादा:
‘नारायणपरं ब्रह्मोत्यार्थं ‘अन्तर्विद्धिः तत्सर्वं व्याप्य
नारायण: स्थितं’ इत्यादा:, ‘तेमेव विद्वानमृत इह भवति।
नान्यः पन्था अयनाय विद्यते ्न तत्समश्राभ्याधिकः
हृयते ्काय यह श्रुतिविचित्रविहृयते स्वाभाविकी ज्ञान बल
क्रिया च ्तत्त्वदायः, 'एको है वै नारायण आसीत।' इत्यादाः: 'यतो वा
इमान भूतानि जायते। येन जातानि जीवित।
ययन्त्रयन्त्रभिसंविशषिति। तत्त्विज्ञानस्वः। तदृढ़हो' ति 'परति
विश्वस्थापितेश्वर' भिम्यायायाः श्रुतयः प्रमाणम्।

cांब्पुराणेः
'श्रुतिन्थ्यः: स्मृतिप्रोक्ताप्रायोचित्ते भयं गतः।
क्रमेण श्रुतिन्थ्यस्य जनुभृतानरामाश्रयेतु।
कर्मेऽस्य पुराणं च प्रोत्ते हि मरणान्तिकम्।
प्रायोगिन्ति मनुष्यानि पापिष्ठानि सुदाृताणम्।
भयं दुर्लभिरतानि मरणे जायते भूषाम्।
तेषामेवाधिशर्याय तदहं तन्त्रमुक्तवान्।
पाज्जर्त्रं भागवतं तेन सात्त्विनवालकम्।
देवप्रणान्तु समुदिश्य कमलापितेश्वरी।' इति।
अत: श्रीमानारायणकपर्वात् परमेकानित्वं
श्रीमाधृत्यनानाञ्चावेति प्रतिज्ञा कर्तुमुचिता।
एवं 'अविलाजगेकारणश्रीमानारायणकपर्वात्' इति
नवमहेतुनिर्थितः।

THE TENTH POINT

अथास्य श्री वैखानसुत्रस्य श्रीमानारायणकपर्वादू
तत्सून्त्रानुवादतामेव भगवत्प्रवतत्तल्लभ्वतः इति
प्रतिपादनाय ्भगवतप्रेममतमतोपपते् रिति
दशमहेतुर्निरुप्याहे्
छन्दोगब्राह्मणे्

‘ैवानसा वा ऋषय इंद्रय प्रिया आसनू’ इति।
अत्र इंद्रशब्दः परमात्मपर् इति पूर्वमेवोक्तम्।

वाराहे्

‘अश्रव्यः कपिला गावः तुलसी विखनास्तथा।
चतवारो मत्रिया राजनू तेषां वैवानसनो वरः’॥ इति॥
‘यत्र वैवानसा विप्रा यत्र सति गवाः गणः।

यत्र बिल्वः पलाशायच तत्र सत्तिहतो हृति’॥ इति
‘येष्वयन्ति नरा भक्तया नारायणमनामयमू।
तान्यान्ति विबुधा बहाया देवतागणा:॥
मध्ये भक्तिपरो यजुर मध्यां मत्तरायणः।
मध्यानी स्वकुलं सर्वं नयत्च्युतःपतमू॥
येष्वयन्ति सदा विष्णुं न ते प्राकृतमानुषः॥
नाविष्णुगुजायते विष्णुं विष्णुविष्णुमच्चयेत्॥

रूपद्वयः हरे् प्रोक्तं विज्ञमच्चक एव च॥
विम्बेद्वावहानादूर्धवं सदा सत्तिहितोजर्म्यः।
अर्चकस्तु प्रसन्नात्मा हरिरेव न संशयः॥
कलिः कृतद्वस्तेषां कृलेषारस्वव व सुखावहः॥
येषा शरीरमनिं हरिशुश्रूषणं रतम्’॥ इति。

तत्रेव–
देवतार्ज्ञे्

‘कर्ष नयति पापानि पुण्यवृद्धिकरोति च।"
दारवेधि: तथा पुण्येऽस्यपोषिणेऽच न तत्कलम्।
भगवद्वद्रक्कितानां चत्तलं प्राप्यायात्मात्। इति।

अन्यत्र—
‘सत्संड्ग देववर्जनसत्करशाः परोपदेशे च रतो मनुष्यः।
स यति विश्वे: परमं पदं
यदहाः वसाने स्वयुत्तुल्यतेजः।॥
इति।

अन्यत्र—
‘नारायणेऽकनिष्ठा ये साधवकास्तानू निबोधत।
पुरुषा राजसार्यचैव नानादीवत्त्वा जिनः॥
बाह्रा निरदेवताश्रयैव तामसा: परिकीर्तिता:।
रजस्तमोभभूताणां न तु मोक्ष: कथवचन॥
इति

पुराणाते—
‘चतुर्व पूर्वते विश्वुविधिना प्रवत्तिनिः।
न तत्र ह्याधिकौत्तित्वाधिचौरादिकं भवम्।॥ इति।

किर्क्का—
‘नित्यभुक्तोपभोग्यत्वात्यध्यूहात्मानो हरे:॥
तत्कालसर्विकृत्वे कलक्षताद्विधववाति:॥
विशुद्धैयोगसंसिद्द्रैशिचन्त्वयात्नातात्मान:॥
अर्चात्मन्येव सर्वायामधिकारो निरंकुश:॥
अर्चावतारिख्यो ममम्युत्तेश्वतस्वा।
उक्ता गुणा न नावकते वर्तुं वर्ष्यशतेष्टि॥
एवं पञ्चर्पकारोजहमात्मानं पत्तामधः॥
पूर्वस्मादपि पूर्वस्मात् ज्ञायांशेषवेधस्तरोत्तरः॥
सौलभ्यतो जगत्स्वामी मुलभोहस्तरोत्तरः॥

इति प्रतिपादितार्थीया भगवत: परत्वादिषु सौलभ्याभावात्
अखिललोकसमपुन्नीवनाधर्मचर्चावतारः॥
तदेकपरत्वाह्नेनासा: तत्त्वितमः॥
एतादृशारायणिकपर्त्वाभावादुच्यायनस्य अपस्तम्बादीनाज्यच्
न कर्थिन्धुदिपि परमेकान्तित्वं भगवत्प्रियतमत्तिज्ञच् सम्भवति॥
एवं च वेचानसानामेव परमेकान्तित्वं
भगवत्प्रियतमत्तिज्ञोपव्यध्यते इति सर्वं समज्ञवसमिति दशामो
हेतुनिरुपित:॥

Selected Portions from the Original text have been reproduced here to provide a connected reading.
Appendix IX

MARICI ON VAIKHĀNASA PHILOSOPHY

(Excerpts from Vimānārcanā-Kalpa, Patalas 85-95)

-तत्त्वोपदेश विधिं वच्ये-  

तत्स्य भावसत्तत्वमिति तत्स्य परग्रहणं: परमात्मनो नारायणस्य भावः ‘तत्स्य नारायणः: पर’ इति श्रुतिः। तद्वर्गमनं ज्ञानं तद्विदः ।
ब्रह्मविदः। तस्मात्परमात्माःः, जीवात्मा ज्ञाता, श्रुतयो ज्ञानमिति
ब्रह्मवादिनो वदन्ति। तदुप्रहणो निष्कलस्मकलश्च स्वभावः।।

निष्कलः:- परमात्मनोज्ञतू न किंचिदस्तीति क्षीरे सर्पः:, 
तिले तैलं, पुष्ये गंधः:, फले रसः:, काष्ठ्य अनिरिव अंतर्विश्वः
तत्स्यं व्याप्सकाशोऽपमः: ‘अंतर्विश्वः तत्स्यं व्याप्स्त नारायणःस्यत’ इति ‘आकाशाशीरीः ब्रह्मः’ तिं अशीरीः: शीरीः
व्याप्तिः तिष्ठति, वन्यविपशेषकःलवादिनिष्ठम्: ।

अमलः: नित्यः: अविन्योगप्रमेयः: निर्गुणो निर्गच्छो निरवयो
निराशंतो निविकल्पो निर्द्वहो निर्वचनः: अतीतदियः:
सुसूक्ष्मलवादनिर्देशः: सदसदिति ब्रह्मवादिनो वदन्ति।

परंथाम परंत्योति: सर्वशः: सर्वशक्रिम्रयः सर्वदेवमयः सर्वध
मयः: सर्वधारः: सनातनः: ज्ञानवज्जित्वान्वितीयस्थानगो बहि: प्रजः: प्रजावस्थः:
स्थूलपृथ्वीभागेन वैश्वनार्तरतेज: स्वरूपेण भूज्ञान: सर्वेष्णामात्या
गुहायां निहित: ‘अगोरणीयामहतो महीयानात्या गुहायां
निहितोस्य जन्तो’ रिति श्रुति:। तस्मादुदयकस्मपलानातराकाशोपलब्ध
वैश्वनार्शिकाया त्रिगुणात्मको विष्णु: परमात्मा तिक्षिति:। ‘तस्या
शिरायामध्ये परमात्मा व्यवस्थित:। स ब्रह्म स शिव’ इति
श्रुति:। एवं निष्कलिमिति विज्ञायते:।

अथ सकलः काढळे अग्निर्ममनातुन्त्वलशिव निष्कलिमिति
को विष्णु: ध्यानमेशनेन भक्तया संकल्पनातु सकलो भवति।
तस्मादग्नि स्वस्फूलिंगा इव ब्रह्मोज्जाणादिदेवता रूपेष्ठिन्नलातु
कुलालचक्रस्थलो घटुणरावालिमेद इव यथार्थ: मनसा भावित
तत्तद्यो भूता विष्णु: प्रकाशिते। ‘विश्वतारश्चक्षुरतविश्वस्तूमुखो
विश्वतोताहुस्ततविश्वस्तपात:। संबाहृभ्यं भवति संपत्तेष्यार्था
भमी जनयनू देव एक’ इति श्रुति तत सर्वव्याप्यशारीर: परमात्मैव
सर्वभूतानां भवति: श्रवश्वरक्षणसंह्यति नित्तित्तशारीरी भवति।
‘अनि मेव देवानामभरसो विष्णु: परमस्तत्ततेण सर्वा अन्या देवता’
इति ब्राह्मणम। तस्मातः प्रधान: परमेश्वर्यो विष्णु: स एव
पुरुषः स एव स्रष्टा, पाता, हर्ता, अखिलस्या। तद्विष्णु: पुरुषः।

तद्विष्णोविभूति: श्री: सा च नित्या आदानतरहिता अव्यक्तक्षुपिनी
प्रमाणस्रमाणासाधारणभूता विष्णो: संकल्पानुरुपा नित्यावनन्दयो
मूलप्रकृतिरूपा शक्ति: तद्विष्णु प्रकृतंशभूता पौष्टिका: तद्विष्णु
स्थिरयः। तदात्मिका मया प्रकृतिः: मायी विष्णु:।
प्रकृतिसुप्रस्तुतेवेतवानवादी। तथ्यां लोकप्रवृति: विकारस्यु: सवें
प्रकृतीयुपन्यातः। कार्यकारणकलिते हेतु: प्रकृतिः: पुरुष: सुखदु: खानां
भोजकृते हेतु:। प्रकृतिस्थः: पुरुषः प्रकृतिसनु गुणानू भुख्ये।

सा प्रकृतिद्विग्भ्या भवति चेतनाचेतनेति, अचेतना पंचभूते:
मनोबुध्याधिकार्य-पैरिष्ठा भिन्ना। अन्या जीवभूता चेतनेति। तथा
प्रकृत्या सदा संझिनिप्त: पुस्या:, प्रकृतिस्थ: जीवाचामः
क्षेत्रजः बहव:, तेष्य नित्या अनादोविद्यासंबुचितपण्यपापपालः
भोतु कुहुविवं देह प्रविष्या तत्तदायांविनानिनः
तत्र शुभारुभकरमणेण कुता तत्त्वकलानुरुपं देहं पुनः पुनः प्रायः
वर्तत इति विज्ञायते॥

अथातः परमात्मन: सकाशादिनिर्मयमयमण्डलभवतः
तदन्तर्गताः सर्वेषामण्डलानामूर्ति सनातनमंचत्यं देवर्यल्यनिलक्ष्यं नित्यशुफळबुधुः
मुद्दस्वभावपुपुत्रान्यभूयमानं वैश्वावाण्डस: तत्रविष्णुलोकाकाश्चतरः;
आमोद: समोद: प्रमोद: वैक्षण्डणिति। एकक्षयोपरि यथाक्रममेण
भवति। तस्मिन् हेममयप्रकारः गोपुरतोरणाशतसहस्रे: कनककमलकुसुमादिभिरपि अलंकूँते,
अमृतवल्पूणाशतसहस्रेशष्टि सरितां प्रभासमाने दिव्ये लोके सहस्वादित्य संकारां हेममयं
ह्वादशतलेूयुंतविशां, नित्यज्ञानक्रियर्यविशेषताविदेशर्वशिष्यी: नित्य
परिजनैृयुंत मंदिरस्। तस्मिन् व्योमनिलये परमात्मा स्वसंकल्पने
देवीभूपणायुथे: सह आमोदे विष्णु:, प्रमोदे महाविष्णु:, समोदे
सदाविष्णु: वैकुंठे सर्वव्यापी नारायण आसीनो भोजेतु॥

अधोतो देहलक्षणं वक्ष्ये-

स्वांगुलिभि: वणावतंगुलो देह। तद्हादशांगुलानिधिप्रमाणः
प्राण: प्राणायामेन समो भवति। (वहिमभण्डलम्, तत्पुरुषः:) (गुदादारभव वणांगुलदूर्यं मेध् मेधातवंगुलाभास्तामध्येकांगुलेद्वह:)
गुदातूव्यंगुलादूर्यं देहमध्यमः। तस्मिन् हेमाभं त्रिकोणं वहिमभण्डलम्
तन्मध्ये बिनुनादेन सह रेफानिजं चलति। तन्मध्ये बिनुनादेन
सह रेफानिजं चलति। तन्मध्ये मण्डलपुरुषो यज्ञृमूति:
पिंगलानुशः (प्रियाभिषकु: चतुर्दशंग: वणेत्र: सपहस्तो दक्षीणो
अभ्यस्त्रकृत्यक्षतिखद्युथ: वामे वरस्त्रकृत्येवः; त्रिपादः
पीतांबरधरः) (श्रीवत्सांकः) किरीटकेयरूपादिसर्वभिरणायुक्तः।
दक्षिणामयोः स्वाहास्वधाभ्यां सहितः, सर्वदेवः परिवृतः स्थितः।

तदृशं नवांगुलं कन्दस्थानं। चतुंगुलोत्सेधायांं, लघादिसपरं
ततुभिभूषितं, अण्डाकृतिकं, कन्दस्थितं नाभो द्रादशरयुः
चक्, तत्र चक् पुण्यपापप्रचोदितसतनुप्जरमध्यस्तो लूतिक
द्वै प्राणारूढः प्रवर्तते जीवः।

तस्यैव नामः तिर्यंगता अधं ऊर्ध्वं गता अष्टयक्रृतिरष्टध
कुकुटिलानागरुप्या विद्यामुद्युमुखेन ऊर्ध्वबारं संतोषः, कन्दपाश्र्यः
सिध्वता कुण्डलीभूता सर्फळणामणिमण्डलक्रिष्यमपेयुः
कुण्डलिनीशक्ति: आतमः। फणेन बहसःह्राणतः सुपुम्नानाडीरष्ट्र
मुप्गृह्य तिष्ठति।

नाथ्या उपरि विनास्त्यं हृदयं। तत्र तत्र प्रतिष्ठितः हृदयं
अर्कबिंब: तस्मिनु सकाराबेजानित्वं सहस्रबालायुः ज्योतिर्भवति।
ततर्थ्यं मण्डलपुरुषो विष्णूमूर्ति: तत्रणामिद्वसंकाशो हेममयो
हिरण्यश्रमुकेशानाश्युः। पीतंबरः: श्रीवत्साकं: चतुभुजः
शांकचक्रधरं: अभय कद्यवलिंबितहसत रत्नास्त्रेत्रपाणिपादः
सौम्यः। सुपुम्नामुः। किरीटकेपूर्णारकक्षकाप्रलंकोषपि
दिस्वाभरणभूषितः। सृष्टिस्थित्यन्तकारणः। देवीभ्यं पारिशिक्तः
सहितः। स्थितः।

तदृशं नासायेनु शुद्धस्फटिकसंकाशां वंदनार्त्यम्। तस्मिनु
श्रीकाराबीजानितम्, आमृतं स्रवनं श्रवीरोचिः द्वारा तत्तत्त्वं
मण्डलपुरुषो नारायणमूर्ति:। शुद्धस्फटिकसंकाशाः। पीतंबरः
श्रीवत्साकं: चतुभुजः। शांकचक्रधरः। अभयकद्यवलिंबितहसतः
पद्मोदरदलापनेत्रो रत्नास्त्रेत्रपाणिपादः। किरीटकेपूर्णारकादि
सर्वाभरणभूषितः। स्मरेखुः। देवीभ्यं परिशिक्तः सहितः।
तस्योपरि पूर्णिः सुपुम्नाया अग्रे मुक्तिवर्णः। तस्मिनु शिरः पद्म
अधोमुखमूर्ध्वमूलं शोड़शदलयुं तस्मिन्न स्थितं अमृतधारार्थः।
सहस्रयात्रापूलाव्यामां मण्डलपुरुष वासुदेवं ध्यायेदिति विज्ञायते॥

अथ कथाद्वारः द्वादशाङ्गुलं सुचारुनालं अणि मामहिमालधिमागारियार्थः। प्राकाष्मीश्वरं वशिष्ठस्मियं वेदेष्वरं-
दलेखं प्रकृत्यात्मककर्मविकृतं विद्याकृतं संयुक्तं अधोमुखं हदयकमलं
प्राणायामेवयंकितं उच्चमुखं भवति। तस्मिन्न: कर्णाकामध्ये
महानन्दयंजलं। विश्वाचि: विश्वतोमुखं: आपातलनमस्तकं
संतापयति। ततः तदं पीताभा नीवारशृवकत्तवी वाहितिखा तस्या:
शिखाया मध्ये प्रज्ञालिनीत्योतोपरमेव स्वसंकल्पेन तत्जान्नूऽप्रभः।
पीताबर्द्धर: पदमाक्रं: रक्तास्पियाणियापादश्चतुभूषिणश्रंकंशांखं
रोभेन्द्रक्कथलंबंत्तिहस्तं: श्रीवत्सांकः सुप्रसन्नः: शुचिसिन्ति:
सर्वभरणं भूषितं: हुदी स्थितं: परमामः। दक्षिणायनयो
(श्रीभृजीम्याः) विश्वतिमायायाः परिष्कृत: सह संस्थितः।
"नीवारशृवकत्तवी पीताभास्वयमः पुष्पमा तस्या: शिखायामध्ये
परमान्वा व्यवस्थितः"॥ इति श्रुतः। तं विष्णु जिज्ञातुः
ध्यान्योगोऽन्त्यकात्मकं प्रयेत्।

"सदा पशुन्ति सूर्यः" इति श्रुतः। विश्वव्याप्तिनं विष्णु
ध्यानमथनेनास्विर्भूतं तेजोधासुरं भक्त्या सकलं संकल्पः
आवाहास्वयमे भवति॥ "प्रवः पानमंधसो धियायते महेश्वराय
विष्णुवेचार्चतं" इति श्रुतः। तस्माद्विश्ववचनमेव द्विजेनरहसः
कर्त्त्वात्मिन्ति विज्ञायते॥

जीवात्मा अंजनाभ: नित्यशुल्कः (बुज्जः: बोधनिर्विकारः
नित्याणग्रामाः:) सर्वगत हृदयेवंबूः देह प्रवृत्य शुभशुभकर्मिणि
करोति।

तत्कर्म द्विधा भवति ऐहिकमामुखिमं चेति। तत्राहिंक
भोजनायैवान्न्द्रद्वानाव्रणास्वसनश्रयांदिकम्। आमुमाति।
अहिंसादान्धर्मपरोपकारभगवदराधनादिपुत्रपणानि सर्वाणि भवति। देवयोगवेहावसाने स्वकार्मिनुसूर्य परलोक प्रायः सत्तत्कर्मफलं भुक्तवा श्रीणे फले निवृत्य, आकाशं प्रविष्टित।

वायुभूम्ता अयं धूमो भूमा अपः प्रविष्टित। अपे भूमा दर्शं प्रविष्टित। अवंभूता भूमी वर्षित। भूमा ओरधिवनस्पतीनु प्रविष्टित। ओषधीभ्योग्मु। अम्बाच्छुकुलशोणितो च भवतः। ततः स्वविषयं योनि प्रविष्टित। प्रतिदिवसवृध्ध्या परिणातो जायते च। एवं क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्योश्च परसयं संबंधादननतसंसारस्थानरजगनरमृगश्युपक्षकिरहाःपुजस्ववे-दजोजनज्ञेदा वहवो भवति इति विज्ञायते।

अथ अयं देहं: जम्मकृत्वा भार्यमयपाणिनिबन्धितो भगवन्यायाया मोहितः कामक्रोधलोभमोहमदमात्सर्थिः हिंसादीन करोति। योनिद्विग्रहण निमर्दमु पुन: पापीयसियो योनिमात्रिय पुनर्जन्मानं वर्गरक्षकलेपै कर्मसु प्रवर्तित। तस्मादग्रहवनमायाया मोहितवात् भगवन्तं समाधितथ भक्तवा नारायणमुपासित।

तदुपासनाते सोपि भक्तकत्वसल्लावात् भक्तानुकंपया स्वमाया मोचयति। तत् आत्मा साम्यन्त्रान प्रविष्टित। परशादादायधर्मयुक्तो भगवदार्धनं करोति। तदाराधनेन संसारान्तगमित्वो जीवात्मा परमात्मानं नारायणं पशुवत। सोप्यपुरानुरूपिकां प्रसादं यवत। परशात्तुकसायो भवति।

संसारबन्धनवासनान्युक्तिमूः। तदपि समारा ध्वनिश्रीचतुरविधंदावती: सालोकं सामीयं सारूसं सायुप्यमिति। आयामद्वायायत: सालोकं, प्रमोदद्वायायत: सामीयम, संमोदद्वायायत: साहूं, वैकुण्ठद्वायायत: सायुप्यमिति। तच्य नित्यांस्वात् अमृतसापनः सर्वदा तद्रिणोऽपि। परमं पदं सदा
पश्यन्ति सूर्य 'इति श्रुति:॥ भगवनं नान्यथा प्राणोत्तीति विज्ञाते॥

अथ भगवतसमाश्रयणं चतुर्विधम् भवति (समाराध
नमित्यामनंति) जपहुतार्चनाध्यानमिति। साविनीपूर्वं वैण्णवीमूचम्,
अष्टाश्रयं वा, भगवनं ध्यातवा अध्यसंतु स जयः।
अग्निहोत्रेत्यादिद्बि रथ दूति तद्वन्ति होमः, गृहे देवायतने वा
वैदिकेन मार्गेन प्रतिमदिष्टू पूजयेत् तद्वन्ति । निष्कलसकलविभागं
च ज्ञात्वा अष्टाङ्गग्राह्यगामार्गाणं परमात्मां गीव आत्मना चिन्तयेत्
तद्ध्यानमिति।

तेवचमेव सर्वाधिसाधनं स्वातं। तत्र परमात्मैव पञ्चधा भवति।
'सवा एष पुरुषः पञ्चधा पंचालये' इति श्रुति:॥

तस्मादामाशादि महाभूतानां (क्रमेण) परमात्मनि भेद एव।
स्थ्यास्सहवनीयास्तवाहार्यगार्हपत्यास्ससथ्यार्थः पञ्चाश्रयिनवत्
‘पञ्चधापूर्णी व्यक्त्रमहीरांद्रेष्टे’ इति श्रुति:॥ प्राणादिपञ्चवायुमेवतैविव
पञ्चमृतिनिमेवदिविढः इति 'पोपुयमान: पञ्चधिम्बः स्वगुणः प्रस्त्रे:
सर्वानिमानु धारितिष्ठसि' इति श्रुति:॥

तस्मात् 'विष्णुपुरुषस्तवार्श्चुतुनिन्यात्र' इति मूर्तिनां पञ्चाणां
आदिमूर्तिश्रुतिष्णु: तद्वदावच चतस्मो मूर्तयं: 'तद्विन्यमः श्रमापदाय
चतुर्गायेत् इति श्रुतिः। तस्मात् 'ब्रह्मा चतुर्यात् भवति। पादाद्ध
तिः त्रिपादातू कैवलच्च क्रमेण धर्मज्ञानेश्वरायं वाह्यं विषयमुणी:
चतुभिं मूर्त्त्यो भवति। आदिमूर्तेऽश्चतुर्मृत्तित्वातू क्रमेण
विष्णुमहाविश्वामक्षु: सदाविद्वार्यापि नारायण इति चतमूर्त्त्यो
त्रिगुणात्मको विष्णु: परमात्मा तिष्ठति। 'तस्या शिखायामध्ये
परमात्मा व्यवस्थित:। स ब्रह्मा स शिव' इति श्रुति:॥ एवं
निष्कलमिति विज्ञातये॥
अथ सकलः काण्ठे अगिर्येंघ्नातुंच्चलस्त्री निष्कलात्यको 
विषेण: ध्यानमयनेन भवत्या संकल्पनात् सकलो भवति।
तस्मात् नेबियस्फुलिंगा इव भ्रोणानांदस्य नरम्य भूविन्त्य 
कुलालक्रस्तेष्व्रि मृदो घटश्चर्यायदीश्व इव यद्यपूर्ण मनसा 
भवितं तत्तद्वृयो भृत्या विषेण: प्रकाश्ये। "विश्ववत्सक्रुतेनविश्वतोमुखे 
विश्वतोबहुरुतविश्वतस्यात्। संवाहुष्वऽय धमति संपत्ततेहार्वा 
भूमी जनयन्नू देव एक" इति भृति: तत्र सर्वध्यायेणरः
परमात्मेव सर्वभूनां प्रभवरहस्त्यसंवहि निमित्तदारिणी भवति।
‘अनिमेव देवानायामो विषेण: परमस्तदंतयेण सर्वं अया देवता’
इति ब्रह्माणम्। तस्मात् प्रधानः परमो भव्ययो विषेण: स एव 
पुरुषः स एव सत्यत्, पाला, हर्ता, अखिलस्य। तद्द्रातः 
पुरुषः।।

tद्रातंविप्रभृति: श्री: तस्मान नित्या आध्यात्मिकता 
अव्यक्तरूपणी प्रमाणान्प्रार्थिणाःधारणभूता विषेण: संकल्पनानुरूपा 
नियान्त्रयिदै मूलप्रकृतिरूपा शक्ति: तद्द्रातः प्रकृत्यंश्वभूता 
पौष्णम: तद्द्रातः सिथ्रय: तदात्मिकः माया प्रकृति:। मायी विषेणः।
प्रकृतिपुरुषयेतावला। ताथ्या लोकप्रवृत्ति: विकारगुणा: सर्वं 
प्रकृतिपुर्वनप्रवृत्त:। कार्यकारिनमंत्वे हेतु: प्रकृति:, पुरुषः सुख्यु:खः खाणः 
भोक्तृते हेतु:। प्रकृतिस्य: पुरुषः प्रकृतिजानु गुणानु भृते॥

सा प्रकृतितिहृदयं भवति चेतनाचेतनेन्ति, अचेतना पंचभूतः
मनोबुध्याकारःपृष्ठध्रा भिन्नः। अन्या जीवभूता चेतनेति। तथा 
प्रकृत्या सदा संश्लेषः: पुरुषः:, प्रकृतिस्य: जीवात्मान: 
क्षेत्रजः: बहवः:, तेपं नित्या अनाविद्यासत्तेत्पुरुषपापफलं 
भोक्तृते बहुविधं देह्य प्रविश्य तत्तदात्माभिमानिन: तत्र 
शुभश्चुष्णभक्तर्मणी कुल्या तत्तस्तानुरूपं देहं पुनः पुन: प्राय्य 
वर्तनं इति विज्ञायते॥
अथात्: परमात्मन: सकाशांतिरणमयमण्डमभवत्, तदन्तर्गतानां
सर्वंशांमण्डानामुपरि सनातनमधिचिन्त्य देववर्णनभिलक्ष्यं नित्यशुद्धबुद्धे
भवति। विज्ञानशं: पुरुष: महविज्ञानशं:सत्य: सदाविज्ञानशं:
अच्छुत: व्यापिनोंशोनिरुच्छ: इति धर्मान्दिब्रह्महाष्टङ्गचतुर्दशं भियते।
पुरुष:पुरुषार्थक: परमपुरुष: धर्ममय इति, सत्य: सत्यात्मक:
ज्ञानस्वर्त्तोमय इति, अच्छुतोऽपरिमित: ऐश्वर्य श्रीपतिरिति
अनिरुच्छ: महान्वै वैराग्यस्वर्त्संहारार्धिति। एवं पञ्चमृत्तिनामभिभिः
गुरुपदेश्येन अष्टाङ्गयोगमार्गेन ध्यात्वा आवाहा अच्छ्येवदित्याह
परीचि:॥
Vidyalankara, Sastra-Chudamini, Sangita-Kalaratna, Professor Saligraman Krishna Ramachandra Rao, is a well-known scholar who combines traditional learning with modern research. Well versed in Sanskrit, Pali, Ardhamagadhi and several modern Indian languages and acquainted with Tibetan and some European languages, he has written extensively on Vedanta, Buddhism, Janism, Indian Culture, Art and Literature.

In his professional career, however, he was a Professor of Psychology. He has headed the Department of Clinical Psychology in the National Institute of Mental Health and Neuroscience’s, Bangalore and the Department of Indian Culture in the Collision College Study Center of the University of the Pacific (U.S.A.) He was the senior associate of National Institute of Advanced Studies (Indian Institute of Science), Bangalore, and Guest Faculty, Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore and member of the Governing Council of TTD (SVCL Research Center), Tirupati. He has been member of Karnataka State Lalitha Kala Academy and Sangita Nritya Academy and Sangita Nritya Academy; he has served on the Agama Board (Govt. of Karnataka). He is President of Silpa-Kala Pratishtana. The Govt. of Karnataka has honored him with the 1986 Rajyotsava Award. He has received awards from Lalita-Kala Academy and Sangita Nritya Academy. He has been Awarded the Veda-Sanman for the year 2000 by the Govt. of India (Ministry of HRD, Sandipani Mahavidyalaya, Ujjain). He has written more than Sixty Books in Kannada, a Play in Sanskrit, and a Pali Commentary on a Buddhist classic. One of his books on Iconography in Kannada has won the State Sahitya Academy Award, as also another of his Book on the Tirupati Temple.