

Sri VaikhAnasa Bhagavad SAstram

(An Introduction)



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CONTENTS

prArthanA slokam	1
Introduction	3
VaikhAnasam	4
VaikhAnasas and SrI VikhAnasa Maharishi	16
VaikhAnasa ideology	26
VaikhAnasa Kalpa sUtra	29
SrI VishNu - Supreme godhead of VaikhAnasas	33
Atma sUktam	39
SrI VaikhAnasa Bhagavad SAstram	49
VaikhAnasa Literature	61
Divya desams following VaikhAnasa Aagamam	80
nigamanam	82
Appendices	83
Appendix 1 - Reference Books	85
Appendix 2 - Bibliography	89
Appendix 3 - Divya desa details	91





VaikhAnasa gruha archa mUrthys at SrI Ramakrishna Deekshitulu's gruham



श्रीः

श्रीमते श्रीलक्ष्मीनृसिंह परब्रह्मणे नमः

श्रीमते श्रीश्रीनिवास परब्रह्मणे नमः

श्रीमते वैखानस महागुरुवे नमः

श्रीमते रामानुजाय नमः

श्रीमते वेदान्त गुरुवे नमः



prArthana slokams

SRI SRINIVASAR :

nirupama gunasindhurnityalakshmi sametO
niKhilanigamavEdayE nistulO venkatEsa: |
nijacharaNasamarchasaktubhaktauGharakshI
nivasatu hrudaye me svAnghribhaktim vitanvan||

VIKHANASACHARYAN:

srI lakshmi vallabhArambhAm viKhanO muni madhyamAm |
asmadAchArya paryantAm vandE guru paramparAm ||
nArAyaNam sakamalam sakalAmarEndram |
vaiKhAnasam mama gurum nigamAgamEndram ||
bhrigvatrikASyapamarIchirmuKhAn munIndrAn |
sarvAnaham kulagurum praNamAmi mUrdhnA ||





SrI VikhAnasa on kUrmAsanam at Thirumala
(Thanks: SrI Ramakrishna Deekshitulu archakam)



श्रीः

श्रीमते श्रीलक्ष्मीनृसिंह परब्रह्मणे नमः

श्रीमते श्रीश्रीनिवास परब्रह्मणे नमः

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श्रीमते वेदान्त गुरुवे नमः

Sri VaikhAnasa Bhagavad SAstram ***An Introduction***



There are two Agamams to worship the Lord (VishNu archanam). One is VaikhAnasam and the other is PaancharAtram. We will be following closely the essay by the great VaikhAnasa Bhattar, Sri U.Ve. KadakkaLUR Sthala Sayana BhattAchAr and draw the essential points from there for this introductory essay on VaikhAnasam and add a few references at the end for your additional studies. There are centers of research on the two VaishNavite Agamams at Melkote, Kaanchipuram, Thirumala and Srirangam that one can access for additional information. There are also university departments of Sanskrit and Eastern Religions in Europe (Norway, Austria, France and Germany) that have scholars doing research on these two Agmaams.

Swamy NammAzhwAr has instructed us to serve the Lord through blemishless Kaimkaryams all our lives as His archakAs (Ozhivil kAlamellAm udanAi manni vazhuvilA adimai seyya vENDum). The last of the AzhwArs, Thirumangai Mannan has also reminded us that the nitya Kaimkaryam to Sriman Narayanan is our birth right (toNDE seythu yenRum thozhuthu vazhi ozhuha paNDE Paraman PaNitta PaNi). Agamams speak with the same voice, when they say that the devout Archanam of VishNu is the easiest way for us to gain the Lord's anugraham.

For the benefit of human beings, Sages like AsvalAyanar, Aapastambar, DhrAyAyanar and Vikhanasar used appropriate Vedams to create Kalpa sUtrams for the observance of their samskArams from garbha dhAnam to



antima kAryam. Sage Vikhanasar stands out among the creators of gruhya sUtrams in that he has included AarAdhanam for Archa Moorthys and the construction of Temples and the consecration of Archa Moorthys at these temples in his kalpa sUtrams. A famous VaikhAnasa scholar states it is for these reasons that the Thirunakshatram of Sage Vikhanasar is being celebrated by the VaikhAnasa community of archakAs. There is no celebration of other gruhya sUtra kartAs such as Sage Aapastambhar, who blessed Yajur Vedins with their kalpa sutras.

VAIKHANASAM

Amongst the Indian Communities of Priests, committed to the promotion of temple-culture, the Vaikhanasas occupy a significant position. The oldest of such priestly communities, they even to this day largely function as temple priests. They find mention in Vedic corpus, the epics (Mahabharatha and Ramayana), the puranas (like Bhagavatham) and the Smriti literature. They are described as ascetics, hermits, devoted to contemplation on Godhead, and engaged in Vedic sacrificial rituals. They were sages closely associated with the celebrated Valakhilyas of Rigvedam, and dear to Indra (Vishnu). So we read in Tandyamaha-brahmana (14.4.7)

vaikhAnasA vA rushayA indrasya priyA Asan||

They had their scriptural lore, named after their own designation, rooted in the Vedic corpus, containing the essence of Vedic wisdom, and given entirely to the worship of Vishnu as the supreme spirit of the Vedic canon. Sage Marichi's Vimanarchana Kalpam (patala 96), one of the earliest of Agama works, has this to say:

vaikhAnasam mahAshAstram sarvavEdEshUdrutham sarvavEdArthasAram

apratarkya aninditam vaidikairUpasEvitam vishnOrAradhanam|

sarvabhUthahitArdAya shAbdam pramAnamavalambya vishnunAm vikhanasa



uktham, vikhanasa bhrugvAdInAmuktham....

It may be noted that this scriptural lore aligned itself firmly and uncompromisingly to the Vedic wisdom (more specifically to the Aukheya-Taittiriya branch of Krishna-yajurveda) and was therefore described as 'vaidika' in contradistinction to the other approaches which incorporated the tantrika or folk practices. Even now, the Vaikhanasa priests, at home and in the temple, insist on first performing the fire-ritual prescribed in the Vedas, and then worshipping Vishnu, as the supreme spirit:

tasmAdagnau nityahOmAnthE vishnurnithyArchA gruhe dEvAyatane bhaktyA
bhagavantam nArAyanamarchayEditi vignAyate|

This is prescribed by the Vaikhanasa-srauta-sutra. In fact, the Vaikhanasa is the only group among temple-priests to have a kalpa-sutra of their own. They translate in to practice the Vedic dictum that Agni is the lowest of the gods (in the sense being visible to the human eye) and Vishnu, the highest and that therefore the worship of these two effectively means the coverage of the worship of all the gods in whom the Lord is the indweller (Sarva dEva NamaskAram Kesavam pratigacchathy):

agnirvai dEvAnAmave vishnu: paramastadantarEna sarvai anya dEvathA: iti
brAhmanam|

vishnO: nitya dEvArchA sarvadEvArchAbhavathi|

The worship of the Godhead assumes two forms:

- aniconic (amurta) and
- iconic (samurta).

Worship of Agni in the sacrificial ritual (agni-hutam) illustrates the former and worship of Vishnu in an icon, duly installed at home or in the temple represents the latter. Agni and Vishnu thus constitute the two conceptual limits or



polarities of the Godhead. The worship thus consists of:

1. fire ritual (**homa**),
2. iconic worship (**archana**),
3. recitation of sacred mantras (**japa**) and
4. contemplation on the abstract significance of the iconic form (**dhyana**).



Fire-ritual (homa)

This is perfect accord with the ancient view (mentioned in Yaska's Nirukta) that Veda has three interpretations:

- adhi-yajna,
- adhi-daiva and

- adhyatma.

Further, the worship of Agni (**homa-puja**) which is the focus of attention in the Vedic corpus has been faithfully translated into the worship of Vishnu in the iconic form (**bera-puja**). In the context of the three-fold sacrificial fire (**trEtAgnipaksha**):

- the primary immobile image (**dhruva-bera**) in the sanctum of a temple represents the **gArhapatya-agni**,



Dhruva beram of SrI SrInivAsa PerumAL (Tirupathi)

- the image for routine worship (**kautuka-bera**) represents **Ahavaniya-agni**, and

- the processional image (autsava-bera) the dakshinagni.



Kautuka beram at Tirupathi

In the context of the five-fold fire (panchAgni-paksha), two other icons, the icon for receiving the daily bath (snapana-bera) and the icon to receive daily offerings of food (bali-bera) represent the sabhyagni and the avasathya agnis respectively.

Thus the Vedic sacrificial ritual (srautagni) corresponds in spirit to the Vaikhanasa worship of the image of Vishnu in the temple (bera-puja), three times during day (savana). In the Vaikhanasa shrine, the important concepts in a Vedic sacrifice (yagna) are to be found (dIksha, adhvaryU, ritvik, hautra-prasamsa, havis, pUrnaHuti, avabhrita, trishavana, prAyaschitta and so on). The



worship sequences strictly follow the Vedic prescriptions and Veda mantras are recited in every sequence exclusively. Like a Vedic sacrifice, worship in a Vaikhanasa shrine is designed to secure the good of all living creatures and is based on Veda (vishnOrAradhanam sarvabhUthahitArdAya shAbdam pramAnamavalambya). Hence worship here is termed 'dEva-yajana' in Marichi's definitive treatise of Vimanarchana Kalpam and the worship is meant to secure the welfare of the state (rAshtra), the administrators (rAja) and the entire cadre of devout chieftains of administration (yajamAna). Marichi's words are:

ata dEvayajanam vyAkhyAsyAma:|

grihOtrEna labhatE svargamityAhu:|

sangati dEvapujAnAm yagnA iti surayO vadanti|

yagnEshvEtEshu dEvayAgO vishishyatE|

yajamAna bhavEpi bhuvi shashvatam tishtati|

tasmAdragnO rAshtrasya yajamAnavamsasyAbhivruddi:||

This is in fact the special, and also essential, feature of the Vaikhanasa mode of worship. It is rooted in the Vedic tradition, and is a continuation of the Vedic approach. It is a direct successor to the yagnA ideology of the Vedic corpus in the context of Agama. When Bhagavatha (11.27.7) enumerates three distinct kinds of worship (makha) and designates them as:

1. 'vaidika' (worship through fire-rituals like agnishtOmA prescribed in the Vedic corpus),
2. tAntrika (worship with flower offerings and folk practices) and
3. misra (a combination of the two kinds mentioned above),

the first form of worship is clearly Vaikhanasa. The commentator Vijayadvaja (pAda-ratnAvali) explains that the three modes of worship take the form of



"agnishtOmadih", "pushpAnjalyAdih" and "nAma-sankIrtanAdih". Viswanantha chakravarthi (parArtha-darsini) mentions specifically that Vaidika mode of worship employs only Veda mantras (like purusha-suktha) during worship. And this is precisely what is done in the Vaikhanasa-worship. Mahabharatha (Anugita, Asvamedhika-parvan 122,26) also refers to the Vaikhanasa mode of worship as prevalent in those times:

vEdOtKEnaiva mArgEna sarvabhUthahridistitham mAmarchayanthi|

yE viprA matsAyuhyam vrajanti te||

An ancient smriti text Vridha-hArIta-samhitha (chapter 11) mentions not only three systems of worship:

1. **srauta** (based on veda),
2. **smarta** (based on smriti texts, secondary to the Vedas) and
3. **agama** (based on agama texts, later in date),

but identifies the first with the Vaikhanasas. It was the Vaikhanasas who transformed the Vedic yajna ideology (**amUrtarchana**) into iconic worship in the temples (**samUrtarchana**). Worship thereafter became three-fold:

- mental (mAnasi, including japa, dhyana, nama-sankirtana),
- fire-ritual (homa) and
- worship of idols treated like a sovereign or honored guest (bera):

mAnasI hOmapUjA cha bErapUjEti sA tridhA||

Marichi significantly states that the proper method of worship assumes four modes (**charita kriya jnana yogEshu chaturshi pUjAmArgEshu**):

1. correct conduct indicated by the smriti and Kalpa texts (**charita**),



2. performance of Vedic rituals and iconic worship (**kriya**),
3. development of transcendental wisdom (**jnana**) and
4. practice of yoga.

The first of these modes (Sruti based/Srouta) provides justification for the presence and prevalence of an elaborate Vaikhanasa-Kalpasutra in four parts **smarta** (for grihya), **dharma** and **srauta** (including **pravara-prasna**). This augments the equally elaborate Vaikhanasa-bhagavachchastra, which deals with temple-culture exclusively and exhaustively.

The VaikhAnasa literature comprises texts amounting to four lakhs of grantha in a total of 128 books, ascribed to four sages:

1. Bhrighu,
2. Atri,
3. Marichi and
4. Kasyapa,

who were all inspired by the primeval sage Vikhanasa. This represents Vaishnava-agama in an avowedly Vedic context. It deals with the construction of temples, making of icons, installations, consecrations, daily worship in the temple, occasional festivities (**utsavam**), and necessary purifications and equations for the lapses (**prAyaschittam**).

Worship in a Vaikhanasa shrine presupposes the adoption of the Vaikhanasa-Kalpasutra supplemented by the Agama texts (known collectively as Daivika-sutra). In a very large number of Vishnu temples in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, this mode of worship continues uninterrupted for great stretches of time. The most celebrated among these, however, is the **Tirumala-Tirupati temple**, where Vaikhanasa worship has been conducted all through its recorded history. It has also been a rallying point for the Vaikhanasa





community, for here it was that the great scholar, Srinivasa-makhin (Srinivasa Dikshitulu) wrote his works elucidating the Vaikhanasa-ideology.



The golden vimanam over SrI SrInivAsa PerumAl sannidhi at Tirupathi





In this ideology, devotion (**bhakti**) is means to liberation (**moksha**) only when accompanied by worship of Godhead in an iconic form (**aradhana**). The concept of co-operation between devotion and worship (**upasana** or **yajna**) is highlighted in the Vaikhanasa philosophy. This is also the Vedic outlook: yajna as a means for the fulfillment of human aspirations combines devotion with ritualistic activity. Worship-activities (**kriya-yoga**, **upasana**, **yajana**) are in fact superior to devotion which one feels immediately and as a passing mood; they gradually render one eligible to the highest of benefits, namely liberation from worldly ills. It is only gradually that one attending on the Supreme Spirit in the iconic form (**saguna-brahma**) reaches or knows the supreme spirit beyond names and forms (**nirguna-brahma**) and obtains emancipation. It is a ladder like path (**sopana-mArga**). Iconic worship is an important and indispensable ingredient in this path. This makes the movement of the devotees firm and progressive.

The word 'Vaikhanasa' etymologically signifies digging deep in to the Godhead (by earnest contemplation assisted by worship) that is enshrined in one's ownself (**vishEshEna khanati| khanitvA chAtmAnAtmAnam| khaanashabdEna dhyAnamuktam bhavati| dhyana mAvishya yOgEna|**). Iconic worship done according to the prescriptions laid down in the Vaikhanasa texts is itself an act of digging (**khanana**) into the Supreme Spirit in one's own being. Hence the significance of '**atma-suktha**' in Vaikhanasa worship.

It is true that the highest form of worship is mental (**manasa**). The supreme spirit really dwells in the heart of the devotee and must be reached by mental processes. Direct cognizance of the presence and power of Godhead is worship proper. But knowledge and devotion do not render iconic worship superfluous or unnecessary. For the formless Godhead in the heart needs to be visualized in an iconic form for being worshipped. Bhrigu makes an interesting observation (Prakirnadhikara, 36, 286-287):

yatra mAnasArchA syAt tachcha mAnasikam bhavEt|

antaryAmi ya evAste hrudayE nishkalE hari:||



eva sakalE bhUtvA bimbE yatsannidhApita:|

tasmAtsakalapUjAyAm naiva kuryAd vyatikramam||



iconic worship - SrI Malayappa Swamy - Tirupathi

When the worship is mental, the object of worship is also mental. The Godhead resides in one's own heart, devoid of attributes like name, and form, (nishkala, nirguna) and as the inner controller (antaryami) of the living being. However, it



is this Godhead that is projected and installed in the idol for receiving worship. Albeit devoid of form, the Godhead assumes a form (becomes **sakala**) for facilitating worship. If HE is in the mind, HE is only thought of. And thoughts being what they are cannot be expected to result in proper worship.

The activities involved in worship are in reality approaches to the Godhead; hence they are called kriya-yoga. The activities are accompanied by appropriate Vedic mantras recited, and by having an idol properly installed for offering worship. There is also contemplation and further a feeling of devotion. Thus the Vaikhanasa worship is a pentad (**panchaka**) of recitation of Vedic mantras, activities like in a yajna, utilization of proper and consecrated substances like the idol, contemplation and devotion. Marichi (**Ananda-Samhitha**) says that this is the proper approach to Godhead in the present age. In the first of the aeons, Krita-yuga, God was worshipped only in the mind; in the next age, Treta, sacrifices were the proper approach; in Dvapara age idol worship was commended and in the present Kali age, contemplation is the best approach. But the special features of worship in each of the four ages must be combined in the present age to give the best results.

krutE tu mAnasam srEshtam trEtAyAm yajanam param|

dvAparE pratimArchA cha kalau chintanamuttamam||

chaturshvapi yugEshvevam vishEshastu yugE yugE|

mantOchchara kriyA dravyadhyAna bhAvAngapanchakam||

The five details mentioned above are but 'limbs' (**angas**) of worship as an effective approach to Godhead for the sake of securing emancipation. Worship (**aradhana**) primarily means only idol worship (**archana**), for which the details are necessary limbs. That this kind of worship is the supreme expedient (**paramopaya**) and is the guiding principle of Vaikhanasa worship. The idol representation is in the essence the Godhead's own manifestation for facilitating worship (hence known as **archavathara**). IT symbolizes the Supreme



Spirit in all its glory and in its immanent as well as transcendental aspects (viz, the Brahman of Vedanta). It is in this sense that the self-manifest image of Vishnu (the Vedic God of gods) on the Vengadam hills (Tirumala) is hailed with the words 'Venkata-brahmane-namah'. (It may be noted in the passing that there is a mantra in Rigveda (10.155.1) which can be considered as a reference to this hill. The antiquity and vaibhavam of Tirumala goes back thus to the Vedic age:

arAyi kAnE vikate girim gachchasadAnve sirimbithasya satvabhi:|

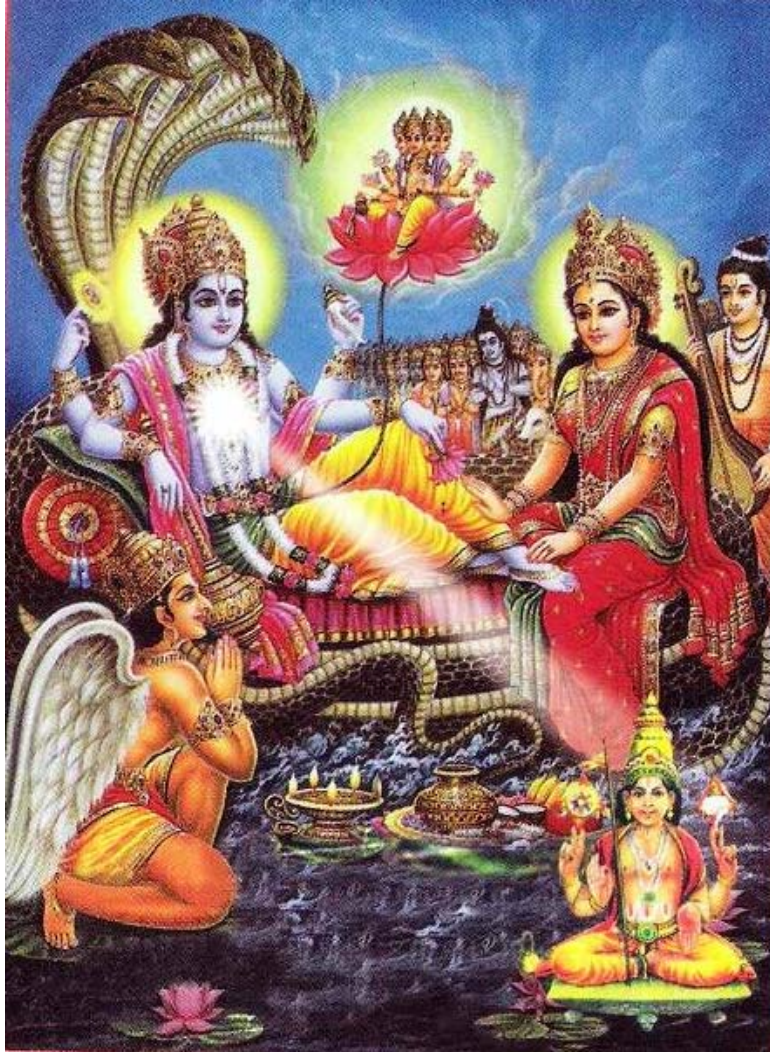
tEbhishtvA chAtayAmasi||

The person, devoid of wealth and vision, is implored to go to the hill which burns up all evil (vikata for Venkata) and drives away all obstacles to peace and prosperity. The call of the rishi Sirimbitha has obviously not gone in vain.

VAIKHANASAS AND VIKHANASA MAHARSHI

It is believed that Sage Vikhanasar was created from the mind (Maanaseeka Utbhavar) of Sriman NarayaNa, when many sages were reluctant to engage in the performance of AarAdhanam for Him in bhU lOkam because they were unsure of doing the right kind of ArAdhanam. They had no clue. Sriman NarayaNa through viSEsha khaanam (digging) created a new sage, named him Vikhanasar and empowered him to perform ArAdhanams for Him in His Vibhava and archAvatArams thru upadEsams on Veda, VedAntams and initiation into Gayatri/Saavitri mantrams. Sage Vikhanasar arrived at NaimisAraNyam, where the Lord is present as a Forest. He arrived there with his Nine sishyAs, Atri, Brughu, Mareechi, Kasyapa, Vasishta, Pulaha, Pulashtya Krathu and Angiras in the time of Swayambhuva (The 1st one) Manvantaram, Sukla Paksham, SrAvana Pournami, Monday, Simhalagnam with star of Sravanam according to Sage MarIchI's Ananda SamhitA. Among them four sishyas Atri, Bhrigu, Marichi and KAsyapa has written the major portion of Sri Vaikhanasa Bhagavachhastram based on the teachings of Vikhanasa Maharshi. Sage Vikhanasa blessed the world with one and half crores of

PramAnams in his Aagamam. The four sisHyAs condensed these vast numbers of PramAnams to a smaller subset of four Lakhs of grantams to make it simpler for the human beings to follow for the worship of the Lord thru VaikhAnasa Aagamam (sUtram VikhanasA prOkTam saardhakODi pramANakam, chaturlaksha pramANEna samkshipya prOchyatE adhuna).



Maanaseeka Utbhavam of Sage VikhAnasar from SrIman NARayaNa!

The Vaikhanasas as a community are temple priests. They regard themselves as ordained by birth to be temple priests and they are enjoined not to follow other avocation in life. Vishnu himself is said to have declared that those who follow the Vaikhanasa Sutra are dearer to him. A verse in Varaha Purana puts in

to the mouth of the Vishnu the view that the Aswatha Tree, the Red Cows, the tulasi plant and the sage Vikhanasa (the ancestor of the community) are the four things that are dear to him, and that among the four, Sage Vikhanasa is the dearest. Ananda Samhitha (Marichi) states that the Sage Vikhanasa who prepared the Vaikhanasa Sutra according to a branch of Yajurveda was Brahma himself.

AdikaIEtu bhagavAn brahma tu viKhanA muni: |

Yaju: shAKhAnusArE chakrE sUtra mahattaram ||

Kriyadhikara (Bhrigu) identifies Vikhanasa with Vishnu or with the first sage who appeared as an aspect of Vishnu (viz, Brahma), and says that the Sutra was taught by this sage.

viKhanAvai vishNu: tajjA vaiKhAnsA smritA: |

vishNuvamsajaSva viKhAnA munInAm prathamO muni: |

tEnOpadishta yatsUtram tatsUtrEshUttamam smritam |

Brahma, the creator, who was the offspring of Vishnu, was called the first sage, and was called Vikhanasa, because he dug into his own mind (manasAh KhananAt) for creating the scriptural lore.

viKhanA iti prOkthO manasa: KhananAt suta: |

brahmaNA: suvisEshENa munInA prathamO muni: ||

Digging up into (Khanana) appears to be in the background of the expression Vikhanasa. Several shades of meaning have been projected. Ananda Samhita speaks of Vishnu 'digging up' the essential import of the Upanishads before he gave the scriptural lore of the Vaikhanasas.

vEdAntatattvamImAmsAKhananam krutavan hari: |

nAmnA viKhanasam chakrE tatpadAnvarthayOgata: ||



Digging into the meaning of 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 as Vikhanasa.

KhananAdviKhanA muni: |

Khananam tatvamImAmsEtyAhu |

nigamArthAnAm KhananAditi na: Srutam |

Digging out the hidden meaning of Vedas and revealing them to the human beings, according to Ananda Samhita, were the tasks that Vishnu accomplished and therefore he became known as Vikhanasa, and his offspring who was the progenitor of all was known as Vaikhanasa.

antarhitAnAm KhananAdvEdAnAm tu visEshata: |

sa vibhu: prOchyatE sarvairviKhanA brahmavAdibhi: ||

vaiKhAnasaSva bhagavAn prOchyatE sa pithAmaha: ||

When the word Vikhanasa, in the background expression, is interpreted as referring to Brahma, the creator, a distinction is made in Nrisimha Purana, between the older Brahma (Agraja), who was born out of Vishnu's mind with only one head and who became the author of the Sutras, and the younger Brahma (Anuja), who was born out of Vishnu's navel, with four faces, for producing the worlds and denizens in them. Vikhanasa, who was the 'older' Brahma, became the 'younger' Brahma after six incarnations (incarnation meaning 'Manvantharam' and now it's the 7th Manvantharam). The sages Bhrigu, Atri, Marichi and Kasyapa are said to have received the cult of Vishnu from the first Vikhanasa (viz., the older Brahma in Svayambhuva Manvantharam).

The approach of the Vaikhanasa worship is described as peaceful (soumya). Thus, the expression Vikhanas (with its derived form Vaikhanasa) has many



shades of meaning:

- the great god Vishnu himself,
- the creator Brahma who appeared from his navel-lotus,
- the great sage who was mind born and who was instructed by Vishnu himself in the matter of worship,
- the sage who was the progenitor of the lines of the Vaikhanasa devotees,
- the divine author of the sutras known after him, and
- the hermit who was in the third stage of life.

It is probable that the Vaikhanasa community was so called because of the involvement in all of these aspects. More importantly, Vaikhanasas are distinguished by their uncompromising adoption of the Vaikhanasa-Sutra, which is devoted in all its parts to Vishnu and which was initially communicated by Vishnu himself to the sage Vikhanasa.

AdikAlEtU bhagavAn brahmA tu viKhanA muni: |

Yaju: SAKhAnusArENa chakrE sUtram mahattaram |

tatsUtravidhyanushtAnAt smritA vaiKhAnasAstu tE |

yatsUtrAdyantamadhyEshu bhagavAn vishNuravyaya: ||

(from Atri's Pura-Tantram)

The sage Vikhanas (or the primordial Vikhanasa) is adored by the community in its daily prayer as one who is sustained by Vishnu (*achyutagam-srayAya*), who is engaged in severe austerities (*tapOgra-nishta*), and who is the knower of the highest principle (*brahma-darsin*). He is described as an expert in the worship of Vishnu (*Vishnu-pUjA-visArada*), 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 Vishnu's main idol 'Dhruva-bera'.

He is also described as having Vishnu as his father and Lakshmi as his mother, and sages like Bhrigu as his disciples:

nArAyaNa: pithA yasya mAAtA chApi hari priyA |

bhrugvAdi munaya: SishyAstasmai viKhaNasE nama: ||



"Vishnu-pUjA-visArada" - Sage VikhAnasa - Tirupati

Atri Maharshi gives the story of how the Brahma obtained from Vishnu the Vaikhanasa sutra. At the beginning of creation, Vishnu taught the creator Brahma, the method of worship according to the Vedic corpus. This teaching was a thousand crore of verses in extent ('sahasra-kOTibhis slokaih sAnKhyatAm bahu vistAram'). But this elaborate worship manual disappeared in course of time. Then Brahma went to Naimisa forest as an ascetic with matted hair on the head, and began to perform severe penance. He meditated for long years on Vishnu and by the power of penance perceived the Agama (scripture explaining the worship procedure) elaborately as it was once taught by Vishnu

(apasyAd Vishnuktam Agamam vistArat tada). He was now known as Vikhanas or great sage. He abridged the elaborate teachings, retaining the most essential aspects (samkshipya sAram AdAya) and taught this version, which was like a well-carved gem (sanolliKhita-ratnAvat), to his sons, Marichi and others, who were hermits. This version was one and half crore of verses in extent.

dhAtA viKhanasO nAma marIchyAdistutAnmunIn |

abOdhayadidam ShAstram sArthakOti pramANata: ||

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 Vaikhanasas: Marichi, Bhrigu, Atri and Kasyapa. They recast and further condensed the teaching in four lakhs of verses ('chAturlaksheshu granthEsu samkshipya samhita'). And they were responsible for the formation of the Vaikhansa community.

According to Marichi, the arrival of Vikhanasa Maharshi in the Naimisa forest was on a Monday, when there was full moon and lagna was simha, during the bright half of the Sravana month, in the era which began with Swayambhuva Manu.

sravanE srAvanE sukla pourNimA sOmavAsarE |

simha lagnEcha samyuktE bhajE naimisamAgatam ||

'Kriyadhikara' by Sage Bhrigu provides a more elaborative description on how the Vaikhanasa mode of worship was instituted. When Vishnu at the beginning of the Kalpa was absorbed in meditational slumber (yoga-nidra) upon the milky ocean, Brahma appeared, in the lotus, which sprang forth from Vishnu's navel. Brahma, four faced, contemplated upon Vishnu as soon as he appeared, whereupon Vishnu directed him to create all the worlds and all the creatures in them, and gave him the Veda mantrAs to help him in the creation. Brahma created all things, all beings and all the gods, and worshipped Vishnu with the

Vedic hymns. However, he became proud of his ability to create and became arrogant. Vishnu, in order to correct him, brought forth, two demons, Madhu and Kaitabha, who assaulted Brahma and snatched from him the VedAs, which they hid in the depths of the ocean.

Brahma with his power (Vedic Corpus) gone, became grief-stricken, and wondered how he should worship Vishnu now that the Vedic hymns were no longer available to him. Vishnu advised him to worship him for five days with the repetition of the twelve-lettered and eight-lettered mantras - dvAdasAksharam and ashtAksharam. This became what is known as the **Pancha-rathra** method of worship. Then Vishnu decided to fight, and diving deep into the ocean killed the demons Madhu and Kaitabha. He brought the Vedas up and gave them to Brahma, who was overjoyed and began worshipping Vishnu again with the Vedic hymns (viz., in the Vaikhanasa way).



SrI Lakshmi Hayagrivar

Arrogance entered Brahma's mind a second time, and Vishnu, in order to correct him, created the demon Somaka, who attacked Brahma and took away the Vedas from him. Distraught, Brahma again approached Vishnu and asked him how he should be worshipped, now the Vedas having again gone out of his possession. Vishnu advised him to worship without any mantras and in accordance with the Tantrik procedure. This is known as the **Agneya** mode of worship. Vishnu assumed the form of a great fish (Matsya), and killed the demon Somakasura with his great power. He brought back the Vedas and gave them to Brahma. Brahma was happy and he began again worshipping Vishnu with the Vedic hymns. Thus the Vaikhanasa mode of worship came to stay.



Matsya Avatar

The Vaikhanasas, tracing as they do their descent from Vishnu himself, regard themselves as Vishnu-devotees from their very birth (**garbha-vaishnava-**

janmanam), not needing any other initiatory rites or diksha during their lives to make them Vishnu-devotees. The sacramental rites that are prevalent in a Vaikhanasa household include a symbolic ceremony, unique to this community, known as Vishnu-Bali (or garbha-chakra-samskaram). Prescribed to be performed during the bright half of the eighth month of pregnancy (garbhadhadyashtame masyeva sukla pakshe) in order to protect the individual within the womb of the prospective mother (asyah garbha-samrakshanartham).



Vishnu-bali

Vishnu-bali is a sacrament which follows 'seemantha' (the ritual before child birth). The significance of this ritual is that an offering (Bali) is made to Vishnu (Vishnu-devatako balih upahriyate asmin); and even inside the mother's womb, the foetus acquires the status of a Vishnu-devotee (garbhastha sisoh garbha vaishnavatva siddhyartham). The ceremony involves a fire-ritual and offering to the pregnant lady, the sacrificial sweet rice-pudding (pAyasa) in which the emblems of Vishnu (Chakra and Sankha) has previously been dipped and a part offered to the fire. While the woman is drinking the remainder of the rice-

pudding, the following mantra is recited.

tvatsutO bhAgyavAn dhanyO garbhavaishnava sangnita: |

aprAkrutO mahAtmAsau garbhachakrENa lAnchita: ||

(Sri Vaikhanasa Kalpa Sutram)

The belief is that Vishnu himself will brand on the arms of the individual to be born the marks of the conch and discus, which He carries in His own hands. Thus the person is a Vaishnava, even when he is born, and he is regarded as the offspring of Vishnu viz., Vaikhanasa. The practical import of this ceremony is that the child born as a Vaikhansa is already sanctified and initiated by Vishnu himself and does not need any other sacrament or initiatory rite to make him a Vishnu-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 eg. The Pancharathrins), for whom during the boyhood a formal ceremony of branding the arms with heated metallic images of Vishnu's conch and discus (**tapta-mudrankana** or **samAsrayanam**) is conducted. A Vaikhanasa not only does not require this external imprint ceremony, but is prohibited from going through it at any cost. If he does this ritual, due to ignorance or out of greed, under duress or force, he ceases to be a priest and must undergo prayaschittam rites. Without the prayaschittam he is not eligible to touch the Dhruva-bera in the temple.

VAIKHANASA IDEOLOGY

The characteristic Vaikhanasa viewpoint is that the pathway to final emancipation is not devotion alone, but iconic worship (**samUr+Archana**) done with devotion (**bhakti**). It does not equate 'bhakti' with 'upasana', but points out that 'upasana', which is synonymous with 'yajana' (worship as a sacrifice), signifies a different, and in fact a superior approach. Worship (**Bhagavat-samUrta-yajana**) is held to be more effective than even the wisdom concerning Brahman (**brahma-vidya**) as shown by Srinivasa-makhin in his excellent work



'Uttama-Brahma-Vidya-saaram'. The Tamil songs of the Alvars indirectly suggest the superior merit of iconic worship in temples. The Vaikhanasas may thus be credited with having institutionalized the iconic worship (samUrtaArchana) of Vishnu, who was essentially a Vedic god. It is not surprising, therefore, that in the Vishnu temples in ancient shrines like Tirumala, Tirupati, Mahabalipuram, Srikakulam, Amaravati, Vedadri, Dharmavaram, Chola-simhapuram, Vijayanagaram, Tirucchirapalli, Ramanathapuram, Pithapuram, Kakinada, Vinukonda, Khadri, Uttaramerur, Tanjavur, Tirukkurungudi, Madurai, Darbhasayanam, Kondavidu, Nellore, Tirumazhisai, Senji, Vellore, Venkatagiri and Karveti nagaram (Puttur, AP), the worship is done according to Vaikhanasa Bhagavat Sastram.

The Vaikhanasas carry on their worship entirely with Vedic Mantras and are also strict with their adherence to the Vedic sacraments as ordained by the Taittiriya Brahmana texts (from Krishna Yajurveda). The belief that Vikhanasa Maharshi not only taught the Kalpa-sutra, which deals with householder's religious duties and responsibilities, but also taught the Daivika-sutram, which deals with iconic worship, and which was amplified by his four disciples Atri, Bhrigu, Marichi and Kasyapa refers to the equal importance that the Vaikhanasas give to the Vedic sacraments and rituals on the one hand, and worship of idols in home and temple on the other. In their view, the two are complimentary to each other. This was not the view of Saiva or of the Panacharatra sects. They recognized that the Agama approach was at variance with VedAs. The VaikhAnasa Agama was meant exclusively for temple-worship and addressed the need of the times when Vedic culture was fast becoming obsolete. The very expression 'Agama' seems to have been named to distinguish this approach from 'Nigama' (which was the term for the Veda). It is to be noted that the Vaikhanasa texts do not generally adapt the expression 'Agama', although in more recent years the term 'Vaikhanasagama' is being used to distinguish it from Saivagama, Pacharatragama and Sakteyagama. The Vaikhanasa know their scripture only as 'Bhavagachhastra'; their implicit acceptance of Vedic authority was well known even to the ancient smriti-karas



like Baudhayana, idol worship was not for them a substitute for the Vedic ritual, but was itself in their view, a Vedic ritual. Hence the sutra prescription,

tasmAdagnau nityahOmAntE vishnurnityArchA gruhE dEvAyatanE bhaktyA
bhagavantam nArAyanamarchayEt ||

There is an intriguing verse in Vishnu-Purana, which has been cited and explained by Srinivasa-Deekshita in his Tatparya-Chintamani (Uttama brahma vidya saram),

yajvabhiryagnapurushO vAsudEvaSva sAtvatau: |

vEdAntavEdibhirvishnu: prOchyatE yO natOsmi tam ||

Godhead here is described as what the sacrificers (viz. the Vedic ritualists) worship as Yajna-Purusha (viz. the personification of sacrifice), the Sattvatas (viz. the Pancharathras) regards as Vasudeva, and the knowers of the final import of the Veda (viz. the Vaikhanasas) as Vishnu. Srinivasa-Deekshita (or Srinivasa-Makhin) distinguishes between the 'sacrificers' (viz. the knowers of the Veda, 'vEda vidbhih Vaikhanasaih' also a group among the Vaikhanasas, devoted to the idol less rituals prescribed in the Veda, 'amUrtaArchanam') and the knowers of Vedanta (viz. worshippers of idol representations of Vishnu, 'samUrta-bhagavad-yajanam'), who are also Vaikhanasas.



Yajna purusha

The distinction between the two groups of Vaikhanasas, the fire-ritualists and the idol-worshippers, made by Srinivasa-Deekshita probably refers to the evolution of the Vaikhanasa community from the Kalpa-sutra stage to the 'Bhagavachhastra' stage. The texts recognize that Godhead may be worshipped



on:

- an altar (**sthandila**),
- in water (**salila**),
- in the solar orbit (**surya-mandala**) or
- in ones own heart (**hridi**).

The worship may take the form of offerings to:

- the fire (**huta**),
- repetition of the sacred mantras (**japa**) and
- contemplation (**dhyana**).

But superior to all these is worshipping an idol form (archanam), because it involves special devotion (bhakti) in addition to the offerings (as in **huta**), repetitions (as in **japa**) and meditation (as in **dhyana**). It is also better suited to the common folks. That's why the Vaikhanasa moved from the first stage (Veda) to the second (Vedanta) of Vedic culture. They continue to perform Vedic rituals (prescribed in the Smarta section rather than in the Sruta), but valued idol worship more. Their scene of activity shifted from sacrificial hall (yagasala) to the temple.

SRI VAIKHANASA KALPASUTRAM

The Kalpa sutrams consist of 32 chapters. Among them are 7 gruhya sutrams, 3 dharma sutrams, 21 Sroutha sutrams and 1 Pravara sutram.

The worship of Vishnu was tantamount to the performance of a great Vedic sacrifice. The Vaikhanasa-kalpa-sutras, therefore, prescribe the worship of Vishnu 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 Vishnu; but the Vedic rituals were never entirely given up.

The Vaikhanasas are probably the only group of Agama adherents who rely heavily on Kalpa-sutra. The Vaikhanasa kalpa-sutra, has four distinct divisions:

1. Sruta,
2. Smarta (Grihya),
3. Pravara and
4. Dharma, with the Sulba-sutra prescriptions accommodated in the first two divisions.

It is directly preached by Sri Vikhanasa Maharshi as Sri Vaikhanasa Kalpa sutram with 4 parts and 32 prasnas.

Srouta Sutram

The first division Srouta Sutra begins with the settling up of the ritual fire (**agnyadhana**) and goes on till the ritual known as Soma samstha. It includes rituals like daily (**nitya**) and occasional (**naimittika**) and also prayaschittas for these. In all it contains 21 rites and expiations for:

- Sapta Havir Yagnas,
- Sapta Soma Yagnas and
- Sapta Paka Yagnas.

However they are not valued high as it is motivated by selfish desires. According to Vaikhanasa creed it is imperative to suppress the selfish desires and religious conduct must be resorted to for its own sake. So to preserve the Vedic affiliation the Grihya sutras were highlighted.

Grihya Sutram

The second one Grihya Sutras consists of 7 Prasnas with details ranging from Ashtadasa Sariraka Samskaras, Sandhyavandana Vidhi, Punyaaham, Agni Pratishtha, Aaghaaram, Antha Homam, Vaastu Homam, Varsha Vardhanam, Rites for Nitya, Paaka, Havir Yagnas, Soma Yagnas, Griharcha Methods, Funeral rites, and expiatory rites for Astadasa Sariraka Samskaraas. The Grihya sutras relate to life in the household and deal with 18 sacramental rites (**Ashtadasa Samskaaras**) for the individual which are meant to cleanse the physical body and render it fit for spiritual progress. They range from:

1. **NishEka** - Impregnation and the ceremony connected with it
2. **Rutu-sangamana** - Coming in to contact with the husband at a specific time
3. **Garbhadana** - Auspicious time for Satsantana Sankalpam
4. **Pumsavana** - Male-production rite, performed in the fifth month of gestation and before the period of quickening of the foetus
5. **Seemantha** - A ritual in the 8th month of pregnancy
6. **Vishnu bali** - Ritual in connection with receiving the holy emblems of Vishnu, Chakra and Sankham in the Mother's womb itself and is believed to be made by Lord Vishnu himself. This ritual is carried out during Seemantham. (In contrast to the other Sutras, where, the Samasrayanam or Pancha Samskaram is performed after the child is born so as to become a 'Vaishnava', Vikhanasa Maharshi, specified this Samskaram, which is special to Vaikhanasa Kalpa Sutram, where in, the child will become a Vaishnava by getting the holy marks of Vishnu in the Mother's womb itself, thereby becoming a 'garbha Vaishnava'.)
7. **Jaata karma** - Ritual connected with the new born. This is a special Samskaram in which the Father of the new born child will create the Agni for his child's Nityagni Anushtanams and till the child is given the

Upanayana Samskaram (i.e. when he gets the eligibility to perform sacrifices), that Agni created for the new born will be maintained by the child's Father, till the Upanyanam of the new born, He will perform the Agni Anushtanams on behalf of this child.

8. **Utthana** - Transferring the Mother (who gave birth to the new child) from 'sUtika griham' (Maternity Hospital) to Home
9. **Naamakarana** - Naming ceremony
10. **Anna prasanam** - Ceremony of Feeding the food (rice) for the first time
11. **Pravasagamana** - Ritual in which the child is taken to 'Guha' (Guha is the original word used in Vaikhanasa Kalpa Sutram, 'Guha' meaning Kumara Swamy) to perform some holy rites. By performing this Samskaram, the child is said to get the Strength and Health. Kumaraswamy is routinely invoked in VaikhAnasa Aaradhana kramam ("bhUshaNE--ShaNmukham AavAhayAmi"). KumAraswamy is a member of the parivAram of VishNu , the Supreme godhead of VaikhAnasAs and has specific assigned duties.
12. **Pindavardhanam** - After the above Samskaram, It is indicated that a religious food treat is arranged and the Vaikhanasa will have this meal with other Vaikhanasa Brahmins. Also called as 'kumAra bhOjanam' performed during Upanayanam.
13. **Chaulam** - Pancha Sikha and Tonsuring (Sometimes Piercing the Ears is also performed usually during Chaulam.)
14. **Upanayana** - Wearing the Sacred thread ceremony
15. **Paraayana Vratibandha Visarga** - Study of Vedic corpus
16. **Upakarma** - Observing of a rite in continuation of the above
17. **Samaavartana** - Return from Study



18. Pani grahana - Marriage

So the Vaikhanasas have the rites beginning with those connected with birth and ending with the rites regarding death and cremation ('Jatakadi-Smasanantham'). Among the sacraments included is Vishnu-Bali which is unique for the Vaikhanasas. The texts also deal with the installation and worship of the icons at home (Griharcha-bimba-pratishta, archana) and other details pertaining to religious observances (like seven-fold Paaka yagnas). These are regarded as the divine sacraments (daivika) in contradistinction to the eighteen samskaras which are meant only to provide the twice-born status to the individual (brahmana).

Dharma Sutram

The Dharma Sutras which are complete in three chapters (prasnas) deal with religious life and conduct of different groups and castes of people, responsibilities and duties in different states of life (asrama dharmas), the characteristic conducts of hermits, renunciants and such matter. There are also details concerning the eight-fold technique of yoga and other spiritual practices.

Pravara Sutram

The Pravara Sutra concerns itself with the lineage of several rishis with special reference to the Vaikhanasa community. It contains one chapter.

In essence, the Vaikhanasa Kalpa sutra provides the essential code of conduct for a Vaikhanasa 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 corresponding kriyas.

VISHNU – THE SUPREME GODHEAD OF VAIKHANASAS

The Vaikhanasas are distinguished by their uncompromising devotion to Vishnu



as the Vedic God par excellence. The Grihya Sutra prescribes that after the customary offerings are made to the sacred fire (Agni), Lord Vishnu must be worshipped to the effect that the fire-god (Agni) is the lowest of the gods while Vishnu is the highest; and that in between them, all other gods are accommodated.



"Vishnu - The Supreme Godhead!" - Tirupathi



athagnau nityahOmantE vishnOrnityArchA sarvadEvArchA bhavathi |

(Vimanarchana Kalpam)

agnirvaidEvAnAmavamO vishnu: paramastadantarEna sarvA anya dEvatA iti
brAhmaNam |

(Aitareya Brahmana. 1,1,1)

The Vaikhanasa school retained Vishnu in his Vedic context and advocated the worship of Vishnu with the six Vedic hymns addressed to Vishnu (**shad-Vaishnavam**). The books also admit that Narayana and Vasudeva are expressions which are synonyms with Vishnu, but prefer to retain the expression Vishnu, as it is the only expression recognized in the Vedic corpus. Consider this for instance, '**Agni**' and '**Vahni**' both mean the fire-god, but when the offering in fire is made, the proper announcement would be '**Agnaye Svaha**' and not '**Vahnaye Svaha**'.

According to Vaikhanasas, worship of gods is of two kinds: iconic (**sa-mUrta**) and aniconic (**amUrta**). The latter consists of oblations in fire, while the former is the worship offered to Vishnu in an idol installed at home or temple. The two according to Atri Maharshi, have marked correspondences. The setting up of the fire (**Agnyadhana**) is like unto the installation/consecration of the idol (**Pratishtha**); and the several sequences in the sacrifice are like the sequences in the idol worship.

The view of the ancient sages like Bhrigu, that by worshipping Vishnu, the god of gods, in ceremonial splendor again and again, one would achieve the benefits normally derived from the performance of sacrifices,

utsavE devadEvEsam yam sEvantE tE sarvE padE padE |

yagnaphalam labhEranniti bhrugvAdayO vadanti ||

A statement from the Vaikhanasa kalpa-sutra to the effect that all Vedic rites,



austerities and sacrifices prescribed in the Vedas are only variant form of worship of Vishnu,

athatOnushtAnakalpam vyaKhyAsyAma: |

sarvE vaidikAchArAstapOyagnaSva vishNupUjAvidhErbhEdA: |

iti vaikhAnasa sUtram ||

The ancient lawgivers knew that in the worship of Vishnu the Vaikhanasas were only following the lead given by the great sages of yore like Vasishtha, the ascetics like Sanaka, and by the section of the ancient followers of the Vedic tradition who were the adherents of the cult Vishnu. (Vridhdha-Haritha-Samhitha).

Although the Vaikhansas texts align themselves against the Tantrik tradition, there is atleast 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 Tantrik 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:

- he regards himself as wholly belonging to the deity, without however a direct encounter with the deity ('tasyaivAham');
- then, an encounter does occur and the devotee can confide with the deity: 'I am thine' ('tavevAham'); and finally
- 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 ('tvamevAham').

In the Vaikhanasa texts, it is prescribed for purposes of invocation (AvAhana) that after the worship of the enclosure-deities (Avarana-pUja) and the worship of the door-guardians (dvAra-pAla-pUja), the priest should station himself in



front of the idol (behind the screen), and reciting the 'Atma-sUktham', should enter into a state of meditative absorption, when he will become in fact Vishnu himself. Then follows the sequence of symbolic and ritual 'placement' (nyAsa), after this identity of self with Vishnu is transferred to the main idol. 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 Bhrigu's Kriyadhikara that Vishnu has two forms: the Idol and the Priest. The idol acquires divinity after invocation (AvAhana), while divinity abides always in the priest. He is therefore to be regarded as a mobile god viz., saakshat Vishnu rupi.

rUpadvayam hare: prOkta bimbamarchaka Eva cha |

bimbam tvAvAhanAdUrdhvam sadA sannihitOarchaka ||

archakastu hari: sAkshAtchhara rUpi na samsaya: |

The Atma-Sukta (Sri Vaikhanasa Mantra Prasna, 5-49; Sri Vishnuvarchana Sara Sangraham and KAsyapa's Achara-Kanda) is a collection of nine verses in the trishtubh metre. Its employment is peculiar to the Vaikhanasa worship. It is recited while invoking the form of Vishnu 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 Vishnu's 'sakala' form. It is a procedure by means of which the priest's self identifies itself with the highest of selves, viz., Vishnu. The hymn is called Atma-Sukta not only because it begins with the words 'AtmAtma', but also because it concerns itself with transforming the individual self into the cosmic spirit.





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"Self of the Self"



ATMA-SUKTAM

AtmAAtmA paramAntarAtmA mahyantarAtmA |

yaschAdirAtmA sat u nOntarAtmA |

vyAvEshti vishvam sakalam bibharti |

yO vyaktapunya: sat u na: pradhAna: || 1 ||

Meaning:

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.

prANA: praNIIti: sa udAna Adi

vraradO varAhO vyAnaSva mE syAt |

tapasAm cha mUrti: kapilO munIndrO |

yaSvApAnO hayasIshA na: || 2 ||

Meaning:

The outward breath (prAna) is our guide (praniti); the upward breath (udAna) is the primordial and boon-bestowing boar (varAha); the spreading breath (vyAna) is the form of Kapila, the sage who is the personification of penance; the downward breath (apAna) is the horse-headed deity, Hayagriva.

Yatsava akshnAtyajara: samagram |

Sriyam Urjayuktam sat u mE samAna: |

Balam Asuram yatsatatam nihantA |

brahmA buddhim gOpa ISvara: || 3 ||

Meaning:

My digestive breath (samAna) is that which devours everything, even goddess of prosperity (Sri) with her energy; my strength vanquished at all times evil forces, and my intellect is verily Brahma, and Isvara is my protector.

savitA cha vIya induSva dhAtu |

rasayutam bhUtA bhUtA: udaram nabhO vA |

bhUmiryathAmGrirvavrudhEsamIsha: || 4 ||

Meaning:

Savitri (the aspect of Sun-god) is my sex energy, the moon is the watery ingredients in my body; the five basic elements (bhutas: earth, water, fire, air and akasa) 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.

asthINi mE syuratha parvatAKhyA |

bhujagaSva kashA divi yE charanta: |

dyoU nEtrarUpoU pruthuprushnimuKhyoU |

rudhiram cha sAram sakalam cha tOyam || 5 ||

Meaning:

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.

snAyavO mE AsannadIrbhrugum hridayamastu |



sava anyE munayAgabhUtA: |

vEdA mE Asyam jihvA mE saraswatI |

dantA maruta upajihvA upasruti: || 6 ||

Meaning:

My sinews are the rivers on the earth, my heart is Bhrigu himself (the Vaikhanasa 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.

vrushaNau mitrAvaruNAvupasthA: prajApati: |

AntrA mE vEdA: SrutismrutI mEdhAdhAraNE |

svEdam mE vasha mUtrakOsham samudram |

purIsham kAnchanam || 7 ||

Meaning:

My testicles are the twin gods, Mitra and Varuna, my sex organ is the creator, Prajapati; my entrails are the Vedic hymns; my intellect (**medha**) and retention (**dharana**) are the revealed texts (sruti) and the texts subsidiary to them (**smriti**); my perspiration is indeed the rains, and my bladder is the ocean itself; my fecal matter is gold.

sAvitrI gAyatrI maryAdA vEdI |

hrutpuNdarIka vimalE pravishTa: |

sakala: salakshmI: savibhUtikAngO |

yatsava puNyam mayyadhishTAnamastu || 8 ||



Meaning:

The hymn in the gayatri metre addressed to the sun-god (Savitri) is the sacred precincts and the altar; and into the pure lotus of my heart has entered Vishnu in His cosmic aspect (sakala), along with the goddess of wealth (srI), in all His glory; may all that is filled with merit in me provide for Him a foothold.

savashAm dEvAnAmAtmaka: |

savashAm munInAmAtmaka: -

stapOmUrtirIha puNyamUrtirAsan || 9 ||

Meaning:

"May I contain in myself the essence of all the gods and all the sages, may I be a personification of austerities (tapo-murti) and of all merit (punya-murti)".

The purpose of the ritual of invocation (AvAhana) of the supreme, transcendental and all-pervading Vishnu (the etymological meaning of the word Vishnu is 'pervader') in the heart of the devotee or in an idol 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 idol, or meditated intensely and devotedly in the heart, Vishnu makes his presence felt in the idol or in the heart, and receives the worship offered (Kriyadhikaram).

Vaikhanasa worship is essentially Vishnu-oriented, but Vishnu is worshipped in his comprehensive and pervasive aspect (in accordance with the root meaning of the word 'vishi vyApatau'); and when Vishnu is invoked for worship, his presence includes the presence of all the other gods as his retinue (sa-parivara). Hence worship of Vishnu means worship of all the gods ('vishNO r nityArcha sarva-dEvArchAbhavati').

A ritualistic application of the comprehensive and pervasive character of Vishnu

can be seen in the custom prevalent in the Vaikhanasa temples of having three idols in addition to the main and immovable stone idol in the sanctum (Dhruva-Bimbam). The main idol represents in reality Vishnu, possessed of all the powers of divinity and properly installed as a deity (archA). Even as the Veda speaks of 'the three strides' that Vishnu took ('trIni padA vichakramE Vishnuh'), the main idol in the temple also makes three strides represented by three other idols, thus making for pervasion and comprehension:

1. "kautuka-beram" which receives all daily worship (nityArchana);
2. "snapana-beram" used for the occasional rituals (naimittikArchana) and
3. "autsava-beram", used for the sake of people who are motivated by worldly desires (kAmyArchana).



snApana beram - SrI ugra SrInivAsa mUrthy - Tirupathi

The symbolism of the four idols (**chatur-murti**) is interesting. The main idol is Vishnu, who is being all-pervasive, does not move about. When the presence of Vishnu crystallizes itself for the sake of receiving worship from the devotees, the spirit of the main idol moves out into kautuka-beram, which rests on the seat of worship (**archA-pItha**). This is the first stride. Then, as the sequence of worship necessitates such rites as administering a bath, the spirit of the main idol moves into the 'snapana-beram', which is placed in the enclosure for bath (**snapana-mandapam**) which is outside the sanctum. This is the second stride. And the third stride is represented when the 'autsava-beram' 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 idol now reaches beyond the confines of the temple. To these three is usually added another idol known as '**bali-beram**', for the sake of distributing food daily to the attendant deities located in the enclosures.



Bali beram - Koluva SrInivAsa mUrthy - Tirupathi



Idol 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., Vishnu. The individual soul (jIva), when it frees itself from phenomenal fetters, enters into the sphere of Vishnu (known as 'VaishnavAnDa') in four successive stages, each stage being designated a plane of Vishnu-experience (Vishnu-loka).

1. The lowest of the stages is 'AmOda', where the presiding aspect of Godhead is called Vishnu; and the individual soul experiences the pleasure of residing with Godhead in the same plane (sAlOkya).
2. The next stage is 'pramOda', where Maha-Vishnu presides; and the individual soul experiences the great delight of residing in close proximity with the Godhead (sAmIpya).
3. The stage higher than this is 'sammOda', where the presiding aspect is Sadaa-Vishnu, and where the individual soul experiences the joy of obtaining the same form (roopam) as that of the Godhead (sArUpya).
4. The highest stage is 'Vaikunta-lOkA', where 'vyApi-nArAyaNa' presides, and where the individual soul experiences the union with the Godhead (sAyujya).

The four aspects of Vishnu with reference to these four planes of 'Vishnu's sphere' are designated as Purusha, Satya, Achyuta and Aniruddha respectively. These are distinguished by their dominant and divine traits which these aspects reveal in each plane and which the individual soul shares:

1. virtue (dharma) in the first,
2. wisdom (jnana) in the second,
3. sovereignty (aiswarya) in the third, and
4. dispassion (vairagya) in the fourth.

The four planes of the Vishnu's world are regarded as the four quarters of



Brahman:

1. 'AmOda' - represents one quarter of Brahman,
2. 'pramOda' - one half
3. 'sammOda' - three quarters, and
4. Vaikunta-loka is the full Brahman symbolizing the 'highest foothold of Vishnu' ('tad vishnOh paramam padam') which is reached when Vishnu (the first plane) 'makes three strides' ('trIni padA vi-chakramE vishnuh').

In temple worship of the Vaikhanasa system, the four aspects of Vishnu are visualized as four forms located around Vishnu in the immediate enclosure ('prAgAdi chatur-dikshu'):

1. Purusha to the east,
2. Satya to the south,
3. Achyuta to the west and
4. Aniruddha to the north.

The forms are also differently conceived.

1. Vishnu in the centre is dark-colored and wears golden colored garments. He is well bedecked with all auspicious ornaments and is adorned with the Sri-vatsa 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 lower hand, the corresponding left hand holding the hip (katyavalambita). He has goddess Sri on his right side and the goddess Bhu on his left. All the other aspects are four-armed and carry conch and discus.
2. Purusha who is shown to the east of Vishnu faces the eastern direction (PrAngmuKha); He is fair-complexioned, wearing yellow garments. The



variant forms **Sri** and **Medini** (Bhu) are on his sides.

3. **Satya** who is shown to the south of Vishnu faces the southern direction (**dakshinAbhimuKha**), and is collyrium-hued; He wears red garments and is flanked by **Dhriti** and **Paushni**.
4. **Achyuta** is located to the west of Vishnu, and He faces west. He is golden colored and wears dark blue colored garments. He is accompanied by **Pavitri** and **KshoNi**.
5. **Aniruddha** is to the north of Vishnu, and He faces the northern direction. His body-color 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 **Pramodayini** and **Mahi**.

The four forms correspond to the four iconic variants of the main images in the sanctum (**dhruva-bimba**) which represents Vishnu.

- Purusha is symbolized by the kautuka-idol,
- Satya by the utsava idol, Achyuta by the snapana idol and
- Aniruddha by the bali idol.

During actual worship, however, Aniruddha is omitted, and the dhruva, kautuka, utsava, and snapana images are taken to represent Vishnu, Purusha, Satya and Achyuta respectively. The aspect of Aniruddha is imagined to be present in the bali-altar (maha bali peetham), in the sacrificial fire-pot (Nityagni-kunda), in the temple (vimana) and in the priest (Archaka).

In spite of the conception of Vishnu as having aspects (murti) and idol forms (bera), as accompanied by consorts (devis) and as surrounded by a retinue of gods (parivara), the Vaikhanasa 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 gingelly 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 arani-sticks, Vishnu 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.

sarvAdhAram sanAtanamapramEyamachintyam nirguNam nishkalam ksheerE
sarpistilE tailam pushpE gandham phalE rasam kashTE agnimiva sarvavyApinam
paramAtmAnam manasA samkalpyAvAhamEdAvAhanamridvAsanam
vishnOrayuktam mitratyathA hyAraNyAm vyAsE vahnirmathanAtsannihitO
bhavati tathaiva tathaiva dhyAnamathanEna bhaktasya hridi vishNu: sannihitO
bhavati |

(Vimanarchana Kalpam, 31st patala)

kAshTEagnirmathanAdujjvalanniva nishkaLAtmakO

vishNurdhyAnamathanEna bhaktyA sankalpanAtsakalo bhavati |

(Vimanarchana Kalpam, 80th patala)

It is in order to facilitate contemplation that idols are to be worshipped. Saunaka, the author of Rig vidhana is credited with the following counsel: "A beautiful image of Vishnu, with a smiling countenance and graceful looks, must be 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".

sarUpAm pratimAm vishNO: prasannavadanEkshaNAAm |

krutvAtmAna: prItikarIm suvarNarajatAdibhi: ||

tAmarchayEttAm praNamEttAm bhajEttAm vichintayEt |

vishatyapAstadOshastu tAmEva brahmarUpiNIIm ||



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"delightful to the devotee"

utsava beram - Sri Malayappa Swami - Tirupathi

SRI VAIKHANASA BHAGAVACCHASTRAM

We read in the concluding portion of Sage Marichi's Vimanarchana Kalpa, 100th patala:

Even as Vishnu became the primordial source from which emanated the forms



Purusha, Satya, Achyuta and Aniruddha, He transformed His Vedic nature in to the sage called 'Vikhanasa Maharshi'. And even as Purusha, Satya, Achyuta and Aniruddha are only His variant forms albeit derived, the Sages Bhrigu, Marichi, Atri and Kasyapa, were the variant forms of the first sage Vikhanasa Maharshi. To Vikhanas, Vishnu taught at the very beginning of creation the doctrine subsequently celebrated as '**Vaikhanasa Kalpa-Sutram**', which comprehends all the Vedas and contains the secret teaching of the Vedic lore. And Vikhanasa Maharshi in his turn briefly communicated this doctrine to the four sages (Bhrigu and others). What Vikhanasa Maharshi taught was in extent of one and a half crores of granthas (a grantha being thirty-two letters of a verse in anushtubh metre). The four sages in their turn prepared their own treatises, known as:

1. '**Adhikaras**' by Bhrigu,
2. '**Samhithas**' by Marichi,
3. '**Tantras**' by Atri and
4. '**Kaandaas**' by Kasyapa,

altogether extending to four lakh granthas.

No doubt the Vaikhanasa Kalpa Sutram is an ancient one, and what is more important, it is comprehensive, dealing as it does with all respects of 'Kalpa' (Srauta, Smarta or Grihya, Dharma and Sulba). By common consent, this text is held to be the source for all the later Vaikhanasa texts and manuals. The texts ascribed to the four sages who were disciples of Vikhanasa Maharshi have unfortunately not survived in their entirety. There are some prose and poetical works in the names of Marichi and Bhrigu, which are popularly studied and frequently printed (like Marichi's Vimanarchana Kalpam and Bhrigu's Kriyadhikara and Prakirnadhikara), while most of the other texts are known only through citations and extracts from them by later commentators and glossators like Nrisimha-Vajapeya-Yajin and Srinivasa-Dikshitulu.



There is truth in the traditional view that the Kalpa-sutras of Vikhanasa Maharshi provided not only inspiration but also material for the later Vaikhanasa writings. A distinction is thus drawn between the Sutra (by Vikhanasa) and the Sastra (by his disciples).

mUlamasyApi SAstrasya sArthakOtipramANata: |

upAdiSatsa bhagavAn asmabhyam naimishE vane ||

iti samkshEpata: prOkta mahatvam sUtraSAstrayE: |

(Prakirnadhikara, 30, 93-34)

A Kalpa Sutra is different in its orientation and approach from the Agama texts, and when the Vaikhanasa Bhagavachhastram was constituted, it had to contain the details which the Kalpa Sutra did not contain, or elaborate the details which were only suggested in the Kalpa Sutra. The requirements of Bhagavachhastram appear to have necessitated the composition of Sastra-texts by the four sages, Bhrigu and others, in addition to the Kalpa Sutra by their master, Vikhanasa Maharshi. For instance, the entire Vaikhanasa literature of the post-kalpa-sutra period may be said to have stemmed out of a statement in the Sutra-text of Vikhanasa Maharshi:

tam yagnapurusham dhyAyan purushasUktEna samstUya praNAmam
kuryasyagnEshu vihInam tatsampUrNam bhavatIti Sruti: | dvijAtiratindritO
nityam guruhE dEvAyatanE vA bhaktyA bhagavantam nArAyaNam
archayEttadvishNO: paramam padam gachhatIti vignAyatE ||

(Sri Vaikhanasa Grihya Sutram, 4, 12, 8-11)

One who does not perform the great sacrifices would compensate for this omission, according to scriptural authority, by contemplating upon Vishnu, who is the very personification of the great sacrifices, eulogizing him with hymns like Purusha-Sukta, and by worshipping him. Therefore, the twice-born one must worship day and night with devotion, in his own home or in a temple, Vishnu, the great god. Nrisimha-Vajapeyi-Yaji explains that sacrifice



(yajna) which involves only offerings into fire and tending the ritual fire, is actually worship of God without an icon (amUrtarchanam) and has its rewards, which are alternately obtained by worshipping Vishnu in an idol, 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 sacrifice as well as by iconic worship.

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

athAgnau nityahOmAntE vishNOrnityArcha sarvadEvArcha bhavati |



" the highest god!"

Agni is the lowest of the gods, being only a messenger (dUta) of the other gods, and Vishnu is the highest, being the very spirit of the sacrifice (yajna-purusha) 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 Vishnu. 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-prAyaschittArtham**) and as conducive to the welfare here and hereafter (**aIhikAmushmika-phala-siddhyartham**). This would make the performance of great sacrifices (prescribed and elaborated in Srauta Sutras) unnecessary and redundant. This highlights the role of idol worship as a substitute for the performance of sacrifices, and justifies the emergence of Bhagavachhastram out of the main body of the Kalpa Sutram, which was fast becoming irrelevant and impracticable.

The pressures that occasioned the rise of the Bhagavachhastram may now be broadly be indicated. The environment in which the Kalpa-Sutra complex was prepared was when sacrifices (mostly from Yajurveda) and rituals (mostly from the Brahmana texts) were prevalent. The dharma-sutra section which was an adjunct to the Srauta and Grihya sections of the Kalpa Sutra recognized the division of the society into 'twice-born' groups (**dvi-jati**) 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 Srauta and Grihya sections of kalpa-sutra had meaning and applicability only to these groups. But the age of the great Vedic sacrifices was fast fading, and the relevance of the Srauta-section of the kalpa-sutra 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 smritis than on the revealed Vedic corpus (sruti). Naturally, the Grihya section (which became known as 'Smarta', "based on smriti books") of the kalpa-sutra assumed greater importance.

It is revealing that among the twenty or so kalpa-sutras that have come down to us (most of them, however, in an unsatisfactory condition), more than half do not contain the Srauta section at all; if they did contain once, the section has disappeared subsequently. And none of the extant kalpasutras, excepting two (Katyaayana and Bodhayana), bother about the Sulba-sutra section, which



principally deals with sacrificial altars (*vedi, chiti*), their measurements, and the implements and vessels used in the sacrifices (*yajnayudha*). Barring five of the kalpa-sutras we are acquainted with, all others have the Grihya section, rather elaborately.

The concept of sacrifice (*yajna* or *yAgA*) was redefined as giving up ones wealth in the name of deity ('*devatam uddisya dravya tyAgAh yAgAh*'). And in the place of the great sacrifices of olden days (like *agrayana, AsvamEdha, vAjapEya, sOma* and so on), the Grihya sutras prescribed a group of "five great sacrifices" (*pancha-mahA-yagnAs*), which every twice-born householder was to undertake. The five 'great sacrifices' in the names of gods (*dEva*), ancestral spirits (*pitru*), animals and birds (*bhUta*), fellow human beings (*manushya*) and the Veda (*brahma*), 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' figures prominently and which took ritualistic forms:

1. The '*dEva-yajna*' is defined as offering faggots (*samiths*) to the fire-god. In the earlier great sacrifices, several articles and eatables (*purOdasha* etc) were poured into the fire in an elaborate ritual, and reciting hymns from the Vedic corpus. But the idea of '*dEva-yagna*' is the offering of even a single faggot into the fire, with no other rituals accompanying this act ('*yad agnau juhOty api samidham tad dEva-yajnah santishthatE*').
2. The '*Pitru-yajna*' is likewise the mere offering of water to the ancestral spirits, with the utterance of '*svadhA*' ('*yat pitrubhyah svadhA-karOti aapas tat*').
3. The '*bhUta-yajna*' is offering food to birds (like crows) and animals, after the midday ritual known as '*vaisva-dEva-bali*' and before his own lunch ('*yat bhUtEbhyO balim harati tat*').
4. The '*manushya-yajna*' is partaking of ones food with other human beings (like learned folk, guests, visitors and the indigent people) ('*yad brAhmanAdibhyOnnam dadati tat*').



5. The 'brahma-yajna' is the study or recitation of ones own branch of the Vedic corpus (sva-sAKhA) ('yat svAdhyAya adhiyitaikam api rcham yajus sAma vA tat'). svAdhyAya strictly means careful study of the entire Vedic corpus to which one belongs. But as a yajna 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 Srauta section to the Grihya signifies not only that the sacrifices were receding to the background but that idol worship was becoming more important and popular. 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 idol worship, complete with rituals and hymns, became the focus of attention in the books designated as Bhagavachhastra which were in effect successors of the Kalpa-sutra-texts.

Gradually the focus moved more towards idol worship and particularly idol worship at temples along with homes. And as such the 'kriya-yoga' is suggested. Kriya-Yoga occurs in Bhagavata (11th skanda, 27th adhyaya). Uddhava requests Krishna to enlighten him about Kriya-Yoga, which is another term for the worship of the God:

kriyAyOga samAchaSva bhavadArAdhanam prabhO |

yasmAt tvAm yathArchanti sAtvata: sAttvatarshabha ||

vaidikastAntrikO miSra iti mE trividhO maKha: |

trayANAmIpsitEnaiva vidhinA mAm samarchayEt ||

"Worship is of three kinds. Vedic (Vaikhanasa), Tantrik (Pancharatna) and 'mixed', and that one could chose from among them whatever appeals to him."

'Bhagavatha' which is the name of the purana which eulogizes Vishnu, is also the term for a devotee of Vishnu. And the Vaikhanasas are primarily



Bhagavathas (Bhrigu's Kriyadhikaram, 30, 136-150), even as the Panchaaratras are. The Vedic kind of worship mentioned in the above work answers to the Vaikhanasa variety, while the 'tantrik' kind signifies the Pancharatra variety.

"Vaishnavam dvividham vaiKhAnasam pAncharAtram iti; vaiKhAnasam vaidikam pAncharAtram tu avaidikam" (Vimanarchana Kalpam).

There has been a division among the bhagavatas from very early times into Vaikhanasa and PAncharatra. This division has been mentioned even in Mahabharata. While the bhagavathas extol intense loving devotion (bhakti) or total surrender (prapatti) to God as the principal means of reaching the Godhead, a difference in approach between the Vaikhanasas and Paancharatras has been noted. Srinivasa Dikshitulu, for instance, in his tAtparya chintAmaNi (dasa-vidha-hEtu-nirUpaNam) points out that total surrender for a Vaikhanasa means the uninterrupted invocation and worship of Purusha and other forms of Vishnu preceded by 'pranava' (viz., OmkAram) for the three ingredients of the sacred syllable signifies Vishnu ('a' kAra), Lakshmi ('u' kAra) and their devotee ('ma' kAra) in unison, while for a Paancharatra, it means an occasional invocation, and without Vedic mantras.

The expression 'kriya-yOga' means the ritualistic actions that the worship of Vishnu involves; even as the title of a Vaikhanasa work, 'Kriyadhikaram' of Bhrigu does. The same expression occurs in Agni-Purana (a dialogue between Narada and Brahma) as distinguished from Jnana-Yoga, which is inward and internal; 'kriyA-yOga' is defined here as outward-oriented:

gnAnayOgastu yOgasya yastu sAdhanamAtmanA |

yastu bAhyArthastamdyOga: kriyAyOga: sa uchyatE ||

The same text explains that 'kriyA-yOga' consists of acts such as:

1. building a shrine to Vishnu ('kArayati mandiram'),
2. making an idol that is suitable and beautiful ('pratimAm lakshana-vatim cha



kuryAt'), and

3. worshipping every day ('ahanyahani yogEna yajatO yan maha-phalam').

kriyA-yOga refers primarily to ordering ones life in accordance with the values of idol 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 idol worship as a domestic rite. It is not a detail of the Kalpa Sutra, but it brought idol worship out of the Grihya confines and paved the way for Bhagavachhastram. Bhrigu's Prakeernadhikaram (35, 1-13) speaks of the benefits of kriyA-yOga ('athA vakshyE visEshEna kriyA-yOgAsritam phalam'):

- by building a temple, it says, one obtains the rewards of performing a sacrifice every day;
- by even desiring to build one, he gets rid of sins of seven lives;
- by causing an idol to be installed, he achieves imperishable worlds; and so on.

And the account ends by claiming that idol 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.

Ahanyahani yagnEna yajatO yanmahAphalam |

prApnOti tatphalam vishNO: ya: kArayati mandiram ||

kArayEd bhagavadgEhamiti buddim karOti ya: |

saptajanmakrutam pApamalpam vA yadi vA bahu |

vishNOrAlayavinyAsaprArambhadEva naSyati ||

pratimAm lakshaNavatIm yam kArayati mAnava: |

kESavasya sa talloKamakshayam pratipadyatE ||



bErapUjA tviyam prOkTA pUjAnAmuttamOttamA |

atItE yajamAnEpi chiramasyA avastitE: ||

(Bhrigu's Prakeernadhikaram)

1,

sangatirdEvapUjA cha dAnam yagna iti smruti: |

yagnEshvEtEshu vidhivad bErapUjA viSishyatE ||

yajamAnE mrutEyEshA SaSvatam bhuvi tishTati |

(Bhrigu's Khiladhikaram 30-31)

There is another outlook in Kalpa Sutram which facilitated the rise of Bhagavachhastram, and this pertains to the hierarchy of saints and devotees. An individual born of brahmana parents is a brahmana, but he is so only by birth and not in spirit (jAta-mAtram). It is only when he undergoes the sacrament of upanayana that he becomes really a brahmana, but his status as brahmana depends upon the daily performance of sandhya (or savitryadhyayana). He is naturally superior to the brahmana who is only by birth, but inferior to the brahmana, who is 'srOtriya' (one who studies the Vedas, who has undergone the sacrament of marriage, and who performs the pAka-yagnas). But a 'srOtriya' is inferior to the 'AhitAgni', who studies the Vedic branch to which he belongs and tends the ritual fire at home. And he, in turn, is inferior to the 'anuchAna', who performs without fail the 'havir-yagnAs'. The 'bhrUna', who performs the elaborate sOma-yajna is superior to the 'anuchAna'. The 'bhrUna', who is the best among the ritualists, is inferior to the 'rishi-kalpa', who besides having the advantage of all the prescribed sacraments, is restrained and disciplined in body and mind ('samskArair upEto yama-niyamAbhyAm'). And the 'rishi', who not only has studied all the four Vedas along with their auxiliary texts, but also engages himself in austerities and penance (sAngachaturvEda-tapOyOga). And surpassing even him is the 'muni', who is devoted to Vishnu and is ever in



perfect equipoise ('nArAyaNa parAyanO nirdvandvO muni:').

Thus, the Kalpa Sutra by formulating the hierarchy (pUrvAt pUrvAt paratO variyAn) highlighted the value of devotion (bhakti) in contradistinction to the need for ritualistic rigor in the spiritual practices at home. The ideal of the muni was also the goal of the Bhagavata (Vaikhanasa) career. The muni is not concerned with his own salvation, but works for the welfare of others (called 'IOka-sangraha' in Bhagavad Gita which is eminently the definitive text of the Bhagavata cult). Srinivasa Dikshitulu (or Srinivasa Makhi, an erstwhile Vaikhanasa Hereditary Pradhana Archaka of Tirumala Venkateswara Swamy temple (950 A.D.), we will get to know more about him and his works, later) in his dasa-vidha-hEtu-nirUpanam (10 proven reasons why Vaikhanasa way of worship is best) quotes at length from Atri's Pura Tantram (Ch.47) to the effect that the Vaikhanasas 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 kriya). The citation also distinguishes between 'worship at home' (GrihArcha), which is done for securing individual or familial welfare, and 'worship in the temple' (AlayArcha), which is done for the good of the public, and defends the superior merit of the latter. 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 Samhita:

viprA vaiKhAnasAKhyA yE tE bhaktAstatvamuchyate |

EkAntina: susutvasthA dEhAntam nAnyayAjina: ||

Kartavyamiti dEvEsam samyajantE phalam vinA |

prApuvanti cha dEhAntE vAsudEvatvamabjaja ||

And because of this disinterested devotion that idol worship involves, the texts proclaim that idol worship is the best religious practice and that it is the only



avenue to final emancipation:

bErapUjA tviyam prOkTA pUjAnAmuttamOttamA |

tasmAt sarvaprayatnEna bhaktyA paramayA yuta: |

samUrArAdhanam kuryAnnAnyathA muktimApnuyAt ||

(Bhrigu's Prakeernadhikaram)

For idol worship which could be commonly resorted to, temple is the most suitable place. But the temple must be properly constructed, and the idol appropriately installed in it and effectively installed and consecrated in it. 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 Agama indispensable. It is claimed that in the present age (Kali-Yuga) Agamic worship alone is indicated, and not Sruta and Smarta worship which were prevalent in the previous ages (Krita Yuga, Treta Yuga and Dvapara Yuga):

SrutismrutividhanEna pUjA kAryA yugatrayE |

AgamOktavidhanEna kalau dEvAn yajEtsudhI: ||

We read in Prakeernadhikaram (35.25) that if the Vedic sacrifices are prescribed because they wash away the host of sins and fulfill all our desires, the worship of Vishnu will produce the same benefits, because Vishnu personifies in himself all the sacrifices:

yagnA narANAm pApaughakshAlanA: sarvakAmadA: |

yathauvEjyA jagaddhAtu: sarvayagnamayO hari: ||

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



dIpam prayachHati narO vishNOrAyatanE hi ya: |

sadakshiNasya yagnasya phalam prApnOtyasamSaya: ||

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

bhaktyA pradakshiNam kuryAnnityam vishNvAlayE nara: |

sAyam prAtaScha dEvEsam namasyannatha chintayat |

ya: praNAmam kuryAtsa tu yagnaphalam labhEt ||

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

udityutkrushTaSabdOyam savO yagna udAhruta: |

tasmAduttamayagnatvAdutsava: paribhashyatE |

vAjimEdhAntayAgAnAm tasmaddEvOtsavO vara: |

vAjimEdhasahasrENa yajatE yat phalam bhavEt |

yaSvOtsavEna yajatE tayOstulyam phalam smrutam ||

VAIKHANASA LITERATURE

Marichi's Vimanarchana Kalpam enumerates a general description of the Vaikhanasa 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 Vikhanasa Maharshi (who was



none other than Vishnu) for the good of all beings, relying on the scriptural authority.

The text proceeds to say that the Vikhanasa Maharshi taught this doctrine to Bhrigu, Kasyapa, Atri and Marichi, who in turn prepared the Vaikhanasa texts named Adhikaras, Kandas, Tantras and Samhithas respectively, totaling in all four lakh grantha (a grantha being 32 letters in an anushtubh verse). The four sishyas blessed us with the summary of VikhanasAchArya's upadesams in the form of:

Sage Atri's works:

Atri prepared four tantras, entitled

1. PUrva Tantram
2. AtrEya Tantram (A part of it called SamUrtaArchaNAdhikaraNam (devanagari) which deals with Worship and Consecration of Vishnu Temples. This is the only available text currently.)
3. VishNu Tantram and
4. Uttara Tantram

And these works are covered in 88,000 granthas (or slokas).

Sage Bhrugu's works:

Bhrigu prepared thirteen Adhikaras called

1. KhilAdhikAram,
2. PurAdhikAram
3. KriyA adhikAram,
4. VAsAdhikAram,



5. MAnAdhikAram,
6. NiruktAdhi adhikAram,
7. PrakeerNAdhi adhikAram,
8. ArchaAdhikAram,
9. Yajn~Adhi adhikAram and
10. VarNAdhi adhikAram.
11. ChitrAdhikAram
12. PratiguhyAdhikAram
13. YajnAdhikAram

The total bulk of all the works is given as the same as that of Atri's works viz., 88,000 granthas in one account; but in other accounts, it is given as 64,000 granthas, which fit into the total tally of four lakh granthas. Among these, the works that are available in print form are:

1. **KhilAdhikAram** (devanagari),
2. **KriyAdhikAram** (devanagari),
3. **VAsAdhikAram** (telugu),
4. **PrakIrnAdhikAram** (telugu) and
5. **YajnAdhikAram** (telugu).

Sage Marichi's works:

Marichi wrote eight Samhithas:

1. Jaya Samhitha,



2. Aananda Samhitha,
3. Samjn~Ana Samhitha,
4. Vijaya Samhitha,
5. Vira Samhitha
6. Vijita Samhitha,
7. Vimala Samhitha and
8. Jn~Ana Samhita.

They extend to one lakh and 84,000 granthas. Among these the available texts are:

1. Ananda Samhitha (devanagari and telugu) and
2. Vimanarchana Kalpam (devanagari and telugu).

Sage Kasyapa's works:

Sage Kasyapa's blessed us with three Kandas, named:

1. Satya KAnda,
2. Tarka KAnda and
3. Jn~Ana KAnda,

And altogether they extend to 64,000 granthas. The only available text from KAsyapa is Jnana Kanda (devanagari and telugu). Some accounts describe there are two more texts called Santana Kanda and Kasyapa Kanda also written by Kasyapa Maharshi, but when they are included the count 4 lakh is not obtained.

The enumeration ends with the statement that the source of all these four classes of texts is the Vaikhanasa Kalpa Sutram.



yEtEshAm chaturvidhAnAm mUlam tadvaiKhAnasasUtram |

<i>Author</i>	<i>Works</i>	<i>Granthas</i>
Atri	4 Tantras	88,000
Bhrigu	13 Adhikaras	64,000
Marichi	8 samhithas	1,84,000
Kasyapa	3 kandas	64,000
Total		4,00,000 granthas

Table showing the author-wise classification of the different VaikhANasa texts.

There is a statement in Garuda Puranam, incorporated also in Prakirnadhikaram (34, 9-10), which mentions that these sages, by the command of Brahma (Vikhanasa) wrote the Vaikhanasa Scriptures and worshipped Vishnu on earth:

AdEsAt brahmaNO vishNum srInivasE atrirarchayEt|

kASyapO vishNvadhishthAnE subha kshEtrE bhrugurmuni: |

marIchirmandarE vishNu marchayAmAsa kEsavam ||

1. Marichi in Mandara Kshetram,
2. Atri in Srinivasa Kshetram,
3. Kasyapa in Vishnvadhisthana Kshetram and
4. Bhrigu in Subha Kshetram.

It is difficult to identify what these places were, except Srinivasa kshetram, which is undoubtedly the present-day Tirumala Divya Kshetram.



puRa chaturmuKhAdEshAchatvArO munayOmaLA: |

praNIya vaishNAvam shAstram bhUmAvabhyarchayannrupa ||

marIchirmandarE vishNumarchayAmasa kEsavam |

sarvadEvOttamam dEvam (AdEshAd brahmaNo vishNum)

srInivAsEatrirarchayEt |

kAsyapO vishnvadhishtAnE SubhAkshEtrE bhrugurmuni: ||

Sage Marichi, one of the four sisHyAs of AchArya VaikhAnasa has saluted VaikhAnasa Aagamam as Soumyam (Beautiful) and Vaidheekam (based on Veda PramANams). It has been pointed out that VaikhAnasa mode of worship would yield soubhAgyams in this world (Eihikam) and in the other world (VaikunTham/ Aamushmikam). PancharAtram on the other hand will yield only the Phalan of Moksham (the boon of nitya kaimkaryam to the Lord in His supreme abode and enjoying ParipoorNa BrahmAnadham there). PaancharAtram in contrast to VaikhAnasam is known as AgnEyam, since one needs a dheekshA to worship the Lord through this aagamam. VaikhAnasas are blessed with the dheeksha even while they are in the womb of their mothers. VaikhAnasa ArchakAs have thus Garbha dheekshai and hence do not need any external dheekshai to engage in Bhagavad AarAdhanam. While VaikhAnasam is appropriate for ArAdhanam every where, PaancharAtra Aagamam (AgnEyam) is recommended for worship at areas, where there is not much of human sanchArams (Mountain tops, Forest areas et al). It is said that the change in worship at a temple consecrated with VaikhAnasa Aagamam to PaancharAtra Aagamam will cause sorrow to the nation. When the temple consecrated with Paancha rAtra Aagamam experiences of improper worship, then conversion to VaikhAnasa Aagamam mode of worship at that temple would reverse the inauspicious trends in the nation (PaancharAra-vidhAnEna pratishtApya vartamAnE archanE heenE sati, soumyasya pravESEnam kartavyam tath Raaja-rAshtra samruddhikaram bhavati).



The daily VaikhAnasa AarAdhanam at the temples as well as at homes uses a lot of Veda Mantrams. At the temples, the sequence of AarAdhanam is:

1. PradhakshiNam,
2. Prayer to dhvAra dEvathais,
3. Opening of the Sannidhi doors,
4. Prostration before the Lord,
5. Collection of water from the river for Thirumanjanam and have pradakshaNam of the sannidhi,
6. cleansing of the sannidhi (Suddhi),
7. pulling the curtains to begin the AarAdhanam for the Lord.

This is the archanA kramam as summarized by U.Ve. KadukkalUr SthalaSayanA BhattAcchAr Swami. He describes what the archakar does inside the thirai:

Archakar sits on the koorma peetam in PadmAsanam and performs archanai for the moolam of the peetam as:

1. sarvAdhAram,
2. sanAtanam,
3. dhivyam and
4. kamaTa roopam.

Next, the archakar invokes the thousand-headed serpent, the 8 dhig gajams, seven oceans and the AadhAra sakti and a thousand-petalled lotus with a beautiful red peetam in the middle of that gigantic lotus flower, where SrIman NarayaNan is seated. The archakar should imagine himself as standing or sitting on the right side of the Lord, recite the guru paramparai of Viganasar, perform the rechaka, pooraka and kumbaka prANayAmams as per yoga sastra and proceed with the appropriate sankalpams.



Next follows the Aatma suddhi thru sOshaNam, dhAhanam and plAvanam with recitation the appropriate mantrams; the pancha suddhis (BhUta, sthAna Paatraa, Aatma and Bimbha suddhi) follow. Brahma nyAsam is done and the aavAhanams are completed before the commencement of ArAdhanam.

Six Aasanams are prescribed in VaikhAnasa AarAdhanam:

1. MantrAsanam,
2. SnAnAsanam,
3. alankArAsanam,
4. BhOjyAsanam,
5. YaatrAsanam and
6. Paryanka Aasanam.

1. MantrAsanam:

NyAsams are completed thru appropriate mantrams and the Moolavar's sakti is invoked onto the Koutuka, Utsava, Snapana and Bali bhErans. After completing these Avahanams, five types of archanam are made:

1. offering a seat,
2. water for washing the Lord's feet,
3. achamana teertam offering,
4. Argya teerta samarpaNam and
5. mukha vaasasam

Aasanam paadhyam Achamam argyam cha mukha vaasasam

panchOpachArA Devasya mantrAsana parigrahE



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2. SnAnasanam:

Now the Kouthuka bhEram and His Paadhukais are placed in front and the following 8 upachArams are offered:

Paadhukam dantakAshTham cha tailamudhvardhanam tathA

SirasyAmalakam tOyam kadkatam plOtamEva cha

ashtOpachArA dEvasya snAsana parigrahE

The 8 upachArams are:

1. dantAvadhAnam (teeth cleaning),
2. Tailam (oil for bath),
3. Nelli powder (as detergent/soap),
4. Theertham for Thirumanjanam
5. Cleaning of the keSa bhAram of the head,
6. decoration,
7. plOtam and
8. offer of argyam.

3. AlankArAsanam:

This follows immediately after snAna Asanam.

Vastram yajn~Opaveetam cha gandhAlOpanabhUshaNE

Pushpa dhAmaanjanAdarSadhUpOargyamEva cha

daSopachArAn Devasya alankArAsanE dadETh

After SnAnam, ten upachArams are offered:



- (1) a new set of Vastrams
- (2) sacred thread
- (3) sandal paste
- (4) Jewelry
- (5) Flower garland
- (6) coleriyum for the eye
- (7) aadarsam/Mirror
- (8) DhUpam/incense
- (9) Dheepam/ lamp and
- (10) argyam.

4. *BhOjyAsanam*

After alankArAsanam, five upachArams are offered:

- (1) Madhuparkam
- (2) Havis nivEdhanam
- (3) Paaneyam to accompany the food presented
- (4) Homam and
- (5) TaambhUlam.

5. *YaatrAsanam*

After nivEdhanam for all the deities (sannidhis) at the temple, Bali samarpaNam in 8 directions should be done. This is preceded by stOtram, Umbrella, flag, fan upachArams are to the Lord (**kouthuka BhEram**) seated on a



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seat, where He usually is. After directional Bali, the archakar arrives at the MahA bhUta peetam and calls the names of dhavajan, Sankhan, YootAdhibhan and akshahrundhru and place the PrasAdhams on all four sides of this Peetam with the recitation of the "yE bhUtA:" mantram.

6. ParynakAsanam

Now the SaaRRumuRai, GhOshti theertam, prasAdham distribution for the ghOshti takes place. The sevArthees are presented Bhagavath PrasAdhams next. As the evening advances, Lord is readied for His sleep at the Thiru PaLLi arai (Sleeping chambers). Five more upachArams are offered before inviting Him to rest. These are:

- (1) offer of KastUri or fragrant vastus
- (2) ThaambhUlam
- (3) Sandal paste
- (4) Pushpam
- (5) PradakshiNam-namaskAram.

This is the last of the Asanams, ParyankAsanam.

SrI VaikhAnasa Mantra prasn timer describes all these upachArams and associated mantrams for the daily ArAdhanam of BhagavAn. For each UpachArAm, there is a separate mantram. The upachAram with the specific mantrams establishes the saannidhyam in the Moola BhEram from Whom the sakti for all the other Moorthys are derived. Sri PaancharAtra Poushkara Samhitai recognizes the ArAdhanam done by VaikhAnasa archakAs without expecting anything in return (nAny Yaajina) and salutes these archakAs as visEsha BhaktimAns, who reach the lotus feet of their Lord at the end of their lives here:

viprA VaikhAnasAkhyA yE tE bhaktAstatvamuchyatE



yEkAntina: suddhasatvasthA dEhAntam nAnyA-yAjina:

karmaNyamiti DevESam samyajantE Phalam vinA

prApnuvati cha dEhAntE VaasudEvatvamaBjaja

SankarshaNa samhithai of PaancharAtram states that ArAdhanam by Paanchraatra vidhAnam will bless one with Moksham, whereas the worship by VaikhAnasa vidhi will grant all auspiciousness in this world and Moksham at the end of one's life.

PoojayEt pancharAroustu mantrai: mOkshaphalapradhai:

VaikhAnasOktai: dhiviyairvaa mantraisarvArtha siddhayE

Another PaancharAtra samhithai (PaaramEswara samhithai) states that one should offer namaskaraNams at least to five VaikhAnasa archakAs before adorning the Lord with Pavitra Maalais during the Pavitra Utsavam.

The charyaa bhAgam of Paadhma samhithai points out that for PaancharAtra ArAdhanam, one should be blessed with dheekshA first. Physical snAnam or mantra snAnam as well as daily anushtAnams must be completed before starting the AarAdhanam for the day. A rigorous set of observances start after the removal of thirai:

1. alankAram,
2. Atma suddhi,
3. Mantra nyAsa vidhi observance,
4. mantra suddhi,
5. dhAhana-sOshaNa-plAvanams for the ArAdhana dhravyams,
6. yOga Peeta Parikalpanam,



7. peeta pArSva devatA Parikalpanam and

8. three AavaraNa-BahirAvaraNa devatA kalpanam are completed.

SnAnAsanam is performed with 30 upachArams; the alankArAsanam has 26 upachArams and BhOjyAsanam has 128 upachArams. Homam follows.

Thus, both the Sri VaikhAnasa and PaancharAtra Agamams have almost equal number of anushtAna kramams for Bhagavad AarAdhanam. Sri VaikhAnasam has Veda Mantrams for every step. In PaancharAtram, Moola Mantram is used for Paadhyam, Argyam and Aachamanam after referring to the individual kriyAs. VishNu worship with extensive use of Veda Mantrams is considered special and may be this motivated swamy Desikan to indicate the uniqueness of VaikhAnasa AarAdhanam while revering both Aagamams:

ThvAm PaancharAtrikanayEna pruthagvidhEna

VaikhAnasEna cha pathA niyatAdhikArA:

Samjn~yAviSEshaniyamEna samarchayanta:

preetyA nayanthi phalavanti dinAni dhanyaA:

It is interesting to see that the AarAdhanam at Swamy Desikan's sannidhi at ThUppul and Thiruvaheendhrapuram is according to VaikhAnasam, where as the PaancharAtra samhita (JayAkhyA) AarAdhanam takes place at Kaanchi VaradarAjan's temple and at Srirangam. The AarAdhanam at Thirumala is by VaikhAnasam although Sri RaamAnujA established the PaancharAtra Aagamam at many dhivya dEsams. Swamy Desikan blessed us with a SrI Sookti named PaancharAtra Raksha following the foot steps of Swamy AlavantAr's SrI Sookti of Aagama PrAmANyam. We have to revere therefore both these VaishNavite Aagamams.





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BHOGA-SRINIVASA (Kumbhakara)

Drawing of SrI Bhoga SrInivAsa Murthy

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DHIVYA DESAMS FOLLOWING SRI VAIKHANASA AAGAMAM:

Quite a few dhivya dEsams in ChOLa dEsam, Paandya Naadu, ThoNDai Nadu, Nadu Naadu and Vada Naadu worship according to VaikhAnasam. Thiruvengkadam (Thirmalai), NaimisAraNayam are examples of the Vada Nadu temples that follow VaikhAnasam. In Nadu Naadu, both the dhivya dEsams (ThirukkOvalUr and Thiruvaheendhrapuram) worship with VaikhAnasa Aagamam.

(NOTE: In the appendix to this eBook we have listed in detail the individual temples and their salient features along with pictures wherever available, for the reading pleasure of aastikaas)

In chOLa Naadu, there are quite a few temples that have adopted the VaikhAnasa AarAdhanam.

- (1) ThiruviNNagar/Oppiliappan Sannidhi
- (2) KaazhiicheerAma ViNNagaram
- (3) ThiruvAli Thirunagari
- (4) Nandhipura ViNNagaram
- (5) Thiru NaRayUr/nAcchiyAr Koil
- (6) ThirukkaNDiyUr
- (7) ThirukkaNNangudi
- (8) ThirukkaNNapuram
- (9) ThirukkaNNa mangai
- (10) KarambhanUr/Uttthamar Koil
- (11) KoodalUr
- (12) Kapistalam
- (13) TanjaimAmaNikkOil



(14) Tillai Thirucchitrakoodam and

(15) ThiruveLLiyankudi are some of these VaikhAnasa Temples.

In ThoNDai MaNDalam the VaikhAnasa temples are:

(1) ThiruvallikkENi ParthasArathy Temple

(2) Thiruvidadantai

(3) Thirukkadanmallai

(4) ThiruttaNKA/Dheepa PrakAsan

(5) Thiruneermalai and

(6) ParamEswara ViNNagaram and a few others.

In Paandya Naadu quite a few dhivya dEsams follow VaikhAnasa Agamam:

(1) SrivilliputthUr

(2) Koodal Azhagar

(3) ThirumAlirumchOlai

(4) ThrukkOshtiyUr

(5) Thirukkurungudi

(6) Thirumeyyam

(7) ThiruppuLingudi

(8) VaraguNa mangai

(9) ThiruppullANi

(10) SrI vara- Mangai



(11) Thiru Tholaivilimangalam

(12) ThirukkuLanthai et al.

Ahobilam, Srirangam, Kaanchi Deva PerumAL's temple are few of the well known dhivya dEsams that follow the PaancharAtra Aagamam. The thirteen MalayALA dhivya dEsams are supposed to follow VaikhAnasam but their way of worship is Taantrikam.

Although no human being can vouch for it, the SaastrAs say that the VaikhAnasa AarAdhanam is performed at Parama Padham/SrI VaikunTham and KsheerAbdhi.

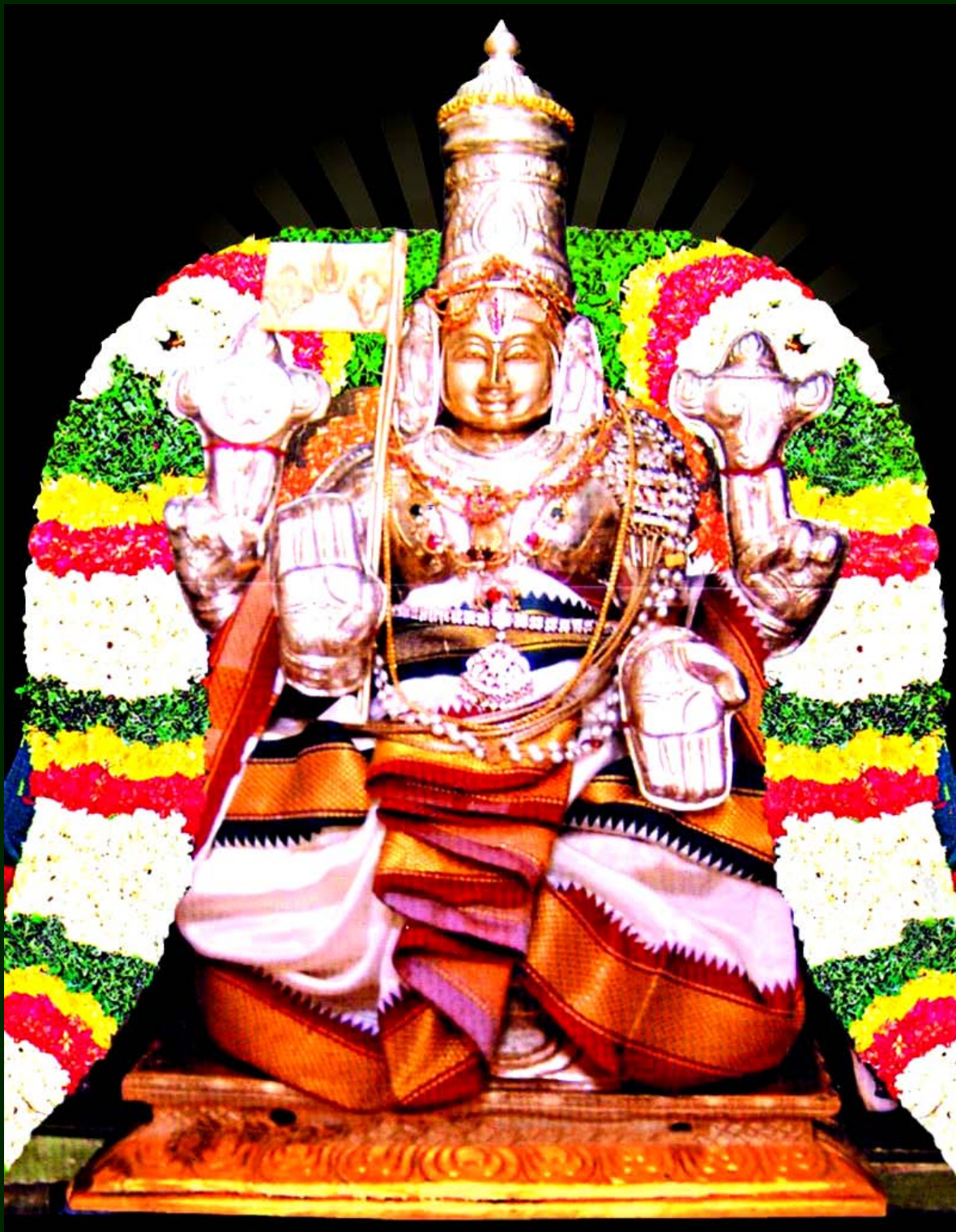
NamO SrI VenkatESaya!

Daasan,

RAmakrishna Deekshitulu

Oppiliappan Koil VaradAchAri Sadagopan

Appendices



Sage VikhAnasa - Tirumala



APPENDIX - 1

VAIKHANASA AGAMA BOOKS FOR REFERENCES

INTRODUCTION:

India is a land of Temples. The temple is a public place of worship. It is the common belief among all religions in the world to worship their Lord through prayers. This is called Bhakti Marga. In this system Priest will be there in the temple to conduct pooja to the Lord on behalf of the Devotees. This pooja system is otherwise called as Archana or Aradhana to the Lord. Daily the Priest prays to the Lord to give peace and pleasure to all the people in the world.

The mode of this worship is clearly and elaborately explained in Agama texts. These Agamas may be classified broadly into three groups on the basis of their sectarian affiliations: Saiva, Vaishnava and Sakta.

We are dealing here with Vaikhanasa Agama books. Sage Vikhanas is the founder teacher of this system. He has written Vaikhanasa Kalpa Sutra and taught the Agama to his four disciples Sage Bhrugu, Sage mareechi, Sage Kasyapa and Sage Atri. This Vaikhanasa Agama adheres to the vedic tradition and it worships Vishnu. These four desciples have written the Vaikhanasa Agama texts as follows:

- a) Bhrugu - Thirteen Adhikaras
- b) Mareechi - Eight Samhitas
- c) Kasyapa - Three Kandas
- d) Atri - Four Tantras
- Total - Twenty eight texts.

Out of these twenty eight vaikhanasa texts only ten texts are available now and T. T. Devasthanams has printed nine texts so far. In addition to these original

texts there are some explanatory books written by scholars explaining the details according to the subject wise for practical purposes. They are also printed by T. T. Devasthanams. All these books explain the system of worship of Sriman Narayana in Idol form.

The Agama texts have four main divisions in their books. They are:

- a) **Kriya Pada:** dealing with construction of temples, the making and consecration of Icons.
- b) **Charya Pada:** dealing with the actual worship rituals daily and occasionally and prayaschittas.
- c) **Yoga Pada:** dealing with Astanga Yoga.
- d) **Jnana Pada:** dealing with the basic philosophical principles and knowledge concerning the ultimate reality and liberation (Moksha)

Some of the Agama texts contain all the above four divisions and some may give more details on few divisions only. But all the texts give details of charya pada i.e, worship of the Lord. The above four Padas are complementary to each other. The main goal is liberations from the phenomenal fetters (Mukti) and prosperity in worldly life (Bhukti) through Bhakti and worship of Lord Vishnu and his other form (Avataras).

List of Vaikhanasa Publications and Availability:

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams Publications - Tirumala, Tirupati

Sri Venkateswara Swamy Vari Devasthanam - Dwaraka Tirumala:

Executive officer, S V S Devasthanam, Dwaraka Tirumala,

West Godavari Dist., A.P, India

Phone: 08829 27142

1. Vimanarchana Kalpam
2. DevAlaya moola caritra



3. Charu Charyaa
4. VaikhAnasa Mantra PrasnAstakam
5. Pratistanu KramAnika
6. ParirAya Harichandanam
7. BhagavannAmArcchana Prakarana

Sree Vaikhaanasa BhagavaCHaastra Grandhamala:

Agama Pravara: Dr. Deevi Krishnaswamy Iyyengar, Nalluru (Post),
Repalle Mandal, Guntur Dist., A. P., India

Phone: 08648-222158

1. Nityarchanaa vidhaanam
2. Bhagavadaaraadhana chandrikaa
3. Brahmotsavaanu kramaanika
4. Krishnaa pushkara vidhi
5. Sankalpa shraada prayogamu
6. Pratyabdhika prayogamu
7. SUTranu karmanida (1, 2 and 3 parts)
8. Vikhanasa stotra ratnaavali
9. Sandhyaavandhanamu
10. PaitRa Maedhikaa Prayogamu
11. VadhuuDharma Chandrika



Sree Mareechi Grandhamala:

Secretary, Sri Vaikhanasa Divya Siddhantha Vivardhini Sabha,
Sri Vaikhanasa Asramam, Ring Road, Tirumala, Chittor Dist. A.P., India
Phone: 0877-2277282

(Publication details will be updated soon.....)

Sree Vikhanasa Trust:

Secretary, Sree Vikhanasa Trust,
Sri Vaikhanasa Asramam, Ring Road, Tirumala, Chittor Dist. A.P., India
Phone: 0877-2277282

1. Archakatvam in Andhra Pradesh - Supreme Court judgment
2. NavagrahaSaanti
3. KhagoeLaSaastra Viznaanamu
4. Sumuhuurtha RatnaavaLi
5. Panchaangam yelaa Choodali
6. NityaVibhuuti Vaibhavam
7. Sree Vaikhanasa ProuDivyanjika
8. Sree LakshmiViSishtaadvaitaBhaashyam
9. Sree Vaikhanasa KalpaSuutram
10. Hill Shrine or Vengadam (Under Print)

APPENDIX - 2

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Most of the information gathered in this eBook is from the guidance of the great professor late Acharya S.K.Ramachandra Rao garu through his book Vaikhanasagama.
2. Sri Vaikhanasa Kalpa Sutram by Bhagavan Vikhanasa Maharshi.
3. Srimad Bhagavadarcha Prakaranam - Nrisimha Vajapaya Yajin
4. Sri Vaikhanasa Grihya Sutra Bhasyam (Tatparya Chintamani) - Sri Srinivasa Dikshitulu (950 A.D. - 1030 A.D.)
5. Dasa-Vidha-Hethu-Nirupanam ... Sri Srinivasa Dikshitulu



Malayappa Swamy in Garudavahanam - Tirupathi



APPENDIX - 3

DIVYA DESAMS FOLLOWING VAIKHANASA AAGAMAM

VadanAttu Divya Desams

THIRUPATHI

Mangalasanam:

Thirumangaialwar - 988-997

Perialwar - 206, 399.

Total of 12 Paasurams.

Special Information:

Deities	: Thiruvengadathan, Alarmel Mangai
Vimanam	: Ananda Nilaya Vimanam, Seshachalam
Theerthangal	: Swami Pushkarini, Koneri Theertham
Prathyaksham	: Thondaimaan Chakravarthy, Arumugan
Direction and Posture	: East-faced and Standing Posture
Features	: There are also quite a few waterfalls also over the Seven Hills. They are: Akash Ganga, Kumara Dhara, Papavinasham. The foothills are better known as Keezh Thirupathi, where one can worship Lord Govindarajan. The temple for the ThAyAr is located near Keezh Thirupathy, in a town called Thiruchchanoor.



SrI Oppiliappan - ThiruviNNagaram

Chola Nattu Thirpathigal

THIRUVINNAGARAM

Mangalasanam:

Thirumangaialwar - 1448-1477, 1855, 2080, 2673 (72), 2674 (113)

Peyalwar - 2342, 2343

Nammalwar - 3249-3259

Total of 47 Paasurams.

Special Information

Deities	: Uppiliappan, Bhoomi Devi
Theerthangal	: Aarthipushkarni, Ahooraathra pushkarni
Vimanam	: Suddhananda
Direction and Posture	: Standing Posture and East-faced.
Pratyaksham	: Markendeyar, Garudan, Cauvery, Dharma Devas.
Features	: All Prasadas in this Kshetra is offered without salt.

KAZHICHEERAMA VINNAGARAM



Mattavizhukuzhali and Thiruvikrama Narayana - KAZhicheerAma ViNNagaram

Mangalasanam:

Thirumangaialwar - 1178-1187

Total of 10 Paasurams.

Special Information

Dieties	: Thaadalan, Thiruvikrama Moorthy, Mattavizhunkuzhali
Theerthangal	: Chakra Theertham, Sankha Pushkarini
Vimanam	: Pushkalaavarthaka Vimanam
Pratyaksham	: AshtakoNa Maharishi
Direction and Posture	: Standing Posture and East-faced.

THIRUVALI THIRUNAGARI

Mangalasanam:

Kulasekaralwar - 725

Thirumangaialwar - 1078, 1188-1217, 1329, 1519, 1733, 1735, 1850, 2014, 2027, 2063, 2673(71), 2674(115)

Total of 42 Paasurams.

Special Information

Deities	: Vayalali Manavalan, Amrutha Gatavalli
Theerthangal	: Ilaakshani Pushkarini
Vimanam	: Astakshara Vimanam
Pratyaksham	: Aladhaniganjama prajapati & Thirumangai AzhwAr
Direction and Posture	: Sitting posture and West-faced.
Features	: There are two kshetras here: Thiruvai and Thirunagari, separated by about a couple of miles. Thiruvai hosts a sanctum sanctorum for Sri Narasimha, while VayalAliManavaaLan is at Thirunagari.

THIRUNANDIPURA VINNAGARAM



Thirunandipura ViNNagaram utsavar

Mangalasanam:

Thirumangaialwar - 1438 - 1447

Total of 10 Paasurams.

Special Information

Deities	: Vayyam kAtta Perumal, Jegannatha perumal, Shenbaga Valli.
Theerthangal	: Nandhi Theertham
Utsavar	: Jagannathan
Pratyaksham	: Nandhi, Sibi Chakravarthy
Direction and Posture	: Sitting posture and East-faced.

THIRUNARAYUR



Naraiyur Nambi and Vanjulavalli thAyAr

Mangalasanam:

ThirumangaiAlwar - 1078, 1329, 1470, 1478-1577, 1611, 1659, 1852, 2067, 2068, 2673, 2674

Total of 110 Paasurams.

Special Information

Deities	: NaRayUr Nambi, Nambikkai Nachiyar/Vanjula Valli
Theerthangal	: Manimuktha River
Vimanam	: Srinivasa Vimanam
Direction and Posture	: Standing posture and east-faced.
Pratyaksham	: Medavi muni
Features	: This Kshetra is also known as "Sugandha Giri". The deity at this temple has only two hands unlike the others who have four. Thirumangaiazhwar was given the Panchasamskaram at this Kshetra by NaRayUr Nambi Himself.

THIRUKKANDIYUR



utsavar - ThirukaNdiyUr

Mangalasanam:

ThirumangaiAlwar - 2050

Total of 10 Paasurams.

Special Information

Deities	:	HaraSaapa vimOchanar, Kamalavalli Thayar
Theerthangal	:	Kapaala Moksha Pushkarni, Bali Theertham
Vimanam	:	Kamalakruthi Vimanam
Pratyaksham	:	Agasthya Maharishi
Direction and Posture	:	Standing and East-faced.

THIRUKKANNANGUDI



Moolavar and utsavar - Thirukannangudi

Mangalasanam:

Thirumangaialwar - 1748 - 1757

Total of 10 Paasurams.



Special Information

Deities	: Shyamalameni Perumal, Aravinda Valli
Theerthangal	: RaavaNa Pushkarini
Vimanam	: Utpala Vimanam
Direction and Posture	: Standing Posture and East-faced.
Features	: This is one of the "Krishnaranya" Kshetrams in Tamil Naadu. The others are: ThirukkaNNa puram, ThirukkaNNa Mangai, Thirukkapittalam and ThirukkOvalUr.



SowrirAja PerumAL



Kannapura nAyaki

THIRUKKANAPURAM

Mangalasanam:

Perialwar - 71

Andaal - 535

Kulasekaralwar - 719-729

Thirumangaialwar - 1648-1747, 2067, 2078, 2673(72), 2674 (90, 133)

Nammalwar - 3656 - 3666

Total of 128 Paasurams.

Special Information

Deities	: Sourirajan, Kannapura Nayaki
Theerthangal	: Nithya Pushkarini
Vimanam	: Utpalaavartaka Vimanam.
Pratyaksham	: Kanva Maharishi
Direction and Posture	: Standing Posture and East-faced.



THIRUKKANMANGAI

Mangalasanam:

Thirumangaiar - 1638-1647, 1848, 2008, 2673, 2674

Total of 14 Paasurams.

Special Information

Deities	: Bhakthavatsalapperumal, Abishekavalli Thayar
Theerthangal	: Darshana Pushkarini
Vimanam	: Utpala Vimanam
Direction and Posture	: Standing Posture and East-faced.
Features	: There was found a bee-hive in the sanctum sanctorum of the Goddess for many years but not now.



THIRUKKARAMBANUR

Mangalasanam:

Thirumangaialwar - 1399

1 paasuram.

Special Information

Deities	: Purushottaman, Poorva Dhevi
Theerthangal	: Kadhamba Theertham
Vimanam	: Udhyoga Vimanam
Features	: Also a Sivan temple for Bhikshandar. A Sannadhi for Sri Brahma is present here only. This kshetra is hence called Trimurthy sthalam.
Direction and Posture	: Bhujanga Shyanam and East-faced.
Pratyaksham to	: Kadamba Maharishi, Sanagadhis, Uparichara vasu

THIRUKKUDALUR



Thiruvayyambattu Perumal and thAyAr - Thirukudalur

Mangalasanam:

Thirumangaiyazhwar - 1358 - 1367

Total of 10 Paasurams

Special Information:

Deities	: Vayankattu Perumal, Padmasana Valli
Theerthangal	: Chakra Theertham
Vimanam	: Sudhasathva Vimanam
Pratyaksham	: Nandhaka Maharishi
Direction and Posture	: Standing and East-faced.

THIRUKAPISTALAM

Mangalasanam:

Thirumazhisaialwar - 2431

Total of 1 Paasuram.

Special Information:

Deities	:	Gajendra Varadar, PoRRaamaraiaal
Theerthangal	:	Gajendra Pushkarini, Kapila Theertham
Vimanam	:	Gaganaakruthi Vimanam
Direction and Posture	:	Standing and East-faced.
Pratyaksham to	:	Gajendran, Hanuman

THIRU THANJAI MAMANI KOIL



Moolavar and utsavar - Thiru Thanjai MAMaNi Koil

Mangalasasanam:

Thirumangaialwar - 1268-1277

Total of 10 Paasurams.

Special Information - Thanjai Maamani Koil

Deities	:	Neelamega Perumal, Senkamalavallith Thayar
Theerthangal	:	Kannika Pushkarini, Amrutha Theertham
Vimanam	:	Soundarya Vimanam
Direction and Posture	:	Sitting posture and East-faced.
Pratyaksham to	:	Parasara Muni

THIRUCHITRAKOOTAM



Moolavar and utsavar - Thiruchitrakoodam

Mangalasasanam:

Kulasekaralwar - 741-751

Thirumangaialwar - 1158-1177, 2674

Total of 32 Paasurams.

Special Information:

Deities	: Govindarajan, Pundareeka Valli
Theerthangal	: Pundareeka Saras
Vimanam	: Saathveeka Vimanam
Direction and Posture	: Bhoga Shayanam and East-faced posture.
Pratyaksham to	: Tillai Three thousand Deekshitaras , Kanva Maharishi

THIRUVELLIYANGUDI



Kolavalvil rAman - utsavar - ThirvelliyanGuDi

Mangalasanam:

Thirumangaialwar - 1338 - 1347

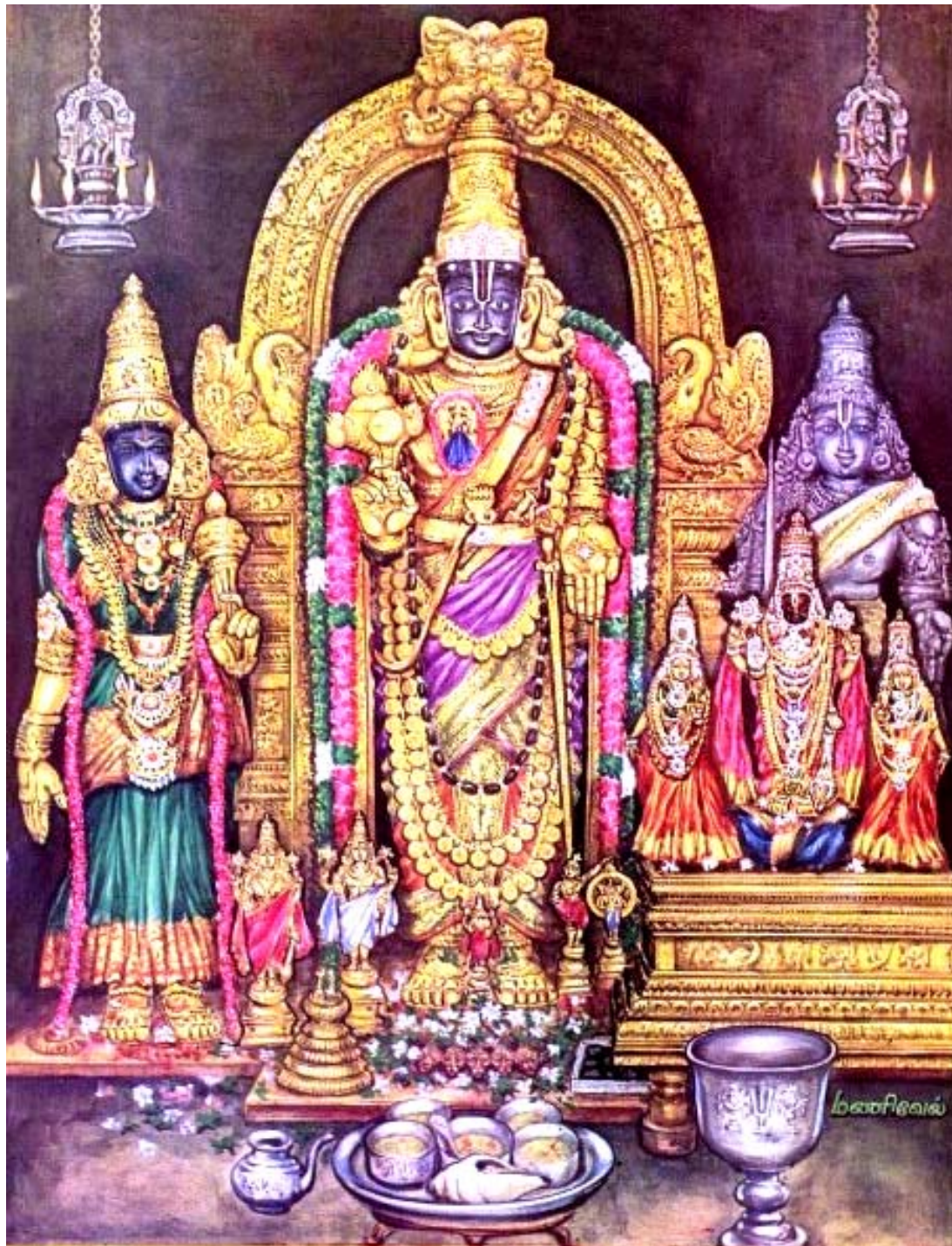
Total of 10 Paasurams.

Special Information

Deities	: Kolavill Raman, Maragatha Valli
Theerthangal	: Sukra Theertham, Bramha Theertham, Indra Theertham, Parasuraama Theertham
Vimanam	: Pushkaalavarthaka Vimanam
Features	: One who worships the deity at this Kshetra is said to earn the credit of worshipping the Deities at all the 108 Divya Desams. Garudan at this dhivya dEsam has Chakram and Sankham on His hands. ChenganUr, the birth place of PeriyavAccAn PiLLai is nearby.
Direction and Posture	: Bhujanga Shayanam and East-faced.

THONDAI NAATTU THIRUPATHIGAL

THIRUVALLIKENI



SrI ParthasArathy PerumAL - Moolavar - ThiruvallikeNi

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Mangalasanam:

Peyalwar :2297

Thirumangaialwar: 1068-1077

Thirumazhisaiwar : 2416

Total of 12 Paasurams.

Special Information

Deities	:	Parthasarathy, Rukmani, Aniruddhar, Balaramar, Prathyumnar, Saathyaki Mannaadhan(RanganAtha), Vedavalli Thelliyasingar (Narasimhar) Chakravarthi Thirumagan, Bharathan, Lakshmanan, Shatruganan, Mythili , Deva Perumaal
Vimanam	:	Aananda, Pranava, Pushpaka, Sesha, Thaiviga
Theerthangal	:	Indra, Soma, Meena, Agni, Vishnu united to form Kairavini saras
Pratyaksham	:	Sumathy, Thondaimaan, Arjuna
Features	:	Seven Rishis performed tapas here and had darSanam of ThiruvEngadamudayaN as PaarthasArathy. Thirumazhisai AzhwAr met the Mudhal AzhwArs here and PeyAzhwAr became the AchAryan for Thirumazhisai.
Direction and Posture	:	East-faced and Standing (ParthasArathy). East-faced and Bhujanga Shayanam (MannAtha). West-faced and Sitting Posture (TeLLiya Singar). South-faced and Standing deity (Chakravarthy Thirumahan). East-faced and sitting on Garudan (Gajendra Varadhar)

THIRUVIDANTHAI (THIRUIDAVENTHAI)



SrI nitya kalyANa PerumAl - Moolavar - ThiruviDaventhai

Mangalasanam:

Thirumangaialwar - 1021, 1108-1117, 2673 (73), 2674 (119) .

Total of 13 Paasurams.

Special Information

Deities	: Nithya Kalyaanar, Komala Valli
Vimanam	: Kalyana Vimanam
Theerthangal	: VarAha and Kalyana Theerthams
Pratyaksham	: Markendaya
Direction and Posture	: East-faced and Standing Posture; Moolavar is VarAha Roopi.



THIRUKKADANMALLAI



utsavar - Thirukkadalmallai



Mangalasasanam:

Thirumangaialwar - 1088-1107, 1195, 1551, 2050, 2060, 2673, (73), 2674 (120)

Boodathalwar - 2251

Total of 27 Paasurams.

Special Information

Deities	: Talasayanaththuraivaar, Nilamangai Nachiyaar
Vimanam	: Gaganakruthi Vimanam
Theerthangal	: Gajendra Pushkarini
Pratyaksham	: Pundareekar
Direction and Posture	: East-faced and Bhujanga Shayanam
Features	: It is said that Bhoothathazhwar had His incarnation in the Pushpa Nandavanam (Flower Garden) of this temple.



SrI DeepaparakAsar - Thirutanka

THIRUTTANKA

Mangalasanam:

Thirumangaialwar - 1849, 2065.

Total of 2 Paasurams.

Special Information

Deities	:	Deepa Prakasar Divya Prakasar, Maragadha Valli
Vimanam	:	Srikara Vimanam
Theerthangal	:	Saraswathi Theertham
Pratyaksham	:	Saraswathi
Direction and Posture	:	West-faced and Standing

THIRUNEERMALAI



Thiruneervan Nan perumAL - Thiruneermalai

Mangalasanam:

Thirumangaialwar - 1078-87, 1115, 1521, 1554, 1660, 1765, 1848, 2069, 2673 (73), 2674 (130)

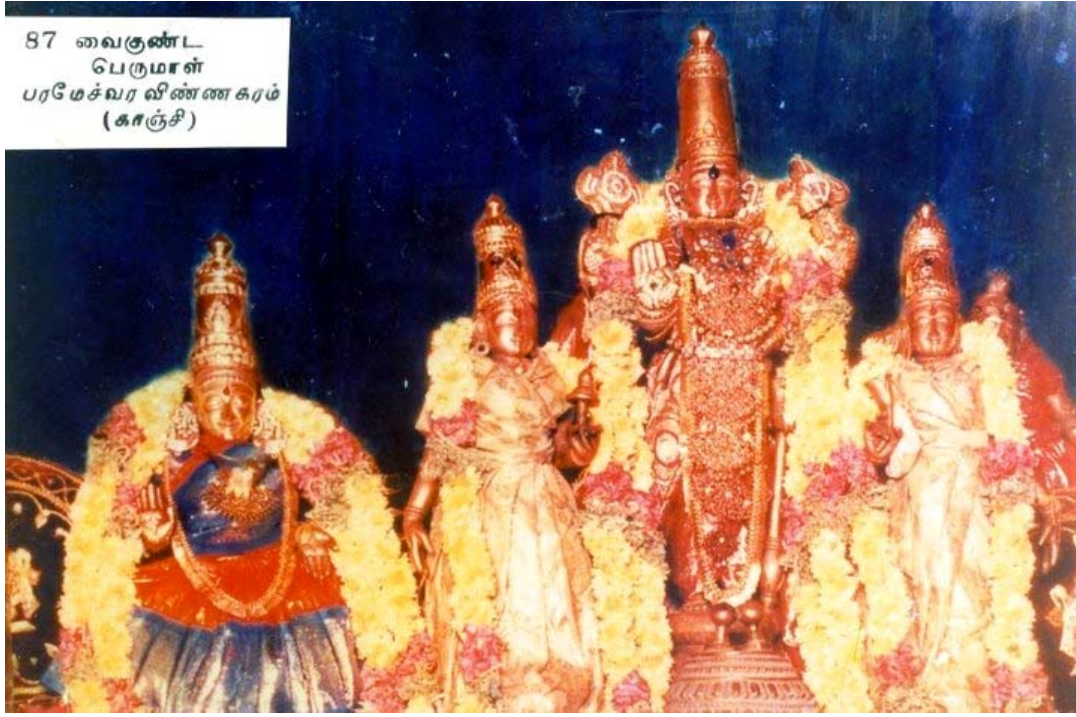
Boodathalwar - 2227.

Total of 20 Paasurams.

Special Information

Deities	:	NeervaNNan , Nilamangai Nachiyaar
Vimanam	:	ThOyagiri Vimanam
Theerthangal	:	MaNikarNika Pushkarini
Pratyaksham	:	Bhrugu, MarkandEyar and Thondaimaan
Direction and Posture	:	East-faced and Bhujanga Shayanam
Features	:	There are four sannidhis (NinRAn, NadantAn, IrunthAn and PaLLikoNDAn); Ranganatha is in sayana Kolam on top of the hill facing East. NeervaNNan stands facing East. Here, Thirumangai waited for six months for the flood waters to subside for the darsaNam of the PerumAL.

THIRU PARAMESWARA VINNAGARAM



utsavar - Thiru Parameswara ViNNagaram

Mangalasanam:

Thirumangaialwar - 1128 - 1137.

Total of 10 Paasurams.

Special Information:

Deities	: Paramabadha Nathan, Vaikuntha Valli
Vimanam	: Mukundha Vimanam
Theerthangal	: Ayiraama Theertham
Pratyaksham	: Pallavan
Direction and Posture	: West-faced and Sitting Posture at the ground level sannidhi; In the first floor of the VimAnam, PerumAL is in Sayana Kolam; In the second floor, He is in the standing posture.

Pandya Nattu Thirupathigal

SRIVILLIPUTTUR

Mangalasanam:

Perialwar - 133

Aandaal - 549.

Total of 2 Paasurams.

Special Information

Deities	: Vatapathra Saayee, Rangamannar, Andal, Periya Thiruvadi (PeriyAzhwAr)
Vimanam	: Samsana Vimanam
Theerthangal	: Thirumukkula Theertham
Pratyaksham	: Mandooka Maharishi, Periyazhwar
Direction and Posture	: East faced and Vatapatra Shayanam
Features	: Avatara Kshetra of Periazhwar and Andal. The Divine Thiruppavai is fully illustrated by way of paintings as one circumambulates the central sanctum-sanctorum.



ANDAL and SrI RangamannAr - SrIvilliputtur

THIRUKKODAL



KUDalazhagar utsavar and thAyAr

Mangalasanam:

Thirumangaialwar - 1762

Thirumazhisaialwar - 2420.

Total of 2 Paasurams.

Special Information

Deities	: Koodalazhagar, Vagula Valli, Maragatha Valli, Varaguna Valli, Madhura Valli
Vimanam	: Ashtanga Vimanam
Theerthangal	: Hema Pushkarini, Chakra Theertham
Pratyaksham	: Sounakaadhigal, Bhruugu, Periyazhwar
Direction and Posture	: East-facing and seated



Azhagar on Garuda vAhanam - ThirumAliruncholai



THIRUMALIRUNSOLAI

Mangalasanam:

Perialwar - 71, 258, 338-359, 453-462

Aandaal - 534, 587-596

Thirumangaiarwar - 1022, 1114, 1329, 1573, 1634, 1760, 1765, 1818-1837, 1855, 1969, 2020, 2034, 2673 (74), 2674 (125)

Boodathalwar - 2227, 2229, 2235

Peyalwar - 2342

Nammalwar - 2886-2918, 3733-3744, 3749.

Total of 128 Paasurams.

Special Information

Deities	: Azhagar, Maalalangarar, Sundaravalli
Vimanam	: Somasundara Vimanam
Theerthangal	: Silambaaru (Noopura Gangai)
Pratyaksham	: Malaya Dhwaya Pandian, Dharma Devatha
Direction and Posture	: Standing and East-faced Posture
Hill	: Vrisha Giri
Vriksha	: Chandana Vriksham (Tree)
Features	: Noopura Gangai is a waterfall in this Kshetra atop a hillock at about 3 miles.



SrI SowmyanArAyaNa PerumAl - Thirukkoshtiyur

THIRUKKOSHTIYUR

Mangalasanam:

Perialwar - 13-22, 173, 360-370

Thirumangaiarwar - 1550, 1838-1847, 1856, 2674 (125)

Boodathalwar - 2227, 2268

Peyalwar - 2343

Thirumazhisaialwar - 2415

Total of 39 Paasurams.

Special Information

Deities	: Sowmya Narayanan, Thirumaamagal Naacchiyar
Vimanam	: Ashtaanga Vimanam (This can be found nowhere else. Built in three tiers. The deity is worshipped in different postures in each tier.)
Theerthangal	: Deva Pushkarini (Thiruppaarkkadal)
Pratyaksham	: Kadambha Rishi, Indra
Direction and Posture	: East-faced deity. (Posture: Standing, Walking and in bhujanga Shyanam.)

THIRUKKURUNGUDI

Mangalasanam:

Perialwar - 71

Thirumazhisaialwar - 813

Thirumangaialwar - 1005, 1399, 1470, 1788-1807, 2065, 2674 (114)

Nammalwar - 2782, 2986, 3161-3171.

Total of 40 Paasurams.

Special Information

Deities	: Vaishnava Nambi, Malaimel Nambi, Nindra Nambi, Iruntha Nambi, Thirupparkadal Nambi,
Vimanam	: Panchakethaka Vimanam
Theerthangal	: Nithya Pushkarini, ThiruParkadal River
Pratyaksham	: Lord Shiva
Direction and Posture	: East-faced and Standing Posture
Features	: Nammazhwar was born due to the VisEsha anugraham of this dhivya dEsa EmperumAn; Thirumangai ascended to Parama Padham form here; AchArya RaamAnuja performed UpadEsam for PerumAl here and was named

THIRUMEYYAM



utsavar - Thirumeyyam

Mangalasanam:

Thirumangaiar - 1090, 1206, 1524, 1660, 1760, 1852, 2016, 2050, 2674 (126).

Total of 9 Paasurams.

Special Information

Deities	:	Sathyagiri Nathan, Uyyavandha Naacchiyar
Vimanam	:	Sathyagiri Vimanam (Sathyagiri)
Theerthangal	:	Sathya Theertham, Kadhamba Pushkarini
Pratyaksham	:	Sathya Devathas
Direction and Posture	:	East-faced and Standing Posture (Also in: Bhujangashayanam in this Kshetra)
Vriksha	:	Palaa (Jack Fruit) Vriksham
Features	:	This Kshetra is also called as Pancha Sathya Kshetram.



THIRUPPULINGUDI

Mangalasanam:

Nammalwar - 3473, 3568-3578.

Total of 12 Paasurams.

Special Information

Deities	: Kaaysina Vendhan, Malarmagal, Pulingudi Valli
Vimanam	: Veda Saara Vimanam
Theerthangal	: Varuna Theertham, Nirruthi Theertham
Pratyaksham	: Nirruthi, Varuna, Dharmaraja
Direction and Posture	: East-faced and Bhujanga Shyanam



THIRUVARAGUNAMANGAI

Mangalasanam:

Nammalwar - 3571.

Total of 1 Paasuram.

Special Information

Deities	: Vijayasanar, Varaguna Valli
Vimanam	: Vijayakoti Vimanam
Theerthangal	: Deva Pushkarini, Agni Theertham
Pratyaksham	: Agni
Direction and Posture	: East-faced and Sitting Posture



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SrI Adi JagannAtha PerumAL - ThirppullANi



THIRUPPULLANI

Mangalasanam:

Thirumangaialwar - 1768-1787, 2674 (131).

Total of 21 Paasurams.

Special Information

Deities	: Kalyana Jagannathan, Kalyana Valli, Deivach Chilaiyaar
Vimanam	: Kalyana Vimanam
Theerthangal	: Hema Theertham, Chakra Theertham
Vriksham	: Ashwaththa Tree
Pratyaksham	: (Pullaranya Kshetram; Darpa Shayanam) Pullaranya Maharishi, Ashwatha Narayanan
Direction and Posture	: East-faced and Standing Posture
Features	: About three miles south lies the sea bathing ghat (Samudhra Snaana Kattam)

THIRUVARAMANGAI

Mangalasanam:

Nammalwar: 3183-3193

Total of 11 Paasurams.

Special Information

Deities	:	Vanamaamalai PerumAL, Thodhaadr Naathan, Dhaiva Naayakan , Sireevara Mangai NaacchiAr
Vimanam	:	Nandanavardhana Vimanam
Theerthangal	:	Indra Pushkarini, sERRu-Thamarai theertham
Pratyaksham	:	Indran, Brahma, Romasar, Bhругu, Markendaya (The Lord being accompanied by Sri, Bhoo, Neela Devis, Senai Mudaliyaar, Periya Thiruvadi, Chandra, Surya)
Direction and	:	East-faced and Sitting Posture
Features	:	This is one of the ashta Swayamvyaktha Sthalas. The deity gets an oil Thirumanjanam daily. And all the oil used in the Thirumanjanam gets collected in a big well-like structure. The oil is then used up for various medicinal purposes. His Holiness Sri Vanamamalai Jeeyar has His Mutt headquartered in this Kshetra. The administration of the temple comes under the purview of the Mutt.

THIRUTHOLAIVILIMANGALAM

Mangalasanam:

Nammalwar: 3271-3281

Total of 11 Paasurams.

Special Information

Deities	:	Devappiran, Aravindhalochanan, Karunthadanganni
Vimanam	:	Kumudha Vimanam
Theerthangal	:	Varuna, Thamrabharani
Pratyaksham	:	Indra, Vayu, Varuna
Direction and Posture	:	East-faced and Standing Posture

THIRUKKULANTHAI



Thiru MAYakkUtthan - utsavar - ThirukkuLanthai

Mangalasanam:

Nammalwar - 3561.

Total of 1 Paasuram.

Special Information

Deities	: Mayakkoothan, Kulandhai Valli
Vimanam	: Anandha Nilaya Vimanam
Theerthangal	: Perungula Theertham
Pratyaksham	: Brihaspathi
Direction and Posture	: East-faced and Standing Posture