Chapter XVI
Vedic Rituals

The progress of Brāhmaṇism in the South and particularly in Andhra has been described in Chapter IV. The rules and regulations of Āpastamba were necessitated by doubts regarding Vedic rituals and social relations. But Vedic ritualism received a setback during the reigns of the Mauryan emperors, Ashoka and Sāṃśe, on account of their patronage to Buddhism and Jainism respectively. The early kings in the Sātavāhana dynasty are found out to be in favour of Jainism.

The overthrow of the Mauryan dynasty by Pusyamitra Sunga turned the tables against the non-Vedic religions all over the country. That the Sunga revolution is the culmination of the Brāhmaṇical reaction against the religious policy of the Mauryas is vindicated by the performance of two Ávamōdhas by Pusyamitra. Sātakarni I, the Andhra-Sātavāhana contemporary of Pusyamitra also seems to have realised the might of the tide of the Brāhmaṇical reaction. The Nānāghat inscription of his queen, Tāganika, gives a long list of Vedic sacrifices performed by her husband. They include one Rājasūya and two Ávamōdhas. During this period, it seems that especially, Ávamōda and Rājasūya became more political and some political achievement of great significance such as founding a new dynasty, raising one's dynasty to

2. Vide Supra, PP. 200-203.
3. His Ayodhya Inscription Says: Gviraśvamōdayajinah Semapateh Pusyamitrasya etc.
   B.I., XI, P. 57.
4. Vide Infra, Appendix, II.
imperial dignity or repulsing a formidable foreign invader prompted a prince to offer the one or the other of the two sacrifices. The three great achievements of Satavahana I — Conquest of Elva, repulsion of the invasion of Chāravān and proclamation of himself as the Lord of Daksināpatha — were probably the occasions that were celebrated by the imperial sacrifices. The other sacrifices of Satavahana and the enormous Daksina given away on the occasions clearly indicate that ritualism grew complicated and costly, and indirectly indicate the anxiety of Satavahana to win the favour and support of the powerful Brahmin community for the infant Satavahana empire. It is interesting to note the pride of Nāgānīka for having taken part in the sacrifices and austerities. She describes herself as Dākṣa-yaṭya, Yajñākārī, Yajñākārī, Yajñākārī, Yajñākārī, Yajñākārī. The ardent Vaidika royal couple named one of their sons as Vādī Śāri or The Glory of Alter.

But the zeal of Satavahana for ritualism appears to be of monitory nature. None of his successors cared for sacrifices. The Śatasaṃhitā makes only a stray reference to sacrificial fire, and it is rather strange that there is no evidence to show that Gautamiputra Satavahana, the greatest of the Satavahana ever cared to perform a single sacrifice. The Mālik inscription of his mother Gautarī Śāri Śāri describes him as a military genius of rare

2. Ibid.
4. Ibid. p. 189.
5. B.I., VIII, Mālik Ins., No. 19.
7. op. cit.
ability and as a stout champion of Vedic Dharma. He was the abode of Vedic love (Aṣṭaśāhna-nilayaśya). He promoted the welfare of Brahmin families (dvijavāra kutumba vīvardhanaśya), suppressed the pride and power of Kṣatriyas (Kṣatriya darpaṇā mardanaśya), stopped the mixture of castes (vinivartita gāturvarga sankaraśya), became the origin of many pious traditions — and in one word he was Ekaśāhnaśya. The military achievements of Gautamiputra were of no mean order. He destroyed the Saks, Yavanas and Mahavas, uprooted the Kṣaharāthas, and having extended his empire from Sālpājāna to Nysore, made his horses quench their thirst in the waters of all the three oceans. Any one of them would have been a fitting occasion for such a Vādika king to be celebrated by a horse sacrifice. But he abstained from any such celebration.

Further, it may be noted that unlike Māgānike who took pride in the numerous sacrifices of her husband, Vālsrī, the mother of Gautamiputra laid emphasis on the practice of ethical virtues of self-improvement such as truth, generosity, non-violence and forbearance. These developments may be due to the predominance of the Buddhists in the population of the empire and the profound influence they exerted on the rulers. Further, the references to the Purāṇa heroes in the said Nāṣik inscription may denote the progressive replacement of the Vedic by the Purāṇic or the Śrāvaka by the śāstras system of religion.

The only other Sātavāhana emperor that is known to have celebrated some Yañña is Yañnerā Śatarkara. But there is a strong

1. Ibid.
tradition that Yajnaśrī was the patron of the celebrated Buddhist philosopher, Ācārya Nāgārjuna, and his successor, Viṣṇu Cātākorni is actually found at Nāgārjunakonda on a Buddha Purnima day. In the Ratnavali-Nālaperikotha attributed to Ācārya Nāgārjuna, the author makes an appeal to the king not to persecute the Buddhists and to allow them to continue their ancient practices such as DEVĀRNA. From this, it may be assumed that Yajnaśrī was at first hostile to Buddhism and under the influence of Nāgārjuna turned into its patron. But the pro-Buddhist policy only proved fatal to the dynasty.

As already pointed out, the Satavāhanas disappeared in a fresh wave of Brahmanical upsurge. As a result, the dynasties that ruled in the Andhra country during the post-Satavahana period seem to have vied with one another in performing Vedic sacrifices. Śri Sāntamula, the founder of Kavakula independence performed Āśvamedha, Agniśṭoma and Vajapeya. His Āśvamedha Vedi has been recently unearthed in the Nāgārjunakonda valley, very near the Mahāgaiya of the Aparasāliyasa. The Pallavas who succeeded the

1. Vide Supra, Buddhism in Practice.
2. Ibid.
3. Yajnaśrī was also a great conqueror. His coins are found all over the Dakkan which indicates the fairly large extent of his kingdom. He might have conquered Western Dakkan from the Sakas. A large number of horse-type coins of Yajnaśrī are found at many places in the Dakkan. It may be presumed that Yajnaśrī performed a Horse Sacrifice and issued these coins to mark the occasion.
6. Ind. Arch., 1956-57, P. 37; Pl. LVI A and Pl. 1.V.
Ikṣvakuśus in this region were ardently devoted to the Vedic Dharma. They destroyed the Buddhist Tirthas of Śriparvata and Dhanavyakas and took titles like Anekasvamadhiavabharta undana, Śatakramakaṅkana, Saryo Dharma, Dharma maharajadhiraṇa and the like. They were said to be always ready to uplift the Dharma that declined under the pressure of the evils of the Kali age. Sīvaskandavarmā and Kumaravismū of the Pallava family, Vijayaśevaravarmā of the Salankyanacca, Pravarasena, the Vakāṭaka and Madhavaśevarman of the Viśnukundinā line were Aṣvamedhinī. Of all the kings of the period, pravarasena and Madhavaśevarman II of the Viśnukundins showed special zeal for Vedic sacrifices. The latter is described as ŚRUTI VIṣṇUŚEVARA INUKARAKARMA KARHAYUSUṬANASYA. He performed as many as eleven Aṣvamedha, Rajasuya, Sarvamedha and thousands of Agni-stomas, with the aim of gaining authority over all the living beings and the position of Paramāsthiv. Thus under the Viśnukundins, Vedic ritualism reached high water mark in Andhradēsa.

Enigmatis of the age

During this period, the Hindu society was organised on the basis of caste. Gutationsputra is said to have stopped the admixture.

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1. Vide Supra PP. 153-155.
2. En even the Later Pallavas are guilty of persecuting other faiths.
3. According to the Udaiyendirian plates, Pallavamalla is said to have "anyam adihara kṛityan Viṣṇvaya" I.A., VIII, P. 201.
4. Vasanta grant of Sinhavarnna, I.P.I.A.P.I.S. M., Ch. XVIII, P. 211 ff.
5. Ibid., V, P. 155.
6. Vasanta grant, op. cit.
of castes and resorted it to its purity. In the post-Gautavahana period, we hear about a sacrifice, known as Hiranyagarbha. Damodaravarman of the Amandaputra dynasty called himself "the son of one who performed Hiranyagarbha." (Hiranyagarbhadhasvaya).

Madhavavarman II, the great Navi of the Vismakundin dynasty also performed the sacrifice. We learn from the Matsayuparna that the purpose of the Hiranyagarbha was a second birth (of course symbolical) in this life itself. Curiously, Madhavavarman's parents were favourably inclined to Buddhism. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the great champion of Brahmanism, Madhavavarman repudiated his original birth to the Buddhist parents and had a second birth as a Vaidika, by performing the Hiranyagarbha. Thus, rites of conversion or purificatory ceremonies were evolved in this period. Some of the kings of this period claimed to have protected Varna and Asrama.

Sastras and Sakhya

We learn from inscriptions that the Brahmin community was fairly large and most of the Brahmin families were of the Aparajita-sambhutra, thereby lending support to the view that the Sutrakara himself was an Andhra. There were also the followers of the

1. Nasik Inscription of Balasri, op. cit.
3. K. Sastri Inscription, Rauki Plates, App. II.
   According to the Purana the performer says:
   Navrata Raja purva nartya sharma surottama
   Vedicvarna Sambhasvada divyadho bhuvanayakam.
   Ch. 576.
4. Indrapalanagara Plates, Vide Intra, App. III.
6. We come across grants addressed to many Brahmins. For example the Kolleru grant Vijayanandivarman records a gift to 157 Brahmins.
   I.A.V, PP. 175-177.
7. Vide Intra, App. VI.
Hiranyakasisutra and it is interesting to note that the "contents of the Hiranyakasi Dharma Sutras are practically the same as those of Apastamba Dharma Sutras". The Chandogya, Taittiriya, Vajasanyaya and Brahca sakhas were popular.

**Brahmanical Scholarship**

The life of a Brahmin was regulated from birth to death by the Sodasa Sanskaras. The Brahmin community was engaged in the six Karmas namely, Yajna, Yajana, Adhyayana, Adhyapana, Dasa and Pratigrahana and the Panaa Yajnas. Their villages, the Brahado-deyas or Agroha-res entered with Vedic learning. Among the Brahmins, we come across Praveda, Pravina, and Caturvedins. The Baramahabu grant mentions a Sivasarma who was a master of the four Vedas. Besides the Veda, they mastered the Vedangas, Puranas, Itihasas, Dhanasastras, Ed Kalas and Agasas. The Tandivade Inscription of Prthvimahevara mentions a certain Bhavasama whose mind was purified by the knowledge of the Vedas, Vedangas, Nyaya, Upanisads and Yoga; he was a student of 3,000 Vidyas and 20 commentaries. His father prthvisarma was devoted to the study and teaching of 3,000 Vidyas. It is not possible to know what these Vidyas were. Sivasarma of the Pedamaddali plates of Jayasimha I knew 70 commentaries on Tarka. The Nidhapurru grant of the same king mentions

2. V.A. Narsimhama Sastri, CRITICAL HERITAGE OF INDIA, IV, PP. 301-302.
3. Vaco Infra, App. VI.
5. According to Manudharmasastra these Yajnas are: Adhyayana Brahman yajnah pitraysaustu tarpanam Homo dalvo harihaha mio yajna atidhipuranam Apto, Sanskrit-English Dictionary, P. 431.
Katiscama who was well versed in two Vedas, Itibasa, Purana, Dharmasasthra, Agama and Opanised. His grandfather, Kandaswama was a scholar of two Vedas, with Pada, Rama and Amsakrama and knew the Kalpa, Purana, Itibasa, and Dharmasasthra. He was a ghatikasaanya at Asnapurasthana. The Calavali Plates of 1

Bhawana (c A.D. 830) mentions a Brahmin who studied the Purana, Ramayana and Dharmasasthra.

The inscriptions frequently mention Agamas. The word "Agama" generally means Veda. But as the Agamas are mentioned along with the Vedas, they should be taken to refer to sectarian literature, connected with the worship of either Siva or Vishnu or Sakti. The frequent reference to the Agamas shows the growth and popularity of the sectarian literature. In the introductory portion of the Andhra Mahabharata, Rashayayattra tells us that Rajavala Jareendra 3 was interested in the Siva (Isvara) Agamas. The popularity of the Puranas and the Agamas indicate the direction in which religion was developing in the land, i.e. more and more puranic and less and less vedic.

Chatikas

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The Pallavas and Vaisakundis set up colleges known as --

Chatikas. Vikramendravarman of the Vaisakundin family claims to

1. B.I., XXXV, PP, 221-224.
2. Agamas are mentioned in:
   2) Naktipatru grant of Jayasimha I, op. cit.
   3) Nambara grant of Amara I, I.A., XII, PP. 61-64.
have acquired great merit by establishing numerous Ghatikas. (Aneka ghatikavapta punyacancayasya). The Tizmeyanuru grant of Pulakesin II mentions Indupur Ghatika. Haresamudram inscription (Anantapur District) says that the temple of Venambeswara at Benjera was a Ghatikasthana, and a gift was made to it for feeding 90 students. It is noted above that Mandesaram was a chatika-samanya of the Ananpurasthana. Brahmans of Upadhyayakula are mentioned in inscriptions.

It can be assumed that in these Ghatikas instruction was given in all the fourteen Vidyas that included Vedas, Vedangas, Mimamsa, Nyaya, Dharmastra and Purana. According to some other source the Vedas included Ayurveda, Dhanurveda, Gandharve and Arthasastra.

**Decline of Rituals**

From the time of Visnukundin Madhavavarma, there was a steady decline in Vedic rituals. The Eastern Calukyas who succeeded the Visnukundins were no doubt champions of Brahmanism. Some of them took the proud title Paramabrahmmana. But none of them is

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1. Sikkulla Plates, op. cit.
2. Rasal, IV, No. 657.
3. The Veinallii plates of Vikramaditya I mentions a Brahmin named Iswara who was a Sadangavit.
   C.P.L. A.P. Govt. Museum, Ch. IV.
4. Naishadhiya says:
   Angani Vedaschatvare mimansa nyayavistaratrah
   Dharmastra puranamcha vidyabyetaschatah darsa
   Ch. I, V. 2.
5. Brahmandapurana, Part II, Ch. 36, Vs. 82 and 89.
6. The following are some of the kings among the Eastern Calukyas who took the title Paramabrahmmana:
   Jayasinha I, Nidaduru grant, R.I., XVII, 55-58.
   Nagayudhara, Canduluru grant, R.I., VIII, 236-241.
   Amarastra II, Ramaburu grant, R.I., XII, PP., 81-84.
known to have performed Vedic sacrifices, but were fond of describing themselves as “anefsavamadhavabhrtasatana”. It seems on the other hand that the Calukyas and their contemporaries encouraged the Brahmins that were living in their respective kingdoms to perform Vedic rites. Yajana and Yajas are in fact two of the duties of a Brahmin. Prthvisaharaja, one of the early kings of Kalinga, patronized a Brahmin whose body was purified by the AVASHITA waters of a variety of sacrifices, whereas his father gave away his wealth on the occasion of numerous sacrifices, and his grandfather saw two other side of the Srutis and Sartis and performed Agnistoma and other sacrifices. The Pedamasdalli plates of Jayasimha I, the second king in the Eastern Calukyan line, was executed by Sivasarma who performed Vajpeya. The Kidparra and Cudivada (Vizag District) grants of the same king refer to Brahmins who performed Agnistomas. The Pallivada grant of Vianvarshana II mentions that the donee’s grandfather, Drvasana performed sacrifices from Agnistoma to Paundrika.

This practice was continued by the Kakatiyas, their ministers and even by the Reddi kings of Kondavidha. (A.D. 1325-1491).

1. See above, p. 228, n.c.
8. The founder of the Reddi Kingdom Prayyerrddy had the title: Anavarita Puratha Krtasamapana.
   Annavarati Inscription, Rel. VI, No. 263.
Kumarilabhatta

It was during the Calukyan period that Kumarilabhatta lived and tried to energize Vedic ritualism. According to the Jain writer, Jinavijaya, Kumarila was an Andhra and was born at Jayamangalam on the borders of Andhra and Utkala. He was originally a Buddhist, but later turned into a Brahmanist.

Kumarila made a thorough study of the nature and purpose of sacrifice and elaborately discussed them in his Sloka-vasrtika, Tantro-vasrtika and Tuptika. These three works constitute a comprehensive commentary on the classic Bhasya of Sararasa or Jaimini's Kimamkusastra.

Kumarila is said to have undertaken extensive scholarly tour of the country in the course of which he used all possible weapons to discredit and weaken his rivals especially the Buddhists. There are traditions that he encouraged the rulers to persecute and suppress the Buddhists.

Kumarila was a great defender of Vedic ritualism, based on the Brahmanas. At the same time, he had a keen and realistic
sense of appreciating the contemporary religious atmosphere. As stated above, in the original Minamasa, there was no concept of Moksa or deliverance, and happiness was the fruit of good acts. But during the long interval between Jaimini and Kumarila, Moksa "had become a matter of such a moment to the Hindu mind that it could not be evaded". Further, by the time of Kumarila, Vedic religion was nearly played out because temple worship became popular and the sentiment against animal sacrifice gained strength from a new emphasis on Ahimsa.

In view of these developments, Kumarila organised the Smaraka and gave them a practical outlook in daily religious observances. He introduced the notion of Moksa in the Mimamsa system — probably for the first time. He said that salvation is brought about when man enjoys and suffers the fruits of his good and bad actions and thereby exhausts them and stops the generation of the new efforts. This is achieved by: (1) refraining from the performance of Karmay karma (2) guaranteeing oneself against the evil effects of such by assiduously performing the Nitya and Naimittika karmas.

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2. The concept of Moksa first appears in the Mimamsa in the writings of Kumarila and Prabhakara. Scholars are divided in their views regarding the dates of these two famous Mimamsaka. Some hold the view that they were contemporaries, one hailing from Andhra and the other from Kerala. It is said 'hardly any contribution has been made to Mimamsa philosophy, after Kumarila and Prabhakara'.
3. S.N. Baggobo, History of Indian Philosophy, I, p. 372.
4. From inscriptions we learn that Mimamsa was widely studied by Brahmins in Andhra:
   (1) Gudvada inscription of Jayasimha, I, p. 113, XXX, pp. 133-36.
Further, Kumarila is said to have introduced the worship of
Pancayatana. Since then, the worship of gods or Devatarcana has
become a part of the Nitya karna of the Smartas. The Pancayatana
is a group of five deities: Siva, Visnu, Ambika, Ganapati and
Surya. By the introduction of the Pancayatana, Kumarila probably
wanted to achieve two things: (1) reconciliation between the
purely Karma and the Bhakti margas; (2) The age of Kumarila wit-
tnessed the rise of sectarianism and already the Saiva Smartas and
Vaisnava Smartas appeared on the stage. Each of the deities in
the Pancayatana came to be associated with a cult. Therefore it
is reasonable to assume that Kumarila tried to bring the deities
into harmony and free the Smarte system from the evils of growing
sectarianism.

Acarya Sankara

Acarya Sankara followed Kumarila. Opinion is sharply divided
about his date. But it is generally believed that Sankara flou-
rished during the first quarter of the 9th century A.D.

Hailing from Kerala, Sankara made his impact felt by the
entire country through his vigorous campaigns of religious disput-
atations. In the course of these campaigns, Sankara, according to
Anandagiri's Sankaravijaya, visited Tiruvailam and Tirupati, one
Saiva and the other Vaisnava places of pilgrimage in Andhra.

The Cidvilasiya Sankaravijaya states that he visited Ahobilam also.

1. Ibid.
2. S. Radhakrishnan, History of Indian Philosophy, II, P. 447.
4. Ibid.
Some of the devotional poems generally attributed to Sankara are supposed to have been inspired by the deities of these places.

2. Sankara was a great compromiser. In the first place, he established the authority of the Veda by declaring that there is no contradiction between the Brahmanas and the Upanisads, the Karmamarga and Jnanamarga being for two different classes of people. The former was for the ordinary man, who is anxious for this or that pleasure whereas the latter is for the wise who could control his senses and become disinclined to all earthly joys and anxious to realise the Brahman. Through the concept of Nishkama Karma, Sankara insisted that one should be particular about the Nitya Naimittika karmas. But throughout all his writings, he demonstrated the superiority of Jnanamarga. He recommended three paths to knowledge—PRASTHANATA THAYA. Any of the three would lead one to the stage of Nisakta. They are: (i) The Brahmacaras, essentially the path of ritual or Karmamarga; (ii) Bhagavadgita or the Shaktimarga, and (iii) the Upanisads the path of Tapes or renunciation or Jana. However Sankara said that in order to become qualified for Nisakta one (1) should have a thorough knowledge of the Vedas, (2) should perform only the obligatory (naimittika or the Sodasa) duties, (3) scrupulously

1. In Sankara's Jyotirlingastava we find the following:
Srisailamagadhi prasargavat:-moebandri sarngapi sadvedaram
Tamerjuna Mallika-prasargamonam namodi vasundhara-ramanam.

He is said to have praised Brahma-bhumi of Srisaila as:
Gopati sarvadharma-prasargam gandhara- prasarganapiya
Gandhivaram gomagami girircvar gandharkantalamarmam
Gangadhanagamagam tapodan gan gomati gomati
Srisailothahatvagini bhavatini Srisirlaras bhavaye.

2. Sankara is said to have composed a few stotras in praise of Narasimha of Abhala with the Nakula-Lakshminarasana asadhi Karvalabhar.

refrain from the Kanya and Misidha karma and (4) cultivate great virtues. These virtues are: (i) knowledge of what is eternal and what is transient, (ii) disinclination to the enjoyments of this life and of heaven, (iii) anxiety for the attainment of right knowledge, (iv) control over the senses and (v) strong desire for salvation.

Thus Sankara "did not preach a single exclusive method of salvation..... while revivifying the popular religion, he purified it ....." Sankara systematised the Sûrîta religion and founded the Hindu ascetic order, with five Mathas, at Uderi, Puri, Baraka, Sriperumbadur and Kanibi for the propagation of his principles. Sankara's system possesses such vitality that it almost survives to this day.

Nominal Rituals

The result of the impact of Kumarila and Sankara is a further decline in the Sûrîta rituals. Already, as noted above, the kings in Andhra refrained from sacrifices and patronised the Brahmans that undertook them. From the 9th century onwards we come across only stray references to sacrifices.

The court poet and Purohit of Rajaraja Narendra, Kamayya-bhattarakar was always engaged in Japa and Homa, but did not claim to have performed any sacrifice. The Koramilli inscription of the same king says that the donee was an expert in setting up

2. Radhakrishnan, History of Indian Philosophy, II, 470.
4. He calls himself 'Sûrîta japa homa tatpuru Andhra Mahabharatas, Avatarika, V.
Yupas or sacrificial posts. This statement indicates Vedic rites, involving animal sacrifices. But one interesting development of the period was that the sacrifices became mere symbolical. The famous Jain writer, Somadeva, in his Yasastilaka Cārya, refers to the sacrifice of an artificial cock to Goddess Candi, with the hope of obtaining the merit of offering a live cock. The Southern recension of the Mahabharata, in its section on Narayaniya contains a reference to pista Pata. This shows that the consensus was against animal sacrifices and that the Brahmins who were fond of sacrifices were afraid of outraging public opinion by offering animals and were content with symbolical offerings. Thus Vedic rituals became purely nominal.

However in the post-Calukyan and the early Kakatiya periods also people continued to have glamour for Vedic sacrifices and their fruits. Even without performing sacrifice, people had names like Somayaji, Vajapeya Somayaji and Madhava Somayaji. Some made gifts with the hope of getting the merit as they get for Asvamedha or any other sacrifice. Rameswara Diksita, one of the ministers of Kakatiya Pratapa Rudra I is described PARIJABHA BHARA KRIYA KARANATHAR. The same Rameswara Diksita built numerous temples and made provisions in certain tanks for the Sandhyavandanam by

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4. Irlapadu inscription dated S. 1067 (Guntur Dt.), 22.11.1.
   IV, No. 927.
7. "asvamedha phalabhagi gal" Kaspeta Ins., Tel. Ins., I, No. 7.
8. Hanumakonda Ins. of Hudradaeva, Tel., Ins., I, No. 3.
1. Brahmins. The famous poet Tikkana, the minister of the Telugu Coda King Mallova, Manunesiddi, was punctilious about pūdīna rites. He is said to have performed a Yajña and came to be called Somāyaji. It is very difficult to ascertain the nature and quality of the Yajña offered by Tikkana. At the beginning of the 14th century, a Brahmin by name Kosamayya performed Agnistoma and Atiratra sacrifices. But on the site of the Yajnas, he built a temple in which he installed the image of Yānaswara. This typical event symbolises how gradually the Karammarga has yielded place to the Bhaktimarga.

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1. Tel. Ins., I, No. 56, P. 169.
2. Post Kosamayya dedicated his Desakumarasri to Tikkana. He describes Tikkana as: Adbhurabja dinanatha - Avatārika, V, 36.
4. Ibid.