PART THREE

CONCLUSIONS
A perusal at the foregone pages makes it clear that the Muslim rule, after the fall of the Kākatiyas, inflicted a death blow on Vedic dharma and Indian culture. The atrocities committed by the Muslims were so innumerable in all fields of life that the Indians could not tolerate any further. At this point the Musunuri brothers who served the Kākatiyas, gave a call to all those other Nayakas who were their colleagues in the previous regime and held a meeting with all those who had identical minds to free the motherland from the yoke of the cruel Muslim rule. This confederation led the Hindu armies against the Muslims declaring war of independence and drove them away from the land.

But soon after achieving independence everyone of them wanted to become the overlord of the entire Andhra and with this view tried to overthrow his neighbour.

This ambition gave rise to the kingdoms like the Reddis of Kandukur, Kondavidu and Rajahmundry. It is only during this time minor principalities like Masunūri rājya and Recharla Rājya
came into being. The foundations for the Vijayanagar empire were laid by Harihararaya and Bukkaraaya who were for a long time in the service of the Kakatiyas.

All these Nayaks joined together with the common ideal of establishing a Hinduraj and reviving Hindu Dharma. They all stuck to their motto. After driving away the Muslims they restored the Agraharams to their respective owners. They also gave new Agraharams to the learned Brahmins to enable them to carry on their routine of adhyayana and adhyapana. They gave priority to the renovation of temples and then constructed new ones. They kept in their mind the facilities to be given to the pilgrims who visit them on and off. With this idea only the Reddis of Kondavidu constructed steps to Patalaganga at Srisailam and steps to reach the shrine on the top of the hill. The Vijayanagar kings built massive gopurams on the four quarters of the temple compounds, and spacious mandapams. These gopurams and mandapams not only give a grandeur look but also serve the pilgrims as places of shelter, etc. Major kingdoms like the Kondavidu and Vijayanagar could afford
to construct new temples. It is in this direction the Kondavidu constructed the grharaja saudha which was considered an attractive and magnificent temple. But unfortunately even the traces of this are not now extant. Probably taking this as an example the Vijayanagar constructed Virü-paksa and other temples. In the construction the Vijayanagar made use of the genius of the Reddi times that blossomed in the period as a result of around prosperity. The other minor principalities also contributed their mite to the development of Hindu religion.

The Raya gopurams of the present South Indian temples speak of their architectural taste. The ornate pillars of the Vijayanagaram are a class by themselves and many foreign travellers bestowed encomia on the architecture of the city. According to Ferguson, 'the carvings are in better taste, than anything else in this style'. The horse court or Sesagirimandapam at Srirangam according to Brown contains a 'Colonnade of furiously fighting seeds each rearing up to a height of nearly nine feet, the whole executed in a technique so emphatic, as to be not like stone but hardened
steel'. The lathe-turned pillars of single stone also are said to be a speciality of the Vijayanagar style. Because of the alround prosperity, the genius of the age blossmed in a calm and peaceful atmosphere. Using hard stone for sculpture, a legacy from the Reddis is a speciality with them.

Like-wise painting also was encouraged by the Rāyas. Mural painting was widely in vogue. As this happened to be a costly art wealthy people seemed to have indulged in this. Music and dancing are the twin arts which go hand in hand. Music can survive without dancing but dancing cannot stand independently without music. The fact that Devadāsi system was in vogue at that time shows that they encouraged dancing and music. The first Vaggeyakāra Annamācarya who wrote about thirty two thousand songs in praise of Lord Sri Venkateswara of Tirupati, was patronized by the Royal house. Lakuma who was connected with Vasantaraya of the Kondavidu Reddis seemed to be a Devadāsi or a court dancer for whom the Vasantarājīyam was written. This practice was emulated by the Rāyas of Vijayanagar also. Finally whatever
the Rāyas of Vijayanagar did they couched it with their genius so as to make it their own.

By the time the Kondavīdu kingdom came into existence the Vīrasaivism took hold of the people. To answer them Vaisnavas also slowly began starting Vīra Vaisnavism. The rivalry and the struggle between these two can be noted from the war that reduced Palanādu to ashes. Probably thinking of these disastrous events and the uncouth habits of these sects the Kondavīdu kings wanted to go back to the Vedic Saivism discouraging Vīra saivism. The simplicity of Vedic Saivism attracted all the people. The same policy seemed to have been adapted by the earlier kings of Vijayanagar. When the Jains complained to Bukka-I that the (Vīra) Vaisnavas were persecuting them Bukka-I set right things with his religious policy of tolerance. So it was first Kondavīdu that went back to Vedic Saivism which was endorsed by all others of the period.

Though the Kondavīdu kings were not against vedic sacrifices, they did not seem to have encouraged them. On the other hand they encouraged
Puranic vratas which are within the reach of a common man. So Vedic sacrifices gradually gave place to Puranic vratas. The same thing was encouraged by other rajas also.

The practice of prefixing a surname to the name of an individual became almost a regular feature in the period of Reddis which continued till date in Andhra. This surname might be after the village they inhabited or the mūla purusa of the family or derived from the gotra of the family.

The Niyogi and vaidiki division among the Brahmins of Andhra became more distinct. Niyogis are those who took up official assignments and Vaidikis are those who adhered themselves to the study and teaching of Veda and officiate at vedic rituals.

Another interesting thing we notice in this period is the functioning of water-clocks. These clocks were set up to note the time. This is more important to perform anything for the muhurtam fixed for the purpose. These water-clocks function
in a different manner from those of the ancient periods in letting out and taking in water. This invention or improvement goes to the Reddi period.

Kondavidu for the first time brought Telugu language and literature on par with Sanskrit. Reddis, encouraged Telugu poets and scholars. Scholars of merit were patronized in their courts. Among them poet Śrīnātha occupied the highest place. In extending this patronage the Reddis chose scholars who were proficient equally in both Sanskrit and Telugu. Śrīnātha, a scholar in Sanskrit and Telugu, dominated the scene of the day, inspite of the fact that Mallinātha a famous scholar in Sanskrit was also present in the same court. Śrīnātha specially translated Sanskrit works like the Naisadham of Harsa and Kasīkhanda a Purāna, etc. into Telugu. Had he not translated the Naisadha of Harsa Telugus would not have the fortune of understanding this work in a clear manner. In addition there were other poets also in their courts. Telugu literature grew to a considerable size. The Recharla family and the Musunuri family also chose the same pattern in encouraging Telugu
language and literature. Finally it is in the Vijayanagar court that Telugu literature reached its heights. The emperor Krishna deva Raya of Vijayanagar also adapted the same policy. He gathered round him scholars and poets who were stalwarts in their own fields. He named his poets' Association as Bhuvanavijayam. Here there is a difference between Kondavidu and Vijayanagar. While Kondavidu encouraged translations from Sanskrit Vijayanagar encouraged original compositions with a nucleus of Purnaic incident or a story where there is a chance of a greater play for the imagination of the poet. Peddana's Svārocisamanusambhavam, and Timmana's Pārijatāpaharanam are the finest examples of this type. These works are called the Prabandhas and as such, this is mostly known as Prabandhayugam. Poets were given complete liberty in displaying their intelligence and imagination in their works. Vaisnavism in Vijayanagar gradually became popular than in the time of Kondavidu and as such both Saivism and Vaisnavism found their places in the works.
Reddis of Kondavidu were good scholars in Sanskrit. They also wrote original works, in addition to the commentaries in Sanskrit. They were specially interested in fine arts like dance and music. Vasantharajiyam a treatise on dance in Sanskrit, and Amarakavyakhya are noteworthy in this connection. The same thing may be said of Recharla and Musunuri families. The kings of Vijayanagar also were profound scholars in Sanskrit and Telugu. The Amuktamalyada of Krishna devaraya is considered one of the best works in Telugu literature. Tirumalaraya also seemed to be a good scholar. From this we feel that when the kings become scholars they encourage scholarship in others and to adhere to the Hindu Dharma and culture, good education also becomes one of the important requisites.

The policy of education seemed to be the same in all those rajyas. As they dedicated themselves to the Hindu dharma, they gave importance to the Hindu education only. As Buddhism and Jainism almost declined the question of encouraging their education did not arise. So the Brahmins as in the past were entrusted with teaching, etc.
They were granted Agraharams for the purpose, in addition to these Gurukulas, the temples also became the seats of learning. Education was imported in the mandapas of the temples. The curriculum contained Vedas, Sastras and professional courses like medicine in Sanskrit and grammar, Kavyas, Puranas in Telugu. Kondavidu rulers gave preference to Sahitya and the same policy was followed by others of the period. Vijayanagar also gave preference to Sahitya. Kondavidu encouraged Ayurveda. We do not see such an encouragement to these Sastras in Vijayanagar. The single teacher schools known as pial schools in villages were started by the Kondavidu kings to spread education specially in Telugu. The Vijayanagar also seemed to have continued it.

Fine arts like music and dancing were well encouraged by the Kondavidu kings. Like wise the Vijayanagar also encouraged these two arts. The episode of Lakuma is a fine example of this encouragement. All these kings of this period encouraged these fine arts.
In the field of architecture Vijayanagar seemed to have taken impetus from Kondavidu in using hard stone. The stone used for the steps by the Kondavidu must have been hard. We do not know with what type of stone they constructed the grharaja-saudha. From the history of temple construction and architecture we note the previous dynasties made use of the local material only. In the light of this the Kondavidu kings must have used hard stone for all their constructions, with the improvement of lathe-turned pillars, etc.

The number of festivals were increased by the Kondavidu kings. The vasantôtsavam, etc., celebrated bear witness to this. Though this vasantôtsavam is not the invention of the Reddi kings, as known from the Sanskrit dramas, it is to be said that this vutsava was celebrated with such a pomp and luxury which was not surpassed by others. This is done to keep the people in gay spirits. The same thing is emulated by the Vijayanagar kings also. They also increased the number of festivals like Divalî, Kartika Paurnami, the Srijayanati, the Lakshmi Utsava and the Gautami and Krishna Puskarams.
The society as usual was divided into four sections, namely, Brahmin, Ksatriya, Vaisya and Sudra based on the duties carried on by them from time immemorial. As the restriction of intercaste marriages is only in the Dharma sastras and not in practice, sub-sects were multiplied. People in this age, following the kings, performed all the Vedic samskāras, etc., preparing a panchāngam and consulting it for an auspicious muhurtam became intensified in the public.

People used cups and plates made of gold and silver in their houses. Wood carving also was in vogue. They know diamond mining and copper, bronze and iron industries were well organised in this period.

Thus we note that the Hindu religion which was threatened with serious calamitous consequences was once again put on a firm pedestal by the Reddis of Kōṇḍāvidu which act was followed by the Rechar-las, Musunuris and Vijayanagar Kings.