

HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF LINGAYAT RELIGION

M.R. SAKHARE



**PRASARANGA
KARNATAK UNIVERSITY, DHARWAD
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M.A., T.D. (Cantab)



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by Shri. M. R. Sakhare.

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FOREWORD

(First Edition - 1942)

There is an increasing interest, both in India and abroad in works on Indian thought. While there are scholarly works in English on many branches of Indian Philosophy and Religion, the Lingāyat system has not had many sympathetic and learned expositors. The world of scholars will welcome the publication of this important work on the Lingāyat religion by Professor M.R.Sakhare. The book is full of wide and specialised learning and is invaluable as a contribution to the study of Shaivism in one of its great developments.

In a long and learned Introduction, the author traces the history of Shaivism in all its various phases and deals with the Lingāyat reform of Brahmanical Shaivism with great sympathy and keen insight. He notes how this religious reform attempted to bring about a social revolution as well. Basava gave to Vīraśaivism a prophetic turn and a popular appeal. The author takes great pains to make out that the Lingāyat faith is altogether independent of the Hindu religion which is primarily based on the authoritativeness of the Vedas and the Varnāśramadharma. As the Lingāyat religion accepts the authoritativeness of the Āgamas and repudiates the distinctions of caste, it is said to be non-Hindu. I am afraid that this is taking a somewhat narrow view of the spirit of Hinduism.

The book gives us the text of Nandikesvara's Lingadharanachandrikā, with translation and copious notes. The ill-conceived and mistaken notions of Linga worship are

ably refuted. The Vishistādvaita metaphysics in its special Lingayat form (i.e. Shaktivishistādvaita-editor) and the disciplinary rules are clearly formulated. I have no doubt that Professor Sakhare's work will continue for long to be of immense use to the students of Indian Philosophy and Religion.

- S. Radhakrishnan

PREFACE

Lingāyat Religion and Philosophy have a distinct place in the Religious History of India. It is true that the six systems of Indian Philosophy are well known in the Philosophical world. But apart from these systems, there are other Philosophical systems in India which deserve special mention. Shaiva Schools of Philosophy, Schools of Tantric Philosophy, Jaina and Buddhistic Schools of Philosophy may be cited here. Lingāyat Religion and Philosophy come under Shaiva Schools of Philosophy and are known as Veerashaiva Religion and Philosophy popularly called Veerashaivism.

Veerashaivism is not merely a sect and a mode of worship but a regular system. Many of the scholars who wrote on the history of Indian Philosophy including Dr. Radhakrishnan, Dr. Dasgupta and Hiriyanna could not realise this for the reason that much of the literature on the subject was in Kannada and that in Sanskrit was not published fully. The students of Lingāyat Religion and Philosophy particularly those who do not know Kannada, therefore, find it extremely difficult to study the subject for want of adequate literature in English. This subject is prescribed in colleges and post-graduate Departments such as M.A. in Philosophy, M.A. in Kannada etc. These students are very much handicapped since they do not find proper text books on the subject in English. Hand Book of Veerashaivism by Dr. S. C. Nandimath and History and philosophy of Lingāyat Religion being an introduction to Lingadhārana Chandrika by Prof. M. R. Sakhare are frequently referred by the students. There was

a great demand for these books. The University, therefore, thought of reprinting these books as they are authentic works on the subject and as such are required by the students and the public very often. The University could obtain the permission of Literary Committee, L.E. Association, Dharwad for reprinting the Introductory Part of the work by Prof. M.R. Sakhare. We are now publishing only the introductory part leaving the textual part of Lingadhārana Chandrika and the translation and notes by Prof. M. R. Sakhare on the text. As Dr. Radhakrishnan expressed in his introduction, Prof. Sakhare's work will continue for long to be of immense use to the students of Indian Philosophy and Religion.

Lingadhārana is a distinctive feature of Veerashaiva Religion. It is on account of this Lingadhārana, this religion is called Lingāyat Religion and its followers, Lingāyats. The Linga concept of Veerashaivism is quite different from the rest of the Shaiva concept. The Linga worn on the body and worshipped by the Lingāyats is called Iṣṭalinga as against the Sthāvara Linga worshipped by other Shaivites. The Iṣṭalinga is the cosmic and Conscious force hidden in the heart of the individual, but drawn out by the Guru by placing his palm on his head and piercing his sight through his eyes. The Guru, thus places it, the supreme consciousness, in his (disciple's) Bhāva, Prāna and Tanu. The one Linga is called Bhāva Linga, Prāna Linga and Iṣṭalinga. The installation of the one Linga in three places Iṣṭa, Prāṇa, and Bhāva is called Āyata, Swāyata and Sannihita respectively. The Linga on the body of the disciple is called Iṣṭalinga, that on the prana is Prāṇa Linga

and the one in the Bhāva is Bhāvalinga. The Iṣṭa, Prāna and Bhāva are the three bodies the gross, the subtle etc. The concept of Linga and the process and technique of Linga Dīkṣa form the cardinal principles of Veerashaivism. Linga dhārana Chandrika of Nandikeshvara explains clearly the whole process. This is one of the basic texts pertaining to Veerashaivism in Sanskrit. Prof. M. R. Sakhare is of the opinion that Veerashaivism is quite distinct from the Hinduism on account of Iṣṭalinga-dhārana, non-observance of Varnashramadharma, etc. He has therefore, selected this text which as published by the Jangamavadimath of Banaras was incomplete and not critically edited. He has edited the text with the help of this printed one, and two other manuscripts. He has added very valuable translation and notes at the end. For the present we have taken only the Introduction of this work which gives the history and the philosophy of Lingāyat religion in detail.

The 'Introduction' is an independent thesis by itself. Since Lingāyatism has its roots in Shaivism, he traces the history of Shaivism in all its phases. The roots of Shaivism go back to Dravidian civilization which according to the author was not inferior to Aryan civilisation. He has pointed out that the doctrine of Transmigration of soul is as much Dravidian. Having traced the roots of Shaivism in the Dravidian civilisation and called it a Dravidian Religion, he has further given the development of Shaivism in Vedic times and later periods. These chapters throw flood of light on several issues pertaining to Shaivism, Dravidian and Aryan civilisation etc.

Agamas form the basis of Shaivism. An exhaustive treatment of the Shaivagamas finds a place here. He has shown

that Shaivagamas and Shaivism precede Vaishnavagamas and Vaishnavism.

He has skilfully culled out of the Agamas and given different schools of Shaivism. The heart of the thesis lies in tracing the origin of Lingāyat Religion and proving that Basaveshwara was the founder of the religion in view of the prophetic turn he gave to Virasaivism, new interpretation of Shatsthala and social revolution, he brought about. He has also said in unmistakable words that as the Lingāyat Religion accepts the authoritativeness of the Agamas but not the Vedas and discards Varnāshrama which is the basis of Hinduism, it is not a part of Hinduism. Dr. Radhakrishnan in his forward says that 'This is taking a somewhat narrow view of the spirit of Hinduism'.

In the next chapter the philosophy and practices of Lingāyat Religion are dealt in detail.

The whole thesis is the result of life time's study of the great scholar.

Prof. M. R. Sakhare was one of the founder members of the K. L. E. Society. He was a Sanskrit Professor at the Lingaraj College, Belgaum. In addition to his enormous work in the field of Education in developing the G. A. High School, Lingaraj College and other Institutions started by the K. L. E. Society, he has done this great scholarly work. He was truly a dedicated soul.

The Karnatak University is supremely happy in bringing out this scholarly work by Prof. M. R. Sakhare. The University is grateful to the members of the family of late Prof. M. R. Sakhare and to the literary committee of the L. E. Association for having given over exclusive copy right of reprinting the Introductory part of the work, but for which the present venture would not have been possible. Our thanks are also due to Dr. K. Krishnamoorthy, Prof. and Head of the Dept. of Sanskrit, for scrutinising the press copy and reading the proofs of this work. We are happy to place this work at the hands of the public.

Karnatak University,

R. C. Hiremath

Dharwad

Vice-Chancellor

1-4-1978

ARGUMENT

I long cherished a desire to place before the reading world the Philosophy and principles of the Lingayat religion for the main reason that it is not much known outside Karnataka, of which Lingayats form a majority community. Even in Karnataka it is known as a kind of Shaivism with another alternative name of Veerashaivism, and the Lingayats are said to be a Shaiva sect, wearing Linga on their bodies and being outside the sphere of Brahmanic influence. Linga worn on the bodies is the most prominent characteristic of Lingayatism and Lingayats, no doubt. But the wearing of Linga means next to nothing unless the meaning underlying it and the principle on which it is based and enjoined are understood and are what matter most, like the sweet and invigorating kernel enclosed by the hard crust of a coconut, or like the luscious juice of a fruit, rather than its shape and charming exterior. Moreover wrong ideas have long been prevailing about the status of the community and not much is known about the religion historically. One instance will suffice to show what kind of deep ignorance prevails even among scholars. For instance Mr. K.A. Nilkanthashastri, Professor of History and Archaeology, University of Madras, makes an astoundingly wrong statement and a sweeping assertion that the religion was founded by Bijjala (vide Cultural Heritage of India, Vol. II, p. 34). Even a child will be shocked by such an unhistorical statement. One would be puzzled to understand how he failed to see that it was impossible for a Jain king to found a different religion.

Lingayats themselves do not know what their religion is and what its history is, much less others. The community is considered to be a kind of caste of the Hindu fold and the religion merely a sect. To dissipate wrong ideas entertained about the religion and to place before the reading and thoughtful public facts of the religion was the chief cause of my long cherished desire, which remained a desire awaiting its fulfilment. And after my return from England I began to seriously think of undertaking the heavy responsibility and the enormous and onerous task of setting forth and explaining the principles of the religion so far as I could.

If ignorance about the religion is so deep, want of knowledge about its origin and founder is much worse. Even the Lingayats do not know who founded the religion and when. Certain things handed down by tradition are taken for granted. In their enthusiasm attempts have been made by some unknowns to push back the origin of the religion to very ancient times with the idea that high antiquity is not only a mark of its soundness but also of the greatness of its principles. It was probably thought soundness and greatness of the religion lay in its antiquity like the survival of the fittest and not in the soundness and greatness of its principles, doctrines and Philosophy. I thought it proper, therefore, to discuss its foundation and founder, and a whole chapter (XI) is devoted to the topic. It is likely that Lingayats themselves will be taken aback and surprised by my conclusion. But I leave it to readers to see how far my reasoning and conclusion are right. I shall have succeeded if they begin to think of the subject and discuss it historically.

It also seems that the idea, like that of Hindus, of अपौरुषेयत्व (the impersonal divine origin), is the sure and unimpeachable sign of greatness of a religion. Hence the origin seems to have been imputed to mythical founders rising out of Lingas. It is generally thought that Basava only revived the Shaiva religion without pausing to think and consider the great and stupendous work he did and the revolution he effected in the Shaivism of his time. People mixed up Shaivism with Veerashaivism and thought that the latter was merely a revival of then existing religion without any clear conception about Religion in general and Veerashaivism in particular. All such wrong ideas have contributed to worst confusion about the religion, its status and that of the community in the Hindu fold. I have tried my best to dispel all wrong ideas in these respects and place before readers what the real state is, and should be, of the religion and the Lingayat community. I, therefore, hold that the terms "Lingayat" and "Lingayatism" are preferable and real to avoid confusion and to give distinctness to the religion and the community, as an independent fold.

To give a good historical perspective to the evolution of the Lingayat religion out of Shaivism, that forms the background of Lingayatism, I thought it fit to trace historically the origin of Shaivism as a Dravidian religion and the result of Dravidian civilization. I wanted to be brief, but as I undertook the task the treatment became unavoidably elaborate regarding its origin and its adoption and absorption by the Aryans and its subsequent history upto 12th century, when the Lingayat religion had its rise. It is thought by many that

Shaivism has grown out of Vedic worship of Rudra. We may see for instance "Origin and early History of Shaivism in South India" by Mr. C. V. Narayana Iyar. Others think that Shaivism is probably a pre-Aryan religion of the pre-Aryan inhabitants of India. The latest finds of Mohenjo Daro and Harappa, now unearthed, have been very useful for my thesis about the origin of Shaivism. I have, therefore, given profuse extracts from the descriptions of these finds and conclusions arrived at by scholars of Archaeology.*

Not much is known of the Agamas, their origin and date. I have, therefore, tried to explain all about these points to the best of my ability and to place my views before readers for their consideration and further research in connection with the Agamas.

(Shivalingam is generally considered to be phallus and its worship phallic worship. I found it desirable to refute such a horribly wrong idea and explain the real meaning of Shivalingam. Mr. C. V. Narayana Iyar is my predecessor in this respect. But his explanation is not quite sufficient. I have tried my utmost to explain Shivalingam as the amorphous representation or symbol of Shiva, the ultimate Reality. It is for scholars to see how far they agree with and accept my interpretation. So

* I may also mention here that the works of late Mr. P. T. Shrinivas Iyengar have been very helpful to me in my description and exposition of Dravidian civilization, which he maintains to be Tamilian, as he holds Dravidians to be identical with Tamil people.

also Ishtalinga is mistaken for an image. And I have tried to prove that it is not so. Different schools of Shaivism and their principles and Philosophy are also described in order to show how far the principles and Philosophy of Lingayatism agree with those of others and how far and where they differ from them. The practice of Lingayat religion based upon its Philosophy is the most essential thing, as of any other religion. This, therefore, required a detailed treatment; naturally it has been the bulk of chap. XII. Shaivism, Shaktism and Lingayatism are all allied religions. The basic philosophy is the same, except that Shakti is considered not only prominent but all-in-all as the main phase of Universal Consciousness in Shaktism. In Shaivism and in Lingayatism on the contrary, Shiva is considered primary as the possessor and wielder of Shakti. But Lingayatism is more allied to Shaktism. On better examination and study of the two religions it will be found that there is point to point correspondence in Philosophy and principles. But they violently differ in the practice of religion, the spiritual life and discipline. This makes the main or whole difference between the two. It has not been possible for me, however, to give a comparative description of the points of correspondence and the points of difference, as I thought it would be too much for the thesis. It may, however, be done in a separate volume.

Lingayatism differs both from Shaivism and Shaktism in respect of adoption by both Shaivas and Shaktas of Varnāshramadharma in some form or other. The Shaiva Brahmins in particular, like Vaishnavas, have adopted all

Sanskaras of the Varnāshramadharma. The rest of the Shaivas are considered Vaishyas or Shudras, the Kshatriyas, forming the second Varna, are hardly to be found and recognized as such in India now. The same state of affairs obtains more or less among the Shaktas of Bengal. Hence Shaivas and Shaktas have been indistinguishable from the caste Hindus and are Hindus in religion, if Hinduism is Varnāshramadharma, mixed with images and image-worship and the details of the worship according to the teachings of the Agamas. But Lingayats having done away with both Varnāshramadharma and image worship, fundamentally differ from all these communities. I have tried to explain this in the thesis and established that the Lingayat community is an independent religious entity.

Linga worn on the body is not only the most prominent characteristic of the religion but its basis and central point. Lingadhāranachandrikā, therefore, has been made the basis of my thesis and the result has been the present work.

To facilitate the understanding of the dissertation of Lingadhāranachandrikā by an ordinary reader I thought it best to append the translation of the text and explanatory notes. The latter have become unavoidably copious. They may or may not be exhaustive but are, I think, quite sufficient to facilitate easy understanding of the dialectical discussion of the topics by the author.

Though I am positively of opinion that Vachana Shastra is the basic literature of the religion as its scriptures, I have based all my thesis with profuse quotations on Sanskrit books

for the simple reason that my thesis centres round a Sanskrit work. So also I wanted to show how the Sanskrit treatises of the religion have caused confusion and misunderstanding about the religion and its status, though they agree in the fundamentals and maintain its own independence and that of the community.

-Author

CONTENTS

1 Foreword (First Edition)	iii
2 Preface	v
3 Argument	ix

CHAPTER PAGES

I Veerashaiva and Lingayata	1-10
Lingayata better expresses the religion and the community-Different derivative interpretations of "Lingayata"- Lingayata, Veerashaiva and Aradhya distinguished - Shaivism, the background of Lingayatism.	
II Pre-Aryan Dravidian Civilization	11-98
Various views about the origin of Dravidians- Theories of Dravidian origin-Muir-Indo-African -Austral origin - Tibeto-Burman-Kolarian origin - The theory of Diffusion - Mediterranean origin - Writer's theory of Indian origin - Govindacharya Swami's opinion in support quoted - Dr.Chatterji's opinion quoted in support of the theory -P. T. S. lyengar's opinion quoted in support-Pre-historic state discussed - Different pre-historic ages stated - Suitability of Peninsular India as the place of Dravidian civilization - Palaeoliths of South India-The Neolithic Age in India - The implements of the Age -Pottery-Art - Dress and decoration-Occupations- Housing	

and building - Disposal of the dead - Iron Age Antiquities- Proto-historic period discussed - Caldwell's opinion stated-Extract in corroboration of the writer's theory from Mohenjo Daro description quoted - Summary of the extract - Other extracts in other respects given-Language discussed - Opinion of Father Heras about the Mohenjo Daro script being Dravidian language given-Karnatak and Mohenjo Daro-The coming of Aryans from Volga valley stated - Writer's conclusion stated - Dr. Hall's opinion about Dravidian civilization - Sir John Evan's opinion.

III Shaivism, the Dravidian Religion 99-148

Writer's theory - Marshall's opinion - Father Heras' opinion and article on the Dravidian religion-Worship of the Mother (Shakti) and a male Deity (Shiva) - Linga-worship - The Divine triad - Other Gods and minor deities - Emblems of God - Modes of worship Religious festivals and temples - Death and judgment, virtuous life, heaven and punishment - Summary - The clash between Dravidians and Aryans owing to difference in religion and probability of Rudra-Shiva being borrowed by Aryans discussed - Prof. MaxMuller's and Elliot's opinions - Dr. Fergusson's and Stevenson's opinions stated - The God of the hilly region-Kurunji - The deity of Palai the desert region - God of Mullai, pastoral Region - The God of River valley or Marudan - God of coastal region or Neydal - The Aryans adopted

Dravidian Rudra as a howling God - Opinion of Professors Ranade and Belvalkar quoted - Details of Aryan's borrowing Dravidian culture stated in conclusion.

IV Shaivism during Vedic times 149-184

Shiva and Vishnu minor Gods in Vedas - Dravidian origin of Shiva - Sanskrit derivation of Shiva- Rigvedic Rudra, a God of terror - Two- fold nature of Vedic Rudra - Reasons of Rudra's identification with Shiva - Full development of Rudra as Shiva-Higher position of Rudra in Atharvaveda - Kesins, Rudra's special attendants described - The Vratyas, worshippers of Rudra-Shiva described - Rudra in Brahmanas - Shaivism in the Upanishads-Appearance of Umā in Kenopanishad - Rudra - Shiva in the Svetashwataropanishad established - The later progress of Shaivism during the Upanishadic period-Kāpālikas, the worshippers of Shiva mentioned in Maitri Upanishad - Shaivism becomes fullfledged in Atharva-Shira Upanishad.

V Development of Shaivism in later times upto the 12th Century A. D. 185-236

During the Sūtra period - During the epic period - Ramayana- Shiva was worshipped by Rāma - Shaivism in Mahābhārata - Extensive area of Shaivism described -

Shaivism in Puranas - Nature and long period of Puranas described - The story of Rudra in Markandeya Purana - Shaivism of Shivapuranas - Definite historic mention of Shaivism- Shaivism during Bhārashiva and Vākhātak reigns - Shaivism in Shri Harsha's reign - Shaivism in South India described - Shaivism during the period of Nāyanārs and the eight fold character of the period described.

VI Shaivism, a pre-Vaishnava religion 237-245

Absence of Vaishnavism in pre-historic times - Vishnu purely a Vedic God - Avatāras were first of Prajāpati and not of Vishnu-- No mention of Vishnu in Upanishads - Rama was first a human being and worshiper of Shiva - Krishna also a human being and Shiva's devotee - Muir's opinion about Rāma and Krishna- Lassen's opinion - Dr. Bhandarkar's opinion of Shaivism being earlier than Vaishnavism quoted.

VII Rise of the Agamas, their development and contents 246-308

The Agamas, Shaiva, Shakta and Vaishnava - The Upa- agamas- The age of the Agamas- References to Agamas by Appayya Dixit, Sāyanachārya, Anandagiri and poet Bhāravi - Evidence from the works of Kullukabhatta, Aparāditya. Hāita and Kālidāsa - References

in the Puranas and the Mahābhārata - Reference in Maitreyopanishad - Svetaswataropanishad like Agamas and Agamic - The Bhagavadgita mainly based on Agamas - Parallel sloka? from Gita and three Agamas - Krishna a devotee of Shiva according to Appayya Dixit- Krishna learnt spiritual philosophy from Upamanyu, a Shaiva sage - Gita not based on the Vedas- Gita condemns Vedas - It approves Agamas - Gita runs counter to the Katha and Iṣa Upanishads their doctrines of Samsara, Sannyasa, theistic monism, Yoga, religious exclusiveness and doctrine of Maya- Conclusion.

Supposed Vedic origin of Agamas - Agamas as parallel to and offshoot of Vedas-Agamas derived from Tamil original now lost - Agamic principles and rituals opposed to Vedic but akin to Tamilian practices - Inscriptional and literary evidence also points to a Dravidian origin - Tantric rites too indicate a primitive non-Vedic origin - Vedas borrow Tantric elements from Agamas and supersede them-Co-existence of Tantric and Vedic worship with their mutual antagonism points to different origin of both - opinions of others in support of the writer quoted - Long period taken for development of the Agamas - Agamas consist of four padas and their contents-Their disagreement with the Māyā doctrine of Vedānta - Their Bhakti cult

and Image worship - Growing synthesis of Agamas and Vedas-Modern Hinduism mainly Agamic - resume of the whole chapter.

VIII The Meaning of Shivalinga 309-328

Linga misunderstood as the Phallus of Shiva on five fallacious grounds - Phallic worship prevalent in primitive world is a perversion of Indian Linga worship - The term Shisnadevah misconstrued and Yaska's correct interpretation of it - Linga primarily means symbol only and secondarily the Phallus - Linga does *not* resemble the Phallus in shape - Shaktas pervert Shakti worship to Sex worship - The real significance of Linga first pointed out by Swami Vivekananda - A. K. Kumar Swami's opinion - Linga is the least anthropomorphic representation of Shiva - Linga ocular presentation of Ornkara - Linga suggests the all - pervading, myriad-shaped form of Shiva - Conclusion.

IX Ishtalinga and Image Worship 329-333

Ishtalinga is a miniature of Sthavaralinga but not an image of Shiva. It is Shiva Himself enthroned in the human heart - It suggests the oneness of the worshipper and the worshipped - Ishtalinga worship is not image worship but is Sahamārga in the attainment of beatitude - The four modes of worship, Dasa- marga, Satputramarga, Sahamarga and Sanmarga - No scriptural sanction for the Image worship by Lingayats.

X Schools of Shaivism 334-363

In the beginning Shaivism an electric religion for the worship of the Cosmic Principle - Pāshupata school is the earliest referred to in Mahābhārata, Vayu Purana etc., - Inscriptions referring to Pāshupata school - Several Pāshupata sects after Lakulisha - References to these sects by Shankara, Rārnānuja etc. - Mysore Inscriptions on Pāshupata school - Ten sects mentioned in Anandagiri's Shankara Vijaya - Four chief sects mentioned by commentators on Shankara Bhashya - Reference by Ramaunja and Madhva to four schools - The siddha school and its doctrines - Its extinction and the explosion of its doctrines by Allamaprabhu - The Kālāmukhas and Kāpālikas, their degeneration and extinction by the time of Mādhavāchārya - The Lakulisha Pashupatas and their rules of conduct - The Siddhānta School of South India and its creed of Ultimates Pati, Pasu and Pasa - Table of Tripadarthas and Tattvas - The Spanda School of Kashmir founded by Vasugupta; Its ideas of Māyā and Moksha - Shaivism and Shaktism compared.

XI The Rise of the Lingayat Religion and its Founder 364-432

The five Achāryas supposed to be founders of Lingāyatism - Their divine origin according to Agamas - Siddhanta - Shikhamani's descriptions of Renukāchārya being the founder and of his incarnation as Revanasiddha

- But Revanasiddha is the author himself - Revanasiddha is made contemporary of Vibhishana but no evidence in Rāmāyana - The author's attempt at making Lingāyatism hoary - Shivayogi post-Basava fathering his teaching on Revanasiddha - Real post-Basava Revanasiddha - Panditārādhyā not described as founder by Gururāja; Achāryas not mentioned by him but Basava, Allama and the Sharanas - Wrong notion to make religion ancient - If Renuka was Agastya's contemporary Basava was pre-Agastya; but all is wrong - Two more reasons for Lingayatism being late (1) Shaktivishistadvaita growing out of Kashmere Shivadvaita founded by Vasugupta in 10th century A. D. - (2) The eight āvaranas (अष्टावरणाः) existed before Basava but not in the sense given them by Lingayatism - So also Shatsthala - Antiquity of (Veerashaiva) Agamas exploded - Another reason for Revānārādhyā not being the founder - Further discussion of the Achāryas not being founders. Revanasiddha a contemporary of Bijjala and his life based on Kanarese literature - Latest inscription about this - Harihara's Revana- siddharagale - Bommarasa's Revanasiddhapurana - Marulārādhyā, a pupil of Revana - Panditārādhyā Basava's contemporary - Venkannaya's opinion - Ekorāma later than Basava and a convert - Vishvārādhyā being much later than Basava - No scriptural literature by Achāryas like

founder - Literary evidence of Basava being the founder - Further evidence; Shivānubhava-mantapa-Ashtāvarana ritual framed by. Kaliketabrahmayā (Foot note) - Further discussion and Vachana literature - All authors pay tribute to Basava and not Achāryas - Basava considered द्वितीयशंभु- shivanubhavkvshāstra based on Vachanas - Basava's name woven in Mantra - Basava's revolt against Varnāshrama-dharma being another reason of his founding - Miss Laxmi's opinion,

XII Philosophy and practice of Lingayat Religion 433-662

Religion defined - शक्तिविशिष्टाद्वैत, the Philosophy of Lingayatism - प्रकाश and विमर्श of परशिव (Universal Consciousness) - शक्ति (विमर्श- शक्ति) - The reflex relation of identity of शिव and शक्ति- शक्ति विशिष्टाद्वैत and केवलाद्वैत of शंकराचार्य distinguished - Demolition of मायावाद according to मरितोंटदार्य and शिवाद्वैतदर्पण - शक्तिविशिष्टाद्वैत as निर्विशेषाद्वैत distinguished from केवलाद्वैत and विशिष्टाद्वैत - Defects of मायावाद pointed out - Kashmere शिवाद्वैत and शक्तिविशिष्टाद्वैत distinguished - पंचकंचुक्स and माया of Kashmere school - माया of शक्तिविशिष्टाद्वैत - अज्ञान or अविद्या - अन्योन्याभाव refuted - शुद्धाध्वन् and अशुद्धाध्वन् - परिणामवाद refuted - Gunas of शक्ति and माया distinguished - मयूरांडरसन्यास explained - उपास्योपासकभाव, the foundation of Lingayat religious practice - घनलिंग, the परब्रह्मन् - Degrees of consciousness - स्थला - उपास्योपासकलीला - लिंग - Wrong interpretation of

Linga by European scholars exposed - Brown's right idea of Linga - Anga explained - Non-difference of शिव and जीव - मल and पंचकंचुकस - शक्ति; as विधा - कालशक्ति - शक्ति as भक्ति - भक्ति as उपासना - Sixfold modifications of लिंग, अंग, शक्ति and भक्ति - Table of sixfold modifications - Transcendent परशिव (महालिंग) - शिवतत्त्व (प्रसादलिंग) - शक्तितत्त्व (चरलिंग) - सदाशिवतत्त्व (शिवलिंग) - ईश्वरतत्त्व (गुरुलिंग) - विद्य (आचारलिंग) - Table of six Lingas - Linga as embodied and explained Anga - लिंगरूपत्व of the human body illustrated and explained - The Lingas as chakras- The gross elements and their groups - Connection and correspondence of organs of knowledge and action - Practice of the religion - 8 principles of the religion - 1st principle, the necessity of religion - 2nd principle of religion being a personal affair 3rd principle, sex distinction abolished - 4th principle of universal brotherhood in religion - 5th principle of concordance of religious and social life- 6th simplicity and all-suitability of practice-7th principle of ahimsa -8th principle of unity of knowledge and action -शिवयोग, the practice of religion including other forms of Yoga - The पंचाचारस - अष्टावरणस - गुरुलिंग and अहंग्रहोपासना - जंगम - विभूति- रुद्राक्ष - पादोदक explained - प्रसाद - मंत्र and its scientific basis -मंत्र of Lingayatism-Meaning of Yoga and चित्तवृत्तिनिरोध given - Yoga as means of unfolding consciousness - Different forms of Yoga - मंत्रयोग - लययोग-हठयोग-राजयोग - Inclusion of राजयोग by शिवयोग - चित्तवृत्तिनिरोध further explained - Sense - ego and Higher-ego-

Intense inner urge and its causes - Elements of शिवयोग and its identity with शिवपूजा and its inclusion of other forms of Yoga - शिवपूजा - दीक्षा -Basis of षट्स्थल - Necessity of calling down Divine consciousness - शक्ति or शिवानुग्रह and the three planes of consciousness - Rising up of human consciousness to meet the descending higher consciousness - The lowest physical plane of इष्टलिंग- The intermediate or vital plane of प्राणलिंग explained - The highest intellectual plane of महालिंग - त्यागांग, आचारलिंग and गुरुलिंग- भोगांग, शिवलिंग and चरलिंग -योगांग, प्रसादलिंग, महालिंग- Importance of the intermediate vital plane-प्राण - प्राणलिंग identified with autonomous nervous system - त्यागांग, its subsidiaries and work - भोगांग, and its working - The importance of प्राणलिंग (intermediate plane) established-The third and highest plane further explained -The petals of the six ādhāra chakras illustrated and explained-प्रसाद - हस्त - Table of षट्स्थल of लिंग and अंग - Inclusion of eightfold योगांगस (यम, नियम etc.)-यम and नियम -आसन-प्राणायाम-The last four angas-Two main divisions of षट्स्थल (क्रियामार्ग and ज्ञानमार्ग)- Form and procedure शिवपूजा- क्रियामार्ग is सहमार्ग and अहंग्रहोपासना - ज्ञानमार्ग or सन्मार्ग - Development of शिवयोग-क्रियादीक्षा - मंत्रदीक्षा - वेधादीक्षा- Abolition of impurities-उच्छिष्टट्टंसूक explained -इष्टलिंग neither प्रतिमा nor प्रतिक;-षट्स्थल-मंत्रयोग - षट्स्थल-लययोग - षट्स्थल-कर्मयोग -भक्तियोग - ज्ञानयोग -अर्पण or dedication of two kinds -कर्मापण-ज्ञानार्पण-Non-difference of भक्ति and ज्ञान- Further explanation of षट्स्थल - सकल - निष्कल and निष्कल explained - Three forms of दान-Primacy of भक्ति

-सामरस्य as final result of शिवयोग experimental and no mystery- Concluding remarks.

XIII The author of Lingadharanachandrika and his work 663-669

Lingādharaṇa, soul of the religion-The author's dialectical interpretation of different Mantras - Author's history - His date - Some remarks about his work. The commentary and commentator of the book Commentator's ignorance of the religion and wrong interpretation - A hack writer.

XIV The Status of Lingayat Religion 670-683

Confusion and misunderstanding about the religion - Hinduism - Hinduism and Varnashramadharma -Lingayatism is अतिवर्णाश्रम- Lingayatism to Hinduism - Hinduism as image worship-Lingayatism having no image worship is not Hinduism - Lingayats as अप्राकृतब्राह्मणस - Real explanation of अप्राकृतब्राह्मणत्व - Tabular analysis of Hindus and their religions - If Aryasamaja is a separate community Lingayat's have better claims of being a separate fold.

XV Lingayat religious literature and scripture 684-692

Development of Vachana literature-Vachana literature the scriptures of Lingayatism - Lateness of Agamic उत्तरभाग and an instance (वातुलोत्तर) - Rise of Sanskrit treatises - Vain attempts at attributing authorship of प्रभुलिंगलीला and वसवपुराण to व्यास exposed.

CHAPTER ONE

Veerashaiva and Lingayata

Lingadhāranachandrikā is a treatise written to establish the principle and creed of wearing Linga on the body by the Veerashaivas or Lingāyatas. The latter term is comparatively a later one to have come into vogue; but it prominently expresses the followers of Veerashaivism and signifies unmistakably those that wear on their bodies the holy Linga, that forms the most distinctive and distinguishable religious mark of the followers. The former is coeval with the origin of the religion, whenever it may have been; but it fails to express the distinctive mark worn on the body by the followers of Veerashaivism, though it expresses them strikingly in contra-distinction from all other Shaivas and Shaiva sects of India. The word "Veerashaiva" does not bring out the idea of Linga worn on the body as strikingly as the word "Lingayata" does. The former has been etymologically defined and elaborately explained in treatises and literature of the religion. But the origin of the word "Lingayata" is not only obscure but conspicuous by the absence of its explanation in religious literature, and is neither defined nor explained therein. Still it has the very enviable merit of marking out the followers of the religion severally and collectively as a religious community. It is no wonder, therefore, that the term "Lingayata" should have been more common since some time past and long enough past, to the obscuration of the other to a certain extent in ordinary parlance, and should express not only a member of the community but also the distinctive mark of the faith that makes the community

a distinct religious entity. It connotes the most distinctive and characteristic feature of the religion, nay, the very heart and soul of the religion, namely, the creed of wearing of Linga on the body, and denotes that such are the followers of the faith and such is the community, History and Philosophy of Lingayat Religion in sharp and unmistakable distinction from other religious communities or sects of India. The term "Veerashaiva" is significant and looms large in religious tracts and literature to the total exclusion of "Lingayata" but is less common in ordinary language. "Lingayata" is ordinarily more common and more known. This is why the term "Lingayata" is used in the title of the book.

* The word "Lingayata" has been spoken of derisively by a person, who makes no secret of his intensions, and has been slightly compared by him to words like "Bagâyata" (garden land) and the similar. This is but mere mockery and impious and irreverent language that it does not deserve. Whatever and whenever may be the origin of the word, it is seen that it has attained the full religious and communal signification and significance. One may feel sorry that the word should be so mocked at and tossed about in the spirit of contempt and satire. It is palpably renegadelike to do so. One may not like it but one cannot help the lolling tongue of scandal. But the word had not the misfortune of being left alone to be treated so slightly. It had its stalwart defenders and exponents. A learned gentleman has explained the word, in sharp report, grammatically and justified its significance and popularity. The word "Lingayata", he says, is a Sanskrit word

* See Mr. Pavate's Basavabhānu pp. 16-19.

and can be a Sanskrit word in formation. It is derived, he explains, from the constituents, लिंग and आयत or लिंग-आ-यत. The formation of the word has been explained grammatically by him as follows:- (1) लिंगेन आयतः (ब्रह्मणा सामरस्यालकविस्तारतां गतः।) लिंगायतः। (2) लिंगेन आ (समंतात्) सामरस्यार्थं यतते (यति प्रयत्ने) + अच्, (समासांते कर्तरि अच्) लिंगायतः। (3) लिंगो आ (समंतात्) यातयति (यति उपस्कारे) + अच् (समासांते कर्तरि अच्) लिंगायतः। (4) लिंग आ समंतात् अभिव्यत्यर्थं सर्वावयवसंबंधार्थं यतः (यम + क्त, यम् परिवेषणे परिवेष्टने) लिंगायतः।

The above explanation is convincing and speaks well of the scholarship of the gentleman and it cannot be taken exception to, except by petty-fogging spirits. All the same an explanation of this kind has not been found in treatises of the past times. The explanation has been original and given for the first time. And it may be accepted in authority hereafter, as it will attain confirmation and sanctity of age in due course. But so far as our knowledge of existing Sanskrit works of Veerashaiva Religion goes, it is not found used, except only in one book, namely, वीरशैवाचार प्रदीपिका (page 62), in the verse-

मंत्रैश्च परिपूतस्य लिंगं दर्शयते गुरुः ।

तस्माच्छिष्योऽथ भो देव लिंगायित इति स्मृतः ।।

But it is noteworthy that the word used here is लिंगायित and not लिंगायत. It cannot be said whether it is misspelt or misprinted. But it is very probable that it may be so. The verse quoted above seems like an explanation of the word लिंगायत. Except for this there is no book in which the word is used. It looks, therefore, like a solitary island peak, prominent and striking, and attracting the attention of readers.

The learned gentlemen is conscious himself and admits that the explanation given above has been his own attempt to prove that the word is a Sanskrit word grammatically formed. He, therefore, remarks § "After the word has been established in the foregoing to be a Sanskrit word grammatically formed, there remains no ground for any body to ask for its occurrence in books of past times, for the simple reason that its use at present is proof enough of its use in the past. Grammar and the explanation of the grammatical formation of a word is sufficient to prove, whether the word is a तत्सम (loan-word), तद्भव (modified word), देश्य (original Kanarese or indigenous word), अन्यदेश्य (foreign word), or ग्राम्य (slang). Now that we have established the word to be a Sanskrit word, the disputant cannot say that the word is not a Sanskrit word unless and until he successfully disproves it."

After stating the polemic about the word, we like to give our own opinion and explanation of the origin and growth of the word into wide popular use. We think that the word is one of conventional growth. It is based on the psychology of the people to have a word expressive of an object, short, simple, and connotative of the inner meaning of the object for which it stands. The people desire that the inner

§ Translated from original Kanarese which reads as follows :- ಈ ಬಗೆಯಾಗಿ ಲಿಂಗಾಯತ ಶಬ್ದದ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತ ರೂಪವಿದ್ದಿಯನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿಕೊಟ್ಟು ಬಳಕೆ ಆದರೆ ಪ್ರಯೋಗವನ್ನು ಹಳೆಯ ಗ್ರಂಥಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕೇಳಲಿಕ್ಕೆ ಕಾರಣವಿಲ್ಲ. ಏಕೆಂದರೆ ಅದು ಈಗ ಸದ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ಪ್ರಯೋಗದಲ್ಲಿರುವದೇ ಹಳೆಯ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಕ್ಕೆ ಸಾಕ್ಷಿಯಾಗಿದೆ. ಯಾವುದಾದರೊಂದು ಶಬ್ದವು ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತವೋ, ದೇಶ್ಯವೋ ಅಥವಾ ಅಪಭ್ರಂಶವೋ. ಪರಕೀಯ ಭಾಷಾಗತವೋ ಎಂಬುದಕ್ಕೆ ವ್ಯಾಕರಣವೂ, ಉಪಪತ್ತಿಯೂ ಪ್ರಮಾಣವಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಈಗ ನಾನು ಮಾಡಿದ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತೋಪಪತ್ತಿಯನ್ನು ವಾದಿಯು ಖಂಡಿಸದೆ ಲಿಂಗಾಯತ ಶಬ್ದವು ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತವಲ್ಲವೆಂದು ಸಾಧಿಸಲಿಕ್ಕೆ ಬರಲಾರದು. [See Basavabhānu. p. 19].

meaning or pith of the object should flash forth and the object should throb before their mind's eye or imagination, as soon as the word expressive of the object is uttered. The word "Veerashiva" failed to satisfy such a desire of the people. It denoted, as it does now, simply some kind of Shiva. But it did not connote in any way the prominent and the only characteristic, namely, the holy Linga worn on the body. Linga worn on the body is the visible sign and a distinctive mark of being a Veerashiva. But the word "Veerashaiva" by itself does not and did not bring out the idea of the mark. Men had and have to pause and think before they comprehended the characteristic mark. But having had no patience to do so, they were busy in finding out a new word, as a short cut, to understand the characteristic, Linga, to the exclusion of others, which are not only less prominent but are also common to other Shaivas, namely, ವಿಭೂತಿ. and ರುದ್ರಾಕ್ಷ. But Linga is the only special mark of a Veerashaiva. Linga is so, but what about the wearer of the Linga ? How is he to be expressed and understood easily ? The method of solving the problem was simple. The possessive Sanskrit affix वत् was there. And the word लिङ्गावत् like भागवत्, धनवत्, and a host of others, must have come to be used and attained popularity in a very short time, as it expressed both the distinctive mark and the possessor of the mark. धनवान् expresses the possessor of धन and conveys to the hearer easily and prominently both the characteristic, namely, धನ್ and its possessor. In the same way लिङ्गवान् also does the same. As soon as it is uttered it conveys to the hearer without any trouble on his part to understand, the distinctive mark and its wearer. लिङ्गवान् is the nominative singular of लिङ्गवत् the uninflected form (प्रातिपदिक), and expresses a single individual

wearing Linga; and लिंगवन्तः is the nominative plural of लिंगवन्त and expresses many individuals wearing Linga or the whole host of Linga- wearers or the members of the Lingayata community. It is very common and customary to use plural as a mark of honour, when a single individual is addressed or spoken of or to. The use of plural with reference to a single individual is courteous refined manners. Hence लिंगवन्तः must have been more common than the singular लिंगवान्, as it was civil and respectful when used with reference to a single individual but was necessary, when used with reference to many or the whole host of the members of the community. The Sanskrit words लिंगवान् and लिंगवन्तः must have been first used by the educated few, educated in Sanskrit; but in course of a very short time it must have come to be used by the ordinary folk and attained currency in the general public, on account of its connotative merit. The language of the ordinary folk being Kanarese, लिंगवान् and ‡ लिंगवन्तः, and more probably the latter, must have assumed the form of लिंगायत, a तद्भव word, a class of words of the Kanarese language. The word "लिंगायत" thus seems to be a word of conventional growth. Such is our explanation, though we cannot quote an authority any explanation given of it in books of past times. We are alone responsible for it, whatever may the truth in it and whatever may the merits or demerits in it, though such seems to be the truth. And we may repeat the words of the learned gentleman, mutatis mutandis. "After the word is established in the foregoing to be a word of conventional growth as a तद्भव

‡ It maybe noted that even now insome places people use the word लिंगायतरू (ಲಿಂಗಾಯತರು)" for Lingâyatās

word, there is no ground for any body to ask for its occurrence in books of past times, for the simple reason that its use at present is proof enough of its use in the past. Explanation of a word, as being a word of conventional growth, is sufficient to prove that it is a तद्भव word conventionally grown out of a Sanskrit word. The disputant cannot now say that it is not so, unless and until he successfully disproves it."

There is another reason why the word "Lingâyata" is to be used in preference to the word "Veerashaiva". The words Lingâyata and Veerashaiva are neither coextensive nor convertible, though they look so. In a way "Veerashaiva" is more extensive and a genus. The word "Lingâyata" is less extensive and a species. The former is more extensive and a genus, because it includes within its fold the आराध्यः, who form a class or a community, though a small community mostly found in Telgu districts. "Lingâyata" is a species and less extensive, because it does not include within its fold the आराध्यः, who call themselves Veerashaivas and not Lingâyatās. They are a small sect or a subsect of Veerashaivas; and they profess and practice षटस्थल and अष्टावरण, the creed of Veerashaivism or Lingâyatism, and profess and practice in addition ‡ वर्णाश्रमधर्म of Hindus and Hinduism. They wear on their bodies Linga and also the sacred thread. They retain some of the Brahmanic rites and repeat गायत्रीमंत्र and follow all Brahmanical sixteen संस्कारः like पुंसवन, सीमंतोन्नयन and others, which are tabooed from the Veerashaiva creed.

‡ See "Castes and Tribes of Mysore", Vol. II, page 32.

In short if the real religion, the real Veerashaiva religion, is to be understood it comes to be understood as शक्तिविशिष्टाद्वैत, षट्स्थल and अष्टावरण and neither more nor less. And this aspect of the religion and the whole aspect including the पंचाचारस (five-fold code of life) and त्रिषष्टिशीलस, (sixty three rules of daily conduct) is better expressed and unfolded by 'Lingayatism' and the follower is better expressed by 'Lingâyata'. It is to be understood that whenever the word Veerashaiva and Veerashaivism, and Lingayata and Lingâyatism, are used in these pages, they are used as coextensive and convertible terms and as exclusive of the Ârâdhyâs.

Shaivism and Veerashaivism

Veerashaiva is a particular Shaiva, distinguished from other Shaivas- and Veerashaivism is a division or subdivision of Shaivism. Veerashaivas form a section of the Shaiva world and Veerashaivism forms a species of Shaivism, though an integral and distinct part of it. The word वीर prefixed to 'Shaiva', makes the whole distinction and is intended for making the whole distinction, and is elaborately explained in various ways. That makes Veerashaivism a distinct religious entity. That Veerashaivism is a distinct religious entity and that the Lingâyata community is a distinct religious community' will be vindicated and proved later, so that Veerashaivism deserves to be counted and mentioned along with other major religions of the world. It will suffice here to state the relation between Shaivism and Veerashaivism to show that Veerashaivism has grown out of Shaivism and made itself so distinct a part as to be on par with other religions of the world, though unfortunately, Veerashaivism or the religion of the with

Lingayatas is the least known religion, for reasons that will be noted further on in a relevant section.

Shaivas and Veerashaivas have some thing in common but differ so widely in other vital matters that they stand on a different level altogether and the some thing common comes to be obscured largely. Thus Shaivism is the background of Veerashaivism that forms the foreground, the thing, common to both Shaivas and Veerashaivas or Lingayata, is the God head or उपास्यदेवता. Moreover the idea of the deity at the bottom of the Universe created, protected and reabsorbed by the deity, the idea of the deity as the cosmic principle and spirit, *evolving the Universe, involving the Universe into itself and transcending over the Universe*, is the common ground on which both Shaivism and Veerashaivism stand. Here ends the common ground, though there are some other things common to both like विभूति, रुद्राक्ष, and मंत्र. But these also differ so widely in their relation to other things in the system of their religious practices. In short the deity and the broad philosophical interpretation of the working of the deity in cosmogony and the reabsorption of the Universe into the deity by the deity is what forms the common principle and common ground of the meeting of the two. In other respects, in respect of the methods of attaining final beatitude (the whole called the religious practice), in respect of spiritual practices for spiritual culture of individuals, in respect of sociology and the broad basis of society or the basic principles of society, they differ so widely that they bifurcate and stand on a different level altogether never to meet. However there can be no gainsaying the fact that Veerashaivism has grown out of

Shaivism. And to understand how Veerashaivism has evolved or grown out of Shaivism, study historically its growth and development in the proper perspective, and to understand the scripture and religious literature common to both and peculiar to both, it is indispensable to study and trace the growth of Shaivism historically. To this, therefore, we now turn; because this is as much necessary, as it is to understand the background well to be enabled to understand the foreground equally well.



CHAPTER TWO

Pre-Aryan Dravidian Civilization

All scholars unanimously hold that there was no high form of civilization in ancient India before the coming of Aryans to India. The people that inhabited India before the immigration of Aryans were almost barbarians leading a life of nomads. It has been the fashion of scholars to give credit to Aryans for all that was best in India and for the splendour and glory that was once India. Religion, philosophy, and literature in all forms were all due to the activities of Aryans after they entered India, settled there, and made it their home. It has been, moreover, asserted that the Aryans, whenever and from wherever they entered India through northwestern passes were already civilized people and were in possession of a form of civilization, which they brought to India and which became the basis of the civilization, that later flourished in all branches in that dazzling form, that has been the cultural heritage of India. * "Hitherto it has commonly been supposed that the pre-Aryan peoples of India were on an altogether lower plane of civilization than their Aryan conquerors; that to the latter they were much what the helots were to the Spartans, or Slavs to their Byzantine overlords- a race so

* Marshall's preface to Mohenjo-Daro and Indus civilization.