

**Commentary on Professor M. R. Sakhare's
Book
'History and Philosophy of
Lingāyat Religion'
A Critical Review**

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Preface

During the process of continued study and understanding of the available sacred literature, and writing six books in the recent past, it was evident to me that I had referred to a book by Professor M. R. Sakhare called 'History and Philosophy of Liṅgāyat Religion' published by Karnatak University, Dharwad, India (1). It appears that this scholarly work, in English, of Professor Sakhare was frequently referred to in the past by the students of Philosophy and Religion in order to seek further insight into the Religious Philosophy of Liṅgāyatās who are also known as Vīraśaivas. Although the book had been regarded as one of the authentic works in English on this subject, some questions have been raised as to its usefulness as a reference book in the present day circumstances. With this in mind, the book was reviewed, and then, as it seemed appropriate to report the findings, this commentary has been submitted to the interested and concerned readers.

As in the past, participation of my family members in this journey has enhanced my spiritual experience. My wife Uma Raju, our daughter Bindu Raju, our son Vinay Raju and our daughter-in-law Cecilia Chang Raju have all been supporting the endeavor with encouraging

comments. Furthermore, my brother Dr. B. Dhanya Kumar, in India, has been coordinating with the publishers, attending the book release functions, distributing my books, and such things. I am grateful for his enthusiastic support in this regard.

Indeed, without the diligent work of the publishers and the printers this would not have been possible. My sincere thanks to Dr. Guru Bale, Mrs. Sindhu Suresh, Mr. Toṅṭadārya, the former member of the Legislative Council, Karnāṭaka State, India, and Mr. G. Parameshvarappa, President, Śaraṇa Sāhitya Parishat, Mysore Chapter, for their assistance in introducing the book to the public. Thanks also to Lokappa and his staff at Rajendra Printers, Mysore, for printing the book beautifully and in a timely manner.

Linga Raju, M.D.

Depiction of Sanskrit and Kannaḍa Words

Most of the articles written in English, and published in this book, have many Saṁskṛta (Sanskrit) and Kannaḍa words that are written using the English alphabet. Transliteration of these words for proper pronunciation is a challenge with only about half the number of letters in the English alphabet. Furthermore, in general, the English letters f, q, w, x and z, are not usable in both Sanskrit and Kannaḍa, leaving even a lesser number of English letters for the depiction. Each letter/syllable of the Sanskrit and Kannaḍa alphabets has only one pronunciation, and the alphabet is arranged according to the functional structure of the mouth to produce these sounds. There are no capital letters; all the letters are in one case only. The following is the English representation of the letters of the Kannaḍa alphabet and the corresponding Dēvanāgarī script of Sanskrit that are in common use nowadays. The lines, dots and other marks used here are called 'diacritics' or 'diacritical marks'. The diacritics are combined with English letters to represent new sounds. This representation is slightly modified from the scheme of transliteration given in 'ŚŪNYASAMPĀDANE' Volumes I through V, published by Karnatak University, Dharwar, India (11).

Vowels: The vowels are either of a short or of a long duration. The sound of short vowels is held for one count, and that of long vowels is held for two counts. The sound of complex vowels is held for two counts.

Short vowels	Long vowels	
Complex vowels		
a	ā	
i	ī	
u	ū	
ṛ	ṛī	
e	ē	ai
o	ō	au
Anusvāra (Nasalization):	aṁ (also añ)	
Visarga (Aspiration):		aḥ

Consonants: Five sets of five each of the twenty-five consonants are arranged according to five points of articulation with the first vowel 'a' added for pronunciation.

Velars or gutturals - the sound is produced in the throat or back of the mouth:

ka, kha, ga, gha, ṅa

Palatals – the sound is produced with the tongue touching the palate (roof of the mouth):

ṅa, ṅha, ja, jha, ña

Retroflex or cerebrals – the sound is produced with the tongue bent backwards:

ṭa, ṭha, ḍa, ḍha, ṇa

Dentals – the sound is produced with the tongue touching the back of the upper teeth:

ta, tha, da, dha, na

Labials – the sound is produced at the lips:

pa, pha, ba, bha, ma

Semi-vowels: **ya, ra, la, va**

Palatal sibilant: **śa** Retroflex sibilant: **ṣa**

Dental sibilant: **sa**

Aspirate: **ha** Lateral: **ḷa**

Conjunct (combination of two letters): **kṣa, jña**

If the diacritical marks cannot be used for some reason, then there are a few accepted ways of representing some of the sounds/letters: aa for ā, ee for ī, oo for ū, and sha for the retroflex ṣa. In this version the palatal śa, as in Śiva, seems to have been written both ways – sa and sha.

It is not too difficult to use this type of representation in the articles. Although it takes more effort to properly depict the Saṁskṛta and Kannaḍa words, it is worthwhile to use the diacritical marks so that the words are sounded properly.

Commentary on the book 'History and Philosophy of Liṅgāyat Religion'

The Author

The Late Professor M. R. Sakhare, M. A., T. D. (Cantab) was a Sanskrit Professor at the Lingaraj College in Belgaum, Karnāṭaka State, India. Professor Sakhare, at the beginning of the book, under 'Argument', states that he had long cherished a desire to place before the reading world the Philosophy and principles of the Liṅgāyat religion. The main reason for that desire, he says, was that Liṅgāyatism was not much known outside Karnāṭaka, that even in Karnāṭaka it was known as kind of Śaivism with another alternative name of Vīraśaivism, and that the Liṅgāyatas were said to be a Śaiva sect wearing Liṅga on their bodies and being considered to be outside the sphere of Brāhminic influence.

Further, he states that, Liṅgāyatas themselves do not know what their religion is and what its history is, much less others. To dissipate the wrong ideas and to place before the reading and the thoughtful public the facts of the religion was his long cherished desire. And after his return from England, he says, he 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. He states that, because Liᅅga worn on the body is not only the most prominent characteristic of the religion but also its basis and central point, he has made 'Liᅅgadhāraᅅaᅅandrikā' to be the basis of his thesis, and has presented his work.

He then makes this following statement on page xii under 'Argument': "*Though I am positively of the opinion that Vaᅅana Śāstra 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 centers round a Sanskrit work*". Right at the outset the readers should make note of this - most of what he says in this book is not taken from the main scripture of the Viraśaivas/Liᅅgāyatas. His original book was published in 1942.

It is to be pointed out to the readers that throughout this book Professor Sakhare uses the term 'Liᅅgāyat-religion' for Liᅅgāyatism/Viraśaivism. He is steadfast in his conviction that it is a religion, and he is set out to convince the others.

The Original Book

Professor Sakhare's original book published in 1942 was based on 'Liᅅgadhāraᅅaĉandrikā' which had been composed in Sanskrit by Śrī Nandikēśvara. With regard to the date of that composition, Professor Sakhare states, on page 422, that he puts the author Nandikēśvara in the seventeenth century of the Common Era (CE/AD). The Liᅅgadhāraᅅaĉandrikā had been printed and published at Benares by the Svāmi of Kāśimaᅅh (Jaᅅgamvādi of Benares), a pontifical seat of Viśvarādhyā, one of the five Vīraśaiva Āĉāryas. Professor Sakhare's original book had included History and Philosophy of Liᅅgāyat Religion as an introduction to Liᅅgadhāraᅅaĉandrikā, the textual part of Liᅅgadhāraᅅaĉandrikā, and the translation and the notes.

The Foreword for this original book had been written by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan. He was one of the scholars who wrote on the history of Indian Philosophy. He was a strong advocate of the Vēdāntic Advaita Philosophy, a slightly modified Advaita Philosophy of Śaᅅkarāĉārya. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, later, after the attainment of independence of India from the British, became the first Vice-President of Independent India and then the second President of India.

The Book

In 1978, the Karnatak University thought that the then available Viraśaiva literature in English was inadequate to meet the demands of the public and the students of Philosophy and Religion. Therefore, the University thought of reprinting some of the authentic works in English on the subject to meet the demands. By then, Professor Sakhare had already attained Liṅgaikya (had died), therefore, the University obtained permission from the family and from the Literary Committee of the L. E. Association, Dharwad, to reprint only the Introductory part of the original book, leaving out all the other parts. The book entitled 'History and Philosophy of Liṅgāyat Religion' by M. R. Sakhare, M. A., T. D. (Cantab), was then published by the Karnatak University, Dharwad, India, in 1978 (1).

Vīraśaiva and Liṅgāyata

The first chapter in this book is titled 'Vīraśaiva and Liṅgāyata'. Professor Sakhare starts with the statement that 'Liṅgadhārṇaĉandrikā is a treatise written to establish the principle and creed of wearing Liṅga on the body by the Vīraśaivas or Liṅgāyatas', and then he continues his discussion on the terms Vīraśaiva and Liṅgāyata.

The term 'Vīraśaiva' has been etymologically defined and elaborately explained in treatises and literature of the religion. The term 'Vīraśaivism' is of the same age as that of the origin of that religion itself, whenever that might be. But the origin of the word 'Liṅgāyata' is not only obscure but also conspicuously absent in religious literature, and is neither defined nor explained therein. The term 'Liṅgāyata' is comparatively a later one to have come into vogue, and it prominently expresses the followers of Vīraśaivism, and signifies unmistakably those who wear on their bodies the holy Liṅga. The word 'Vīraśaiva' does not bring out the idea of Liṅga worn on the body as strikingly as the word 'Liṅgāyata' does. The term 'Vīraśaiva' is less common in ordinary language, but the term 'Liṅgāyata' is ordinarily more common and more known. That is why, Professor Sakhare says, the term 'Liṅgāyata' is used in the title of the book.

Professor Sakhare, then, gives his opinion and explanation of the origin of the word 'Liṅgāyata'. He believes that it is derived from the Sanskrit compound word '*Liṅgavat*' which means 'one who possesses Liṅga'; the word '*Liṅgavaritah*', being the nominative pleural, applies to many individuals who possess Liṅga. The two Sanskrit words, he says, must have been first used by the educated few, but in course of time, it must have come to be used by the ordinary folk. As the language of the local people was Kannaḍa, the Kannaḍa word 'Liṅgāyata' must have been derived from those two Sanskrit words. He states that, such is his explanation, and that he cannot quote an authority on it in the books of the past times. On page 2 he also states that the word 'Liṅgāyata' has been spoken of derisively by some, to denigrate the wearers of Liṅga.

He continues, the term 'Vīraśaiva is more extensive because it includes Ārādhyas who form a class or a community, whereas the term 'Liṅgāyata' does not include the Ārādhyas. The Ārādhyas call themselves Vīraśaivas and not Liṅgāyatas; they profess the practice of Vīraśaivism, and in addition they retain some of the Brāhminical rites and rituals which are not accepted by the Liṅgāyatas. Professor Sakhare then states that when the terms Vīraśaiva and Vīraśaivism, and also Liṅgāyata and Liṅgāyatism are used in the book, they are used as

coextensive and convertible terms, with the exclusion of the Ārādhyas.

Then, under the subtitle 'Śaivism and Vīraśaivism' in the same chapter, he starts by saying that Vīraśaivism is a division or a subdivision of Śaivism, and that it is an integral and distinct part of Śaivism. He then states that Vīraśaivism has grown out of Śaivism, and has made itself a distinct religious entity, so as to deserve to be counted and mentioned along with other major religions of the world.

It is to be noted that Professor Sakhare does not use the term 'Iṣṭaliṅga' in this chapter; he exclusively uses the term 'Liṅga' to mean 'Iṣṭaliṅga' in his discussion. As the readers very well know, the term 'Liṅga' is not just Iṣṭaliṅga, it has a broader meaning.

Circumstances in India at the Time of Sakhare's Original Work in 1942

India was being ruled by the British then. The whole Indian Sub-continent was India which was sometimes referred to as the British India. Pakistan and Bangladesh did not exist then. In 1931, Sir John Marshall, the Director General of Archaeology of India had published his detailed account of the archaeological findings discovered in the region of the Indus River Valley in a book called 'Mohenjo Daro and Indus Civilization'. In his book, he had proposed that the period from 3,100 Before Common Era (BCE/BC) to 2,750 BCE was the golden age of Harappa (1, and page 63 of reference 2). It was astonishing to everyone that the findings revealed a very advanced civilization in ancient India during that time. It was astonishing mainly because the European scholars had falsely convinced the whole world that, prior to the so called Aryan invasion of India between 1,500 BCE and 1,200 BCE, there was no recognizable civilization in India, and that the people inhabiting India were almost barbarians leading a life of nomads.

This false Theory of Aryan Invasion of India had indicated, that the light-skin-colored Indo-European tribes from central Asia had invaded India through the northwest mountain passes of

present day Afghanistan, that the invading Aryans were more civilized, and that Religion, philosophy, literature, and everything else were due to the activities of Aryans subsequent to their arrival in India after 1,500 BCE. This false theory was invented by the European scholars. It was not only not based on any historical records, but also not founded on any archeological evidence. It was based mainly on the linguistic speculation that similarities between Indo-European languages required an original homeland which could not possibly be India itself, but somewhere else (3). The basic fallacy of this theory was the assumption that the ancient people of India could not have, on their own, come up with the perfected language of Sanskrit and the Vēdas (and also come up with a great civilization).

Sir John Marshall in his book states that hitherto it had commonly been supposed that the pre-Aryan people of India were on an altogether lower plane of civilization than their Aryan conquerors, and that to the Aryans, they were much a race so servile and degraded, that they were commonly known as Dasas or slaves (page 7 of reference 1).

This revelation that the so called pre-Aryans who had been labelled as 'Dravidians' were far more advanced than what was thought to be, was again misinterpreted by the European scholars, who then came up with many new 'Dravidian

Invasion' theories, speculating that the native pre-Aryan Dravidians might not have been the original natives but some other people who had come to India at some prior time and had established such advanced civilization. This again was based on the assumption that the ancient people of India could not have, on their own, establish such an advanced civilization. Many false theories of 'Dravidian Invasion of India' were rampant at the time.

Main Fallacy of the Book

The main fallacy of the book is that Professor Sakhare presumes **that the Aryan Invasion theory was factual, and does not even raise a single doubt about this invasion, although the theory had been based on the demeaning or insulting assumption that the so called pre-Aryan natives could not have, on their own, come up with an advanced civilization.** He goes all out on his way to disprove the assumption that the native pre-Aryans were not civilized people; but he simply does not go any further and does not raise any question about the Aryan invasion theory itself.

The false theory of Aryan invasion of India came about in the 19th century when the British were ruling India. The British scholars discovered the Vēdas composed in the beautiful and perfect language of Sanskrit, and they could not believe that the ancient people of India could come up with the Vēdas and Sanskrit. They noticed that there were some similarities between Sanskrit and some of the European languages. Instead of considering the possibility that the homeland of these languages could be India itself, and thus looking for the evidences, the European scholars invented this theory, stating that the ancient people of India were uncivilized and therefore

could not have come up with the language of Sanskrit and the Vēdas.

If the basic assumption for the theory is wrong, then the theory that is based on that assumption is also wrong. Professor Sakhare, at the time, had all the information to consider the possibility that the Aryan invasion theory itself was wrong. Not only he was the Sanskrit professor, his native language was Kannaḍa. Kannada and Sanskrit have the same type of the alphabet with the same type of pronunciation; and it is said that there is more than 50% concordance in the words and phrases of the two languages and their meanings. According to the false theory, Kannaḍa, Tamil, and other south Indian languages were the languages of the people in India prior to the arrival of Sanskrit and Vēdas which were said to have been brought by the invading Aryans. Then, with the discovery of a far advanced civilization in India around 3,000 BCE, way before the theoretical invasion of Aryans between 1,500 and 1,200 BCE, Professor Sakhare had all the evidences. Not only that there was a great civilization far more advanced than any other at the time, but also the ancient people of India said to have had the languages similar to the Sanskrit language. So then, how could that be that the far advanced and civilized ancient people of India with their language similar to that of Sanskrit, could not have had Sanskrit and the Vēdas at that time? Professor Sakhare does not

even raise a doubt, let alone disprove the Aryan invasion theory.

He misses that point, and he devotes his entire discussion in refuting the various 'Dravidian Invasion' theories. He does that, at the beginning of the book, in 54 pages in the second chapter entitled 'Pre-Aryan Dravidian Civilization'. He strongly disputes the previously held belief that the pre-Aryan Dravidians were barbarians leading the life of nomads, and further disputes all the Dravidian Invasion theories, and states that the pre-Aryan Dravidians were the native civilized people of India.

The scholarly discussion in this chapter includes, among other things, Paleolithic and Neolithic Ages, Bronze and Iron Ages, pottery, art, dress and decorations, occupations, house and buildings, disposal of the dead, Iron Age antiquities, and such. After this scholarly presentation, he states that it may be safely stated that all culture and civilization in India was evolved gradually by the people who were inhabitants of ancient India; it is understood that Dravidians first evolved a culture in India. He then states that his conclusions have been further corroborated and strengthened by the archaeological findings of Mohenjo Daro and Harappa, and gives several pages of extracts from Marshall's book.

Some parts of the extracts from Marshall's book are notable, and they are as follows.

'None perhaps is more remarkable than this discovery that Śaivism has a history going back to the Chalcolithic Age (Copper Age - said to be a transition from Neolithic to the Bronze Age, or early part of Bronze Age), or perhaps even further still, and that it thus takes its place as the most ancient living faith in the world' (on page 36 of Sakhare's book).

'Much of the gold of Mohenjo Daro and Harappa is alloyed with substantial percentage of silver, and this alloy is found in Kolar Gold Fields of Mysore (present day Karnāṭaka), and at Anantpur in Madras (present day Tamiḷnāḍu), but not in other districts from which the Indus people would have been likely to procure it' (page 38 of Sakhare' book).

'The nearest spot from which the beautiful green amazon stone (a variety of microline falspar) could be got was Dodbeta in the Nilgiris, far away in South India' (page 39).

This following part of extract from page 42 of Marshall's book given on page 42 also of **Sakhare's book is very disturbing** – 'Of the languages of these (Indus Valley) texts, little more can be said at present than that there is no reason for connecting it in any way with Sanskrit;

the Indus Civilization was pre-Aryan, and the Indus language or languages must be pre-Aryan also' – It is unfortunate that, such a scholar as Sir John Marshall is, even after gloriously describing the advanced civilization of ancient India, he continues to adamantly hold his support for the Aryan invasion theory which was based on the fallacy that the ancient people of India could not have, on their own come up with such a perfected Sanskrit Language and the Vēdas. The readers may note that this has been proven wrong; the Indus Valley glyphs (script/texts) have been proven to be pre-Brāhmī script of Sanskrit.

On the same page Marshall states – 'Western Alpine (some Europeans) are said to be strongly represented among the Kanarese-speaking (Kannaḍa-speaking) peoples of Western Deccan and Mysore (present day Karnāṭaka State), but if the racial characteristics can be taken into account in this problem of language, it is clearly the long headed Mediterraneans who have strongest claim to a connection by blood with the Dravidians and are most likely to have used a Dravidian speech'.

Professor Sakhare on page 45 of his book states as follows: 'Proto-Dravidian (language) naturally resembles Haḷe-Kannaḍa (old-Kannaḍa) more closely than modern Kannaḍa. Similarly, it is nearer to Sangam Tamil than to modern Tamil. In this proto-Dravidian language, the construction of

the phrase is generally the same as the modern Dravidian languages' (Kannaḍa, Tamil, Telugu, and also Malayalam). – It is to be noted that Kannaḍa and Sanskrit which he calls as the proto-Dravidian language have the same type of the alphabet with the same type of pronunciation, and more than 50% concordance in the words and phrases of the two languages and their meanings. If Professor Sakhare was able to discern that Kannaḍa and Sanskrit were similar languages, then **why did he not think that Sanskrit was also the language of the ancient people of India?**

Professor Sakhare on page 51 of his book rightfully makes the following statement: It has been an error to call the civilization discovered at Mohenjo Daro, Harappa, and other sites, 'The Indus Valley Civilization', for this phrase seems to suggest that such civilization flourished in the Indus Valley only; it was not localized to this area only, it was all over India and Ceylon (present day Sri Lanka). Then he goes over the connection between the peoples of Karnāṭaka and Mohenjo Daro, under the sub-heading 'Karnāṭaka and Mohenjo Daro'. In particular he goes over a sign that is common to the present day Viraśivas and the inscriptions of Harappa and Mohenjo Daro.

Professor Sakhare makes up a story and states on page 55: 'Finally, that the Aryans came to India from the banks of Volga and arrived at Kathiawar

is established in the following'. Then he gives the following story: The Aryans coming from the banks of Volga River, in their migration eastwards, had stopped for a long time in Mesopotamia. The migration of a whole nation to their new land though promising had innumerable perils. When the rude and uncivilized Aryans [If Professor Sakhare believed that these **Aryans were rude and uncivilized**, how could they possibly bring such beautifully perfected Sanskrit and Ṛgvēda to India?] encountered the wonderful natural goods or manufactured products brought by the Paṇis, the civilized people from India, who were coming seafaring from the 'country of the Sun' which was later called Saurāṣṭra and then Kathiawar on the western coast of India. Aryans had never seen the sea, and could not have any seafaring inclinations. Migration of the whole nation of the Aryans from Mesopotamia to India would have innumerable perils. Therefore, the leader of the Aryans, the Asura Indar called Indra [yes, Indra, that is what the Professor states], as a trial took two families – the families of Yadus and Turvasas – with him, and set sail in one of the ships of the Paṇis, and landed a number of days later on the shores of Kathiawar. Professor Sakhare states that the first expedition of the Aryans into India across the ocean is mentioned several times in the Ṛgvēda, and then gives two quotations without giving the actual Ṛgvēda references: "What time, O Hero, o'er the sea thou broughtest, in safety broughtest them; O hero

thou keepest Turvasa and Yadu safely." And "So sapient Indra, lord of might, brought Turvasa and Yadu, those who feared the flood in safety o'er." It is to be pointed out to the readers that these two quotations do not describe the first expedition of the Aryans into India; there was no expedition. It is astonishing that Professor Sakhare being the Sanskrit professor misinterprets the Ṛgvēdic verses. **Nowhere in Ṛgvēda there is anything about the foreigners invading India. His story seems ridiculous.**

Then **he makes another blunder, on page 58**, by stating that the discussions he presented about evolution of the advanced civilization of the ancient people of India, make it clear **that man arose in India**, simultaneously if he arose in other parts of the world as well, in pre-historic times and gradually developed a culture in all its stages and ages. It is to be noted that the scientific evidence indicates that the modern human originated in Africa, that there was no parallel evolutionary origins, and that all non-African people are descendants of the modern humans of Africa.

Professor Sakhare continues: 'Scholars generally trace the origin and growth of Religion, Philosophy, and Literature in India to the Vēdas. According to them there was nothing in India previous to the coming of the Aryans to India

which was then a land occupied by people uncivilized and barbarous. The Aryans, they say, brought with them some civilization which they spread among people of India after conquering them. But even the references made in the Vēdas to the people already there shows that they with whom the Aryans had to fight, were a people rich in wealth and cattle, who owned chariots and had weapons which they used in fights with the Aryans. The rise of the Aryan did not alter the stage of culture reached by the people'. As evidence for this, Professor Sakhare gives Ṛgvēdic references, and then states: "*This wrong idea of scholars firmly rooted in their minds made them blind to the references in the Ṛgvēda made to the people and their enviable condition of living and then tried to interpret the references to suit their wrong idea of pre-Aryan people of India*". Here, Professor Sakhare recognizes the mistake made by the European scholars, but he does not think of the possibility that there was no Aryan invasion of India. Therefore, the same could be said about Professor Sakhare – that the wrong idea of the Aryan invasion of India firmly rooted in his mind made him blind to the references, and he tried to interpret the reference to suit this wrong idea that the Dravidians and the Aryans were two separate races with separate religions, languages, and cultures – such a sorry situation indeed.

Professor Sakhare then states: 'The face-type of the average Indian of today is same as that of his

Dravidian ancestors of thousands of years ago. Among the modern Indians, the ancient pre-Aryan type of the head has survived, while that of the Aryan conqueror died out long ago'. Again Professor Sakhare is blind to this evidence which indicates that there was never an Aryan invasion of India.

Discussion on Śaivism

In the first chapter of the book, Professor Sakhare states that Viraśaivism is a distinct religious entity that has grown out of Śaivism; and that to understand how Viraśaivism has evolved out of Śaivism, it is indispensable to study and trace the growth of Śaivism historically. Accordingly, he devotes seven of the fifteen chapters in the book on the discussion pertinent to Śaivism.

The third chapter in the book is entitled '**Śaivism, the Dravidian Religion**'. The Professor's wrong conviction, that there was Aryan invasion of India, and the people living in India prior to this supposed invasion were called 'Dravidians', continues to skew his discussions so that some of his discussions become superfluous.

Professor Sakhare states that - one full chapter has been devoted to religion of Sindh people by Sir John Marshall in his book 'Mohenjo Daro and Indus Civilization' where he has concluded that those people worshipped mother Goddess and a male deity Śiva, as represented on seals, images, carvings, and other signs discovered in different sites; but Marshall's conclusions are not considered very authoritative, because, the inscriptions on the seals are not satisfactorily

explained. Then he states that Father Heras has given such satisfactory explanation, and that his reading of the inscriptions proves beyond the shadow of doubt that Śiva and Śakti were the chief deities of Mohenjo Daro people (who have been labelled 'Dravidians'). Then Professor Sakhare goes over his own interpretation of the 'Dravidian Religion'.

Professor Sakhare gives this story of what he thinks happened; the following is an excerpt from pages 76-77 of his book.

"Centuries of years ago, the Aryans were a wandering race and moved from place to place with their cattle in search of permanent place of residence. But their nomadic tendency came to an end when they arrived in India, which they found expansive and convenient and which afforded all facilities geographically and economically for the propagation of their race. They at once made up their mind to settle there. India they found suitable in every way and saw that it was too charming to be left in preference to another. But they did not find it quite easy to do so. The Dravidians were already there, who being the original inhabitants and masters of the land, could not naturally brook the idea of the Aryan intruders settling there and did not like to allow the alien immigrants to settle... The Aryans, therefore, had no easy task of settling in India. The Dravidians tried their utmost to drive back

the intruding Aryans out of India; and racial pride raised, naturally of course, a barrier between the immigrants and the original inhabitants. But the Aryans, strong-willed and tenacious, did not and could not afford to yield to the resistance and attempts of the Dravidians to drive them out. The Aryans had to struggle and struggle hard for their existence in India...”

Then Professor Sakhare states that Ṛgvēda is the evidence for the above story. The readers should note that Ṛgvēda does not have that story, and there is no such evidence. Ṛgvēda, as translated by the scholars H. H. Wilson (4), Ralph T. H. Griffith (5), and many others, including the Indian scholars, does not have that story. Furthermore, the vaçana literature and the Sanskrit books he refers to in his statement on page xii under Argument, “Though I am positively of the opinion that Vaçana Śāstra 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 centers round a Sanskrit work” also do not have any story about Aryan invasion of India. There was nothing about any Aryan invasion, if it ever occurred, in all the Indian literature and the world literature, prior to this wrong invention of the theory of Aryan Invasion of India.

Professor Sakhare continues – ‘The religion of the Aryans was altogether different from that of the

Dravidians whose religion stood on a higher plane, and hence great was the clash and conflict between the two races in India as recorded and told by the Vēdas'. It is to be noted that Vēdas do not make such statement (4, 5). The original false theory of Aryan Invasion of India had falsely stated that there was no recognizable religion in India prior to the Aryans' arrival; but then with the archaeological findings that India had a great civilization with its own culture and religion, the Professor, instead of doubting the theory itself, brings up the two different religions and the Aryan-Dravidian divide.

Professor Sakhare then states that the Aryans called themselves 'Āryas', and spoke of Dravidians contemptuously as Dasyus, Dāsas, Paṇis, and such.

Please note that Professor Sakhare continues to misinterpret what Ṛgvēda says; it is somewhat discomfoting, because he is a Sanskrit Professor, and is misinterpreting the Vēdic Sanskrit.

The following is to be reiterated here: The word 'Aryan', with an 'n' at the end, is an English word; it was invented in the 19th century CE. There were no Aryans. The word 'Aryan' or the Aryan people, and the word 'Dravidian' or the Dravidian people are not found in the Vēdas or in any other literature that existed prior to that false theory. The Sanskrit word 'Ārya' is in the Vēdas,

particularly in the Ṛgvēda. 'Ārya' means 'noble' or 'cultured'. The word Ārya does not indicate a race. The ancient inhabitants of India who transmitted the sacred heritage of the Vēdas, described themselves as Āryas (2). **There is nothing in the Vēdas that says that these 'Āryas' are foreigners or that they invaded India from somewhere else.** The conflicts that are in the Vēdas were the internal conflicts.

The readers should note that Ṛgvēda portrays non-violence and humility, and surrender to the Gods and sages. It includes the kings as an important aspect of the greater teaching. Kings protect the sacrifice and guard the spiritual life of the Āryas. Their battles are portrayed as a struggle between good and evil, truth and falsehood, or spirituality and materialism. The kings follow the wisdom of their ruling priests. In this regard the kings protect the Āryas who followed the spiritual culture of the seers. Those among the same people, who did not follow the spiritual rules, were not considered as Āryas. They were the fallen Āryas or non-āryas. Many of these non-āryas were reinstated as Āryas once they purified themselves and started following the spiritual Vēdic rules. Some who did not were driven away by the kings (6).

Dasyus, Paṇis, and some others were the materialistic fallen Āryas. Dasyus or Dāsas are described as destroyers of rites, and Paṇis are

portrayed in Ṛgvēda as being very rich in gold, cattle and horses (page 119 of reference 6). The conflict described in Ṛgvēda is a conflict between the spiritual and the non-spiritual materialistic people.

However, it is to be pointed out that Professor Sakhare correctly translates some parts of Ṛgvēda, but he misinterprets what that means. On page 79, for example, he states as follows: 'The hymns of the Ṛgvēda contain numerous references to persons, apparently of different descriptions, who were either hostile or indifferent to the system of religious worship, which the Ṛṣis, the seers of Vēdic Mantras, professed and inculcated. There is a long list of condemnatory epithets to persons, such as *adēva*, *adēvayu*, *avrta*, *anindra*, *dēvaninda*, *brahmadviṣ*, *ayajyu*, *ayajvan*, *anyavrta*, *apavrta*, etc., that is, godless, without rites, without Indra, revilers of gods, without devotion, un-sacrificing, followers of other rites, etc...'. The above passage describes the fallen Āryas or non-āryas who were indifferent or hostile to the system of religious worship professed by the seers. Professor Sakhare is calling these people the Dravidians in contradiction to his own statement that the Dravidians were a far advanced people, more advanced than the invading Aryans. Many passages given there show this type of correct translation and then wrong interpretation.

With regard to the worship of Rudra in Ṛgvēda, Professor Sakhare, on page 83, states that although Rudra was borrowed from the Dravidians, there was no opposition from the Aryans for its adoption, and that the adoration of Rudra in Ṛgvēda was regarded as an innovation. The readers should note that there were no Aryans or Dravidians; everyone was 'Ārya'. There was no borrowing or adoption in Ṛgvēda.

Professor Sakhare, on page 84, states that it would be more correct to describe the Indian Religion as Dravidian religion stimulated and modified by the ideas of foreign invaders. Then on page 90, he concludes the third chapter by stating that Aryans borrowed not only the Dravidian gods but also their religious philosophy. The readers should note that there was no Dravidian or Aryan religion; it was all the religion of the 'Ārya'; it was just the Religion of India.

In the fourth chapter entitled '**Śaivism during the Vēdic times**', Professor Sakhare starts by stating – after having established that Śaivism was a pre-Aryan and a Dravidian religion, the discussion now proceeds to see how Śaivism fared during Vēdic times, when the Aryan religion and culture prevailed.

It is to be noted that, because Professor Sakhare believes in the false Aryan invasion theory, he is presuming the Vēdic time to be after 1,500 BCE

or 1,200 BCE. The Aryan invasion theory has been disproven; there was no Aryan invasion ever. Most scholars now believe that the beginning of the Ṛgvēdic period was in 10,000 BCE, and that the Vēdic period had peaked between 3,100 BCE and 2,700 BCE. The Harappa and Mohenjo Daro findings were of that period. The third chapter 'Śaivism, the Dravidian Religion' above describes the main part of the Vēdic religion, and the description continues in this chapter.

It is very comforting to note that Professor Sakhare sets the record straight as to what Ṛgvēda says about Rudra. He states – *'It can be easily seen, when the hymns of Ṛgvēda addressed to Rudra are carefully analyzed, that twofold functions are attributed to Rudra – that of bestowing prosperity, and that of destroying suffering'*. **He categorically states that the idea that Rudra is a god of terror will have to be dismissed.** Bravo! He points the finger at Muir and Weber who falsely claim that idea. And he states that, in Ṛgvēda, Rudra is considered to be a benevolent divinity when Rudra confers wealth and welfare, and is considered to be a wrathful divinity when Rudra punishes evil-doers. **Then he states that there are many indications in Ṛgvēda that go to prove that Rudra of Ṛgvēda is the Śiva of later times.** It is to be noted that Professor Sakhare is ambiguous; his statement here is true, but he

was insisting that Śiva was what the so-called pre-Aryan Dravidians were worshipping before even the Vēdas and Aryans existed on the basis of his false belief on the disproven theory of Aryan invasion of India.

Professor Sakhare continues his discussion pertinent to Rudra-Śiva that is found in all the Vēdas including the Upaniṣads. He discusses how Rudra-Śiva became the Parabrahman of the Upaniṣads. Then he discusses the point that Śvetāśvatarōpaniṣad establishes Rudra-Śiva to be the theistic Brahman, instead of the non-theistic Absolute Brahman of the other principal Upaniṣads. All this is commendable.

In the fifth chapter entitled '**Development of Śaivism in later times up to the 12th century AD (CE)**', Professor Sakhare discusses Śaivism aspects in the Sūtras and Smṛtis, in Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata epics, and in Purāṇas. He also discusses Śaivism during the period of 63 Nāyanārs. The Nāyanārs lived during the period from 4th to the 9th century CE. During that period, Śaivism flourished and became firmly established in south India. The Nāyanārs translated Sanskrit Śivāgamas into Tamil Śiva doctrines. This is all well and good.

In the sixth chapter called '**Śaivism, a pre-Vēdic religion**', Professor Sakhare presents the evidences to show that Rudra-Śiva was a divinity

whose worship was common to all Āryas; Rudra-Śiva was not a sectarian god; and that worship of Viṣṇu was a later development.

The seventh chapter is titled '**Rise of the Āgamas, their development and contents**'. Professor Sakhare raises three questions and then tries to answer them.

First one is to do with the age of the Āgamas. He states that the age of the Āgamas can be determined from the references to the Āgamas in various works. He goes over 14 works going back from the latest to the earliest references starting with the 16th century work. He then gives some notable references - Kālidāsa's Raghuvamśa (first century BCE) refers to Āgamas; various Purāṇas mention the Āgamas; Mahābhārata indirectly refers to Āgamas; in Maitrāyaṇīyōpaniṣad Āgamic literature is referred to twice; the Śvetāśvatarōpaniṣad is certainly an Āgamic Upaniṣad, later followed by other Āgamic Upaniṣads like Atharvaśira and Kaivalya; the Bhagavad-Gītā itself seems to have been written under the influence of Āgamas. Then he makes a statement '*The Gītā like the Śvetāśvatarōpaniṣad, is in complete accord with the Āgamas but opposed to the Vēdas and the Upaniṣads*'. He states that very many passages of the Bhagavad-Gītā differ very little from various Āgamic passages, and gives about 44 passages of the two, side by side, to show that the Bhagavad-Gītā

verses are similar to the Āgamic passages. He states that, the contention that Āgamas themselves must have borrowed from the Gītā cannot stand because, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the author of Gītā, was himself a devotee of Śiva and said to have learnt spiritual philosophy from Śiva. The readers may very well know that such reasoning will not stand scrutiny.

Then on page 167, Professor Sakhare states the following: *"Even though the Gītā seems to have borrowed from the Upaniṣads, on the whole, it seems to be rather opposed to the Upaniṣads in its tone and trend, and to be more in consonance with the teachings of the Āgamas. Firstly, the Gītā itself condemns the Vēdas in no uncertain terms, as will be evident from what it says:-"* And gives four verses from Bhagavad-Gītā in Sanskrit only without giving the actual numbers for the verses, and without translating the verses into English. It is to be pointed out to the readers that Professor Sakhare, throughout this book, gives Sanskrit texts from various references and does not translate then into English. These Bhagavad-Gītā verses are II.42, II.43, II.46, and II.53. The translation given below is taken from the reference numbers 7 and 8.

The unwise who delight in the flowery words disputing about the Vēdas say that there is nothing other than this (material enjoyment).
II.42

The desire-ridden hold the attainment of heaven as the goal of birth and its activities; their words are laden with specific rites bringing in pleasure and power. II.43 (then 2 verses are skipped)

To an enlightened Brāhmaṇa all the Vēdas are as useful as a reservoir of water for irrigation when there is flood everywhere. II.46 (then 6 verses are skipped)

When your intellect which had been tossed about by the conflicting opinions of the Vēdas, becomes poised and firmly fixed in equilibrium, then you shall get into yōga. II.53

The readers should note that there is nothing in the above verses to make such an outrageous statement that 'the Gītā itself condemns the Vēdas in no uncertain terms' (refutation of all this is given below). Professor Sakhare, then takes two Sanskrit words from verse II.42 and one word from verse II.53, and states that the words say the following: the word '*vēdavādaratāḥ*' warns people against concerting themselves with the Vēdic lore and teachings; the word '*nānyadastītvādinah*' means that the Upaniṣads' attaining the position equal to the Vēdas is denied by some; and the word '*śrutivipratipannā*' wants people not to be distracted or misled by the Vēdas. Then Professor Sakhare states "*That is to say, the Gītā wants people to give up the Vēdas and devote themselves to the Āgamas*". The

readers should note that the Gītā does not say such things.

Refutation of the statements and explanations given by Professor Sakhare about Bhagavad-Gītā: There is no dispute that there are many commonalities between the Āgamas and the Bhagavad-Gītā. What is disconcerting is that Professor Sakhare being a professor of Sanskrit makes these un-scholarly statements. First of all Bhagavad-Gītā itself states that it is the essence of the Upaniṣads as follows:

Bhagavad-Gītā begins with the '*Gītā Dhyānam*' which means 'Meditation on Gītā'. This meditation has seven verses. The fourth verse says something like this: 'All the Upaniṣads are the cows, the one who milks the cows is Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna is the calf, people of intellect are the drinkers, and the milk is the supreme nectar of the Gītā'. It basically says that Bhagavad-Gītā is the essence of the Upaniṣads. Furthermore, in the colophon at the end of each chapter, The Bhagavad-Gītā refers to itself as an Upaniṣad – 'In the Upaniṣad of Bhagavad-Gītā, the knowledge of Brahman, the Science of Yoga...'

The fundamentals of the Vēdic philosophy are in the Upaniṣads, and the essence of the Upaniṣads is the Bhagavad-Gītā. The emphasis in Bhagavad-Gītā is on the Karma Yōga, the path of non-selfish action. This is somewhat of a departure from the

Upaniṣadic teaching that prefers the path of Jñāna Yōga, the path of discriminative Knowledge. This may be because the Upaniṣads were geared specifically to those already free from social obligations – the forest dwellers and the hermits, whereas the Bhagavad-Gītā is intended for the society at large, the Karma Yōga being relevant to the householder as well as to the monastic. It should be noted that the Bhagavad-Gītā does not condemn the Vēdas.

Professor Sakhare has taken the above four verses of Bhagavad-Gītā out of context and that too not in one order. Furthermore he is misinterpreting what these verses say, and misleading the readers. It is appalling that he is doing that. The following two paragraphs give the meaning of the verses from the verse II.41 to verse II.53 taken from reference numbers 7 and 8:

Those who are resolute have only one thought of Self-knowledge; but those who are not firm in their mind have thoughts that are endless and branched. The unwise who delight in flowery words disputing about the Vēdas say that there is nothing other than this material enjoyment. The desire-ridden hold the attainment of heaven as the goal of birth and its activities; their words are laden with specific rites and rituals bringing in pleasure and power. There is no fixity of mind for those who cling to pleasure and power and whose

judgment is obscured by such ritualistic activities. Vēdas enumerate the three guṇas of mind; one has to transcend the three guṇas and be free from the pairs of opposites (dualities), be ever-balanced and un-concerned with the thoughts of acquisition and hoarding; one has to be centered in the Self. To an enlightened person, the Vēdas are as useless as a reservoir of water for irrigation when there is flood everywhere.

One should seek to perform one's own duty without seeking any claim on its rewards. The fruit of work should not be the motive for action. And one should not lean towards inaction either. One should perform action renouncing attachments and fixing the mind in Yōga. Being even-minded in success and failure, the equilibrium is verily Yōga. Work done with selfish motives is far inferior to that performed in equanimity of mind; wretched are the result seekers; take refuge in the evenness of mind. The one fixed in equanimity of mind, frees oneself in the life from vice and virtue alike; therefore one should devote to Yōga. Work done to perfection is verily Yōga. The wise, imbued with evenness of mind, renouncing the fruits of their action, freed from fetters of birth, verily go to the divine state. When one's understanding transcends the veil of delusion, then one will become indifferent to what is heard and what is yet to be heard. When one's intellect which had been tossed about by the conflicting opinions of

the Vēdas, becomes poised and firmly fixed in equilibrium, then one gets into Yōga.

In the above passages, Bhagavad-Gītā does not condemn the Vēdas in general. It condemns the ritualistic part of the Vēdas, the people who perform these rituals, and the conflicting message the Vēdas portray. As the readers very well know, the Vēdas in general are divided into two parts, the Karma-kāṇḍa which is the first ritualistic action-oriented part that includes part of the Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇas, and the Jñāna-kāṇḍa which is the knowledge oriented part of the Vēdas that includes the Upaniṣads. The two parts of the Vēdas give some conflicting messages. Bhagavad-Gītā which is the essence of the Upaniṣads, is saying that one should disregard the ritualistic part of the Vēdas and the conflicting opinions there off, concentrate on stabilizing the mind in order to get into Yōga. It may be said that Bhagavad-Gītā does not like the Vēdas in general and ritualistic parts of the Vēdas in particular, but, it is to be noted that, it is definitely not opposed to the Upaniṣads which are part of the Vēdas.

Continuing on track of the Āgamas, Professor Sakhare concludes on the first topic concerning the age of the Āgamas by stating that the beginnings of the Āgamas go back to the time of the Āraṇyakas. Most scholars agree with his statement. Here again, Professor Sakhare is

ambiguous. Although his statement is true, he does not give an approximate date for this time of the Āraṇyakas. The reason why Professor Sakhare does not give a date is not clear. If he had to give one, because he believed in the false theory of the Aryan invasion of India, it would have to be a date way after 1,200 BCE. But because Professor Sakhare insists that Śaivism was the religion of the highly civilized Pre-Aryan people, and its philosophy is based on the Āgamas, then the Āgamas should have existed way prior to Āraṇyakas, and that too way prior to any part of the Vēdas. Now that the Aryan invasion theory has been disproven, most scholars give the date for the beginning of the time of the Āraṇyakas to be around 2,700 BCE, and therefore, the beginnings of the Āgamas go back to the time of the Āraṇyakas around 2,700 BCE.

The second topic is the origin and source of the Āgamas. He gives three theories – one is that Āgamas arose out of the Br̥hmaṇas and thus were contemporaneous with the Āraṇyakas; the second is that Āgamas interpret the Upaniṣads and elaborate their teachings; and the third is that the Āgamas are an independent literature and in no way are connected with the Vēdas. Professor Sakhare, after giving his own long explanation, sides with the third theory. However, he notes, on page 176, that the later thinkers hold that the Āgamas and the Vēdas are one and

the same. But he thinks that the Āgamas and the Vēdas are two different streams of thought running in two parallel channels acting and reacting upon each other so as to ultimately blend together indistinguishably. Then on the same page he asks a question and answers – ‘What is then the source of the Āgamas? We (it is not clear who he means when he says ‘we’, it probably just means I for himself) maintain in reply that the pre-Aryan Dravidian culture and religion was the source of the Āgamas’. There is no dispute that the source of the Āgamas was the culture that existed around 3,000 BCE. But Professor Sakhare calls that culture the pre-Aryan Dravidian culture which was really the Vēdic culture of the Āryas (not Aryans); there were no Aryans or Dravidians; they were all just Āryas, the ancient civilized people of India. It is to be noted that Professor Sakhare continues to build his case for two different races and two different religions – Dravidian and Aryan - somewhat in a biased way.

The third topic is the contents of the Āgamas. It is very briefly stated that the Āgamas are divided into four parts called pādas - Kriyā, Ćaryā, Yōga, and Jñāna; the Kriyāpāda is said to embody all acts such as preparing the ground, laying the foundation for the temple and establishing the idol. Then Professor Sakhare states that, during the early period, the Āgamas pertained to the three main Āgamic cults, namely, Śaiva, Śakta,

and Vaiṣṇava; and that the religion of the present day Hindus has long been wholly Āgamic.

The last statement he makes in this chapter is that the religion of the present day Hindus has long been wholly Āgamic. This statement is contrary to what he states at the beginning of the fourth chapter. There, he states that the Aryan religion and culture prevailed and predominated. If that is the case, then, the present day Hindus would be practicing the Aryan religion. He has been trying to make a case for two separate religions – one a Dravidian religion with Āgamas being its literature; and the other the Aryan religion with Vēdas being its literature. The readers very well know by now that everything is really one religion, the religion of the Āryas (not Aryans) which is the religion of the Hindus.

The eighth chapter is titled '**The meaning of Śivaliṅga**'. Śivaliṅga is the symbol that represents Śiva. The term is usually applied to the Sthāvara (stationary) Liṅga installed in the Śiva temples. Professor Sakhare at the beginning of the chapter states that there is much misunderstanding regarding Śivaliṅga; there is a deep-rooted prejudice which considers Śivaliṅga to be a phallus symbol. Later on in this chapter he states that the root-cause of this deep prejudice and misunderstanding lies in the idea and the gratuitous assumption that the Dravidians, at the time of the Aryan invasion of

India were merely a primitive people with no civilizations of their own. Professor Sakhare, rightfully, dispels this misunderstanding and condemns the impure notion of the well-known European writers. Hurray!

Iṣṭaliṅga

Chapter nine is titled 'Iṣṭaliṅga and Image Worship'. This chapter has only 3 pages, and is interposed here under the discussion of Śaivism probably to compare and contrast the Iṣṭaliṅga to the Śivaliṅga that is discussed above in the previous chapter.

Professor Sakhare states that Iṣṭaliṅga is the Liṅga worn on the body, and then he states how Iṣṭaliṅga is made. He compares it to Śivaliṅga that is worshipped in the temples. Śivaliṅga is considered to be an image of Śiva, and therefore, its worship is an image worship. He then emphatically states that Iṣṭaliṅga worship is not an image worship because Iṣṭaliṅga is not an image of Śiva, it is Śiva itself. Therefore the worship of Iṣṭaliṅga is not an image worship, it is the direct worship of Śiva.

He continues. In the scheme of Ṣaṭsthala philosophy, Liṅga is the manifested Śiva (Saguṇa Śiva), and aṅga is the devotee of a human being, and the two are only the twofold manifestations of Nirguṇa Śiva (Śiva with no attributes); therefore, Liṅga and aṅga are one and the same.

Professor Sakhare then discusses different modes of worship in general. He states that, although

there is no scriptural sanction behind it, some Liṅgāyatas do image-worship at home; it is merely an imitation of the image worship of other Hindus which is universal in India.

In this chapter he just mentions that the Iṣṭaliṅga is given to a child as soon as it is born, to be worn on the body throughout life, and to be buried with the dead body upon death. He does not mention that Guru gives the Iṣṭaliṅga during initiation ceremony. He concludes this chapter by stating that the custom of image-worship is an abnormal growth on the Liṅgāyata religion and has sapped the life and spirit of the religion.

Continuation of discussion on Śaivism

The tenth chapter is titled '**Schools of Śaivism**'. Professor Sakhare starts with a definition of a 'sect': 'A sect is a religious body or denomination, in which distinct religious doctrines and principles are formulated and which has a distinct religious philosophy and common forms of worship that distinguishes one particular sect from another, either of the same religion or another religion'.

Professor Sakhare then states that the philosophy and practice of Śaivism have been set forth in very general terms in Śvetāśvatarōpaniṣad, but in the Atharvaśira-Upaniṣad it is found to have attained a more definite form; in the Atharvaśira-Upaniṣad there occur the special technical terms of Śaivism which are common to all different sects that arise later from Śaivism. It is interesting to note that, although there is no disagreement on this statement, it is surprising that Professor Sakhare is admitting to the Vēdic origin of Śaivism.

Professor Sakhare describes different sects of Śaivas, and also describes the 36 tattvas (principles) in detail. In addition he describes the commonalities as well as the differences between Śaivism and Śaktism. It is to be noted that on page xi under 'Argument', he states that Śaivism,

Śaktism and Liṅgāyatism are all allied religions; the basic philosophy is the same except that in Śaktism, Śakti is considered prominent, whereas, in Śaivism and Liṅgāyatism, Śiva is considered primary, thus implying that Liṅgāyatism is more allied to Śaivism. But then he states "But Liṅgāyatism is more allied to Śaktism". Why he makes such a statement is not clear; it is unacceptable. He, himself, has seven of the fifteen chapters of this book devoted to Śaivism and in addition he incorporates philosophy and practice of Śaivism into the chapter on philosophy and practice of Liṅgāyatism to show that they are similar. That is almost half of this book on Śaivism. With all this, he implies that Liṅgāyatism is not only derived from Śaivism, but also has similar philosophy and similar practices. But why he makes such an unacceptable statement as above without explaining any further is disturbing. His opinion is not only disputable but also not acceptable. The readers should note that the Viraśaiva/Liṅgāyata scriptures do not consider Liṅgāyatism to be more allied to Śaktism; if at all any, it is considered closer to Śaivism.

The Founder of Liṅgāyatism

The eleventh chapter is titled '**The rise of the Liṅgāyat Religion and its founder**'. As has been indicated in the first chapter, the term 'Vīraśaiva' is used fairly exclusively, rather than the term 'Liṅgāyata', in the religious literature. Professor Sakhare states that, determining the time that Liṅgāyatism was founded, and the Prophet who founded it, is a very intricate problem, and that certain things have been taken for granted which have confounded the intricacy. The things taken for granted are based on some hollow traditions handed down from generation to generation so that they have become a kind of gospel truths. Tradition is often fictitious and baseless, it is necessary to determine the truth historically. Here, it is to be pointed out to the readers, that although what Professor Sakhare is saying is probably true, he gives the impression that he has already determined to disprove the historical traditions irrespective of whether they are true or not.

Traditionally it has been handed down that the Vīraśaivism was founded by the five great prophets (pañcācāryāḥ) who rose out of five Sthāvaraliṅgas (stationary Liṅgas in temples) in different yugas (ages): Rēvaṇārādhyā or Rēvaṇasiddha of Kollipāki in Balehalli or

Balehonnur of Mysore State (present day Karnāṭaka State); Maruḷārādhyā or Maruḷasiddha of Ujjani in Ballari District of Karnāṭaka; Ēkōrāmārādhyā of Himavat, Kedāra (in the Himalayas); Paṇḍitārādhyā of Śrīśaila Mallikārjuna in present day Andhra Pradesh State; and Viśvārādhyā of Kāśī (Banares).

Professor Sakhare examines the evidences found in the literature, and vehemently argues in a prosecutorial way. If only he had applied this type of evaluation to the clues that were in front of him about the fallacy of the theory of the Aryan invasion of India, what a great book this would have been. He critically analyzes what he finds in the existing Vīraśaiva literature, and tries to establish the 12th century CE to be the time period when Liṅgāyatism was founded and that Basava was the founder of Liṅgāyatism.

Professor Sakhare gives two Sanskrit passages without English translation, taken from two Āgamas, namely Suprabōdhāgama and Svāyambhuvāgama. He says that the first mentioned Āgama professes to trace the origin of the Ācāryas to the five faces of Paramaśiva, and the other Āgama tells the origin of the Ācāryas to have risen out of the five Sthāvaraliṅgas as mentioned before. He states that the two Āgamas differ and contradict, unless the five Sthāvaraliṅgas represent the five faces of Śiva. He again states that he wants to find out from

the available data whether and how far this is the truth.

Professor Sakhare continues. The first and a very authoritative work in Sanskrit on Viraśaivism is *Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi*. This is the first book because it refers to Āgamas, and all other Sanskrit Viraśaiva books refer to it. It is to be pointed out to the readers, here, that Professor Sakhare demolishes everything in *Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi* except the part where Ṣaṭsthala is elaborately explained in 101 sthalas.

As the readers may very well know that *Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi* (9, 10) has been composed as a dialog between Śrī Rēṇuka, a Pramatha sent by Śiva to profess the Śiva-advaita lore on earth, and the well-known sage Agastya of the Vēdic period who has contributed to the Ṛgvēdic hymns. Śrī Rēṇuka is said to have arisen out of the Sthāvaraliṅga at Kollipāki. On page 235 of his book, Professor Sakhare states that the attempts of the author of *Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi* at making Rēṇuka or Rēvaṇasiddha or Rēvaṇārādhyā as the founder of the religion are quite ill-disguised and unsuccessful, because the Rēṇuka of the book is none other than the author himself.

The author of *Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi* is said to be Śivayōgi Śivācārya. Professor Sakhare attacks the author's identity as given, and tries to find when the author lived and composed the book. In the

first prefatory note in the beginning of the work, he continues, it is stated that the author belongs to the order of the Ācāryas of the name of Siddharāma who was born to his parents by the favor of Rēvaṇasiddha who, first known as Rēṇuka, taught the principles of Vīraśaivism to the pot-born sage Agastya after the Kali age etc. This information tallies with the Purāṇic account that Siddharāma of Sonnalige (modern Sholapur) was born to his parents by the blessing of Rēvaṇārādhya or Rēvaṇasiddha. Hence the Siddharāma referred to in the book as first in lineage is the Siddharāma of the Purāṇas. The great Śivayōgi Siddharāma of Sonnalige was the disciple of Allama Prabhu, and he went with Allama Prabhu to Basava-Kalyāṇa in order to interact with Basavaṇṇa and other Śaraṇas. So the author was the descendent of Siddharāma and therefore was of the post-Basava period. As the author was said to be fourth in the lineage, Professor Sakhare states that the author must have lived about the middle of the 13th century CE.

Professor Sakhare is now faced with the dilemma of how to explain the paradox. First he stated that the author of Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi was none other than Rēṇuka or Rēvaṇasiddha himself. Then he stated that Rēvaṇasiddha who was first named Rēvaṇa blessed the parents to whom Śivayōgi Siddharāma was born. But the author is said to be fourth in the lineage, the first being

Siddharāma. If that is the case, the Rēvaṇasiddha who blessed the parents of Siddharāma cannot be the author himself. Professor Sakhare blames the author for 'creating this absurdity', and states that Rēvaṇasiddha who blessed the parents of Siddharāma must be a person different from the Rēvaṇasiddha with whom the author identifies himself; this is exactly the position and cannot be anything else.

Professor Sakhare then gives this lineage. The elder Rēvaṇasiddha who blessed the parents of the great Śivayōgi Siddharāma was a senior contemporary of Basavaṇṇa. He had a son by name Rudramuni who had a disciple named Muktimuni. Muktimuni in turn had a disciple called Digambar Muktimuni who founded a Maṭha at Rambhāpuri. The Kannaḍa translation of Rambhāpuri is Balehalli which is the present Balehonnur. The Balehonnur Maṭha is the pontifical seat of Rēvaṇārādhyā. The founder Digambara Muktimuni named the Maṭha after Rēvaṇasiddha the father of Rudramuni, out of respect for him. But by the time that Śivayōgi came to succeed to the line of Siddharāmēśvara, this Maṭha must have attained the eminence and earned the reputation in the cause of the religion. Śivayōgi then must have thought fit to father the religion upon Rēvaṇasiddhēśvara after whom the Maṭha was named.

Professor Sakhare continues. Śivayōgi, in his eagerness to make the religion very ancient, has attempted to make Rēvaṇasiddha an avatāra (reincarnation) of Rēṇuka, and has taken him back to the times of Vibhīsaṇa (he was the younger brother of Rāvaṇa of Śrīlāṅka of the Rāmāyaṇa epic). But he has failed so badly in his attempts. Anyhow, the example furnished by Śivayōgi was imitated by his successors. They conveniently started the tradition of the remaining Ārādhyas also being the founders of religion, as their Maṭhas came to be founded in due course and attained reputation in the cause of the religion. This theory of five Ācāryas being the founders of the religion is a myth; it is not true. Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi is the only book in which Rēvaṇasiddha has been stated to have preached and promulgated the religion. In no other Sanskrit book he has been described as the founder of the religion. Also, there is no mention of the other four Ācāryas being the founders.

Professor Sakhare continues. Apart from the above historical information, there are two other considerations. One is that Kashmere Śivādvaita did not exist before 9th century CE, and Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita is based on the Kashmere Śivādvaita philosophy. The other is that there is no evidence of the existence of Aṣṭāvaraṇa, Ṣaṣṭhala, and Pañcācāra before the 12th century CE.

Professor Sakhare states that there are clear and unmistakable references to the Ātmavimarśa of Kashmere Śaivism in the Sanskrit treatises of Liṅgāyat religion (Śivādvaitadarpaṇa), and Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita is only the modified or improved name of Kashmere Śivādvaita; this establishes that Kashmere Śivādvaita is adopted as the basis of Liṅgāyat religion; Vāsugupta, the founder of Kashmere philosophy has been proven to have lived in the ninth century EC; therefore, Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita cannot be early and ancient. Professor Sakhare making such statements does not prove anything pertinent. Whether the Sanskrit Vīraśaiva treatises refer to Ātmavimarśa of Kashmere Śaivism or not is not in conflict. He stacks everything on it, and states that it is Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita and that it is the philosophy of Liṅgāyat. There is no proof to make such a claim; it is not acceptable. Further discussion of this issue is in the next chapter under Philosophy.

Then Professor Sakhare goes on to the second consideration. He states that the eight components of Aṣṭāvaraṇa existed before the 12th century CE, but not in the form in which they are meaningfully connected in the ritualism of Liṅgāyat religion. So also there is no evidence of Ṣaṣṭhala philosophy existing before the time of Basava. Hence, he says, it is conclusive that there was no Liṅgāyatism before the 12th century CE.

It is to be pointed out to the readers that Śūnya Saṃpādana itself in its fourth lesson entitled 'The Saṃpādana concerning the Grace bestowed by Basavaṇṇa upon Ānabasaṇṇa' (given on page 24 in Kannaḍa and page 25 in English in volume II of reference 11) states that Basavēśvara restored the practice of Vīraśaivism which had been tarnished by the six systems and six creeds. The six systems refer to six Dharśana systems; these are the six philosophical schools, namely, Sāṃkhya, Yōga, Nyāya, Vaiśēṣikhā, Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā, and Uttara-Mīmāṃsā. The six creeds are the six Tāntric creeds, namely, Śaiva, Śakta, Vaiṣṇava, Gāṇapatya, Soura, and Kāpālika. The readers very well know that Śūnya Saṃpādana is the main scripture of the Vīraśaivas. On the basis of this it is said that Vīraśaiva philosophy and practices existed prior to Basavaṇṇa's reformation of Vīraśaivism, and Vīraśaivism owes its present form to Basavaṇṇa.

Next, Professor Sakhare attacks the Āgamas, particularly the Uttara-bhāgas of the Śivāgamas. He states that much stress has been placed on the Āgamas that contain the doctrines of the Vīraśaivas; it is implied that the latter parts (Uttara-bhāgas) of the Āgamas contain the doctrines of Vīraśaivism. He states that 'we have already seen how the Āgamas have grown so bulky by continuous additions made to them even in the times after Basava'. Allama Prabhu, Basava, and Ānabasaṇṇa come to be referred in

them. Historically such additions are very late additions. *Anubhavasūtra* is an important small Sanskrit book written by Māyidēva who was an admirer of Basava. This book forms a part of Vātulōttarāgama as may be known from the colophons; Professor Sakhare here gives a list of 8 items in Sanskrit only, without any English translation, and states that this is a clear instance of late inserts we have found so far. Thus, he states, it is very unreasonable to believe on the authority of the Āgamas whose origin goes back to the time of the Āraṇyakas that all these existed then; hence the references to the Ācāryas in them are late additions, pure and simple.

It is to be pointed out to the readers that, sure there are post-Basava additions to the Uttarāgamas, but that does not necessarily mean that all the Vīraśaiva doctrines in them are the post-Basava additions. Professor Sakhare implies that the doctrines of the Vīraśaivas in the Uttara-bhāgas of the Śivāgamas are also later additions after the time of Basava. This has not been proven; most Vīraśaivas believe that these Vīraśaiva doctrines were composed in the 9th or 10th century CE. This is a controversial point. Whether the same thing applies to the Ācāryas in the Āgamas is not clear.

Then, Professor Sakhare praises the Ācāryas: 'We have every respect and all reverence for the Ācāryas. We adore, venerate, and worship them

in deep gratitude for what they have done to the Liṅgāyat religion and the Liṅgāyat world by propagating and stabilizing the religion. They chose important centers in India from which to do the work in service of the religion and the creed. Their work is admirable, their exertions are praiseworthy and they have made themselves immortal, not by founding the religion, but by propagating and stabilizing it'.

After that, Professor Sakhare takes the Ācāryas one by one and tries to establish that they are not the founders of the religion. He then states that the so called Vīraśaiva Ācāryas are not the originators of the faith, because, some of them are found to be contemporaries of Basava, and others even later than Basava. Basava and his colleagues do not mention the Ācāryas in their vaçana literature. If the Ācāryas had founded the religion before Basava, surely the Ācāryas would have been mentioned there with reverence. Hence the Ācāryas were not the originators of the Vīraśaiva faith. Who then is the founder of the faith? Our emphatic answer is Basavēśvara. He says.

Professor Sakhare on page 273 makes this terse statement: "there is nowhere any mention of Basava having got Liṅgadīkṣā from anybody. He himself was responsible for his Liṅgadīkṣā. This is another way of saying that he and he alone started Liṅgadīkṣā on the cult of the Iṣṭaliṅga."

It is unfortunate that Professor Sakhare makes such dogmatic and derogatory statement. The term 'cult' means a religious veneration, but more commonly it means a religious group of people showing faddish devotion with exaggerated zeal or craze; the term cult is usually considered as derogatory. Furthermore, Professor Sakhare is using this term for Liṅgāyatas whom he says belong to a distinct religion. Why he makes such a statement is not clear.

Although the part of his statement saying 'cult of the Iṣṭaliṅga' is somewhat derogatory, another point is to be made here. Professor Sakhare states that there is nowhere any mention of Basava having got Liṅgadīkṣā from anybody. This is not correct. The referenced Śūnya Saṃpādana (11), on page 4 of volume II, states as follows: 'Accounts differ regarding the time and the place of the initiation of Basavaṇṇa. According to Siṅgirāja (Siṅgirāja Purāṇa chapter V.54-61, pp. 67-68) it was performed by Jātavēdamuni at Bāgēvāḍi soon after the birth of Basavaṇṇa. Bhīmakavi (Basava Purāṇa Ch. III.24-29, pp. 40-41) agrees with Siṅgirāja regarding the time and place of the ceremony, but says that it was Saṅgamēśvara Himself who performed the rite. It is not clear why Professor Sakhare states that there is nowhere any mention of Basava having the initiation procedure. He refers to Siṅgirāja Purāṇa and Basava Purāṇa in his book, and it is

mentioned there. But why does he make such a false claim? It is unscholarly of him to do so.

Next, Professor Sakhare goes over a long list of reasons why he thinks that Basava is the founder of the religion. He states that *Śivānubhavamaṅṭapa*, the glorious institution of Basava and his colleagues was the birth place and the cradle of Vīraśaivism. It was a religious institution originated by Basava and presided over by Allama Prabhu, a tremendously great spiritual personage.

After all this critical analysis he comes to the following conclusion: *Basava was the originator of the Vīraśaiva faith in the 12th century CE. The first Vīraśaiva Pontific Throne was that of Allama Prabhu. It was known as Śūnyasimhāsana; it was in Basava Kalyāṇa. The five pontifical thrones of the above mentioned five Ācāryas were established at a later date (post-Basava) to propagate the Vīraśaiva faith and to protect it against aggressors.*

It may be appropriate to point out that more recent information about the Evolution of Vīraśaiva concepts is available in a book format referenced here (12). The interested readers may refer to it.

Philosophy and Practice of Liṅgāyat Religion

The twelfth chapter with the above title is the longest chapter; it has 144 pages of text. Professor Sakhare, rightfully, opens the chapter stating that giving the philosophy and practice of the Liṅgāyat religion is the most difficult task indeed. He also says *"It is certain that we shall not be able to do justice to the subject. We profess our incompetence and inability to set forth the doctrines of the religion fully and properly, though we shall try to perform the task to the best of our ability, now that it has fallen to our lot"*. It appears that when he states 'we' in the passage, it probably refers to just him alone. Also it seems that he is very humble in respect for the enormity of the task ahead of him. That is very nice of him. However, as can be seen from the following discussion, what he says above, that it is certain that he shall not be able to do justice to the subject, and that he professes his incompetence and inability to set forth the Vīraśaiva/Liṅgāyata doctrines fully and properly, will become evident to the readers.

Professor Sakhare defines 'religion' as follows: 'A religion may be defined as a system of belief in the Superhuman Power, which governs the course of the universe and the human life in it, and is entitled to some form of worship from the

human beings for their attaining of eternal happiness’.

It is to be pointed out to the readers that ‘religion’ is difficult to define. It is said that a religion refers to a set of variously organized beliefs about the relationship between natural and supernatural aspects of reality, and about the role of humans in this relationship (Wikipedia.org).

The religion, Professor Sakhare says, has two parts, namely, philosophy and practice. Philosophy is the belief system concerning the relation of the universe and the individual to the Higher Power; it connotes a doctrine that explains all this along with the code of conduct for the practitioners of that religion. Practice of the religion is based on the philosophy of that religion; it is to attain the highest goal as ordained in that philosophical doctrine.

Professor Sakhare then states ‘The Liṅgāyat religion has both parts in it, distinct to itself, and can, therefore, claim to be a distinct religion’. The question then arises as to whether the philosophy and practice of Liṅgāyatas is distinct enough to consider it as a separate religion. This question is further considered later on in this book in the fourteenth chapter entitled ‘The Status of Liṅgāyat Religion’.

Philosophy

Right at the outset, Professor Sakhare states that the following sketch of philosophy is based chiefly on the Kashmere Śaiva literature, the Sanskrit books, namely, Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi, Śivādvaitamañjarī and Śivādvaitadarpaṇa, and the commentary on the book Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi by Maritoṇṭadārya. As has been pointed out to the readers before, he makes this following statement on page xii under 'Argument': "*Though I am positively of the opinion that Vaċana Śāstra 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 centers round a Sanskrit work*". Again on page 435 of this book under 'Liṅgāyat religious literature and scriptures' he states, after some discussion, '*...Thus the Vaċanaśāstra of Basava and the Saints or Śaraṇas is the basic scripture...*' The readers, therefore, should note that the philosophy discussed here by Professor Sakhare is not from the basic scripture of the Vīraśaivas.

Then Professor Sakhare starts with a statement 'The philosophy of Liṅgāyat religion is monism and is called Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita'. On the first part of that statement where he states that the Liṅgāyat philosophy is monism, there is no dispute. Monism philosophy is the oneness philosophy where everything is just one and there

is no other; it is non-dualism called advaitism. Monism is the philosophy of the Viraśaivas, and there is no problem with that part of the statement. The disagreement is on the second part which states that this monism or advaitism is of the nature of Śakti-viśiṣṭa. The discussion mainly centers on this part of the statement.

Professor Sakhare states that this (controversial) term Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita has been adopted from and improved upon Kashmere Śivādvaitism. He then discusses **Kashmere Śivādvaita Philosophy**, some of which is as follows.

The only three attributes of Parabrahman, according to Vēdānta, are 'sat' meaning being or eternal existence, 'cīt' meaning knowledge or consciousness or awareness, and 'ānanda' meaning infinite bliss. There are no other attributes; anything that is brought up is dismissed as not this, not this, not this. These three attributes of Parabrahman are the qualities of Paraśiva expressed in terms of Śiva's Self-consciousness as *asmi*, *prakāśē*, and *nandāmi*, meaning being, shining, and enjoying independently of anything else.

Śiva is the supreme entity. Śiva is the all-knowing, all-doing, all-sustaining, all-pervading, the serene, indivisible and infinite. Śiva as the underlying Reality in everything is all transcending. Śiva's nature is primarily of twofold

aspect – an immanent aspect in which Śiva pervades the universe, and a transcendental aspect in which Śiva is beyond all universal manifestations. Śiva is the origin and source of the universe and is Parabrahman.

Paraśiva's consciousness of self-luminosity (*Prakāśa*) is also called *Āitanya*, or simply *ĉit*. This Prakāśa is said to be the most distinctive aspect of Śiva. Another term '*Vimarśa*' is used here to mean the power that may be called consciousness that results in will, knowledge, and action (*iĉĉha, jñāna, and kriyā*). The creation of the universe is said to be nothing but the ideal projection or manifestation within the Self by Śiva's Prakāśa-Vimarśa. This power of Śiva is Śakti. The gender of the Sanskrit word Śiva is male, and that of Śakti is female; but neither Śiva nor Śakti is male, female or neuter; they may be addressed as He, She or It.

Śakti is part and parcel of Śiva. It is one and the same, but the idea of separateness exists in human mind only. On page 280, Professor Sakhare states "*It is clear from this that Śiva and Śakti is one indivisible whole. The Liᅅgāyat philosophers give a special name 'Sāmarasya' to the intimate union. Sāmarasya means essentially one.*"

Then on page 281, Professor Sakhare states "The philosophy of Liᅅgāyatism is the same as the

Kashmere Śivādvaita philosophy. But Kashmere philosophers have not given any specific name to their Advaitism, but the Liṅgāyats call it 'Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita' to give prominence to the wonder-working power of Śiva... Hence Śiva characterized and distinguished (viśiṣṭa) by His power or capacity to work, which is only a phase of His prakāśa in the form of vimarśa. This is Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita. The Kashmere philosophers imply Śaktiviśiṣṭatva of Śiva but do not express it in so many words. While the Liṅgāyatas express it by naming their advaita 'Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita'. This is the first point of difference between the two schools, which is only a difference in terminology and also an improvement in Liṅgāyat philosophy".

The readers have to analyze what Professor Sakhare states above.

First of all, he states that there is no difference between the two philosophies. He solidifies the oneness philosophy of Liṅgāyatas by stating that Liṅgāyatas use the term 'sāmarasya' which means, as he says, 'essential identity'. There is no stressing of 'Sakti' in preference to 'Śiva' anywhere.

Second, he states that Kashmere philosophers have not given any special name to their Advaitism. But the Kashmere Śaiva philosophy has always been called 'Śiva-advaita' philosophy - that is a type of Advaitism, different from the

Advaitism of Śaṅkarācārya which is referred to, as Professor Sakhare uses the term, as 'Kēvalādvaita' which means simple-advaita or mere-advaita or pure-advaita, and by default is simply called as 'Advaitism'. Śaṅkarācārya's Advaitism is not called Śivādvaitism.

Third, he states that "Liṅgāyatas" have given the special name Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita to their philosophy. Here, when he says "Liṅgāyatas", it is not clear whom he calls Liṅgāyatas. According to Professor Sakhare himself, the basic scripture of Liṅgāyatas is the Vaċanaśāstra of Basava and the Śaraṇas. As the readers very well know, the vaċana literature is very extensive. **Śūnya Saṃpādana** (11) has put together 1,543 of these vaċanas in the proper scripture form, and it serves as the main scripture of the Vīraśaivas/Liṅgāyatas. The Śūnya Saṃpādana states that the philosophy of Vīraśaivas/Liṅgāyatas is Śiva-advaita philosophy (Śivādvaitism). The term 'Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita' does not appear anywhere in it. Śakti is mentioned in passing in the Śūnya Saṃpādana; there is not much there about Śakti's prominence. Even under creation given in Kannaḍa (on page 48 in volume I of reference 11), it states '*...niṣkalaliṅga...tanna ċitprabhāsāmarthyāśaktiya muṇḍuḅu...*' The same passage is translated into English on page 53 as "*...Niṣkala Liṅga...by an impulse of His own spontaneous play and sport, putting forth the power of the glow of His consciousness, created*

within Himself an infinity of macrocosms and myriad of microcosms..." It does not emphasize Śakti or Śiva there at all; it specifies Niṣkala Liṅga as the creator without the Śiva-Śakti divide; Śakti is Śiva, it is His consciousness. Not only that Śakti is not emphasized, the emphasis shifts from Śiva to Liṅga. Furthermore, the word Śakti comes in the five volume books of Śūnya Saṁpādana (11), according to the index pages at the end of the books, only 12 times. In comparison the word Śiva comes there more than 115 times, and the word Liṅga comes there more than 584 times. The basic scripture of the Liṅgāyatas states that the advaita philosophy of Liṅgāyatas is the 'Śivādvaita' philosophy. Therefore, it does not make any sense when Professor Sakhare states that "Liṅgāyatas" have given the name Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita for their philosophy – it is wrong to say that. If he had stated that 'he thinks it is so', then it would have been a separate issue – that would have been his opinion – one should respect other's opinion whether one agrees with it or not.

Next, Professor Sakhare states that another reason why Sāmarasya (harmonious blending or essentially one) is emphasized is that Liṅgāyat philosophers like the Kashmereans do not agree with and approve of 'Kēvalādvaita' of Śaṅkarācārya, the preacher of māyāvāda, the theory of illusion. Like the Kashmere philosophers, the Liṅgāyats hold that the creation

is real and not an illusion. The readers very well know that this real creation is projected or manifested within the consciousness of Śiva, and is not a separate part. Furthermore, Śaṅkarācārya's advaita philosophy is simply referred to as 'The Advaitism', not Śivādvaitism. There is no doubt that the Kashmereans' and the Liṅgāyatas' advaitism is different from that of Śaṅkarācārya's.

Then Professor Sakhare states that 'the māyāvāda of Śaṅkarācārya is demolished and Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita established by Maritoṅṭadārya in his commentary on verse 39 of chapter V of Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi'. He gives this Sanskrit verse in Dēvanāgarī script only. This verse 39 as translated into English in reference (10) is as follows: "*Śakti of the nature of three guṇas and who is ancient, adheres in the Brahman. It is by the disparity (of the guṇas) in her that the threefold distinction arose in it (Brahman)*". Professor Sakhare then gives only part of Maritoṅṭadārya's commentary in Sanskrit (Dēvanāgarī), and does not give translation into English. This is one of his main faults. If he really wanted the readers to know what exactly the commentary states, he should have translated it into English, and point out where it says so.

It is to be pointed out to the readers that over and over again Professor Sakhare gives only Sanskrit/Dēvanāgarī texts without translating

these texts into English. He wrote his original book for the purpose of translating the Sanskrit *Liṅgadhāraṇaĉandrikā* into English, and this Karnatak University book is part of the introduction in that book. If his main purpose in the book was to translate Sanskrit texts into English, then why is he not translating these important Sanskrit texts also into English? Does he have something to hide?

Before coming to Maritoṅṭadārya's commentary, it is to be pointed out that **Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi**, composed in Sanskrit, is considered to be one of the main scriptures of Vīraśaivas, and that Professor Sakhare states that he uses this book as one of the references to sketch this philosophy. *Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi* specifically states that the Philosophy of the Vīraśaivas is 'Śiva-advita' philosophy (Śivādvaitism). The term Śivādvaita comes numerous times in it, and there is no mention of Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita anywhere in it. The following two passages from *Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi* are notable (10).

In the verse 86 of chapter III, it is said that Śiva directly commands Rēṇuka as follows:

"You shall establish on earth the Śivādvaita lore, which will be in accordance with Vēda and Vēdānta and which is beneficial to all."

Then in the two verses 15 and 16 of chapter V, the definition of Vīraśaiva is given:

"It is because of the special experience of bliss in the knowledge in the form of Śiva that these great souls are called Vīraśaiva".

The term 'vi' stands for 'Vidyā' (knowledge) which teaches the identity of Śiva and Jīva. Those devotees of Śiva who take delight in that are called Vīraśaiva".

The readers should note, that the above passages, not only state that the philosophy of Vīraśaivas is Śivādvaita philosophy, but also assert that **this Śivādvaita philosophy is in accordance with Vēda and Vēdānta**. It is unfortunate that Professor Sakhare does not mention any such things.

Then as to the commentary, on the verse 39 of chapter V of Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi, by **Maritoṇṭadārya** of the 17th century CE, it is to be noted that this particular part of the commentary from reference (10) is about 4 pages in Sanskrit, and its English translation is about 7 pages. A brief but the main part of it is given here.

The commentary starts with the word "*Brahmaṇiṣṭhā*" which is translated into English to mean "Vimarśaśakti is inherent in Paraśivabrahman". Then the commentary continues. '*Samyōgā*' which means 'conjugation between those that stay apart in different places' is not possible here because, there is no place outside Brahman (everything is one).

Vimarśaśakti resides in Śiva (Paraśivabrahman) in a relation of identity which is of the nature of perfect harmony (sāmarasya). 'Sanātani' (literal meaning is 'the ancient one') is used here to mean 'eternal Śakti', the natural Vimarśaśakti who is of the nature of harmony between knowledge and action. Such a Śakti exists in Śiva; otherwise, although Brahman is of the nature of luster (self-luminous), it would be without the knowledge of its own nature. Śiva's natural supreme Śakti is heard to be of many forms as Jñānaśakti, Balaśakti (Icchāśakti), and Kriyāśakti, but not yet expressed. Because 'Ātman' and 'Ānanda' are absolute, they are free from disturbance. Śaktis are prone to disturbance due to their being related to objects. Hence, Vimarśaśakti has the manifestation of unity and diversity, and contains within self the entire universe of the movable and the immovable clasped in a relation of identity. This according to the maxim pertaining to '*mayūrāṅḍarasanyāya*' which means an argument that liquid contained in the egg having the subtle form of the prospective peacock. This Vimarśaśakti remains self-abiding as long as it is in a state of non-cognizance of division, but assumes a form consisting of three guṇas in its state of cognizance of division.

In a portion of the Vimarśaśakti, the part of action is free from the capacity to know, and the part of knowledge is free from the capacity to do. From the part of knowledge arises Vidyāśakti

which is of the nature of 'sattva-guṇa'; from the part of action arises the power of 'rajōguṇa'. There is an essential unity between knowledge and action, yet by virtue of cognizance of division, there arises a notion of mutual negation; this notion itself is 'tamōguṇa'. This Vimarśaśakti assumes a form consisting of three guṇas - sattvagūṇa, rajōgūṇa, and tamasōgūṇa. Then the disturbance of evenness among the three guṇas results in the formation of name, form, and action pertaining to three aspects – the enjoyed, the enjoyer, and the impeller – within Paramaśiva who is of the nature of pure consciousness. Thus, by way of re-flashing, the Vimarśaśakti assumes the form of Māyāśakti. It is through Māyāśakti that there is this accomplishment. This is the '*Parinā mavādā*', the argument that the world is a real manifestation of Brahman. The One who is of the nature of pure consciousness, reveals, out of its own will, the entire world of objects which is hidden within itself and without any external material. This is in accordance with 'What is non-existent cannot come into being'. **All this is accomplished through the will of Śiva.**

If the beginning is made with the reason that it is due to relation with beginning-less '*Avidyā*' (non-knowledge or ignorance), then Avidyāśakti would have to be associated with Brahman in an indescribable relation, which would be considered as co-existence with Brahman. Here, the beginning-less Avidyāśakti which is made up of

three guṇas would be considered as the nature of superimposition on Brahman (*Adhyāsa*). Then due to the disturbance of balance among the guṇas, there is designation of three aspects in Brahman – the enjoyed, the enjoyer, and the impeller. Thus, Avidyāśakti would be considered as the material cause of the world on her assumption freely of a form consisting of parts in her aspect as Māyāśakti, as she is endowed with a capacity to accomplish what is impossible. In this case, Avidyāśakti is of the nature of defect and would render Brahman defective if the latter would be its substratum. If the world is regarded as a real object, then there would be no release from bondage, what is existent can never be negated. It is not tenable, because, consciousness being uniform at both the extremes of beginning and end, it does not perform any action.

If an observer sees a shiny piece of conch-shell appearing as silver, there is an association with silver; the observer must have had seen silver before. Here, there is superimposition of shiny piece of conch-shell on silver. In the same way in the case of Brahman on which Avidyāśakti appears, there is an association, hence the defect. It is like the acceptance of Avidyāśakti as a mirror outside Brahman which is the object of reflection. That is not possible, because, there is no space outside Brahman, and existence of

Avidyāśakti as a mirror outside Brahman is not acceptable.

In Brahman who is 'nirguṇa' (without any guṇas or attributes), there cannot be Avidyā; consciousness is without association. In order to avoid the contingency of the absence of consciousness in the case of Parabrahman, Vimarśaśakti has been accepted in it as its very nature.

Further, it cannot be asked as to what is the authority for the existence of Brahman, because there is no authority apart from Brahman, and as such, it cannot be argued that Brahman is to be regarded as non-existent. This is because, Brahman is self-luminous by nature, and is always consciously felt through self-experience as 'I am Brahman'.

It is to be noted that, in this commentary, Maritoṇṭadārya does not mention, by name, either Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita or the māyāvāda of Śaṅkarācārya. However it is fairly clear that in the third and the fourth paragraphs of the above six-paragraph commentary, Maritoṇṭadārya is discussing Śaṅkarācārya's philosophy, and saying that it is defective and not acceptable. These two paragraphs also refute the Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita philosophy by showing that there is no separate entity such as Śakti that is outside Śiva. It is

inherent in Śiva; it is the nature of Śiva; it is in relation of identity with Śiva; it is not a superimposition on Śiva; it is not a co-existence; everything is one.

The explanation of Vimarśaśakti in the first two paragraphs of the commentary seems to be what Professor Sakhare is referring to when he states that Maritoṅṭadārya's explanation is Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita philosophy. It is hardly so. It is to be noted that Maritoṅṭadārya does not even use the term 'Śaktiviśiṣṭa' or the term 'Śaktiviśiṣṭatva of Śiva' when he is explaining the verse 39 in chapter five of Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi. Even if it is the explanation of the 'Śaktiviśiṣṭatva of Śiva', which would not be a problem to accept, it is just that explanation. It is just the explanation of one verse out of about 1,396 verses of Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi. It is to be taken into the context of the whole text of Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi and the whole commentary of Maritoṅṭadārya, both of which emphatically state that the philosophy is the Śivādvaita philosophy, and do not even mention Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita anywhere.

However, Professor Sakhare rightfully points out one problem with the use of the term "*mayūrāṅḍarasanyāya*" for explanation purposes in Maritoṅṭadārya's commentary. It is an argument that the liquid contained in the egg holds the subtle hidden form of the prospective

peacock with all its colored feathers and such. The liquid content of the egg is a material or a substance, and it is used there as a comparison to Vimarśaśakti; and that liquid substance is said to have the prospective peacock which is compared to the manifestation of the whole world. This is not tenable, because, Vimarśaśakti is not a material, it is the power of Śiva, and it just represents the un-manifested condition of the universe within Śiva. **There is no material content in Paraśiva. The Vimarśa or the un-manifest universe in Śiva's consciousness should not be emphasized.** Professor Sakhare states *'The illustration, therefore, is not to be stretched too far. Otherwise the philosophy would be the philosophy of the Rāmānuja's School of Viśiṣṭādvaita, if the un-manifest universe were to mean the subtle material condition'*. Professor Sakhare's point, that there is no material content in Paraśiva, and that the Vimarśa or the un-manifest universe in Śiva's consciousness should not be emphasized, is well taken. But emphasizing Śakti and Viśiṣṭa in the Śaktiviśiṣṭatva of Śiva as in Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita would be confusing and misleading, and it is not acceptable.

On further review of Maritoṇṭadārya's entire commentary on Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi, as in reference number 10, it could be said that Maritoṇṭadārya propounds the Vīraśaiva philosophy to be the Śivādvaita philosophy as it is

in Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi, and nowhere does he state that the philosophy of Viraśaivas is Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita philosophy. However, in the translated part of his commentary, the term 'Śaktiviśiṣṭa' comes about two times as given below.

In the first instance it is in the translated part of the commentary on the verse I.6 which is an obeisance to Śiva. The verse itself is as follows: *"Obeisance to Śambhu along with his inherent Ambā, who assumes many forms according to his free will, who acts according to his free will, and who created the three worlds according to his free will"*. Maritoṅṭadārya's commentary translated into English is as follows: 'Paraśiva assumes divine auspicious forms according to his free will in order to favor his devotees. He moves freely according to his sweet will. He has created the three worlds by his own *Icchāsakti*. He is the Lord of Pārvati (that is, he is always Śaktiviśiṣṭa). Obeisance is offered to such Paraśiva'. Please note that the Sanskrit commentary does not have the word 'Śaktiviśiṣṭa' in it, and that Maritoṅṭadārya asserts that Paraśiva creates these things.

The second instance is in the translated part of the commentary for the verse XI.22 which is about the Guru. The verse is as follows: *"One should not speak of the Guru, who is the teacher giving knowledge, who is pure and who stands as*

Śiva incarnate, as equal to others (ordinary persons) on the basis of the similarity of hands, feet and such". Maritoṅṭadārya's commentary as translated into English is as follows: 'One should not speak of the Guru, who is pure in the sense that his internal senses are pure, who is the revealer of the knowledge of Śiva and who stands in the form of Uma and Mahēśvara (Śaktiviśiṣṭa-Śiva), as equal to ordinary persons on the similarity of hands, feet, and such'. Again please note that Maritoṅṭadārya's Sanskrit commentary does not have the word 'Śaktiviśiṣṭa' in it.

As can be seen from the above, both Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi and Maritoṅṭadārya's commentary on Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi do not say anything about Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita, but they emphasize that the philosophy of Vīraśaivas is Śivādvaita philosophy.

Next, Professor Sakhare states that both Sanskrit works, **Śivādvaitadarpaṇa** and **Śivādvaitamañjarī**, refute māyāvāda of Śaṅkarācārya. There is no dispute that Liṅgāyat philosophy is not māyāvāda of Śaṅkarācārya. The question is whether these two Sanskrit works propose Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita philosophy. It appears that they do not. If they had, Professor Sakhare would have definitely seized on it and stated so. Furthermore, as the title itself has the term Śivādvaita in both these works, it can definitely be said that they propound Śivādvaita philosophy as the philosophy of Liṅgāyatas.

Then, on page 421 of his book, under the title 'The author of **Liṅgadhāraṇaĉandrikā** and his work', Professor Sakhare states that 'it is only from the colophons of various manuscripts that some meagre information can be obtained'; and then calls the author Nandikēśvara '*a bigoted Śaiva and a Vīraśaiva*'. He then states the following: "*One remarkable thing to be noticed is that he never names the Advaita philosophy of Liṅgāyatas as Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita but only as Viśiṣṭādvaita. In this respect he seems to be a follower of Nīlakaṇṭhaśivācārya, who himself is the follower of Śrīkaṇṭha, a noted commentator of Brahmasūtra*".

As can be seen from the above six works referred to by Professor Sakhare, namely, Vaĉana Śāstras (Śūnya Saṃpādane), Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi, Maritoṇṭadārya's commentary on Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi, Śivādvaitadarpaṇa, Śivādvaitamañjarī, and Liṅgadhāraṇaĉandrikā, there is no mentioning of Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita as the philosophy of Liṅgāyatas. The philosophy mentioned there is the Śivādvaita philosophy.

Then, on page 285, Professor Sakhare states that 'so far there is perfect agreement between the schools of Kashmere and the Liṅgāyatas'. Then he states that the difference lies in the explanation of the sixth principle (tattva) māyā.

In the Kashmere School māyā, as a mode of svatantraśakti, causes phenomenal diversities. But the Liṅgāyats differ in their philosophical explanation of māyā. Supreme Śakti is nothing but the very self of māyā. Professor Sakhare gives two half verses as reference from Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi I.9 and II.2, in Sanskrit script only. These two verses are taken from obeisance to Śiva; English translation from reference (10) is as follows.

Obeisance to Paramaśakti (Supreme Śakti) by whom the Mahēśvara becomes associated with name and form and who is of the nature of Māyā. (I.9)

Obeisance to Mahēśvara's Śakti, who is the pearl-oyster for the pearls in the form of all principles (tattvas) starting from Sadāśiva and who is of the nature of Māyāśakti. (II.2)

Then Professor Sakhare says that this Supreme Śakti is higher Māyā, and that the lower Māyā is explained by Maritoṅṭadārya in his commentary on the verse 39 of chapter V of Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi (it is given above). Then he states that evolution of the 36 principles (tattvas) as given in Śivādvaitamañjarī is ideal or psychological. Then on page 290, he states that Liṅgāyat philosophy of Māyā is an improvement on the Kashmerean theory. Further, he says, Liṅgāyatas differ widely from the Kashmereans when it comes to the evolution of the relationship between the worshipper and the worshipped. Then Professor Sakhare gives only the Liṅgāyat version, and that

too, as he states, based on Śivādvaitadarpaṇa, Śivādvaitamañjarī, and Anubhavasūtra. It is briefly described below.

Sthala, Liṅga and Aṅga are very special and technical in the Liṅgāyat theology. Sthala which ordinarily means place, means here, the ultimate substratum, or the abode of the universe. Sthala is, not only the source and the abode of the universe, but also the place into which the universe loses itself at the time of dissolution (pralaya). Thus, Sthala means the ultimate itself which is the Brahman or Paraśiva. And as expressed in Śivādvaitamañjarī, this ultimate sthala is called Dhanaliṅga. This Dhanaliṅga, out of compassion for the Jīvas (souls) entangled with the world and the subjected to all sorts of miseries and affections of the worldly life, becomes the divinity to be worshipped – ‘The Liṅga’. Līlā (sport) of Paraśiva is activated, and the vibratory motion of Perfect Egoity results in the Liṅga to be worshipped and the Aṅga the worshipper. After division, the Liṅga is as complete/infinite (*pūrṇa*) as before. Liṅga is the highest Reality capable of being realized through devotional worship and meditation. Aṅga is a Jīva (soul) devoted to the worship of Liṅga. Any individual soul cannot be an Aṅga; only when Jīva becomes a worshipper of Liṅga, then it becomes an Aṅga.

Then **worship** and **Bhakti** are explained. Bhakti in general means devotion. Feeling of devotion is always there in Aṅga. But the devotional feeling or mental attitude of devotion has to be associated with devotional activity either physical or mental. The activity, physical or mental, expressed by devotion (Bhakti) is worship. Then it is said that Bhakti is not just feeling of devotion, it is the worship of devotion.

Even though Bhakti is considered to be the modification of Śiva's Śakti, Bhakti is said to be superior to Śakti. This is because, Śakti has the tendency towards creation and worldly life where as Bhakti has the tendency towards unification. Śakti operates towards evolution or manifestation of the universe, but Bhakti operates in a reverse order towards dissolution and unification. Śakti veils (masks) the true nature of Śiva, but Bhakti attempts to remove the veil. Thus, the emphasis should be on Bhakti, not on Śakti. Accordingly, Vīraśaivas/Liṅgāyatas emphasize Bhakti only. This is another reason not to use the term Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita.

Then six-fold modifications of Liṅga as well as that of Aṅga are given. Liṅga becomes three first, namely, Bhāvaliṅga, Prāṇaliṅga, and Iṣṭaliṅga. Bhāvaliṅga then becomes twofold, namely, Mahāliṅga and Prasādaliṅga; Prāṇaliṅga becomes

Āralinga and Śivalinga; Iṣṭalinga becomes Gurulinga and AĀralinga. Similarly, Aṅga becomes three first, namely, Yōgāṅga, Bhōgāṅga, and Tyāgāṅga. Then Yōgāṅga becomes Aikya and Śaraṇa; Bhōgāṅga becomes Prāṇalingī and Prasādī; Tyāgāṅga becomes Māhēśvara and Bhakta. Six Liṅgas and six Aṅgas are related and are Ṣaṣṭhala. The six Liṅgas are located in the body of Aṅga, and Aṅga attains sāmarasya through the sthalas of Ṣaṣṭhala. Then it is said that Paraśiva, the Parabrahman, is theologically Dhanalinga, and that Dhanalinga, Liṅga, Bhāvalinga and Mahālinga are one and the same.

Professor Sakhare then states that creation of the phenomenal world is expressed and explained through principles (tattvas) similar to the 36 principles of the Śaiva Schools. But, he states, there is a difference in terminology due to the special stand-point taken by the Liṅgāyat philosophers.

First there is Transcendent Paraśiva of the nature of Bliss itself. So long as Paraśiva is the transcending Reality, Bliss and Intelligence as well as the one all-inclusive Supreme experience of the Perfect, there is no need of a universal manifestation. This is Dhanalinga, and technically it is also Mahālinga.

The first manifestation is the manifestation of pure 'I', and there is no cognizance of 'am'. This

Śivatattva of Śaivas is Prasādaliṅga of the Liṅgāyatas.

The second manifestation is the cognizance of 'I am'. This Śaktitattva of Śaivas is Āraliṅga of Liṅgāyatas.

The third manifestation is the predominance of the will as 'I am this'. This Sadśivatattva of Śaivas is Śivaliṅga of the Liṅgāyatas.

The fourth manifestation is marked by the rise into prominence of 'This' in 'This I am'. The power of knowledge predominates in it. This Īśvaratattva of Śaivas is Guruliṅga of Liṅgāyatas.

The fifth manifestation is marked by the predominance of the power of action where a balance is reached without any stressing of either the subjective or the objective element, as expressed simply in 'I am this'. The universe is brought into existence. This Vidyātattva or the Sadvidyātattva of Śaivas is the Ācāraliṅga of Liṅgāyatas. **Here, it is said that, Liṅga puts the devotional activity into Aṅga, so that Aṅga will have the capacity to attain oneness with Liṅga (Liṅgāṅga sāmāsyā).**

The body of Aṅga is a miniature universe, being composed of the same five elements, namely, earth, water, fire, air, and sky. The presence of the Universal Self in the body is indicated by the

six localities it occupies in the human body, and its activity exhibited in the five organs of knowledge and the five organs of action. Here, Professor Sakhare states that the philosophy of Brahman being in control of the sense organs is maintained by the Vēdānta, and he quotes several Sanskrit verses of Kēnōpaniṣad. [This is, of course, a pleasant surprise that he connects the philosophies of Vēdānta and Liṅgāyatas. The readers may very well know that the most important philosophical concepts of Viraśaivas are derived from Ṛgvēda, Yajurveda and the Upaniṣads. The readers may want to refer to reference (12) for details.]

The six Liṅgas are in the body of Aṅga; they occupy the six specific regions of the body. The six regions are the six cākras (vortexes or centers of pooled energy), which, the Professor says, are connected to nerve centers or plexuses, particularly the autonomic nerve centers. The workings of the six Liṅgas and six cākras in Aṅga, their interaction, and mutual action and reaction, are in the practice of Ṣaṣṭhala.

Then, Professor Sakhare states on page 311, that the devotee gradually develops spiritual power and attains union with Universal Consciousness in the third ventricle in the cerebrum through the nerves of Optic Thalamus connected with Ājñācakra; The Ājñācakra is said to be the final and sixth stage for the union of Śiva descending

from above, and Jīvā ascending from below. It is to be pointed out here that it would have been better, if Professor Sakhare had simply mentioned that the union occurs in the Ājñācakra which is thought to be located in the middle of the brain, instead of using the anatomical structures of the brain. It is well established in the spiritual literature that the Ājñācakra is in the middle of the brain at the level of the middle of the forehead where the third eye of Śiva is positioned. This Ājñācakra has been visualized to be there by the ancient Ṛṣis (seers) during their yogic meditation. The Ājñācakra and the other cākras are not anatomical structures in the body, but they are often compared to them. This comparison to anatomical structures invariably leads to wrong matching. Professor Sakhare states that the Ājñācakra is in the third ventricle of the cerebrum. This ventricle is a cavity filled with fluid in the brain and has no neural tissue (no neurons). The Ājñā center is said to be the place where mental telepathy occurs – this cannot occur if there are no neurons (neural tissue) there.

Another thing Professor Sakhare says is that the cākras are in the nerve centers or plexuses, specifically in the autonomic nervous system, and then gives diagrams of these autonomic nerve plexuses. This type of comparison is not applicable to the spiritual visualization. He continues with such comparisons which are

confusing and misleading. He speculates about the close connections between the organs of knowledge and action and connection with qualities of the elements. In this regard he talks about the touch sensors in the skin, the Pacinon bodies and the tactile corpuscles of Meisner, the special nerve connections between the eyes and the toes, and such. This is going out of his way in order to try to explain these things; it is inappropriate, not spiritual, and not acceptable.

Anyway, it is said that Liṅgāyatas start with Liṅga and end with Liṅga, and therefore, they are Liṅgāyatas, not merely because they wear Iṣṭaliṅga on their bodies.

In the above discussion, Professor Sakhare points out that there is some difference between the Kashmere and Liṅgāyata philosophies. If that is the case, then, there may be a reason to use different terminologies for the two philosophies. Kashmere Śaiva philosophy has been called the Śivādvaita philosophy. Therefore, the Vīraśaiva/Liṅgāyata philosophy may need to be called something else. From the above discussion, it seems clear that it definitely cannot be the Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita philosophy. The Advaita Philosophy of Vīraśaivas/Liṅgāyatas, can be simply called Vīra-advaitism (Vīrādvaitism) or Liṅga-advaitism (Liṅgādvaitism). Because Professor Sakhare insists on using the term Liṅgāyatism instead of the term Vīraśaivism, may

be the term Liṅgādvaitism (Liṅgādvaita Philosophy) is more appropriate.

Practice

The practice of a religion is based on the Philosophy of that religion. In Vīraśaivism, it is believed that the practice takes the individual souls back to the original source in the reverse order of creation and evolution of the individual. Professor Sakhare states that the practice of the Liṅgāyat religion is expressed very well by the definition of the word 'Vīraśaiva' given in various treatises of the religion. The '*Dharmācāraṇa*' is stated in the definition of Vīraśaiva; it means acceptance/adoption and practice of the dharma (religious duties) of the Vīraśaivas. He, then, briefly gives that information in Sanskrit from the treatises Śivādvaitadarpaṇa, Vīraśaivānandaĉandrikā, and Vīraśaivātkarṣapradīpikā.

Thus, he says, a Liṅgāyata is one who practices Aṣṭāvaraṇa, Pañcācāra and Ṣaṣṭhala; of these, Ṣaṣṭhala is all-comprehensive and includes in it everything that the religious practice expresses and lays down; the Pañcācāra and Aṣṭāvaraṇa are subsidiaries and auxiliaries to the Ṣaṣṭhala; this is the very life and soul of the Liṅgāyat spiritual discipline and religious practice. Then, before giving the particulars of the practice, he goes over eight principles underlying the practice:

The first principle, he says, is that religion is as necessary for human beings as food is; a man without religion is the creature of circumstances. The second principle is that it is a personal affair, the affair of the Jīva (soul); every Jīva is the driver of the car of his own life so that he may avoid the ditches and pitfalls of ignorance and follow the safe route of the religion to ever enduring bliss, Mōkśa as it is called. The third principle is very fundamental; it makes no distinction between sexes but gives equal opportunity to both sexes, male and female. The fourth principle is the principle of universal brotherhood of man in matter of religion; keeps its doors open to all people without any distinction, irrespective of their caste (varṇa) or creed, rich or poor. The fifth principle is that life in this world is in no way incongruous in the practice of the religion; it is not necessary for anyone to go to a forest for the sake of attaining Mōkśa; home and life at home do not clash and conflict in anyway with spiritual life (do not follow *āśramadharmā*). The sixth principle is the simplicity and suitability of practice by means of simple and definite technique of Śaṭsthala; the Jīvas advance as far as they wish, up the spiritual ladder. The seventh principle is ahimsa or non-injury; a religion is no religion that does not teach ahimsa, kindness and compassion. The eighth principle is the unity of thought and action, or perfect concordance between knowing and doing;

peace of mind or internal harmony is mainly due to one's satisfaction that one did as one felt.

The practice of the religion is Yōga. Different Yōgas are requisitioned into service of the above principles so as to come up with the Yōgic technique of Ṣaṭsthala. This Yōgic technique of Ṣaṭsthala leads to Liṅgāṅgasāmarasya or essential unity of Liṅga and Aṅga. Of all the different forms of Yōga, Bhaktiyōga is the basis and foundation, because, without Bhakti nothing is possible. The feeling of devotion (Bhakti) prepares the mind and confirms the mental attitude of a devotee and enables the devotee to act sincerely in religious practice. Hence Liṅgāyat philosophers give primacy to Bhakti and Bhaktiyōga. All other forms of Yōga are complementary to Bhaktiyōga. Because, different individuals have different temperament, the Yōga philosophers have matched different forms of Yōga to the individuals according to their temperament – Bhaktiyōga for the emotional, Karmayōga for the action oriented, Rājayōga for the mystic, and Jñānayōga for the rational. All of this is included in Ṣaṭsthala. So far so good.

Then on page 326, Professor Sakhare states that although the Vīraśaivas have strong objection to the Vēdic Yajñas inculcated in the Karmakāṇḍa of the Brāhmaṇas, Kalpasūtras, Gṛhyasūtras, and such, they have special rites of their own. These rites are said to be intended to teach self-

abandonment of all the so called pleasurable things of the world, and to cultivate in the mind the neighborly love and such. Thus the religious rites of the Vīraśaivas are said to be indispensable for spiritual culture and advancement. Then he states that 'these puritanical rites of the Liṅgāyat religion are based on the Yōgapāda of the Divine Āgamas; but this does not mean that other pādas of the Āgamas are neglected; on the contrary the Ćarā, Kriyā, and Jñāna pādas are fully utilized and are made to sub-serve Śivayōga'. Then on page 328, he states 'in short, the practice of the Liṅgāyat religion is Śivayōga that includes in it the elements of other forms of Yōga; it is based on the Yōgapāda of the Āgamas'.

The statements made in the above paragraph by Professor Sakhare have to be analyzed. There is no dispute that the Vīraśaivas strongly object to the rites and rituals inculcated by the Vēdas. But it is to be noted that they also object to the rites and rituals inculcated by the Āgamas. Śivāgamas deal with religious rights and practices pertaining to the Śaiva sect, and are considered to form the main scripture of the Śaivas (11). Some parts of the Śivāgamas known as Uttarāgamas lend some of their concepts to the philosophy and practice of the Vīraśaivas. Of the Uttarāgama literature that is of interest to the Vīraśaivas, only about seven or so Uttarāgamas are available, and none of the Yōgapāda and Jñānapāda parts of the Uttarāgamas are available. Reference 10 on page

[45], states "In the available Uttarabhāgas, we do not find the Yōgapāda and the Jñānapāda. Hence it is not possible to say anything about the contents of those pādas". Therefore when Professor Sakhare says 'these puritanical rites of the Liṅgāyat religion are based on the Yōgapāda of the Divine Āgamas' he is not referring to anything pertinent to the Vīraśaivas. Furthermore. When he says 'the practice of Liṅgāyat religion is Śivayōga... it is based on the Yōgapāda of the Āgamas', he is not talking about the Yōga of the Liṅgāyatas/Vīraśaivas.

Also, it is to be pointed out that Professor Sakhare is contradicting himself when he states that the rites of Liṅgāyat religion are based on the Āgamas. According to himself, all the Vīraśaiva parts of the Āgamas, the Uttarāgamas, are later additions after the 12 century CE (which is not generally accepted of course). If so, he is talking about the rites from the Śaiva doctrines, not the Vīraśaiva doctrines.

The readers should note that the Vīraśaivas do not accept the rites and rituals based on the Āgamas that Professor Sakhare talks about. This has been pointed out in Śūnyasaṃpādanē, the main scripture of the Vīraśaivas. It is stated there as follows. Although the followers of Bhaktimārga advocate the necessity of ritualistic spiritual practice for the attainment of the Absolute, Prabhudēva, however, preaches the superiority of

Jñāna. From the point of Jñāna, body and mind have no real existence as they are products of Prakṛti. The Absolute lies beyond the reach of diverse names, forms and functions. To expect it to be otherwise is nothing but a display of ignorance. To claim that religious practice is indispensable for the realization of Paraśiva is to distinguish between the means and the end. This shows, in other words, a sense of duality which betrays a want of faith that God is inherent in the Consciousness (page 427, volume I of reference 11).

Professor Sakhare, then, describes the religious practices of Liṅgāyatas/Vīraśaivas, namely, Pañcācāra, Aṣṭāvaraṇa, and Ṣaṣṭhala. His description of Pañcācāra and Aṣṭāvaraṇa is somewhat different from what is given here in the following brief description. Because of the importance of these practices to the Liṅgāyatas/Vīraśaivas, Pañcācāra and Aṣṭāvaraṇa have been slightly modified to be what is acceptable.

Pañcācāra is the practice of the five codes of conduct. **Liṅgācāra** is the worship of Liṅga, starting with the worship of external Iṣṭaliṅga and then concentrating on the internal Liṅga, synthesis of Iṣṭa-Prāṇa-Bhāvaliṅgas and unification of the six Liṅgas stationed in the body of Aṅga, and such. **Sadācāra** is to lead a simple and virtuous life – it consists in the rendering of

respectful service to Guru, Linga and Jaṅgama with what is earned only through righteous means. **Śivācāra** consists in the firm conviction that there is no other refuge apart from Śiva the Parabrahman, and is to realize that the Divine Śiva is in everyone, irrespective of gender, wealth, caste or creed, and to treat everyone equally. **Bhṛtyācāra** is of the nature of humility that one is the servant of all the devotees of Śiva; it is to show humility, modesty and respect for others. And **Gaṇācāra** consists in the stubbornness in non-reacting to the condemnation of Śiva, Śivācāra, and/or Śivabhaktas under all circumstances; it is to strive for improvement and development of the community as a whole.

Aṣṭāvaraṇa: Religious practice is said to require these eight-fold external coverings or shields. **Guru** is necessary for conferring Dīkṣā on the disciple, and to show the path that leads to Mōkṣa/salvation. **Liṅga** includes the three-fold Liṅga - Bhāvaliṅga, Prāṇaliṅga and Iṣṭaliṅga – and their six-fold subdivisions - Ācāraliṅga, Guruliṅga, Śivaliṅga, Jaṅgamaliṅga, Prasādaliṅga and Mahāliṅga. **Jaṅgama** is considered as the 'wandering Śiva', and is unique in this respect. Jaṅgama is a *Jīvanmukta*, the one who has attained oneness with the Liṅga in this life and is still living in a body. **Pādōdaka** is the water that has washed the feet of Guru and Jaṅgama, and the water that has washed the Iṣṭaliṅga.

Prasāda is everything that has been consecrated by Guru, Liṅga and Jaṅgama. **Bhasma** is the sacred ash. **Rudrākṣa** are the beads obtained from the Rudrākṣa tree (rosary beads). **Mantra** considered here is the *Ṣaḍakṣara* (six-syllable) mantra 'Ōm na maḥ Śi vā ya'. This six-syllable mantra represents the six Liṅgas (mentioned above under Liṅga) and the six sthalas of Ṣaṭsthala. It is to be noted that Professor Sakhare has a long discussion on the topic of Mantra. He starts by saying that in Śaktism the practice of Mantra forms an integral part of Śakta rituals; and the schools of Śaivism also have their own rites based on Mantra and Mantrayōga. He goes over an unnecessary elaborate discussion which is of no interest to the Vīraśaivas/Liṅgāyatas. Then on page 346, he admits that the only mantra of Liṅgāyatas, based on the Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi, is the six syllable mantra 'Ōm na maḥ śi vā ya' (Ōm namaśśivāya). Also, on page 350, he states that the Liṅgāyatas have retained only one mantra which enables the devotee to achieve the expansion of the self into ultimate Liṅga, called Liṅgāṅgasāmarasya.

According to Vīraśaivas (page 415 of volume III of reference 11), the above eight-fold external protective coverings have counterparts in the inner being. These are – *Arivu* (awareness), *Sujñāna* (right knowledge), *Svānubhāva* (self-experience), *Karuṇāmṛtā* (nectar of compassion), *Kṛpāprasāda* (gift of grace), *Bhasita* (self-

conscious splendor), *Āitkānte* (self-conscious light), and *Āidānaīda* (self-conscious bliss). Attainment of the inner counterparts of the external aspects of Aṣṭāvaraṇa is more important for the Vīraśaīvas. Professor Sakhare does not mention the internal counterparts of the external Aṣṭāvaraṇas.

Ṣaṭsthala: Professor Sakhare starts by saying that the treatment and explanation of Ṣaṭsthala is a very difficult and arduous task – of course there is no dispute on this part of the statement. However, he states that Ṣaṭsthala is also called Śīvayōga – there is much controversy about that statement. Śīvayōga, as he describes it, is practiced by the Śaīvas, not by the Vīraśaīvas. It is to be noted that, here under Ṣaṭsthala, Professor Sakhare goes over an elaborate discussion of various subject matter that is not applicable to the Vīraśaīvas/Liṅgāyatas. This somewhat rambling discussion is about 70 pages. Some of that discussion is described briefly as follows. First he discusses what Yōga means, and then he goes over different forms of Yōga.

Yōga means 'union with'. In its spiritual sense it means the method or process by which the individual spirit is merged in the Divine Spirit. In the case of the Vīraśaīvas who are monists, Yōga is the process for regaining the temporarily lost identity of the Divine Spirit and the human spirit. Yōga is both a science and an art. Yōga aims at

stilling the mind, so that the soul behind it is seen or the soul's liberation is attained. The quietude or complete stillness of the mind effects the destruction of the veil, and the soul becomes free from entanglements of matter and mind. Yōga is said to be an application of systematized knowledge of the unfolding of consciousness to the individual Self. Yōga is within reach of anyone and everyone.

Mantrayōga: He states that he has already noted at some length the basic philosophy of Mantras and their use (under Aṣṭāvaraṇa). Then he states that most of the famous Mantrayōga Schools are out of vogue and have almost always been disregarded by Indian philosophy as such. If so, why is he having an elaborate discussion of mantra that is not acceptable to Liṅgāyatās in his book?

Layayōga: He states that Layayōga is of the Śakta School and its philosophy. Energy (Śakti) polarizes itself into two forms, namely, Prāṇa and Kuṇḍalinī. Prāṇa is the dynamic energy, it is the workforce of the body. Kuṇḍalinī is the static or potential energy, it is located in the Mūlādhāra cakra at the base of the spine. During this Yōga, Kuṇḍalinī lying dormant at the base plexus is roused and made to ascend through the spinal column piercing through the other five cakras or plexuses above it during its ascent, and ultimately to attain union with the Highest Consciousness in

the Sahasrāra at the top of the brain. This is Laya or merging of Jīvaśakti with Śiva in the head.

Hathayōga: Haṭhayōga is said to differ from other forms of Yōga in respect of the emphasis placed on the physical side in the Yōga discipline. It is generally considered to be a method of forcing concentration by means of very hard physical exercises, penances, fasts and modifications of diverse kinds of food, sleep, etc.

Rājayōga: Rājayōga is generally identified with the *Yōgasūtra of Patañjali*, which is the first systematized form of Yōga both as a science and as an art. Rājayōga of Patañjali prescribes a long course of eightfold steps; thus it is called *Aṣṭāṅgayōga*. First step, *Yama*, makes it compulsory to observe faithfully the moral and social rules to enable the practitioner to adapt to the social surroundings. Second step, *Niyama*, consists of certain personal rules of conduct which are intended to turn away the mind of the practitioner from worldly attachments in order to facilitate ultimate success. Third step is *Āsana* which is a course of posture-exercises. Fourth is *Prāṇāyāmā* which is breath-control by means of which there is complete control and distribution of vital energy in the body. Fifth is *Pratyāhāra* where the practitioner practices withdrawal of the mind from the objects that attract the mind through sense organs. This steadying of the mind enables the practitioner to meditate unperturbed as in the

sixth and seventh steps of *Dhāraṇa* and *Dhyāna*. In *Dhāraṇa*, the practitioner focuses thoughts upon a particular object or inner Self. *Dhyāna* is meditation proper where a continuous and steady focus results in an uninterrupted image in one's consciousness. The continuous meditation flows into the eighth stage of *Samādhi* where the image drops from consciousness and only the super-conscious state remains. When one meditates on a particular object, the Self is poured into the object which becomes the All. This kind of *Samādhi* is called *Savikalpa Samādhi* (with variation). When no object is used for meditation, the Self, free from all modifications reaches its own nature. This is *Nirvikalpa Samādhi* (without variation). When the lower self-consciousness vanishes and the super-consciousness manifests in the highest state of *Samādhi*, the Perfection has been achieved.

Śivayōga: Śivayōga is a Yōga process of attaining 'at-one-ment' with Śiva the Highest Reality. It consists of five elements, namely, *Śivajñāna*, *Śivabhakti*, *Śivadhyāna*, *Śivavrata*, and *Śivārçā* or *Śivapūjā*. Śivapūjā, the fifth element, is the primary element that includes in it the remaining four elements. Śivapūjā is the worship of Śiva performed life-long with devotion, one to three times a day. For Śivapūjā, the Śivajñāna, the knowledge of Śiva, is the first necessity; the knowledge is given by the Guru, the preceptor. Śivabhakti is the devotion to Śiva; it is necessary

to conduct the Śiva-worship. Śivadhyāna is the meditation focused on Śiva; it is part of the worship of Śiva. Śivavrata is mainly bhasmavrata or bhasmadhāraṇa which is the application or smearing of the sacred ash during the Śiva-worship. Professor Sakhare, on page 366, states "*We think it unnecessary to give details of Śivapūjā, as it is mostly modeled on Śthāvaraliṅgapūjā (worship of stationary Liṅga in a temple)*". The readers should note this statement, because the so called Śivayōga is applicable to the Śaivas, and not to the Viraśaivas. Despite his admittance that Śivapūjā, the primary element of Śivayōga, is not applicable to Liṅgāyatas, he continues to describe it and incorporate it into Ṣaṣṭhala; this is not acceptable.

After the above discussion of various forms of Yōga, there is, in about 54 pages of text, an elaborate discussion which Professor Sakhare thinks is pertinent to **Ṣaṣṭhala**. Ṣaṣṭhala being the most important part of the practice of the Viraśaivas/Liṅgāyatas, Professor Sakhare's narration is very disappointing, and may be described as somewhat bizarre, haphazard and confusing. He states that Ṣaṣṭhala is the technique of Śivayōga, and intermixes the elements of Śivayōga (Śivajñāna, Śivabhakti, Śivadhyāna, Śivavrata, and Śivapūjā) in order to explain the components of Ṣaṣṭhala; it seems kind of absurd to do that. Furthermore, the six

stages of Ṣaṭsthala (Bhaktasthala, Māhēśvarasthala, Prasūdisthala, Prāṇaliṅgasthala, Śaraṇasthala, and Aikyasthala) are mentioned only in passing, and not explained in a systematic fashion. It is an uncomfortable feeling to see the above five elements of Śivayōga mentioned and explained more often than the six stages of Ṣaṭsthala. Only some of the pertinent features of Professor Sakhare's discussion are given below.

The Ṣaṭsthala is based on the six places or spots in the human body that are the abodes of and that are occupied by the six Liṅgas, namely, Ācāraliṅga, Guruliṅga, Śivaliṅga, Ćaraliṅga (Jaṅgaliṅga), Prasādaliṅga, and Mahāliṅga. These six places or spots are called Ādhāras, and they are Mūlādhāra, Svādhiṣṭhāna, Maṇipura, Anāhata, Viśuddhi, and Ājñā. These Ādhāras are the energy centers, and are also called lotuses or Ćakras.

The practice of Yōga (Ṣaṭsthala) is not to proceed through any set of formal image-worship, and not to perform Yajña (sacrificial ceremonies); and it is not a prescribed form of chanting Mantras. It is by sincere devotion, aspiration, and surrender that the goal can be achieved. Complete change, down to the physical, is to be sought for the purification of the total being in its three planes that are connected with Tyāgāṅga and Iṣṭaliṅga, Bhōgāṅga and Prāṇaliṅga, and Yōgāṅga and Bhāvaliṅga. It is said that the more the lower

nature is purified the easier is the descent of the higher nature. The purification of the lower nature and the manifestation of the higher nature (the Divine) progress side by side.

Ṣaṭsthala has devised the method of a gradual spiritual rise and development of Aṅga step by step. Ordinarily one does not learn to distinguish the three parts of one's being (Aṅga) that work with the three planes; these three are kind of lumped together and called mind, because, it is through the mind that one perceives, sees, feels and understands. It is through Yōga that one becomes conscious of the great complexity of one's own nature, and distinguishes the three different parts of one's total being. The three planes – material or physical, vital or mental, and intellectual or ideal – are said to be the three universes of the lower hemisphere, the human microcosm. The three parts of one's being and the three planes are as follows.

The first part is the Tyāgāṅga; it is the physical or the material part. Here, the earth and water elements predominate. The physical mind is connected with various bodily organs, and subconsciously the physical mind governs much that has to do with the physical condition of the body. It is largely responsible for soundness of the body (healthiness of the body), or illnesses pertaining to the physical body. In this plane, the

Divine presence in the form of Iṣṭaliṅga, first appears as the Light on the soul to be liberated.

The second part is the Bhōgāṅga. It is the mental or the vital nature above the material or physical plane. Here, the fire and air elements predominate. The vital nature is the life nature, and on the surface, it is narrow, ignorant and limited, full of obscure desires, passions, cravings, revolts, pleasures and pain, joy and grief, and exaltations and depressions. But the true vital being concealed behind this superficial nature, is vast, calm, strong, firm, immovable, without limitations, capable of all power, and all knowledge and all joy; it is the instrumental force for all divine realization. Through Yōga, as one becomes aware of this double nature, the exterior surface nature can be dealt with potently, and made free and perfect, and then one could manifest the internal nature which is all divine, pure and perfect. In this vital or mental plane, there is the divine presence of Prāṇaliṅga.

The third part is Yōgāṅga. It is the intellectual or ideal plane, above the material/physical and the vital/mental planes. Here, the sky element and its source the Ātman predominate. Although the second part the vital, and the third part the intellectual are quite separate forces, they are kind of mixed up on the surface of consciousness. Through Yōga, the vital has to be carefully distinguished from the intellectual being which

has to do with cognition and intelligence, ideas, mental thought, vision, will, and such. Once one distinguishes them as separate, the intellectual being within comes to the forefront. It observes, feels, knows, and reveals what is right. This is the highest plane of Yōgāṅga connected with the Bhāvāliṅga, the intellectual or the ideal, the Divine immanence.

Yōga is a technique or a process of getting into consciousness where one is aware of one's own soul, one's own inner being, and the truth of existence of the total being. In the Yōgic consciousness, one is not only aware of things, but also aware of the forces. One becomes aware of all this, not only in oneself, but also in the universe. There is a force, the power of the Divine, in the human microcosm coiled up in the base center or the base plexus, in what is called Ācārāliṅga in the Mūlādhāraçakra. This power of the Divine is waiting there to be awakened/activated during Yōgic meditation.

In the practice of Yōga, the six energy centers (çakras/lotuses/sthānas/Ādhāras), have a general function and also have their special powers and functions. The base center *Mūlādhāra* governs the physical. The abdominal center *Svādhiṣṭhāna* governs the lower vital. These two centers are in the plane of Tyāgāṅga in the domain of Iṣṭāliṅga, and are occupied and worked by the two sub-forms of Iṣṭāliṅga – the Ācārāliṅga in the

Mūlādhāra, and Guruliṅga in the Svādhiṣṭhāna. Here, the force of the Divine is in a static condition, and the ego prevails on all that is concerned with the physical wellbeing.

The navel center *Maṇipūra* governs the larger vital, and the heart center *Anāhata* governs the emotional being. The two centers form the intermediate plane which is the mental or the vital plane. This is the plane of Bhōgāṅga and is the domain of the Prāṇaliṅga. The vital force of consciousness functions here. In the Maṇipūra the egotistic element is more prominent; it works in conjunction with the mind which predominates in the Anāhata. The two centers are occupied by the two sub-forms of Prāṇaliṅga - Śivaliṅga in the Maṇipūra, and Ćaraliṅga in the Anāhata. It is said that the real reformation and purification of the Aṅga begins here in this plane in the domain of Prāṇaliṅga.

The neck or throat center *Viśuddhi* governs the expressive or the externalizing mind. The brain center at the level between the two eyebrows, the *Ājñā*, governs the dynamic mind, will, vision, and mental formation. These two centers of the higher intellectual plane of Yōgāṅga come under the domain of the Bhāvaliṅga. The two sub-forms of Bhāvaliṅga, namely, Prasādaliṅga and Mahāliṅga, occupy the Viśuddhi and Ājñā centers respectively. Here the highest form of consciousness works as the true intelligent being

and seeks the Universal Consciousness. All this is good and acceptable.

Then, on page 377, Professor Sakhare states that the nervous system, though complicated, is very important from the standpoint of mind and mental functioning. So all the movements of the body are due to the strength of the nerves. Some bodily functions are wholly independent and automatic; functions of circulation, digestion, and such, are going on always ceaselessly in the body. This independent functioning is effected by the autonomous nervous system. So far so good. Then he states that 'it is the sympathetic nervous system including the para-sympathetic nerves'. This statement is incorrect. The sympathetic and the para-sympathetic systems are two separate and distinct systems of the autonomic nervous system. Then he makes another mistake by stating that 'the respiratory system is part of this autonomous nervous system'. That is not correct also. Respiratory system is not a part of the autonomic nervous system or any other nervous system, it is one of the major systems of the body like the circulatory system. Professor Sakhare should have stayed away from making such wrong statements. It is confusing and not spiritual.

The six Ādhāras which the Liṅgas occupy and where the force of Divinity works, are the six cākras or plexuses. These plexuses are compared

to and are considered as the lotuses. The lotuses have petals and these petals, according to what Professor Sakhare states, are the main branches of the nerves shooting from the ganglia in different directions. Then he gives a list of anatomical structures that he says are the petals. Then he gives diagrammatic representations of these neuroanatomical plexuses and their branches/petals. This is all incorrect and not called for. All these energy centers (plexuses) are said to have been visualized by the ancient Ṛṣis during their Yōgic meditation. What is more absurd is that on page 384, he states that 'the mention of petals shooting from the plexuses is in no way imaginary but that they are veritable physiological parts of the nervous system'. This statement takes away any spirituality one might have had in the practice of Yōga.

Next, on page 388, Professor Sakhare states that 'the developmental features with which the six forms of Aṅga offer the objects to the six forms of Liṅga (here he uses the term 'deity' instead of Liṅga), are the six forms of Bhakti that correspond to the five gross elements (earth, water, fire, air, and sky), and the Ātman that makes the sixth. Such is the teaching of Ṣaṣṭhala for the practice of spiritual culture'.

Professor Sakhare continues. The Ṣaṣṭhala includes the eightfold limbs (Aṣṭāṅga) of Pātañjaliyōga. Some of these eight means of

Yōga are to be followed by the devotee strictly, and some are to be adopted in their elementary form. The moral codes contained in *Yama* and *Niyama* are required to discipline the emotions and strengthen the will. Both these come under *Bhaktasthala*, and consist of some ethical principles relating to one's self, and also some relating to the interactions with other individuals in the community. By the earnest practice of the two types of moral conduct, the aspirant devotee acquires an excellent discipline of emotions, great moral courage, and unflinching will. The practice of *Yama* and *Niyama* also leads to renunciation of and detachment from the things of this world.

Some *Āsanās* (posture-exercises) should be adopted as the devotee finds suitable. One is not required to follow and practice of other *Āsanās* that are intended for an extreme form of physical culture of the Haṭhayōga. *Āsanās* are sustained postures of the body and are intended to be an aid to clear and collect thought. A suitable *Āsana* is one which is steady and comfortable for the practitioner. The suitable *Āsana* produces mental equilibrium. *Padmāsana* (Lotus-position), or its simpler comfortable version of sitting cross-legged with a straight posture, is recommended.

Prāṇāyāmā is to be practiced only in its elementary form. Its practice is necessary for steadying the mind, and for facilitating the withdrawal of senses from being tempted away

by other objects – that is to facilitate Pratyāhāra. Prāṇāyāmā is the regulation or control of breath. It is an attempt to lengthen the time required naturally for inhalation and exhalation, and also for the retention of the breath in-between. It is said that the longer the retention of the breath the better, but it has to be what is comfortable to the practitioner. Prāṇāyāmā effects the physical wellbeing and soundness of the mind, and it is also helpful for meditation which is common to all forms of Yōga.

Pratyāhāra is the withdrawal of mind from senses-objects so that the mind can be steadied and focused during the subsequent stages of the Yōga. *Dhāraṇa* is the fixing of the mind on to one aspect or the inner Self. *Dhyāna* is the continuous and ceaseless contemplation on the same. *Samādhi* is complete absorption of the mind into what was focused on during Dhāraṇa and Dhyāna.

Professor Sakhare's statement, as above, that Ṣaṭṣthala includes the eightfold Yōga of Patañjali (which is also called Rājayōga), and also the above description of that Yōga, are acceptable to the Vīraśaivas. Śūnyasaṃpādana (11), the main scripture of the Vīraśaivas, in its concluding remarks, referring to Śūnya Saṃpādana, specifically states '*This is the treasury of the attainment of the great Rājayōga*'.

Ṣaṭsthala stages are divided into two sections. Bhakta, Māhēśvara, and Prasādi form the first division, and Prāṇaliṅgi, Śaraṇa, and Aikya form the second division. In the first worship-oriented division action element is predominant, and in the meditation-oriented second division knowledge element is predominant. Action and knowledge go hand in hand and ultimately belief prevails that action and knowledge are one and the same. Action and knowledge become indistinguishable from one another and their essential identity becomes established along with the oneness of Aṅga and Liṅga.

Professor Sakhare states that in the Ṣaṭsthala the six-fold Bhakti is same for the development of any form of Yōga in all six stage that ultimately ends or ripens into Śivayōga with its fivefold factors; it is adopted for Śivapūjā which is the main factor of Śivayōga. Then he describes Śivayōga and its five factors as derived from the Āgamas, and states that 'but here in Ṣaṭsthala, it is modified in light of Yōgapāda of Āgamas, which form the main basis of the practice of Ṣaṭsthala'. This statement is not to be accepted, because, none of the Yōgapādas of the Uttara-bhāga of Śivāgamas that are pertinent to the Vīraśaivas, is available to make such a statement (10). His interjecting of Śivayōga with its five elements pertinent to the Śaivas, and saying that that is the same as Ṣaṭsthala of the Vīraśaivas is absurd, and is not acceptable.

Next, Professor Sakhare states that 'now we proceed to explain the development of the complimentary Yōgas in order, which ultimately develop into Śivayōga'. Then he proceeds to describe the five Yōgas, namely, Mantrayōga, Layayōga, Karmayōga, Bhaktiyōga, and Jñānayōga. He had already described some of these Yōgas at the beginning of the Śaṭsthala practice, but here he tries to integrate these five Yōgas into the Śaiva's five Śivayōga elements and implying that that is part of Śaṭsthala. Again this is absurd and not acceptable.

Near the end of this chapter, Professor Sakhare tries to summarize the practice of Śaṭsthala: The Śaṭsthala technique furnishes the scientific apparatus and procedure, which if followed carefully step by step, will enable the Aṅga to attain its objective. To the devotee, the details of the physical acts of worship are necessary only to strengthen the will. First, the worship of Liṅga is in its gross form, the worship of Iṣṭaliṅga. Next is the worship of Liṅga, both with form and without form. This is Prāṇaliṅga and is an intermediate stage. Then there is worship of formless internal Liṅga that is the internal worship of Mahāliṅga. Bhakti is the root of worship whether the worship is external or internal. Without this feeling of devotion, the spiritual advancement is not possible. During Bhaktasthala, the Aṅga has to learn and cultivate the proper sense of donation (*dāna*). Dāna is giving of charity or making of

gifts. Bhakta has to earn money by righteous means by following the rules of Yama and Niyama (of Aṣṭāṅgayōga/Rājayōga), and has to use it properly for the use of all. This mutual helpfulness of the individual members of the community is called Kāyaka (righteous ethical living) – that is what Professor Sakhare says.

Then he interjects – Mantrajapa and Dhyāna are the main causes of spiritual development. They are the main items of Śivapūjā (worship of Śaivas in Śivayōga). In the second division of Ṣaṣṭhala, Mantrayōga and Layayōga may go hand in hand and might develop into either of their forms, but the end is the same. The final result to be achieved by Śivayōga is Śivasāmarasya or Śivasāyujya. Śivaśakti (Kuṇḍalini) in the Mūlādhāra is to be roused and made to ascend from the lower impure plane to the highest pure plane for perfect experience of Divine Consciousness. Mantrayōga is one such means of rousing the Śivaśakti. The power is to be roused and developed for final emancipation; and Ṣaṣṭhala is the technique for such rousing and developing power. The readers should note that he continues to interpose these things into Ṣaṣṭhala; it is not acceptable at all.

At the end, Professor Sakhare states *"Our task is over. We are aware that our explanation is neither complete nor satisfactory, though we have tried our utmost to give the readers the*

meaning of Śivayōga and its technique Ṣaṭsthala". He is humbly admitting that his explanation is neither complete nor satisfactory. Alas! It is unfortunate that he could not do a better job, particularly as it applies to this most important aspect of the practice of Liṅgāyatas/Vīraśaivas, the practice of Ṣaṭsthala.

Liᅅgadhāraᅅaᅅandrikā

The main part of Professor Sakhare's work was the translation into English of the Sanskrit Liᅅgadhāraᅅaᅅandrikā text. His original book consisted of an elaborate introduction, textual part of Liᅅgadhāraᅅaᅅandrikā, translation of the text, notes on the text, and the appendices. The Karnatak University re-published only the introduction part of the original book as the 'History and Philosophy of Liᅅgāyat Religion'. The thirteenth chapter of this latter book is titled 'The author of Liᅅgadhāraᅅaᅅandrikā and his work'. In this chapter, Professor Sakhare, first comments on the author Nandikēśvara, and then comments on the commentator of Liᅅgadhāraᅅaᅅandrikā. At the end of the chapter, he denounces the Svāmis in general and Svāmi of Kāśīmaᅅh, the Jaᅅgamvādi of Benares in particular.

Professor Sakhare starts by saying 'Liᅅgadhāraᅅa is the most prominent mark and feature of the Liᅅgāyat religion and denotes what it is. All philosophy and practice of the religion hangs on it'. Then, he gives the following information about the author Nandikēśvara and his work.

Author Nandikēśvara begins with the discussion about the internal investiture of Liᅅga in the search of the Liᅅga the Light (*Jyōtirliᅅga*) as it is

the very basis of internal Liᅅga worship. The author next proceeds to the external investiture of Liᅅga and the external Liᅅga worship. The author takes three texts from the Nārāyaᅅopaniᅅad, one from the Taittirīyōpaniᅅad, one from Śrīrudra, and two from ᅅgvēda, and explains them as enjoining the wearing of the Liᅅga. The author seems to be well versed in Vēdic, Purāᅅic and Smᅅti literature, and the literature of the six schools of Indian Philosophy. In the course of interpretation, addresses many principles and maxims of logic established by Pūrvamīmāᅅsā in support of his arguments. The author quotes profusely, especially from Purāᅅas and Āgamas, in support of the view-point taken during discussion. The author interprets the Vēdic texts as laying down Liᅅgadhāraᅅa with all pros and cons, refutes all the objections raised, implies that his explanation silences the carping fault-finders, and finally arrives at the conclusion. In this respect, the author is like the other commentators of the philosophic literature. The author shows his skill in the art of reasoning correctly and expressing it in the textual form. Professor Sakhare states that in his opinion the author has performed the task admirably well.

Then as to the personal information about the author, Professor Sakhare states that only some meagre information could be obtained from two colophons. The colophon of the printed edition published at Benares states that the author was

an authority on Viśiṣṭādvaita, and that he could establish in his disputations that Viśiṣṭādvaita is the essence of Vēda, Vēdānta, Upaniṣad, Purāṇa and Mahābhārata. The author never names the advaita philosophy of Liṅgāyat as Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita but only as Viśiṣṭādvaita. Professor Sakhare here states "*From this it is clear that he was a bigoted Śaiva and a Viraśaiva*". The second colophon from the manuscript B gives information that the author was a descendent of the family of one Paṇḍitārādhya. Professor Sakhare then states that it is likely that the author was a Viraśaiva Ārādhya. As to the date of the author, Professor Sakhare states that, it can be fixed approximately to be the 17th century CE, on the basis of the prominent authors whom Nandikēśvara refers to in his work.

Here, a few things are to be pointed out to the readers. It is not clear why Professor Sakhare calls the author Nandikēśvara a 'bigoted Śaiva'. The dictionary meaning of the word 'bigot' is 'one intolerantly devoted to his own church or opinion', and bigot also means a fanatic, enthusiast or zealot. It is possible that Professor Sakhare calls him a bigot for the following two reasons: One is that the author explains the Liṅgadhāraṇa on the basis of the Vēdic literature which is correct but the Professor does not want to admit it, and the other that the author does not state that the Liṅgāyat philosophy is Śaktiviśiṣṭādvaita

philosophy which the Professor strongly believes in. The Viśiṣṭādvaita philosophy was originally put forward by the noted scholar Rāmānujācārya of the 11th century CE. It is known as Viśiṣṭādvaitism. It is said to be a qualified monism. It holds the view that there are three entities – God, soul, and matter or Prakṛti – which are steady factors, and these three form inseparable elements of one. God is the Supreme Ruler, the soul is the enjoyer, and matter is the enjoyed. All these three exist together both before the creation and after the creation. Creation is simply the manifestation in different forms by the will of God. If so, some state that, it can be categorized as trinitism (belief in three realities), not Advaitism. Viśiṣṭādvaitins believe that only Bhaktimārg/Bhaktiyōga can lead to Mōkṣa (salvation). They also believe that a person can attain Mōkṣa only after the person's death. This Mōkṣa means living blissfully in Vaikuṅṭha (God Viṣṇu's abode), subservient to God Viṣṇu, not becoming one with the God (12). The readers should note that this Viśiṣṭādvaita philosophy is not the philosophy of Vīraśaivas/Liṅgāyatas.

Next, Professor Sakhare comments on the commentator of Liṅgadhāraṇacāndrikā as follows. The work had been commented on by Paṇḍit Mahāmahōpādhyāya Śivakumāra of Benares. The commentator, although had profuse and elaborate commentary on the Vēdic text quoted by the author Nandikēśvara, his commentary on

the principles of Liṅgāyat religion was very brief. The Paṇḍit had done his work well, but it was a sorry fact that the Paṇḍit, though a Śivabhakta, did not know anything of the Liṅgāyat or Viraśaiva religion. In many places his explanations were wrong. Here, Professor Sakhare gives a short line of Sanskrit text, and states that it is quite inaccurate, because, the commentator takes '*daharōpāsanā*' as '*pratīkōpāsanā*' which is repudiated by Liṅgāyatism on account of the '*ahaṅgrahōpāsanā*' taught by it (Professor Sakhare interposes Sanskrit words in Dēvanāgarī script without translation or explanation; he should have explained it further). The commentator was paid for his commentary, and he did his duty accordingly as a hack-writer (hired writer). The commentator, therefore, did his work as a business, and not because he wanted to explain the religious principles well. He lacked sympathy and real insight into the Liṅgāyat religion that was required for this task. Professor Sakhare states that 'we do not and should not reasonably find fault with his commentary'.

Then Professor Sakhare makes this derogatory statement: "We may simply point out that the Svāmi of Kāśīmaṭh (Jaṅgamvādi of Benares), a pontifical seat of Viśvārādhyā, one of the five Viraśaiva Ācāryas, could find no competent Liṅgāyat scholar to comment on the work. It shows a sad bankruptcy of Sanskrit Scholars among Liṅgāyats. The Svāmis themselves, the

heads of such sees and similar big influential maṭhs, should lack in requisite scholarship and insight into their own religion, for the promulgation and propagation of which they are intended, is a regrettable commentary on the present state of affairs and the present of the Liṅgāyat religion". Therefore, Professor Sakhare says, it was thought proper not to print the commentator's commentary along with the text, in his original book.

The Status of Liṅgāyat Religion

The readers should note that, in order to give a clear picture of the forceful nature of Professor Sakhare's discussion in this fourteenth chapter, most of what he says has been taken word for word and copied here. He starts by saying 'we have come to a knotty problem of determining the status of the Liṅgāyat religion – whether it is a separate religion, or a sub-religion of the Hindu religion, or one of the Hindu religions'. It should be noted here that before even considering the issue of whether Liṅgāyatism is a separate religion or not, Professor Sakhare has already made up his mind that it is a religion, and has been using the term 'Liṅgāyat religion' throughout this book.

Professor Sakhare mentions what the general consensus is. Liṅgāyatas are generally considered to be a sect among the Hindus or a sub-sect of the Śaivas. Śaivism itself is generally considered a Vēdic religion or a sub-religion of Hinduism. If that is the case, he says, it is not to be expected that Liṅgāyatism should have any recognition as a separate religion. The readers should note that the above general view that Liṅgāyatism is not a separate religion has prevailed, and it also seems to be the current view. Professor Sakhare,

however, is not satisfied and he wants to show that Liṅgāyatism is a separate religion.

First, Professor Sakhare says that Liṅgāyat religion has fallen into deep obscurity that it finds itself rather difficult to raise up from the obscurity and stand out in bold relief and shine in its glory that it may naturally claim to have of its own account intrinsic worth and merit, which he wants to boldly assert that it has. Second, he says, even the Liṅgāyats themselves do not know what it is, much less, others. Third, he says, the European scholars have neither studied nor cared to study the Liṅgāyat religion and its literature as much as they ought to have done; they formed some superficial idea about the religion from hearsay and superficial study of a book or two, which would give no idea as to what it really is.

Then Professor Sakhare goes on to his blame game. The Liṅgāyatas are themselves to blame for the obscurity into which the religion has sunk. Generally the Svāmis themselves, who are intended to be defenders and propagators of the faith, are so only in name in the sense that they have no insight into the inner meaning of the religion and its principles. They only repeat parrot-like the eight Āvaraṇas, the Pañcācāras and the Ṣaṣṭhalas, particularly the Āṣṭāvaraṇas, and are not in a position even in the least to explain the fundamentals of the religion, when they are asked anything about the religion. In

addition, there is such a sharp division and difference of opinion and of religious practices among the Liṅgāyatas themselves of different parts of India that they are almost divided into different camps on account of different customs, manners, and views about themselves and their religion. There is little unanimity in religious rites and customs or real religious life among the Liṅgāyatas. Svāmis or Ayyanavarus, who have made a class of their own and call themselves Jaṅgamas, though they are no better than birth-made pretentious ignoramuses, but like Brahmins of the Hindu fold, simply prey upon the ignorant masses. Professor Sakhare then exclaims "*Alas! What a lamentable state of affairs, what grievous parody of the religion, what a tragic condition into which the community has fallen!*"

Professor Sakhare continues. Liṅgāyatas are the descendants of the Hindus. To determine the status of the Liṅgāyat religion among the Hindus, it is necessary to know what the Hindu religion is. Hinduism is a common denomination or the highest common factor of all the Hindus of the Hindu communities of India. Generally Hinduism is considered to be the religion as taught by the Vēdas. But the Vēdas do not teach any one common religious philosophy; they have a variety of philosophies, and give rise to a variety of philosophical systems and practices. It is this variety that has been an object of pride for the Hindus. The Vēdas, especially the Upaniṣads, are

a literature of profound learning and thoughts, being the result of inner spiritual experience of great ancient sages. This vast Vēdic literature is with regard to the cosmic principle, the cosmic evolution, involution and life, the working of the universe and the individual souls, and advice given to the individual souls to follow a spiritual life to be free from the trammels of worldly life. From these teachings of the Upaniṣads, different schools of philosophy arose.

After saying all the above glorifying things about Hinduism, Professor Sakhare states that 'Hindu religion is said to be the religion of Varṇāśramadharmā'. He latches on to this and believes that that is all there is to Hinduism; it becomes a main problem for his logic. The three components of the Varṇāśramadharmā are, varṇas (colors) forming the four castes, Āśramas the four stages of life, and dharmā the duties assigned to the four castes and the four stages of life. He states that, it seems that at first the members of the community were classed as different castes in accordance with their mental and intellectual caliber and physical fitness for particular worldly duties; but gradually it came to be based on the birth alone. This made the Varṇāśramadharmā the most unjust social institution. The Vīraśaivas have done away with it, and have ushered in a new era of socio-religious life. Thus, the Vīraśaiva community has been

called *Ativarṇāśramī* a community above the Varṇāśramadharmā.

Next, Professor Sakhare states that if Hinduism is Varṇāśramadharmā, then it cannot include Liṅgāyatism in it as a sub-religion; the Liṅgāyatas are Hindus in the sense that they are the descendants of the Hindus; but they are a different religious entity. In this respect they are like Jains who are also the descendants of Hindus but they broke away from the Hindu religion and formed their own religion. But Jains differ from the Liṅgāyatas in one respect – the Jains disavowed their allegiance to the Vēdas, whereas Liṅgāyatas seem to respect the Vēdas. This respect for the Vēdas of the Liṅgāyatas has confounded their position and status in the community of Hindus.

Next, Professor Sakhare states that he has established that the Āgamas contain the culture of the Dravidians. Here, the readers should note that he is using the now defunct title 'Dravidians' to describe the culture of the ancient inhabitants of India; that culture was in vogue around 3,000 BCE; that statement is not acceptable nowadays; please see the discussion under Āgamas. Then he makes a twisted argument as follows. The Vēdic religion was the worship of natural forces and powers by performing Yajñas. The Āgamic religion was the worship of the images and the deities. Then he says that, in order to avoid the

cleavage between the followers of the Vēdas and those of the Āgamas, there seems that the two sections gradually came to be reconciled. The Āgamists began to respect the Vēdas and adopted the Varṇāśramadharmā. The followers of the Vēdas adopted the Āgamic form of worshipping the deities and images. The religion practiced today by the Hindus is almost entirely based on the Āgamas, and has little or nothing to do with the Vēdas. Hence, he says, image worship is the religion of the Hindus, if the religion can be so defined. Then without showing the proof that Hinduism is defined on the basis of the image worship only, he states that, because the Liṅgāyatas do not worship the images or idols, they are not Hindus. Then he says that Liṅgāyatas are Hindus in only one respect as they worship the Hindu God Śiva. This twisted argument is not acceptable. There were no Aryans or Dravidians; everyone was the same ancient Indian. There was no Vēdic-Āgamic divide. That is how the Hindu Vēdic culture evolved.

Furthermore, it should be pointed out to the readers that, contrary to what Professor Sakhare states above that the religion practiced today by the Hindus is almost entirely based on the Āgamas, it is to be noted that Purāṇas are the ancient sources of almost all religious systems in India (10). The post-Vēdic religious systems of Hinduism which represent the culmination of

Vēdic tradition in the worship of Śiva, Viṣṇu, Śakti, Sūrya, and Gaṇapati, are inspired and instituted by the Purāṇas. The history of Purāṇas can be traced back to Vēdic and epic (Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata) literature. The main aim of the Purāṇas was the popularization of Hindu-dharma. They were very widely used among the common people both in the original Sanskrit and in numerous vernacular versions and adaptations. The epics and the Purāṇas became the real scripture of the common people. They put the stamp of sectarianism. The people were devoted to some god or other, mainly Śiva or Viṣṇu. Purāṇas contain the chapters on the Varṇas (castes) and Āśramas (stages of life), rites in accordance to the Vēdic tradition, special ceremonies, Vratas (vows), and such (10). It seems that the present day Hinduism is based mainly on the epics and the Purāṇas, and not on the Āgamas.

Next, Professor Sakhare states that after the (Liṅgāyat) religion came to be formed (after 12th century CE in the post-Basava period), the new community altogether severed the connections with the Brahminic priesthood. They tried to maintain their position as being Ativarṇāśramīs (those above the Varṇāśramadharmā). In addition they claimed to be *Aprakṛta-Brahmaṇāḥ* which means something like Super-Brahmin. He states that the topic of Aprakṛta-Brahmaṇatva has been discussed in the Sanskrit treatise

Vīraśaivānandaĉandrikā, and the explanation for it is as follows. The worship of Sthūvaraliṅga (stationary Liṅga in a temple) is *prakṛta*; by doing such worship, one can achieve Mukti (salvation/liberation) only after three births. But the Jaṅgama-Liṅga form of worship that the Vīraśaivas perform is *aparakṛta*; it secures Mukti within the present birth alone. Thus the Hindu Brahmin requires at least three life-cycles to attain Mukti, whereas the Vīraśaivas can attain Mukti in this very life while still alive; therefore the Vīraśaivas are like Super-Brahmins. Then he says that the explanation of the practice of Ativarṇāśramadharmā and Aprakṛtabrahmaṇatva by the Vīraśaivas caused confusion and did not result in the independent status of the Vīraśaivas. This confusion was further compounded when the support for the basic principles of the Vīraśaivas was said to be from the Vēdic and especially the Upaniṣadic literature.

Professor Sakhare blames the post-Basava Vīraśaivas and the post-Basava Sanskrit literature of the Vīraśaivas, and states that this confusion could have been avoided if it was maintained that they were an independent religious fold without giving such explanations. It is to be noted that these Vīraśaiva scholars did not believe Liṅgāyatism to be a separate religion; there was no Vēdic-Āgamic divide, and there was no Aryan invasion and the Aryan-Dravidian divide that Professor Sakhare believes in. The basic principles

of the Vīraśaivas are indeed supported by the Vēdic and particularly the Upaniṣadic literature (12).

Professor Sakhare continues. Although Jains and most of the Sikhs are descendants of the Hindus, the position of Jains and Sikhs is safe, as both have thrown off their allegiance to the Vēdas and have maintained their position clearly by asserting the distinctness of creed, tenet and principles. 'If we boldly maintain that Liṅgāyatism is an independent religious entity, in spite of confusion and dubiousness caused to it by the trend of discussion noted above, we tread as a sure and safe ground regarding the status of Liṅgāyatas and their religion'.

Then he says that 'when reduced to a tabular form it will be as follows', and gives a branching depiction that gives this information. He divides the Hindus into two main branches: the first one is the non-Vēdic and non-Āgamic branch that includes the Buddhists, the Jains, and the now extinct Ārvākas; the second branch Vēdic-Āgamic has two sub-branches - Varṇāśramic and non-Varṇāśramic; the Varṇāśramic sub-branch includes Śaivas, Vaiṣṇavas, and Āryasamājists and others, the non-Varṇāśramic sub-branch is the Liṅgāyatas.

Professor Sakhare concludes this chapter by stating "We avow that we have no quarrel with

the Vēdas or their religion. We do not in the least mean to entertaining any separatist tendency. We discuss this question purely on principles as a matter of academic interest from the academic point of view. And we leave it to the readers to judge for themselves and see how far our conclusion is right”.

It is to be pointed out to the readers that Professor Sakhare has not presented the evidences to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that Liṅgāyatism deserves to be a separate religion. Throughout this book, he has many false assumptions, and is not only dogmatic at times but also ambivalent at other times in his opinion and presentation. He is the one who seems to be causing the confusion about the status of Liṅgāyatism.

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan wrote the ‘Foreword’ to Professor Sakhare’s book. He was one of the scholars who wrote on the history of Indian Philosophy. He was a strong advocate of the Vēdāntic Advaita Philosophy, a slightly modified Advaita Philosophy of Śaṅkarācārya. Dr. Radhakrishnan, later, after the attainment of independence of India from the British, became the first Vice-President of Independent India and then the second President of India. Dr. Radhakrishnan in his Foreword states *“The author takes great pain to make out that the Liṅgāyat faith is altogether independent of the Hindu*

religion which is primarily based on the authoritativeness of the Vēdas and the Varṇāśramadharmā. As the Liṅgāyat religion accepts the authoritativeness of the Āgamas and repudiates the distinctions of castes, it is said to be non-Hindu. I am afraid that this is taking a somewhat narrow view of the spirit of Hinduism”.

Liṅgāyat religious literature and scripture

This chapter on the scriptures is the fifteenth and the last chapter of the book. Professor Sakhare states that the confusion raised in the previous chapter as to whether Liṅgāyatism is a separate religion or not naturally leads to the question – was there no literature at the basis of the new religion that could have avoided such confusion? He then states that he is answering that question here in this chapter.

He starts by saying that it is already established that prophet Basava founded the Liṅgāyat religion by giving a different shape to the then existing form of Śaiva religion. Basava turned Śaivism into Liṅgāyatism by far reaching and astounding changes that worked like a miracle and changed the socio-religious life of the Hindus of his times. Basava started Anubhava Maṅṭapa for a thorough discussion of the principles. He was specially helped in this stupendous undertaking by his nephew Ćennabasava, and by Allama Prabhu, the matchless Yōgin who demonstrated to the world, his unflinching power of raising the practitioner to the heights of Yōgic attainment. In order to popularize the new movement, the principles were preached and conveyed to the public in the language of the people, Kannaḍa; it became the best means and medium of carrying conviction to

them. The result was the Vaçana literature; the members of Anubhava Maṅṭapa, every day sent to the people, messages by means of Vaçanas or sayings. The Vaçanas are like Upaniṣads in their poetic fervor and profundity of meaning. Vaçanas are short sentences, very telling, thrilling and soul-stirring, and unfailing in their effect. **Thus, the Vaçanaśūtra of Basava and the Saints or Śaraṇas is the basic scripture of the new religion.**

As to the Āgamas, Professor Sakhare states that the twenty-eight Śivāgamas are as much an authority to Liṅgāyatism as to Śaivas; but only the portions of Śivāgamas called Uttarāgamas, the latter portion of the Śivāgamas, apply to the Viraśaivas or Liṅgāyatas. The Uttara-vibhāgas of Śivāgamas are said to be solely and profoundly inspired by the **Śivādvaita-siddhānta** philosophy, the teaching about subjective illumination.

Professor Sakhare continues. After the Liṅgāyat religion came to be founded, treatises began to be written in Sanskrit in explanation of their religion and its fundamental principles. Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi is the first such religious treatise in Sanskrit. Liṅgadhāraṇaĉandrikā is another one that came much later. These Sanskrit treatises have support from not only the Śivāgamas but also from the Vēdic literature, specifically the Upaniṣads. Another Sanskrit treatise

Vēdāntasāravīraśaivaçintāmaṇi of Nañjaṇṇārya is all full of quotations from Vēdas, Upaniṣads and Purāṇas besides those of Āgamas. Professor Sakhare states 'writers of Sanskrit treatises, later than Śivayōgi, the author of Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi, lost sight of Vaçana Śāstra as the basis of the religion and as the basic religious scriptures; this was so because, they could not quote from the Vaçana literature in their Sanskrit works'. He also makes the following statement: 'The writers of Sanskrit treatises also had to have recourse to write in Sanskrit because they were surrounded by the Brahmanic Śaivas that adopted and followed Varṇāśramadharmā, and put queries in Sanskrit. The enthusiastic followers of the new religion had to meet their opponents on their own ground. They had to prove their view-point by quoting from Sanskrit literature and to explain the authorities quoted suitably to their own tenets. All this resulted in the confusion described just before; and Vaçana literature came to be kept in the background'. It is to be pointed out to the readers that it is not certain whether this seemingly story like statement is true or not.

Next, Professor Sakhare states that it is no use taking for granted all things as they are in Sanskrit and Kannaḍa literature from the historical point of view. Mahābhārata and eighteen Purāṇas are ascribed to the authorship of Vyāsa. At this juncture, he basically discusses the following which is taken from reference 12.

The core of the Mahābhārata is called 'Jaya' which means victory. Jaya with its 8,800 verses is attributed to Vēda Vyāsa. 'Bhārata' with 24,000 verses, containing the Jaya in its entirety, is said to have been recited by Vaiśampāyana who was one of Vyāsa's chief disciples. Mahābhārata is more than 100,000 verses, and is the expanded version of Bhārata. It is said to have been recited by Ugrasrava Sauti, a professional story teller, to an assembly of Ṛṣis. Jaya includes the well-known Bhagavad-Gītā. Thus, technically speaking, Vyāsa authored 'Jaya' including the 'Bhagavad-Gītā', and not Mahābhārata. Furthermore it is stated that Vyāsa's father Parāśara wrote the original text of Viṣṇu Purāṇa, and Vyāsa authored the rest, and edited and presented all the 18 Purāṇas. It is also said that Vyāsa's son Śuka was the narrator of Vyāsa's major Purāṇa called Śrīmad Bhāgavata. So many things seem to be ascribed to Vyāsa. There is a considerable controversy about the authorship of the Purāṇas.

Professor Sakhare continues. He states that Purāṇas gave so much scope for later writers of different parts of India and different schools and sects to insert their own stories and statements in the Purāṇas. The result has been that there is no unanimity in the manuscripts of Purāṇas and other works of different parts of India regarding their contents. Liṅgāyat authors also followed suit and wrote *Prabhuliṅgalīlā* and *Basava-purāṇa* in the name of Vyāsa.

In order to impart sanctity and authoritativeness to his work, the author of Prabhuliṅgalīlā, Siddhavīraśivayōgi, inserts it into *Bhaviṣya-purāṇa* that is ascribed to Vyāsa. Similarly there is a funny story in *Basava-purāṇa* which is ascribed to Vyāsa. [Here, it is to be pointed out to the readers that although the *Bhaviṣya-purāṇa* is one of the eighteen *Purāṇas* mentioned above ascribing authorship to Vyāsa, *Basava-purāṇa* is not one of those eighteen.] The story is that Vyāsa goes to Śiva in Kailāsa and asks Śiva why *Basava-purāṇa* is more popular than all his other *Purāṇas*; Śiva then gets *Basava-purāṇa* weighed against all the other *Purāṇas*, and shows to Vyāsa that *Basava-purāṇa* is weightier than all the other *Purāṇas* put together. Professor Sakhare exclaims “how are we to believe all this?”, and then says that we have to take all this in the spirit that it was the enthusiasm of the admirers of Basava that caused such statements.

Then Professor Sakhare appeals: “We, therefore, appeal to readers, at least to such as are Liṅgāyatas, to work in the field of research for the truth of this religion and for gathering rich harvests of real truths and principles, and for effecting real reformation in the present sad state of religion; so that the religion and the community should feel re-animation and attain rejuvenation”. The readers should note that, only in this spirit that is called for by Professor Sakhare

that this commentary on his book is written as a critical review. Furthermore, in response to Professor Sakhare's appeal, another book has been written and published; it is referenced here (12), and it is entitled 'Evolution of Viraśaiva Concepts and Śūnya Saṃpādane'. The readers may want to refer to it. Also, it is to be pointed out to the readers that Professor Sakhare does not specifically mention Śūnya Saṃpādane in this chapter about the scriptures. It is possible that he includes Śūnya Saṃpādane (11) which has 1543 Vaċanaś, in the 'Vaċanaśūstras of Basava and other Śaraṇas' which he calls as the basic scripture of the Viraśaivas/Liṅgāyatas.

Professor Sakhare's last sentence in his book is "We conclude our work with hearty prayers to God, the Universal Consciousness, nameless but named Śiva the Auspicious, and His consort Śakti, Vimarśa, also nameless but named Ambika, the Great Mother". It is astonishing to see this type of statement from Professor Sakhare for two main reasons. First is that he uses the term 'prayers' as above in 'hearty prayers to God'. It should be noted that Viraśaivas do not pray. They worship and completely surrender. Use of the English word 'prayer' should be avoided. The word 'prayer' means an earnest request for something as in the act of petitioning God to grant a favor; it is kind of begging God to sanction something. It indicates duality – that the individual and God are two separate and independent entities – two

Realities. Viraśaivas consider the worshipper and the worshipped to be one and the same. Namaḥ in 'Ōm namaḥ Śivāya' means obeisance. Obeisance is bowing down to show respect, or submission. Therefore the Viraśaivas do not pray. Second is that he uses the term 'consort' as above in 'His consort Śakti'. The English word 'consort' means 'spouse', 'mate', or 'wife'. That implies that Śiva and Śakti are two different entities. That is not acceptable to the Viraśaivas/Liṅgāyatas. It is unfortunate that Professor Sakhare, after all that he has stated in his book, and who is a firm believer in monism/advaitism of Liṅgāyatas/Viraśaivas, ends his book with such a statement that is not acceptable to the Liṅgāyatas/Viraśaivas. He could have just said *Ōm Namaḥ Śivāya*.

Ōm namaśśivāya

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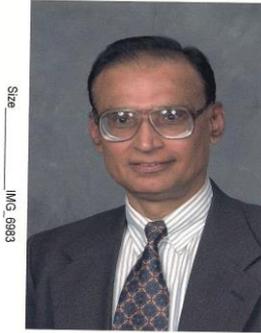
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