

## “Lingayathism” a Scientific and Native Religion of India

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Lingayathism is alive intact in veins of majority of the masses across south India. Lingayathism has each and every characteristics to consider as a universal religion. Founder of the Lingayathism Guru Basaveshwara gave birth to Lingayathism as a counter action of the evil traditions, such as bifurcating human beings, women inequality, improper distribution of public wealth, and so on.

Lingayathism is started by Guru Basaveshwara (1134-1196) and is nourished by the council type body called **Anubhava Mantapa** which is world first parliament. The proceedings of the Anubhava Mantapa are recorded in the form of Vachana literature, the new form of literature. These are typical Oath's written by various Sharana and Sharane's based on their experience and knowledge. This provides very high moral, spiritual inspirations and crystal clear knowledge about supreme reality. However most of the Vachanakaras (writer of Vachana) were common mans. Vachana literature is basic literature (scripture) of the Lingayathism.

Before to Lingayathism there was so many crucial rituals without base were harassing the society, untochability has spread its clutches so that no body was in the position to think from where this untochablity came. Is it has any scriptural base. Working classes who strive to produce livelihood were neglected by so called upper castes. Majority of the masses were not at all getting the true knowledge about God (Creator, organizer and destroyer).

In tyrannical bifurcation called Varna; society was divided into four divisions. Wherein near about 95 percentage population was named after Soodra Varna. Women were also considered as Soodra by birth itself. As per Varna system Brahmana is the first division, Kshatriya is the second division, Vaishya is preferred third and Soodra was the last and least division of the society. The human illusionary Varna's are told to be created by god, these restrictions are bounding till to the death, no one is empowered to cross the barrier.

Guru Basaveshwara turned the ladder of Varna into its opposite (wise versa) direction, where working class got first preference. Guru Basaveshwara made Kayaka (working for survival with divine mind set) is mandatory to each and every human being. Without Kayaka nobody has right to live. Guru Basaveshwara gives a very significant ethics of Dasooha voluntary contribution of the part of earning to the poor/society is every one's duty. Where in Dasoohi (giver) is responsible of correct utilization of Dasooha made. Guru Basaveshwara removed all bifurcations and named it as a unique community called Lingayath.

It is said Hindu culture has power to resolve all the formulations within its territorial limit. On pursuing the History we find India gave birth to maximum of religions. All those religions faiths come into existence to overcome difficult, useless, unequal tyrannical rituals of Hindu culture. But the following Vachana of Urilinga Peddi clearly denies the superiority of Hinduism over Lingayathism; it contends all the bases of Veda, Shastra, Agama and Purana of Hinduism and it establishes the unique features of Lingayat religion in local (Kannada) language in a super special way.

ಉರಿಲಿಂಗಪೆದ್ದಿ ಸವಸ6/1539

ವೇದಮಾರ್ಗವ ಮೀರಿದರುಮಹಾವೇದಿಗಳು ಲಿಂಗವಂತರು,  
 ಆ ಲಿಂಗವಂತರ ಮಹಾವೇದಮಾರ್ಗವ ಲಿಂಗವೇ ಬಲ್ಲನಯ್ಯಾ  
 ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಮಾರ್ಗವ ಮೀರಿದರು ಮಹಾಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಜ್ಞರು ಲಿಂಗವಂತರು,  
 ಆ ಲಿಂಗವಂತರ ಮಹಾಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಮಾರ್ಗವಲಿಂಗವೇ ಬಲ್ಲನಯ್ಯಾ  
 ಆಗಮಕ್ರಿಯ ಮೀರಿದರು ಮಹಾ ಆಗಮಿಕರು ಲಿಂಗವಂತರು,  
 ಲಿಂಗವಂತರ ಮಹಾ ಆಗಮಕ್ರಿಯ ಲಿಂಗವೇ ಬಲ್ಲನಯ್ಯಾ  
 ಪುರಾಣದ ಪರಿಯ ಮೀರಿದರು ಮಹಾಪುರಾಣಿಕರು ಲಿಂಗವಂತರು,  
 ಆ ಲಿಂಗವಂತರ ಪುರಾಣದ ಪರಿಯ ಆ ಲಿಂಗವೇ ಬಲ್ಲನಯ್ಯಾ  
 ದೇವ ದಾನಮಾನವರಿಗೆಯೂ ಅರಿಯಬಾರದು.  
 ವೇದಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಪುರಾಣಾನಿ ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟಂ ವೇಶ್ಯಾಂಗನಾ ಇವ  
 ಯಾ ಪುನಶ್ಯಾಂಕರೀ ವಿದ್ಯಾ ಗುಪ್ತಾ ಕುಲವಧೂರಿವ  
 ಎಂದುದಾಗಿ,  
 ಆರಿಗೆಯೂ ಅರಿಯಬಾರದು.  
 ಲಿಂಗವಂತರು ಉಪಮಾತೀತರು, ವಾಙ್ಮನೋತೀತರು, ಆರ ಪರಿಯೂ ಇಲ್ಲ.  
 ಸ್ವೇಚ್ಛಾವಿಗ್ರಹೇಣೈವ ಸ್ವೇಚ್ಛಾಚಾರಗಣೇಶ್ವರಾ:  
 ಶಿವೇನ ಸಹ ತೇ ಭುಜ್ಜಿತ್ವಾ ಭಕ್ತಾ ಯಾಂತಿ ಶಿವಂ ಪದಂ  
 ಲೋಕಚಾರನಿಬಂಧೇನ ಲೋಕಾಲೋಕಾವಿವರ್ಜಿತಾ:  
 ಲೋಕಾಚಾರಂ ಪರಿತ್ಯಜ್ಯ ಪುಣಲಿಂಗಪ್ರಸಾದಿನ:  
 ಎಂದುದಾಗಿ,  
 ಈ ಲೋಕದ ಮಾರ್ಗವ ನಡೆಯರು,  
 ಲೋಕದ ಮಾರ್ಗವ ನುಡಿಯರು.  
 ಲಿಂಗವಂತರ ನಡೆ ನುಡಿ ಆಚಾರ ಅನುಭವ ಆಯತ  
 ಬೇರೆ ಕಾಣಿರಣ್ಣಾ.

ಶ್ರೀಗುರುಲಿಂಗದಿಂದಲುದಯಿಸಿ ಪ್ರಾಣಲಿಂಗಸಂಭಂಧಿಗಳಾದ  
ಮಹಾಲಿಂಗವಚಿತರಿಗೆ ಪ್ರಾಣಲಿಂಗ, ಕಾಯಲಿಂಗ  
ಭಕ್ತಕಾಯ ಮಮಕಾಯವಾಗಿ ದೇಹಾದಿ ತತ್ತ್ವವೆಲ್ಲಾ ಶಿವತತ್ತ್ವ,  
ಇದು ಕಾರಣ.

ಸರ್ವಾಂಗಲಿಂಗಮಹಾಮಹಿಮೆ ಲಿಂಗವಂತರ ಕ್ರಿಯೆಲ್ಲವೂ ಲಿಂಗಕ್ರೀ.  
ಮುಟ್ಟಿದುದೆಲ್ಲಾ ಅರ್ಪಿತ, ಕೊಂಡುದೆಲ್ಲಾ ಪ್ರಸಾದ.  
ಸದ್ಯೋನ್ಮುಕ್ತರು, ಸರ್ವಾಂಗಲಿಂಗವಯ್ಯಾ  
ಉರಿಲಿಂಗಪೆದ್ದಿಪ್ಪಿಯ ವಿಶ್ವೇಶ್ವರ.

(Translation)

Lingayaths are high Vedics, who crossed the way of Veda,  
That of the high Vedic way of Lingayath's is known by Linga itself.  
Lingayaths are high Shastrics who crossed the way of Shastra,  
That of the high Shastric way of Lingayath is known by Linga itself.  
Lingayaths are high Agamics who crossed the way of Agamas  
That of the high Agamic way of Lingayath is known by Linga itself.  
Lingayaths are high Puranics who crossed the types of Purana,  
That of the high Puranic way of Lingayath is known by Linga itself.

It is not knowable by Lords ghosts and humans.

Veda Shastra puranani spatha vaishyangana eva I

Ya Punshankari vidya gupta kulavadhuriva I I

It's not known by anybody Lingayath's are beyond comparison of similarities, beyond  
comparison of talk and sense

They are not as anybody.

It is said as sechhavigrhenaiva swechhachaganeshwaraha I

Shivena saha te bhujtva bhakta yanti shivam padam II

Lokacharnibhandena lokalokavivatjitaah I

Lokacharam parityajaya pranlingprsadinha II

They can't follow the way of this world,

They can't tell way of this world.

Way, speech, practice, experience, acceptance of Lingayath's is different.

They are created by preceptor and Linga.

Highness Lingayath's are relatives of Prana Linga.

Had have live in Linga (Pranalinga) body is Linga (Kaya Linga) body belongs to god all the  
body ethics is Shiva ethics (Shivatatva)

Every action of the supreme highness Lingayath is nothing but action of Linga. Everything  
come to touch is nothing but offering, everything got is divine grace (Prasada)

The persons who achieve latest salvation, their every organ is nothing but Linga,

Urilinga Peddipriya Vishweshwara.

SVS6/1539

Person having Linga is called as a Lingayath, he should not think of all the other  
subtle. Lingayath religion is derived from the Saiva and its name has been recognized by the  
Sharanas of 12<sup>th</sup> century. Readopting the ethic and practices of Shaivism is nothing but  
foolishness. Madivala Machideva is giving subtle evidence in terms of Vachana.

ಮಡಿವಾಳ ಮಾಚಿದೇವ, ಸವಸ 8/637

ನಮಗೆ ಲಿಂಗವುಂಟು,

ನಾವು ಲಿಂಗವಂತರೆಂದು ನುಡಿವರು.  
ಮತ್ತೆ ಮರಳಿ ಭವಿಷ್ಯವದೈವಂಗಳಿಗಿರಗುವ  
ಈ ಮಂಗಮಾನವರನೇನೆಂಬೆನಯ್ಯಾ,  
ಕಲಿದೇವಯ್ಯಾ.

Basaveshwara the founder of Lingayath religion and he gave the unique concepts called Guru, Linga, Jangama and Prasada; Basaveshwara preached and practiced these ethics with a new zeal. We may find clear cut references through Vachana literature. Let us examine Vachana of Madivala Machideva.

ಮಡಿವಾಳ ಮಾಚಿದೇವ, ಸವಸ 8/682  
ಬಸವಣ್ಣ ಮಾಡಲಿಕ್ಕೆ ಗುರುವಾಯಿತ್ತು.  
ಬಸವಣ್ಣ ಮಾಡಲಿಕ್ಕೆ ಲಿಂಗವಾಯಿತ್ತು.  
ಬಸವಣ್ಣ ಮಾಡಲಿಕ್ಕೆ ಜಂಗಮವಾಯಿತ್ತು.  
ಬಸವಣ್ಣ ಮಾಡಲಿಕ್ಕೆ ಪ್ರಸಾದವಾಯಿತ್ತು.  
ಬಸವಣ್ಣ ಮಾಡಲಿಕ್ಕೆ ಈರೇಳುಲೋಕವಾಯಿತ್ತು.  
ಬಸವಣ್ಣನಿಂದಾದ ಕಲಿದೇವಯ್ಯಾ.

SVS8/682

(Translation)

Basavanna is reason for Guru  
Basavanna is reason for Linga  
Basavanna is reason for Jangama  
Basavanna is reason for Prsada  
Basavanna is reason for seven worlds  
Basavanna is reason for Lord Kalideva

### Religion should think of poor and unables

Swami Vivekananda highlights that the religious deeds should be centred on the poor people, otherwise the religion may lose its importance, “Remember that the nation lives in the cottage<sup>1</sup>”. Guru Basaveshwara was motif of improves the whole mankind in each and every corners of life. Special interest was taken towards lower groups and given the special grade, he was very near and dear of downtrodden the following vachana shows the Guru Basaveshwara’s keenness.

ಬಸವಣ್ಣ ಸವಸ1/349  
ಅಪ್ಪನು ನಮ್ಮ ಮದಾರ ಚಿನ್ನಯ್ಯ,  
ಬೊಪ್ಪನು ನಮ್ಮ ಡೋಹರ ಕಕ್ಕಯ್ಯ,  
ಚಿಕ್ಕಯ್ಯನೆಮ್ಮಯ್ಯ ಕಾಣಯ್ಯ  
ಅಣ್ಣನು ನಮ್ಮ ಕಿನ್ನರ ಬೊಮ್ಮಯ್ಯ  
ಎನ್ನನೆತಕ್ಕರಿಯಿರಿ, ಕೂಡಲಸಂಗಯ್ಯಾ? SVS1/349

(Translation)

Chennayya, the cobbler, is my sire;  
Kakkayya; the tanner, my uncle is;

Chikkayya is my grandsire, lo!  
My elder brother is  
Bommayya the lutenist.  
Then, why, Kudalasangama, do not  
Take cognisance of me?

Vof B348

### **Literature and scriptures Lingayath religion<sup>2</sup>**

Basava, the prime minister of Bijjala, founded the Lingayath religion by giving a different shape to the existing form of Shaiva religion mixed with Varnashramadharma. He gave a different term and form to Shaivism by separating it from the Varnashramadharma and shifting out all crudities. He borrowed the 36 fundamental principles (Tatva's) from the Agamas; he adopted the five materials of Shiva-worship (Vibhuti, Rudrakshi, Teertha which is called Padodaka, Prasada and Mantra) and weaved together in a ritualistic chain of Shivapuja. He adopted Shivalinga that was put on the body, and gave it a definite meaning and made it the central and vital point of the religion. He made Jangamas the peripatetic gurus to guide the followers of the religion for explaining and removing the difficulties at any stage of the practice of Shivayoga. He found the necessity of gurus as instructors for the devotees in matters spiritual. All these formed the Sadhana of the religion. He made religion a personal affair, of course under the constant guidance of Gurus and occasional instructors of Jangamas. He destroyed the artificial barriers put against women from the privileges of religious life. In the same way, he eradicated the inhuman exclusion of a section of the people branded as Shudras from the privileges of religious life. He thereby turned Shaivism into Lingayathism by these far-reaching and astounding changes that worked like a miracle and changed the socio-religious life of the Hindus of his times. He framed Shatsthala, the technique of Shivayoga on scientific basis. For this stupendous work he started Shivanubhavamanatapa, a Gnanamantapa for a thorough discussion of the principles. He extended all facilities to the reach of his saintly followers to practice the principles and prove experimentally the practicability and efficiency of Shiva yoga. He specially helped in the stupendous under-taking of the new religious movement by his nephew, Chennabasava, the genius that framed the brain of Anubhavamantapa, and by Allamaprabhu, the matchless Yogin that demonstrated the world not only the practicability and efficiency of the Lingayath yoga but also its unfailing power raising the practitioner to the heights of Yogic attainments. All this was done in a short period of about nine years, like the work of Christ. The new movement spread like wild fire and attracted streams of followers; and in a short

time the new community became very popular by conversion and admission into the new fold of all new comers. In order to popularize the new movement Basava followed the wise examples of the prophet, Buddha, preaching and conveying the principles of the new movement in the language of the people, Kannada, which thus became the best means and medium of carrying conviction to them. The result was the Vachanas of the members of Anubhavamantapa who every day sent message to the people by means of Vachanas or sayings. The Vachanas are like Upanishads in their poetic fervour and profundity of meaning, fresh from the oven of spiritualized hearts. They are short sentences, very explanatory, thrilling and soul-stirring and unending in their effect. It is a voluminous literature now coming gradually to light and immensely appreciated.

Lingayath Religion has its own Doctrine (Siddanta), achievements, Philosophy (Darshana), Consecration, literature, culture, Heritage etc.,

### **Lingayath religion is world religion <sup>3</sup>**

Lingayath religion is a very progressive religion; it not only gives importance to the bare rituals. Bare rituals, but also it gives preference to internal spiritual development. It is world religion because of its profound values.

It is world religion because,

1. It preaches the ethics worth accepted by everyone belonging of the present and future everywhere in the world it preaches the values acceptable at all the three times, past present and future.
2. It has wide scope of improvement of everyone; it gives religious consecration to everyone.
3. It leads to the worship of the creator in the form of world shape; preaches that all the human beings are the children of God. It has the vision of welfare of all the living beings. It propounds personal welfare, social welfare, national welfare and universal welfare. It preaches the universal family-hood. It is a family religion because it teaches to respect parents, sisters-brothers. It is national religion as it honour nation as mother, and treats every citizen with equality. It is universal religion as it considers God as the father of every one, considers all human beings as brothers. And this is the main feature of Sharana (true follower of Lingayathism)

4. It is advised the commons to study the religious scripture and practice them in personal life, build the moral character, propagate the ethics, protect the religion. Because the Lingayath religion is of commons, for commons and by commons.

Contributions of Basaveshwara to the universe are countless. Today's our perception of equality is concept of Basaveshwara. Kayaka, Dashooha, Social justice, Emancipation of women, Movement to eradication of untouchability and concept of universal welfare are the contributions of Basaveshwara.

Religions found in India Buddhism, Jainism, Lingayathism and Sikhism, religions are found in India to heal the defects/deficiencies within Hindu religion. Lingaythism is found in a very scientific, democratic way and nourished by economically lowest but very high by moral.

In accordance with any aspect all the others are considered as the tribes, castes of Hindu Religion. Lingayath religion is not at all a part of Hinduism. In Hinduism people belonging to 4 Verna and untouchable by name of fifth Verna were there. If Lingayath accepts belonging of Hinduism then they should chose a Verna one of the four Verna. In Hindu there is Upanayan and Yagnopavita (religious consecration) to the Brahmins, Vaishyas and Kshatriyas only. They only are treated as Dvijas. For the peoples of Shudras and fifth Verna's there is not at all Upanayana (religious consecration). People not having Janivar (Upanayana) are considered as Shudra. Without having Janivar Lingayaths will become untouchables. Hindu religion is based on Veda, Agama, Shruti, and Smritis. Guru Basaveshwara the founder of Lingayath religion contends the faults of Veda, Shastra and Smiritis. The Vachana scripture given by Guru Basaveshwara and his fellow persons (Saharans) is the constitution of Lingayath religion. Hindu religion gives preference to fire (Agni) and is followed by performing Homa-Havana, Yagna-Yaga as Agni. Wedding is also performed in the presence of Agni. Lingayath religion does not perform any consecration it does in the witness of Guru, Linga and Jangama. In Vedic Hindu the entrance is restricted. Lingayath accepts every one through Deeksha. By these above points it is essential to get the independent recognition for to Lingayathism.

Lingayathism has more plus/positive points; it has more relevant and specific features at preaching contemporary society. By following the above discussion it follows that the Lingayathism is an independent religion and it is better equipped than Hinduism in solving the contemporary problems. However the deviation of present day practice of Lingayathism from their teachings of its proponent Sri Basaveshwara, bring out the necessity of reorienting Lingayathism.

## **Conclusion**

Lingayathism is an independent religion profound by Guru Basaveshwara in 12th Century; it has very scientific ethics, practices and most progressive values. Guru Basaveshwara enriched Lingayathism with world humanitarian values; scientific reasoning practices and universal frame work. Lingayath religion is also a very unique religion found to contend the false rituals. Lingayath religion is elder then the Sikhism in age but, it is very unfortunate that Lingayathism is till to date hidden in the Hindu culture. But it's indeed a native religion of India which fulfils most of the essentials to be a religion and even it has the capability of becoming role model to the contemporary times.

## **Abbreviations**

SVS=Samagra Vachana Samputa, a collection of "Vachana" written by various Sharanas/Sharnes Published in 15 editions, by Kannada Pustaka Pradhikar (Kannada Book Authority of Karnataka), Government of Karnataka, Bangalore. Translated by Nagshetty K Shetkar. *Samagra Vachana Samputa (5) =5<sup>th</sup> addition of Samagra Vachana Samputa, V No 307=Vachana Number in the book*

Vof B348 = English translated form of Vachana's of Basaveshwara took from the book Vachana's of Basavanna; Pub Annana Balaga Sirigere. No denotes the number of Vachana in that book

## **References**

<sup>1</sup>Swami Vivekananda, "Caste Culture and Socialism" Page118

<sup>2</sup>M. R. Sakhare, "History and philosophy of Lingayath Religion" Page 685.

<sup>3</sup> B. C. Javali "Pravachana Pitamaha" (Master Preacher) Page115. 1995.