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## BASAVA AND THE EMERGENCE OF LINGAYAT IDENTITY

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### ABSTRACT

According to Murugha Mutt seer Shivamurthy Murugha Sharana, the emergence of Basavanna meant that Lingayats were Dalits. The seer stated, "Lingayats like The Lingayats emerged as a reactionary force against Hinduism in the twelfth century," when he spoke at an event to celebrate Hadapada Appanna Jayanti here on Friday. It assimilated aspects of the larger Hindu traditions while rejecting the majority of them, making the demand for a separate religious status rather complicated. The Karnataka Congress government, led by Siddaramaiah, has declared the Lingayats to be a religious minority, a decision that is expected to have a significant impact on the upcoming assembly elections.



Since its inception, Hinduism has been home to a variety of sub-traditions and competing traditions. In the 12th century, the Lingayats also emerged as a reactionary force against Hinduism. It assimilated aspects of the larger Hindu traditions while rejecting the majority of them, making the demand for a separate religious status rather complicated. However, the fact that a ferocious political struggle for votes lies beneath the socio-cultural demand for a separate religion further complicates the Lingayat issue. According to historian Manu Devadevan, the Lingayat agitation "took off in the early twentieth century" and has since gradually become politicized. In the late nineteenth century when the main enumeration occurred, a large portion of the networks in India began distinguishing themselves as homogenous gatherings. Therefore, at the time, it was largely a cultural movement. There is nothing specifically political there. That only occurs after the 1980s.

**KEYWORDS :** cultural movement , socio-cultural demand , Lingayats.

### INTRODUCTION

It makes sense that the community, which makes up 17% of Karnataka's population at the moment, is a significant source of political party support. The Lingayats have become ardent supporters of the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) over the past few decades. The BJP stands to lose a lot of their effort to build a Hindu vote bank by giving the community a separate religious status. In contrast, the Congress stands to benefit equally from the desired branching. However, the fundamental issue at the heart of the commotion is who the Lingayats are and what exactly is their religious identity. The custom of Lingayatism is known to

have been established by friendly reformer and scholar Basavanna in twelfth century Karnataka. There is no doubt that Basavanna gave the community the shape of a well-organized, structured mass movement, despite the debate over whether he founded the sect or simply reformed an existing order. He is still revered by the sect's adherents as their religion's founder and primary philosopher.

The religious movement of Basavanna must be situated within the political framework of medieval Karnataka, specifically during the reign of King Bijala II. This time period in Karnataka was characterized by a caste-based social system, a feudal economy, and the predominance of Brahmanical Hindu values. Not only did the social, political, and religious order blend into one another, but they also supported and benefited from one another. In addition, Shaivite practices dominated medieval Karnataka's religious framework. According to historian K. Ishwaran, "it is of the utmost importance to see that Lingayatism, although historically related to this type of Shaivism, was born as a negation of its fundamental principles, which were indistinguishable from the mainstream Brahmanical Hinduism." As a result, the Lingayats strongly oppose Hindu social practices like the wearing of the sacred thread and caste discrimination, even though they were and are steadfast worshippers of the Hindu god Shiva.

### **Basavanna's vision influential groups in Karnataka.**

A societal order based on human freedom, equality, rationality, and brotherhood was Basavanna's vision. Through vachanas, or prose-lyrics, he and his followers propagated their ideas, with the caste system as their primary target, which they vehemently opposed. Basavanna asserts, "The birthless has no caste distinctions, no ritual pollution" in one of his vachanas. He was against the Hindu Brahmanical ritualism and its adherence to holy books like the Vedas. One of the most powerful groups in Karnataka today is made up of Basavanna's followers. They hold God Shiva and Basavanna in high regard. Former Karnataka chief minister B.S. Yeddyurappa, journalist Gauri Lankesh, and scholar M.M. Kalburgi are a few well-known people who are also Lingayats. The Lingayat sect fits into a larger trend of Bhakti movements that spread throughout South India beginning in the 8th century AD. The Bhakti tradition was a social reform movement that was centered on Hindu Gods and Goddesses but broke away from the Hindu fold by providing people of all castes and creeds with a path to spirituality. In a way, they were movements that started in Hinduism but tried to change what the followers thought were unfair practices. In this way, none of the Bhakti movements could become a separate religion; rather, they chose to improve the religion into which they belonged.

Basava, the Lingayat movement's founder, and the other saint-mystics (like Cennabasava, Basava's nephew; and Allama Prabhu) who assisted in the dissemination of its teachings are enshrined in the sect's lore. The Kannada people's idiom is based on their own sayings and legends about their lives. The symbolism and thoughts introduced in these works give fascinating differences between Lingayat convictions and those of the Brahmanical custom. The crow, for example, is a courier of death in Brahmanical Hinduism. As part of their funeral rites, many Hindus believe that their ancestors have returned from the dead by feeding crows. In contrast, in Lingayat culture, the crow is regarded as a positive symbol of community and sociability because of its deep commitment to its community. The jangama (priest) and lingayat guru (spiritual leader) have a significant impact on the community. Life-cycle ceremonies are performed by priests, who can be male or female. Additionally, some are itinerant healers and astrologers who cater to the requirements of the local populace. Lingayats have their own temples and monasteries (mathas), which are thriving centers for religious education and culture. Because of their connection to Basava and other Lingayat saints, sacred locations like Kalyan and Ulive are visited by pilgrims.

### Lingayats was different

The situation with the Lingayats, however, was different. They broke radically from the traditional Bhakti paradigm, but they also fit into the category of a social reform movement within Hinduism. "Lingayatism challenged the existing Brahmanical Hindu system to its roots, and made good its challenge by becoming a highly structured movement, striving for the institutionalization of the same or similar values professed by the Bhakti movements in general," writes Ishwaran. The conventional Bhakti movements were only marginally, vaguely, and emotionally critical of the system. In itself, the Lingayat Bhakti movement in Karnataka resembles a cult. The Lingayat status has been inherited since ancient times. This is the sort of thing that didn't occur inside the Bhakti developments somewhere else in South India, which is the reason they are requesting a different religion status," says Devadevan. In this manner, Basavanna's development didn't simply remove the Hindu social practices yet additionally split away from the other Bhakti developments by shaping a standardized request for themselves.

In the beginning, the Lingayat movement was a rebellion against Brahmanical Hinduism. It is based on the teachings of Basava, who lived in Kalyana, a small town in central India in what is now northern Karnataka State. Basava lived from about 1125 to about 1170. Basava, also known as Basavanna, was a Brahman who opposed caste, ritualism, the idea of ritual pollution, the supremacy of Brahman priests, and numerous other aspects of contemporary Hindu society and religion. Instead, he preached a populist message of equality, brotherhood, and independence. The teachings of Basava spread throughout the region, where they became deeply ingrained in the community. Lingayats continue to play a significant role in Karnataka's culture and society over 800 years later. In India, Lingayats belong to a religious sect that was founded in the 12th century AD. The name, which means "the people who bear the linga (phallic symbol)," comes from the words "linga" and "ayta." Because members of the sect wear a small stone phallus somewhere on their bodies, this is a literal description. Women wear it on a neckstring underneath their clothing, while men carry it in a silver box that is suspended on a scarf or thread around the neck. Lingayats are also known as Virashaivas due to their fervent devotion to Shiva, the god whose symbol is the linga.

Kannada, which is considered to be the language of Lingayat culture, is an identity that all Lingayats share. The teachings of the sect's founder, Basava, were specifically presented in Kannada rather than Sanskrit so that they could be understood by the general public. In order to unite the Kannada-speaking population into a single administrative division, the boundaries of Karnataka State—at the time known as Mysore—were redrawn in 1953 and 1956. The Dravidian language family includes Kannada as one of its four major languages. Although it is written in its own script, it is related to the other South Indian Dravidian languages of Tamil, Telugu, and Malayalam.

Lingayats commemorate their saints' birthdays, with Basava's being especially significant. Nandikodu, or the horn of Nandi, and Vyasantol, or the hand of Vyas, are two religious processions that are said to be unique to the Lingayats. According to legend, Nandi, Shiva's sacred bull, once lost a horn in a fight with a demon. The horn was found by his followers, who proudly paraded it around. Lingayats carry Nandi's horn, a long bamboo pole with two brass bulls attached, in a procession through the streets. A cloth hand is made, tied to Nandi's horn, and paraded through the streets on another occasion. This is thought to be the hand of Vyas, the purported author of the Purânas.

### Lingayat dwellings reflect

Lingayat homes are examples of regional house styles and patterns of rural settlement. The shapeless, nucleated villages of Maharashtra give way to the compact, square settlements—often with a tributary hamlet—of southern Karnataka, which is where North Indian and South Indian patterns meet. Mud and stone are typically used to build houses, but cement is becoming more common. The front

veranda of a wealthy Lingayat farmer's home typically has a roof and is constructed on a raised platform. This is used to relax and keep visitors entertained. An entryway, with cut figures of Basava, leads into the living quarters, which incorporate the kitchen, a room put away for love, and slows down for steers. Behind the house, goods like hay and fuel made from cow dung are kept. The occupants' occupation, taste, and financial situation are reflected in the furnishings.

The Lingayats have a complex social stratification system that is very similar to a caste system, despite the fact that the Basava preached that everyone was equal and that caste was wrong. In traditional Hindu society, women enjoy a higher status than men do. In household and festive rituals, they have the same religious authority as men. However, women still tend to play a submissive role in village communities. There is a strong emphasis on having male children because they are regarded as essential for long-term security and salvation. This parachutiya, or parachutist according to Merriam-Webster or Oxford, is at a crossroads. figuratively and nonliterally. The journey to Kudala Sangama, Basava's samadhi at the meeting point of Krishna and Malaprabha, Malaprabha's thirst for the waters of Mahadayi, Mhadei, or Mandovi, was largely fruitless, which was to be expected. Very much like the outing the day preceding to Basava Bagewadi, the apparent origin of the writer? philosopher? saint? social activist? the individual who, without realizing it, established a new religion?

### **Basava sharanas,**

The majority of pilgrims only speak Kannada .How can that be? To speak a language other than your mother's would necessitate a formal education, a luxury that few people can afford. That's why they were drawn to vachanas, which means "speech" or "that which is said." Lingayatism (but not Veerashaivism, whose scriptures are referred to as shivagamas, shaiva agamas, or simply agamas) is based on the prose poetry of Basava and his followers known as sharanas, which are literally translated as "refugees" in the people's language. However, this is also the reason why the... sect is not well-known outside of Karnataka and its Marathi- and Telugu-speaking neighbors. religion? movement? particularly to the north of the Vindhya. For CBSE students, Basava was in the 7th standard NCERT history textbooks under "bhakti-sufi traditions." It was easy to miss if the teacher skipped that page in a rush to finish the syllabus, and it was easy to forget once you wrote what you had learned by rote the night before the final exam. Additionally, scholars will strongly disagree with what is written, which describes Basava as "a Brahmana... who was originally a Jaina" and his followers as "Virashaivas (heroes of Shiva) or Lingayats "What is Lingayatism and whether or not it is a separate religion, and if so, why has the movement intensified recently? In seeking answers to these questions from the common man, language is a barrier, and I am not Edwin Moses, despite the fact that there are workarounds.

Lingayats are seen as a vote bank for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), but that wasn't always the case—more on that later. His leaning toward the Congress makes him an anomaly. But politics aside, his perspective is not unusual. At the Basaveshwara Temple in Basava Bagewadi, the alleged birthplace of Basava—yes, that word again, ostensible—a day earlier, there was this somewhat reticent bank employee. This is due to the fact that no one really knows where he was born .Any sample size below 30 is considered statistically insignificant, so three is hardly a reliable number. However, for news editors and reporters who report to them, two independent sources are sufficient to run a story. This is not insignificant in the context of journalism. However, it appears that, regardless of whether they identify as Hindu, Hindu-Lingayat, Veerashaiva-Lingayat, Lingayat, or Veerashaiva, and regardless of whether or not they support Lingayatism as a separate religion, the minority label is only being pursued for its associated benefits. Why bother with the average person? Why not start with the academics, activists, and leaders of civil society? The common man is important because on May 12 he may or may not vote, regardless of whether he is Hindu, Lingayat, or both, believes that Lingayatism should be a separate religion, understands or even

reads the vachanas, or practices what Basava preached in place of or in addition to practices that are referred to as Vedic, Brahminical, or Hindu.

### Review of literature

Therefore, adherents of the Lingayat religion tell you that vachanakaras, or composers of vachanas such as Basava and his followers or Sharanas from the 12th century, literally mean "refugees," predate Chaucer (who lived in the 14th century). They are correct; in fact, they even predate Dante (who lived in the 13th-14th centuries), but there have been earlier works of literature written in the vernacular, or in a similar vein, anubhava mantapa, the "hall of experience" established by Basava in Kalyan (now Basavakalyana in Bidar district, the crown of Karnataka), is referred to as the "world's first Parliament" due to the fact that it was established in the 12th century and the Magna Carta was not issued until 1215. It had 770 members who represented all segments of society. There are additional examples of even older parliaments, such as Iceland's Althing, which was established in 930.

From the abolition of sati to widow remarriage, every social change from the Indus to the Indian Ocean is often attributed to Basava. You should not even consider mentioning Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar or Ram Mohan Roy's contributions. Convictions abound throughout the state, bordering on the militant and fanatical. And if you say something contrary, how can you be sure that one of the militants, the extremists, won't pick up a weapon to silence you? The Lingayat and Basava schools of thought hold that there is no caste, gender, priests, or temples—only work. Kayakave Kailasa, "work is worship" almost but not quite. Kayaka, societally beneficial work. The majority of Shiva's followers were Shaivites, and with the exception of a few priests and landed gentry, they were members of the working class—farmers, potters, cobblers, tanners, and others—poor, downtrodden, and the dregs of society. Kailasa was Shiva's home. In addition, The Ishta Linga was an extension of Basava's views regarding temples and priests: the former are made by the wealthy, the latter are middlemen, and the poor have no use for either. Instead, they should treat their bodies as temples, using their legs as pillars and their heads as shikharas, or the peaks or crowns of temples, and they should be able to pray at any time, anywhere, without the assistance of a priest. After all, you don't get someone else to eat for you when you're hungry, do you? As they are today, women were stifled as they were passed from mother to father to husband to pyre. People who lack access to education but have a lot of complaints because they have been discriminated against at every turn. Maybe that is the reason Basava held the Shaiva wording with minor changes and significant redefinitions, in order to not confound anybody, particularly the less educated of his supporters. As a result, the names of Shiva that people were accustomed to hearing at the end of the vachanas are the vachanankitas—sort of signatures—Basava himself typically signed off with O Kudalasangamadeva, oh lord of the meeting rivers. The sthavara linga, the Shiva of the temples who could not move, changed into the ishta linga, a personal Shiva who was a piece of stone wrapped in cloth and tied to a thread that was worn around the neck as a symbol of a formless supreme being.

Ramjan Darga, who is a lot more assertive than Mahadevappa but is no less accommodating, asserts, "They were like Naxals." The insurgency drove by Basava was brief and squashed fiercely by the state. The historical evidence is scant, and no two scholars agree completely on how it got to that point. Darga, a former news editor for the Kannada daily Praja Vani, is now the director of the Basavadi Sharanara Peeth at Gulbarga University and the Centre for Vachana Studies at Bidar's Basava Seva Prathishthan. Mahadevappa is also the director of the Centre for Vachana Studies at Bidar's Basava Seva Prathishthan. A somewhat coherent and less hazy picture emerges as many of the missing pieces of the. Lingayats are not Hindus is a book written by Mahadevappa. However, Basava belonged to a Brahmin family, or at least he was born into one.



## CONCLUSION:

It is uncertain whether his rebellion began when he was eight years old during the thread ceremony, but he eventually rebelled, and it is safe to say that he did not die a Brahmin. That is comparable to Dr. BR Ambedkar's statement, "I was born a Hindu but I will not die a Hindu," with the difference that Basava was born into privilege while Babasaheb was not. In that sense, he's more similar to Charu Majumdar, revoking what might have been an existence of solace for progressive words and activities. Darga refers to sharana sankula as "spiritual communism," despite the fact that other Lingayats might object to the use of the C-word and would rather prefer spiritual materialism. Sharana sankula is a utopian society that is egalitarian and does not discriminate based on caste or gender. It also has a "social fund" that belongs to everyone and no one in particular. However, Basava was not isolated, and in those days, preaching something so diametrically opposed to the norm would have drawn violent retribution.

Another illustration of his proto-Machiavellianism is when the king, who was Shaiva but was originally thought to be Jain, allowed Basava to continue preaching because he increased the productivity of the working classes. The "social fund" of sharana sankula was essentially the king's ever-expanding coffers. Additionally, there may have been a quasi-familial connection and/or Basava's direct deposit into the Treasury. Siddarasa and Baladeva, two of Basava's maternal uncles, were employed as bhandari (head of the state exchequer) by Bijjala II. similar to the Finance Minister of today) and dandanayaka Basava began his career as an accountant and later inherited one or both of his uncles' jobs, either when they died or when he deciphered an inscription that led to a windfall for Bijjala II in the form of a treasure that had been hidden. In addition, Basava wed the daughters of his uncles, Baladeva's Gangambike and Siddarasa's Neelambike; the weddings took place simultaneously or sequentially; Because Neelambike was Bijjala II's foster sister and his mother had died while giving birth to his brother Karunadeva, who was breastfed by Neelambike's mother, the hidden treasure might have sparked the second one. Menage a trois, which translates to "household of three," is not commonly understood. the Kalburgi ghost. Even when he was Fin Min or Prime Minister or Chief Minister (depending on which account you choose to believe), Basava was preaching things that were at odds with the status quo. Wasn't he forced to retract something he wrote about Basava's platonic relationship with one of his employees? It's hard to say when trouble started, and whether it was caused by the king's own insecurities or by people around Bijjala II who talked about Basava's rising stock, it's hard to say for sure.

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