PREFACE

The study of "Lingayat Community in Kolhapur District: A Soci-Economic Study (1949-1990) is a fascinating and interesting one. Lingayat religion and philosophy have a distinct place in the religious history of India. Lingadharna is a distinctive feature of Lingayat religion. It is on account of this Lingadharna this religion is called Lingayat religion and its followers, Lingayats.

Lord Basaveshwara was a saint, a statesman and an ardent social reformer in the 12th century in a region now included partly in the present Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra states and mostly in the Karnataka state. Basaveshwar played important role and infused a new life in the movement of this religion.

Kolhapur district came into existence in 1949. The followers of Basaveshwar have been staying in Kolhapur district right from 12th century onward. Even now Lingayat Community in Kolhapur district is minor but important one. Generally, Lingayat community is trading community. Some leaders belonging to this community in the Kolhapur district took active part in the freedom struggle of India as well as social, economic and educational field. Ravasaheb Mali D.B., Dr. Ratnappa Kumbhar, Late Tatyasaheb Kore, Shri Sankanwade S.B. etc. are jewels of the Lingayat community, who rendered valuable service to Lingayat community as well as other communities also.

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Some Co-operative Institutions like Panchaganga Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd., Ichalkaranji, Warana Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd., Warananagar and Veerashaiva Co-operative Bank Ltd., Kolhapur are leading co-operative institutions run by Lingayat leaders and have brought about some socio-economic change in the Kolhapur district.

Some Lingayat Social Organisations and monasteries (Matha) like Siddhagiri, Chitrādurga, Allamaprabhu Mandir, Alate, Bilvashrama Matha, Gadhinglaj, are special things of attractions for Lingayats.

An attempt has been made in this work to present, an account of the socio-economic change brought about by the organisations and co-operative institutions run by the Lingayat leaders in the Kolhapur district by using original and secondary sources.

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