CHAPTER FIVE

ORIGIN, DEVELOPMENT AND ORGANISATION OF 'MATHA' IN KARNATAKA.

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Having dealt with the different denominational mathas, we now propose to deal with the institutional aspect of the mathas in general.

The religious history of Karnataka took a new turn from the beginning of the tenth century, when there was a revival of Hinduism in Karnataka. The immigration of the Kālāmukhas into the South, the impetus given by Rāmanuja to the Vaishnava movement in South India, and the spread of Vīraśaivism under the leadership of Basava are significant developments that changed the course of Hinduism in this part of the country. Specially Śaivism, in its various forms, became predominant; and the movement evolved a new institution known as matha, which began to serve not only as the instrument of spreading the faith, but also as a means of sustaining and stabilising Śaivism. As we have already seen, the matha is an institution resembling, to a certain extent, the Buddhist and Jaina

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monastery. We shall now deal with the origin and the 
process of its evolution.

Stages of Evolution:

The first stage naturally starts with the Gurukula
of ancient days. The matha did not at first take the
shape of a regular institution of a permanent nature.
Agamic literature, which is equated with Vedic literature
in antiquity, also refers to some important mathas. The
Buddhist practice of establishing systematic monasteries
requires special mention, though they were influenced by
ancient Indian institutions like the āśrama, the Gurukula
etc. Buddhists gave a new orientation to the monastic
order. The later Hindu mathas were modelled on the lines
of Buddhist monasteries. But we can see certain funda-
mental affinities of the matha with the Gurukula system of
ancient times. Like the Gurukulas, mathas, were also
educational institutions. The Gurukula was managed or
controlled by one sage. The matha was also headed by one
ācharya. The important difference between the two was
that the head of the Gurukula was a gṛihasta, while the
head of the matha was a sanyasi. The importance of celibacy became predominant in Buddhist religion. Thus, the fourth stage, or sanyasa, of the Hindus became a starting-point for the Buddhists. The same was copied by the later Hindus and adopted in their religious institutions.

As we have already mentioned, it was in the time of Sankara (8th century A.D.), that the matha attained the second phase of its growth. There are definite references in his biographies to the part played by Sankara in shaping the structural features of the matha as an institution. In this respect, Sankara's contribution to the development of the monastic order among the Hindus seems to be striking. He is said to have founded four mathas at the four corners of India. Thus Sankara rendered yeoman service to the growth and development of the Hindu monasteries.

The structural and functional features of the matha received its final shape under the acharyas of the Pāṣupatha-Kālāmukhas sect. Till then, temples were the predominant venue of all religious-social activities. The matha was only a part of it. But the emergence of the Kālāmukhas, particularly in Karnataka, opened a new era in
the history of the matha. Gradually, the mathas came to assume the foremost importance and became centres of activities side by side with the temples. Mathas attached to temples became the residence of sanyasis. These sanyasis (acharyas), with their penance, scholarship and celibacy, occupied a high place in society, commanding respect from both nobles and commons.

The final phase of the evolution was attained in Vijayanagara times with the liberal royal patronage to the mathas, which placed them on a sound economic footing. During this period, too, the acharyas of the mathas did a good many things for the uplift of society. Their sacrifice influenced the royal houses as well as the commons to have a different attitude towards this institution. But liberal royal patronage to the mathas, among other reasons, may also have brought their decline, as certainly, foreign invasions did. Thus, the Golaki matha may have declined for both the reasons.

Use of The Word 'Matha':

The use of the term matha in the sense of an
Institution or establishment appears to be quite old in the religious history of India. *A matha is an abode for scholars and others*, so says the Amara. Fleet defined it as a religious institution. It is also defined as the secluded but of an ascetic, and as a monastery, which is both a religious and an educational institution. Thus, it was a residential college for students, a free feeding-house for the poor and the infirm, and a resort of religious men as well as of mendicants.

In the initial stage, the word 'matha' was used in the sense of a residence of students or monks. Sankaracharya is said to have founded four mathas, through which he propagated his teachings. In course of time, this institution began to develop elaborate paraphernalia and practices, under the Kalamukha acharyas. A large number of epigraphic records relate to mathas which grew in power and popularity from about 10th century onwards. It became very common to attach mathas to temples. But from this time onwards they became very powerful and wielded great influence and, in a majority of cases, held control over the affairs of these temples.
Pilgrims from abroad found a ready residence in them. A grant registers a gift of 6 achchu (coins) for feeding, on the day of the Rohini Nakshatra, 30 itinerant ascetics in the matha. From the 10th century onwards their teaching and disciplinary functions became more and more prominent. An inscription records a gift for feeding the tridandisanyasins and the maintenance of a teacher of the sastras in a matha. Another epigraph refers to grants made for the study of the Rig, Yajur, Sāma and Atharva Veda, for the teaching of the Sastras and recital of the Puranas. It is, thus, quite clear that the mathas, besides controlling, in a few cases, the affairs of the temple and providing lodging and boarding to devotees, were important centres of educational, moral and spiritual activities.

The head of the matha had to practise celibacy. We are told in clear words that such acharyas as failed to observe this rule were to be instantly expelled and replaced by others. Henceforth, the matha began to signify a distinct type of institution with characteristics of its own.
Location of Mathas:

The selection of the site for a matha was carefully made. Usually, mathas were established on the banks of a river, near a tank or spring, in the market-place, along roads and highways. Some were on the side of a mountain, amidst beautiful natural surroundings and commanding a panoramic view of vast stretches of level ground. Rivers were the highways and byways of communication and transport in ancient times. Other reasons may be the fertility of the soil, the ready availability of essential provisions and abundant supply of water. The attitude of the local people was also taken into consideration while selecting the site for a matha. Since they served as active centres of religious and social life, the mathas were constructed only in such places as could be frequented by the people. For example, the Sringeri matha and the Bālehonmatha are on the bank of the river Tunga. Almost all of the ancient mathas are on the bank of a river or near a tank.

Types of Matha:

We can divide Saiva mathas into three types. There
are a few which are purely monastic in nature. The ācharya leads a celibate life (Naistica Brāhmachari). In the second type, the ācharya can lead a householder's life, or he can, after leading a householder's life, become an ācharya. In the third type, the ācharya remains celibate, but at the same time he can remain within the family. The celibates generally reside on the campus of the matha. The first type is a highly developed one, having a distinct community life governed by its own rules and regulations.

Among Virasaivas also, we can divide mathas into three types, namely Gurusthala (Pattada) mathas, Virakta mathas, and Vasikrita mathas. Virakta and Gurusthala mathas are many in number. A detailed study of these mathas will be made later.

The Purpose of Instituting Mathas:

There are numerous mathas throughout Karnataka. They flourished because people took interest in religious, educational and literary activities. Even though they
were not properly educated, they were interested in religion and philosophy. The main purpose of the mathas was to give encouragement to learning and other cultural aspects of life, and also to give patronage to scholars engaged in the pursuit of spiritual knowledge. In other words, the people were religious-minded. Acquisition of merit was very important to them. It was possible through grants to religious institutions like temples and mathas, as well as to the acharyas who were the heads of these institutions, engaged either in educational activities or in religious service. Consequently, they used to undertake works like the installation of free feeding-houses and watersheds, the construction of tanks and establishment of mathas. The matha was, primarily and predominantly, an educational centre. Its main aim was the spread of education and furtherance of scholarship. In olden days, imparting education was considered to be a religious act that earned merit. Such acts had a twofold aim; one was to get merit, and the other was to impart education. So people liberally patronised mathas and other religious institutions. Above all, they felt that it was their duty and responsibility to preserve and continue their literary tradition. The State did not come in their way. It, too,
helped such institutions liberally. But it was for society, mainly, to support them. We have innumerable examples of members of a family and their dignitaries engaged in such activities with pleasure. So far as kings were concerned, public welfare was one of their main objects, their rājadharma. By doing this they would get individual merit as well as fulfilment of their rājadharma. Among such acts of merit, a dāna, or donation, for the worship of God, and for the feeding of the poor, was considered sacred. Of all dānas, the vidyādāna was considered to be the most sacred. Against this background, we must study how the mathas were encouraged throughout the centuries by kings and commons. We get a number of examples of kings, queens, officials and people making handsome donations, willingly, to mathas and temples. By helping these institutions, they were able to protect their culture. Thus, earning merit for oneself as well as for one's near and dear ones was one of the motives in endowing mathas.

We may note here some examples of kings, or his officials, setting up or endowing mathas.
Jayasimha II, in 1018 A.D., made a grant of land for offerings to Kalidevaswami of Balguli, and for feeding teachers and students in the mathas attached to that temple. 13

Another record of 1044 A.D., of Chalukya Someswara I, states that a village, Kuppekulla, in Ballakunde-300 was made to an acharya named Jyestharasibhatara, for the temple of Mahadeva and for the matha attached to it. 14 Among the donors, the chief was Pallavarasa, a subordinate of Aditya.

Another inscription, from Mulgund, belonging to the reign of Someswara II, registers a gift of land made to Dhruveswara-pandita, a disciple or Gangarasi Panditadeva, for the feeding etc., of ascetics in the matha, by settis, the gavundas, the one hundred and twenty Mahajanjas and other public bodies, in the presence of Mahasamantha Sindara-Bhimarasa in 1062 A.D. 15

It is recorded in an inscription, dated 1071 A.D., of Chalukya Vikramaditya VI, that a grant of a village, Kotiganuru, was made by the king for feeding ascetics in the matha of Lakulisa Pandita, and also for feeding
clothing the students and singers residing there: n. 16 A
general named Raviyanabhatta is said to have built a matha
at Yewur; he is also said to have made grants for maintaining
the temple, feeding and clothing the students, ascetics and
scholars in the matha. 17

A record of 1075 A.D., registers a grant of a village
for the feeding of the scholars and the ascetics of the
matha, to Tatpurushapandita, a disciple of Tribhuvanasakti-
Panditadeva of the Kālamukha school, by Ballavarasa. 18

Like the desire to earn merit, the celebration of an
event like a victory was also an occasion for the establish-
ment of a matha. 19

A grant of land, dated 1054 A.D., by Maliyabharasi,
wife of Mahāmandalesswara Rewarasa, for the worship of God,
maintenance of musicians and feeding of ascetics and
students studying in the matha, for earning merit. 19 An
inscription of the time of Chālukya Vijayaditya, dated
1063 A.D., states that, in the camp which he made in
Mudukakere, when he was making expedition in the South,
he made a grant of land for a matha. 20 A stone inscription
of 1529 A.D., records the grant of a village, Kallahali, to Lingannodeya of Nrasimha, at Pashpagiri, by Chennappana in order that merit might accrue to king Krishnadevaraya. Another record, from Saulanga, dated 1571 A.D., states that Mahamandaleswara Gana-Rajaya, when performing the funeral rites of his father Venkatadri-Rajaya, in order that merit might accrue to the latter, made a grant of the village of Saulanga to Vijendra Wodeyar's matha of the Anegondi matha. Immadi Rama Raja Nayadu made a grant, of a village to Chenna Basavaraja in order that merit might accrue to his mother. Virabhadra Nayaka of Keladi made a grant to Mahattina matha, built in Chakod by Kappagalale Basavanna, and for the performance at Kasi of the Monday Parva ceremony; for which he was granted a copper-plate dated 1641 A.D.

Sometimes, people made daily grants for a number of days, probably to fulfill a vow. This type of dana or donation was known as Nityadana. A record pertaining to a Keladi ruler states that the Caturmasya Siva worship in Champakasarsi Mahattina matha at Anandapura was made for a special intention.
A coronation was also an occasion for meritorious deeds. There are a number of instances of bountiful gifts made by kings to mathas and their teachers. They set up and endowed mathas on such occasions.

Harihara, after his coronation, visited Sringeri with his brothers and made grants to the matha with endowments. 26

Expiation of sin was also a good reason for establishing a matha. The idea of earning merit by making donations for a religious purpose encouraged the development of these institutions on a large scale. The patronage of rulers, the interest of the officials and the devotion of the common people made the matha an institution of great importance in the religious history of Karnataka.

Donors:

Kings: When we deal with individuals instituting mathas and endowing them, we naturally come to the question of ownership of land. The owner of the land alone can
donate it. At an earlier time, the owner of the land was the king. He was the master of the whole territory that he ruled. Hence he alone had the right to set up religious institutions and donate land to them. We have already mentioned how a ruler made gifts to mathas at the time of important events.

**Queen:** It is interesting to note that queens, and ladies of all classes, also made liberal grants to religious institutions. An interesting example of this is furnished by an inscription which records the foundation of a matha in honour of Isandeva by a lady disciple in accordance with her dying husband's instructions.\(^{27}\)

**State Officials:** We have already mentioned how state officials also took the lead in the promotion of education and maintenance of mathas. We get many epigraphs to this effect. When the Kalachuri king, Bijjala was at Balligave on an expedition, his chief minister K̲ā'̲śapayya-Nāyaka made a petition to the king in which he describes the greatness of the temple of Dakshina Kedāra and of Vāmasakti, its guru and winds up with a request that the king would perform there some enduring work of merit.
Bijjala, accordingly, made liberal grants to the matha. Bokkasada Siddabasavayya, the treasury officer under the Keladi ruler, built a matha at Kalasa. We could quote innumerable other examples.

Naming of mathas:

It is but natural that, when a new matha is built, it should be named. They were generally named after the donors, religious leaders, mythical personalities, the place name, or even the profession of the disciples of the mathas. Many mathas were given the name of their founder. The matha established by Somaśekhara Nayak at Balikoppa of Bidnur has his name. The matha built by a certain Karttara was known as Karttara matha. As some mathas are attached to temples, they were called by the same name. It is known from a record of Chalukya Somesvara I, dated 1066 A.D., from Marasanahalli, Indi Taluka of Bijapur district, that a matha was attached to the temple of Uttareswara and was called Uttareswara matha. The matha attached to the temple of Tikeswara at Muttage, Bagevadi taluka, is named after it. We also find mathas
named after the tank attached to it. We shall deal with some names of mathas and note why they were called so.

Kodiya matha:

It is so called because the matha was near a kodi, or the sluice of a tank. Hence the matha which is near a kodi, or sluice, is called Kodiya matha.

Piriya, or Hiriya matha:

In the literal sense, it means a great matha. It may be great in two respects: in extent, with a large number of disciples, or because of its importance, or antiquity, or sanctity.

Chitra Matha:

It may have been so called because it once contained paintings, or was adorned with paintings. It may, however, be noted that the terms prefixed to mathas were only a general description without connoting any special difference as regards the fundamental nature of the mathas.

Chilume matha:

It is so called because it was close to a perennial
spring (chilume) in the form of a well supplying good
drinking water.  35

Veda matha:

All mathas were places of teaching. But some mathas
might have had the special privilege of teaching the Vedas. 36

Ganamatha:

The Ganas of the Saiva tradition, who seem to have
belonged to the new school of Saivism, i.e., ViraSaiva, are
described as having won glory for God Siva by destroying
the Buddhist and Jaina creeds, vanquishing the advocates
of the rival faith at some places like Abbaluru, Kembavi, 37
etc. Hence the Ganamatha might have been established to
protect the ViraSaiva religion from other creeds.

Gavi matha:

It is so called because it is situated in a
cave (gavi). 38

Purana matha:

As mathas were important centres of religious
worship, it was here that people listened to the reading
of the puranas. The acharyas of such mathas must have been expert in reading puranas and interpreting them.

Kambali matha:

The disciples of this matha must have been producers of the Kambali.39 (Blanket made out of sheep's wool).

Bidari matha:

Bidari means willow. Basket-makers must have grouped together to have a matha of their own.

Tike matha:

This is so called because the special work of this matha must have been to write commentaries on religious literature.

Olematha:

The important work of this matha was probably, to prepare the 'olegalu' in the right size and shape and distribute the same for copying purposes.
Gradation of mathas:

All Śaiva and Virasaiva mathas, irrespective of their material prosperity, occupy an equal and independent position in respect of religious matters. The religious activities of one matha cannot be questioned or nullified by another matha. But we find that some principal mathas occupy a higher status, or position of honour and respect than their branches. To make the point clearer the Śringeri matha of Śmārthas and Panchācharya mathas among Virasaivas, which are considered to be the principal mathas in Karnataka, have several branch mathas. The heads of these branch mathas still give precedence to the head of their principal matha. In any religious or social matter, the opinion and judgement of the Śringeri matha is held to be final among the Śmārthas; likewise, the opinion of the Panchācharya mathas carries much weight among the Virasaivas. Thus, they occupy an exalted position among the mathas of their respective sects. The causes that contributed to the superior status of these mathas in the estimation of the people can be said to be as follows:
(i) Royal patronage through the centuries, which gave them wealth and position in society.

(ii) The high character maintained by the ācharyas all through the history of the mathas.

(iii) Their past tradition, associated with some of the outstanding religious personalities of these mathas.

Thus, we find that, theoretically, there is no difference in status between one matha and another in respect of religious matters; yet, in practice, the difference is maintained on considerations mentioned above.

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CHIEF ELEMENTS OF THE MATHA

Ordinarily, a matha consists of three principal elements, viz., (1) Ācharya (2) Maridevaru and (3) Sisya. The first two usually reside in the matha, the Sisyas live in villages outside the matha, leading the householders' life.

(1) Ācharya: The head of the matha is called Ācharya or Mahant. His position is similar to that of the
abbot of a Christian monastery. He is the religious head and spiritual guide of the people. The Diksha ceremony and other religious rites are conducted under his direct supervision.

(ii) Maridevaru: Though the word Maridevaru means any devotee, yet it is popularly applied to those devotees who either hold an office in a matha, or lead the life of a celibate within the matha area. Celibate devotees are recruited in their early years by elderly celibates and, under the latter's guidance and supervision, remain as apprentices for a few years. When they are sufficiently acquainted with the tenets and practices of their religion, they are formally initiated in the religious order. These apprentices are to wait upon their superiors, and receive lessons in religion from them. These apprentices can also be appointed as heads of mathas.

(iii) Sisya: The disciples of a matha are called sisyas. Every Saiva and Vīraśaiva householder in Karnataka is invariably affiliated to one or other of the mathas of their sect. Customarily, every man belonging to a Saiva family must have his initiation from these acharyas at the
prescribed age. Formerly, this custom was obligatory, and an uninitiated young man or woman was not allowed to take active part in religious functions.

QUALIFICATIONS OF AN ĀCHARYA

We find that certain essential qualifications are prescribed for the person who is to become the ācharya of the matha. 'Ācharya'—from 'char', to behave, means one who trains up others in good behaviour; it is also taken by some to mean the source of all religion. In either sense, the ācharya was expected to train up his pupils in good behaviour, the essence of religion, and naturally to possess those qualities himself. He must work with heart and soul, and be like a parent to his disciples. He must add the force of his example to precept. 'As one acts, he becomes good by good deeds, bad by evil'.

Though celibacy is a very important factor in an ascetic, the end of life is to love God. Hence, his main means must be the removal of obstacles to the loving of
God; and what these obstacles are is clear from the nature of love itself. Love is the union of wills. If the creature is to love God, he can do it in one way only; by sinking his own will in God's by doing the will of God in all things. Hence, to an ācharya, life has come to mean renunciation. Renunciation of meat, of intoxicating drink, woman etc; he must devote himself to prayer, religious exercises and works of charity. Thus, his life is to be self-denying and hard, but not one of austerity alone.

The qualifications of ācharyas, or religious leaders, in the Vedic times centred round sacrifice and chanting of mantras. In the Upanisadic time, the importance of acquiring knowledge, along with great austerity, became the predominant factor for an ācharya in the forest. But for an ācharya of a later period, along with acquiring knowledge of religious ceremonies, the living of a corporate life became an essential factor along with austerity. The ācharya was to associate himself with the community life. Thus, his life is meant for the service of the people. The following are some of the qualities necessary for ācharya-hood. We can
divide them into two groups for the convenience of our study.

1. The following are the very important qualifications for an Ācharya of the first category:

   (a) **Celibacy** : The Ācharya must be a Naisthīcā Brahmachāri. He should be free from physical passions, and also from the ties of family. It means that he should be above all sexual relations or emotions. In other words, he must follow the ideal of chastity. He is expected to keep unbroken the vow of chastity.

   (b) **Poverty** : Poverty means freeing the soul from concern for material possessions. Private ownership is to be shunned completely by an Ācharya. Let no one presume either to give or to receive anything as his own, neither wealth nor whatsoever, since it is unlawful for them to have even their body or will in their own power. If it comes, it should be disposed of for the public cause.

   (c) **Devotion** : The first step in humility is devotion, or obedience to ancient scriptures and rules,
as a matter of course. Of all the steps in the process of renunciation, the denial of the will is clearly the most difficult. Self-will, self-interest, self-protection, self-regard of all kinds are all part of man's nature; hence, to master them requires a preternatural power. Thus, it is most important, because by this means the ādharya achieves that perfect freedom which is only to be found in the spirit of God.

(d) Charity: The ācharyas were expected to live on charity. The begging bowl was almost indispensable as equipment, and the round for alms, with humility and tranquillity of spirit, content if the alms were given, and patient if refused. It does not mean that begging is the only way of life for an ācharya.

2. The other Qualifications of an Ācharya are as follows:

He must come of a respectable family.
He must be honest and hospitable.
He must be well versed in the ancient religious literature.
He must be trustworthy.
He must have a good character.
As the monastery was frequented by people, as it was a residence for students, as it maintained a *satra* for the public, the ācharya of a matha was to be naturally a man of an affable nature, hospitable and broad-minded. As a trustee of a large property, the ācharya was expected to carry on the *dharma* of a matha and, therefore, he should be thoroughly honest and trustworthy. If he had a large number of disciples, it showed his efficiency. No wonder that mathas flourished under such ācharyas.

Among ṍīrāśaivas, the ācharya must belong to the mathasthala, or jangama group. He must be of a calm and pleasing nature. He must be well versed in the Saivāgamas and the Virasaiva philosophy, and must practice Sivayoga.

The ācharya of a Saiva matha must always apply holy ashes to his body. He must wear Rudrākshas. A Ṭīrāśaiva ācharya recites *Panchākshari* or *Shadakshari* mantras; while those of Saiva sects recite *Gayatri* and *Aṣṭakshari* along with these.
Thus, if the above qualities are found in a person, he is eligible for the ācharya-hood. Hence, ācharyas of the various mathas are held in much reverence and respect by the public.

Duties of an Ācharya:

For an ācharya, 'work is worship'—worship is the most important part of his work, and should be his ideal. He can adopt any kind of work so long as it is compatible with a life of prayer and renunciation. Among his various obligations, prayer must always take the first place. Hence, from the very outset it has been regarded as the monk's first duty to keep up the regular prayers of the matha. Agriculture, basket-making, mat-making, weaving, education, the copying of old literature etc., and have been accepted as suitable for monks. Specially in Vīraśaiva mathas, the ācharyas gave much importance to labour. The name of the matha itself reveals the profession he follows. Elsewhere, this point is dealt with in detail. The ācharya must work with the elevated
feeling that his work is an offering to God. Hence, every kind of work is considered as noble. A vacana of Nuliya Chandaiah stresses the importance of work by all sections of society:

"Even a guru can attain salvation through work alone. Even Liṅga and Jangama must work in order to be free from limitations. Even guru must serve living beings. Even Jangama must serve living beings". Hence, everyone in society must work and serve his fellow—beings. So, it is not wrong if an ācharya labours at some good work. We shall deal in brief with some of these different kinds of labour, or kāyaka.

**Agriculture**: This is, of course, naturally ranked first among the various forms of labour. The sites chosen by the mathas for their retreat were usually in wild and inaccessible places, which were left to them precisely because they were uncultivated and no one else cared to undertake the task of clearing them. The matha usually gets its major income from its landed property.

**Hardicrafts**: We find the inmates of mathas weaving mats, making baskets and doing other similar work.
The acharya might personally supervise even such work.

Preservation of Religious and Secular Literature:

One of the most important works of a matha was to preserve ancient scripture. In this respect, the results achieved went far beyond what was actually aimed at. The acharyas copied the scriptures for their own use; with the development of educational activities it became necessary to copy the scriptures and literary works. Thus, it is not too much to say that today we are indebted to the labours of the mathas for practically all that survives to us of the secular and religious literature of antiquity.

Historical and Patriotic Work:

As years passed by, the great mathas accumulated archives of the highest value for the history of the territory where they were situated. It was the custom, too, in many of the big mathas for an official chronicler.
to record the events of contemporary history. In more recent times, the seed thus planted bore fruit in many great works of erudition which have won for the ācharyas, such high praise among scholars of all classes.41

Missionary Activity:

This was a very important duty of the ācharyas. They had to tour the country and preach religious doctrines and propagate the dharma. The Śaiva ācharyas did very good missionary work. It is not an exaggeration to say that because of their missionary zeal Śaivism became a popular religion in this part. VīraŚaiva Jangamas did the same with even greater vigour and zeal.

Administration:

The matha is run by the ācharya with the help of a number of officials attached to its different departments. The details of the present-day administrative system of mathas in will be dealt with along with the history of the Department of History and Archaeology, Karnatak University, Dharwar
mathas in the latter part of the thesis. Here an attempt at a historical survey of the administrative system of the matha is made, which will be helpful for a proper understanding of the institution.

In the initial stage of the movement, the office of the ācharya, or of a set of officials with various duties in the matha as well as in villages, could not be expected to have existed. The system was simple in its early stage. Only a few functions were there, out of which the prayer-service was the most important. During this period, the ācharya had to reside in huts near about and beg for food stuffs etc., alms from the devotees in their homes, and so to maintain his matha. We do not even get a reference to a common store-house or treasury. There was no steady provision for a regular income and, therefore, the infant institution had to depend on voluntary and sporadic gifts and alms from devotees for its maintenance.

The organisational side of the mathas improved a lot during the tenure of the Kālāmukha ācharyas, who converted this institution into an educational centre.
Thereby the responsibility of a matha increased. Even the rules and regulations for the conduct of the monks and students were reorganised.

It is known from the epigraphs that strict monastic rules were introduced amongst the disciples. Celibate disciples, staying on the premises of the matha were not allowed to stay out at night without previous permission. Under the able leadership of those Kalāmukha ācharyas, the management of the mathas was systematised. They allotted a definite function to each individual. But the ācharya was the head of all the activities. Local mathas, over which their principal disciples presided were dependent upon the central mathas for guidance.

The administration of the mathas attained its zenith with the extension of royal patronage, towards the second half of the 10th century A.D., when the rulers made liberal grants in the form of property. The Kodiya matha received help from the later Chālukyas, Kalachuris and others. Such royal patronage placed the mathas on a sound economic footing. At the same time, we must note that the close contact with the royal court and acquisition
property brought about certain changes in the management of the mathas. To look into the affairs of the mathas and to keep the royal court well-informed about their conditions a royal officer known as 'Dharmadhikari' was appointed by the kings. Vikaramaditya VI appointed Mahāpradhāna Dandanāyakam Srimad Ayyangalu Someśwara-bhattopadhyaya as Dharmadhikari, in charge of the administration of grants and gifts. Whenever a new ācharya ascended the throne of a matha, he had to be finally recognised by the king. Thus, the maintenance of the mathas and their development became the concern of the royal courts. They became interdependent. The ābharyas also had a share in the administration. They were consulted about socio-religious matters, and in this regard their judgement was final.

On the other hand, the royal grants and recognition extended to mathas helped a great deal to increase the sphere of their influence in villages, and the people, lured by the glamour of the mathas, enlisted themselves on a large scale as disciples. Freedom from economic worries gave an opportunity to the ācharyas of the mathas, patronised by all sections of society, to devote
themselves whole-heartedly for the propagation of religion and education. The principal mathas appointed their learned disciples to carry out their objectives in different places. In due course, they became independent, and they established their own mathas and carried on the missionary activities.

The political influence affected the internal administration of the matha. This influence could be noticed particularly in case of the mathas of the 14th and 15th centuries. The headship of the mathas, like the kingship, began to run on hereditary lines. The power of the ācharya increased considerably, and he became the owner of the matha.

Certain formalities of the royal court crept into the functioning of some mathas. It became necessary to take the help of officials of such mathas to meet the ācharya. Hence ācharya's personal staff increased in number. The movements of the ācharya from the matha to villages became more and more formal and even pompous.
Thus, the administration, which was at first simple, became complicated in course of time. The matha became a state within a state. The whole outlook was changed. Their influence on society increased. Without them, no socio-religious activities could be performed.

Economic Sources of the Mathas:

The more important mathas were on the whole financially sound, since the common people, the guilds and the royal family took particular care to see that these mathas never fell short of funds for the discharge of their functions. The sources can be divided into two categories: (1) lands originally granted by kings and nobles; (2) monetary contributions made by devotees. All affluent mathas possess land-grants ranging from a few acres to several thousand acres of land, some of which are totally free from tax and others half-free. The minor mathas, of course, do not possess large revenues, nor tax-free land, nor land assessed at half the usual rate. The royal family voluntarily granted lands to many mathas.43 On several occasions, the royal family gifted
lands at the instance of private persons and government officers. There are many records, throughout the history of mathas, which tell us that on many occasions like festivals and on other religious functions, the princes liberally donated landed property to mathas.

There are numerous epigraphs to show that individuals purchased lands from the Government and voluntarily made them over to mathas. There are many examples of Mahajanas making a gift of land to a matha for its maintenance. Thus, matha got rich grants from all sections of society for its maintenance and for purposes of education and other religious duties.

The second important source of income for the mathas is from their devotees:

The larger the number of devotees, the larger is the income. Every devotee is expected to make a small contribution annually, in cash or kind, to his matha. Thus the income from these devotees is quite considerable.

Example of remission by princes of taxes or custom
duties on articles meant for the use of a matha are many. These princes also granted to the mathas the tolls on sales of cattle. Another source of income was the grant of mulavisa (one-sixteenth of a hana on every mula, or load) made by the rulers or the guilds.

In addition to the above regular sources of income, occasional presents or offerings from disciples and patrons, and special subscriptions raised from disciples to meet the expenses of important functions, are two additional but irregular sources of income. Though there is no legal obligation to pay presents, yet the religious obligation was strong enough to induce people to contribute.

Ownership and Property:

There are three types of ownership: (1) ownership vested in the name of the ācharya of a matha, (2) ownership vested in the community of devotees, and (3) family ownership.
In the first instance, the matha theoretically belongs to the chief Acharya, in whose name the entire property of the matha, is vested. The Acharya acts as a trustee of the matha properties. He can dispose of any property of the matha only in cases of dire necessity. While doing so, he may or may not consult his disciples, though ordinarily he takes them into confidence.

In the second case, the ownership is collectively vested in the community of devotees, called 'Dharmadarshins' with the Acharya as the formal head. These elders of the matha, elected or selected from among disciples with the Acharya as formal head, decide all important issues concerning the matha and its properties. Under this system, the Acharya is only a figure-head. This practice has been in vogue since early times in Karnataka.

In the third case, the ownership vested in the family is prevalent in most hereditary mathas. This is a common feature among the Putravarga Pattada mathas of the Virasaivias. The headship of this type of mathas has been traditionally and invariably held by one particular
family, and all movable and immovable properties are held in the name of the family. The acharya manages the matha in consultation with the senior members of his family.

**Ecclesiastical Tours**

During winter, when the weather is clear, the village roads and paths are dry and travel is more comfortable, the heads of mathas go out to meet their disciples. In the case of tours of the acharyas of the parent mathas, information is usually given in advance through the branch mathas, and they, on receipt of information, make the necessary arrangements for the sojourn of the acharya and the devotees who accompany him. In the case of heads of minor mathas, the acharya usually puts up with one of his disciples. In the case of a parent matha, arrangements are made on a large scale. On such visits, the acharyas not only preach the tenets of their religion but also initiate devotees. They also collect kañika from them, and settle religious and social disputes. The acharya acts as a moving Judicial Court while carrying out his religious task.
Tours are generally attended with considerable pomp and dignity. The acharya is carried in a palanquin, drums are beaten, and, when he alights, he is not permitted to touch the ground with his bare foot. Cultural activities are usually conducted on such occasions. Discourses on religio-spiritual topics are held. Thus, it turns out to be a great festival for the disciples.

CORPORATE LIFE IN SAIVA MATHAS

The Saiva acharyas asserted the dignity of the human soul. No one was considered, by reason of his birth and social status, unworthy or inferior in the religious set-up of Saivism. It raised the status of the lower section of the people to a position of spiritual power and social importance, almost equal to that of the higher caste. The democratic spirit permeates the principles and practices of the Saivism. On the one hand, God has been brought down from the metaphysical height to the reach of the
ordinary people by endowing Him with personality and making him subservient to the will of his devotees; on the other hand, the status of the human being, may, of all creatures, has been elevated by insistence on the identity of God and the soul.

In the Saiva literature and practice, a devotee has been raised higher than God, and the latter, according to the Saivite works, cannot act arbitrarily against the wishes of his devotees. Like true democrats, Saivas have given an honourable position even to those who don't believe in the existence of God.

The same broad outlook could be noticed in the working of the matha and its practices in the early stages. In initiating disciples, no discrimination was made between man and woman; between the high and the low. The Guruship of the matha was not reserved for some classes of people. Even the lower classes of men were raised to the position of worship and headship on the basis of merit and ascetic character. This reveals the real spirit of equality prevalent among the Saivas.
The Vīrāsaiva ācharyas have always desired to educate the common people. Thereby exhibiting their egalitarian outlook. They translated Sanskrit scriptures into Kannada and thus made them accessible to all people. The privilege of reading and interpreting them had hitherto been the virtual monopoly of the upper classes. They encouraged the common people to participate in religious and philosophical discussions.

In congregational prayers, all devotees, irrespective of their social status, used to participate and also receive equal treatment. It shows the levelling influence of Vīrāsaivism and the democratic zeal of the reformers.

In our earlier study of the management of the earlier Śaiva organisations like Kālāmukha, Vīrāsaiva, Śringeri and others, we can clearly discern the democratic principles on which they were based and administered. The matha and the property collectively belonged to the community of devotees, and the ācharyas simply acted as their guides. They did not consider themselves in any way superior to their devotees.
The management of a matha was vested in the community. They usually selected a celibate as guru of the natha. Thus, we find that, in the earlier history of the matha the system of hereditary succession was not present. The democratic method of choosing the best person as the head of a matha prevailed. The ownership of the matha and the responsibility of managing its affairs rested with the assembly of devotees residing within the matha campus.

Theoretically, the acharya occupied an exalted position and was even ranked equally with God, but in practice the relation between him and his disciples has been, throughout its history, friendly and intimate. Some mathas admitted converts and placed them on par with other disciples. Thus, the liberal policy of the matha endowed the disciples with a sense of self-respect. With the coming into existence of the system of hereditary succession to the headship of the mathas, the importance of the community of devotees in the management of the matha affairs began to diminish. The hereditary heads virtually became the owners of their mathas, and the community of devotees, shorn of its former power, was relegated to an unimportant position.
The influence of the royal court on the administrative system of the mathas is another cause of the decay of democracy in mathas. This, in turn, helped to develop formalities which stood as barriers between the guru and the disciples.

In the working of the branch mathas, however, the same liberal outlook continued to exist for a longtime. It has been already noticed that the corporate life of the village centred round the religious institutions for it was constructed by the joint labour of the villagers. Each family was required to land the services for maintaining the matha. Every household contributed to the matha, according to its capacity, in cash or kind. Those who were not in a position to contribute were used to help the matha in any manner they could.

The daily religious functions held in the matha were performed on a co-operative basis. Tasks like the kindling of light, cleansing and sweeping of the floor and arranging of materials necessary for daily services, were done by each devotee by rotation. If the economic condition of a householder was deplorable, he was generally exempted...
from the obligation of supplying materials for religious services in the matha.

Judiciary:

For Virasaivas, the matha was not only a religious centre but also a judicial court. All disputes both secular and religious were decided by the matha-council. The opinion of the five acharyas are the final. The Panchayat headed by an acharya of a local mathas consists of Yajaman; Setti, Banakara and others. The Setti and the Yajamana appointed by the community with the opinion of the Acharya. Both these posts were hereditary nowadays. They were the permanent members of a council of a matha. The other members were chosen for the occasion by among leading members of the community. The council tries offences against caste rules, and imposes fine on the culprit. The money collected was given to the matha to which the village is subordinate. The orders of the matha are final. The highest authority of the appeal is the five principal mathas.
REMARKS ON RELIGIOUS CUSTOMS

Upanayana (Initiation):

An individual, to qualify himself to be considered as a genuine member of the Śaiva sect and to take active part in all religious functions, must, of necessity, be initiated, usually by the ācharya with whom his family is traditionally connected. The rite of initiation is known among Brāhmīns as upanayana; among Virasaivas as Lingadhārana and Diksha. Among Brāhmīns, it is usually performed by the family priests (pūrṇottas). Among Virasaivas, it is usually conducted by the ācharyas, within the matha, or by a Jangama. Also, whenever the ācharya goes on one of his ecclesiastical tours to see for himself the conditions of his disciples the rite of initiation is performed, in the Śaiva community, as a rule before an individual attains majority.

Origin:

Ceremonies conducted in connection with puberty are...
universally prevalent, and are as important as any other class of social procedure. Their basis is civil. Their object is to prepare the young man to enter upon the active duties of citizenship. Thus, the ceremony in question arose out of the civil needs of the community. But in course of time it received a religious colouring, as every phase of life, in ancient times, was saturated with the idea of religion, and every communal function needed religious sanction for its validity. 50

**Forms of Initiation**:

Initiation takes place in different ways among Saivas. Some Saiva sects initiate their youth by tests of endurance. Among some sects it is a compulsory ceremony. Even girls are initiated among Virasaivas.

Without the *upanayana*, nobody could, in olden days, seek admission into and claim the rights and privileges of the community; uninitiated persons were debarred from all privileges. Thus, initiation was a passport even to the literary treasures of the Saivas. It was also a means...
of communication with society, because without it nobody could marry. The character and conduct of an individual seeking initiation would be tested before he was formally initiated, though this was not strictly observed by the common people. The rite of initiation was conducted relying on verbal testimony of good conduct given by elders. But, in the case of ācharyas-designate, or persons intending to lead a celibate life as members of any of the matha a certain period of apprenticeship is compulsory. As in the case of Buddhist monasticism, where a four months probationary period was a necessity, Or among Christian monks of the Benedictine order, where a postulant has to undergo a year's novitiate. Śaiva monasticism also enjoins a probationary period of a few months before a novice is formally initiated and taken as a regular member of the monastic order.

Like the prābhajja and upasampada of Buddhist monasticism, there are also two stages of devotional hierarchy in Śaivism in general and in Viṣṇuvaśīvaśītram in particular. The first stage is marked by a ceremony, among Viṣṇuvaśīvaśītras, known as lingadharana, and as upanayana among the other Saiva sects. At this stage, a person is
recognised as a confirmed devotee by the deeper mysteries of the sect being laid bare to him. The second stage, among Vīraśaivas, is Diksha, and is generally meant for Jangamas. It marks the formal entry of a person into the Vīraśaiva monastic order. After this, only a Jangama can conduct the ceremonies. It is of the nature of an oath, by which the candidate promises to lead the life of a true Vīraśaiva under the guidance of the guru. It is mainly intended for those who are spiritually advanced and intend to lead an intense devotional life.  

Upanayana:

This word literally means leading a boy to his guru, or spiritual guide. The corresponding term in the ancient Zoroastrian scriptures and in modern practices among the Parsis is Navjat  

(The new birth). By it Parsi children, both boys and girls, receive religious initiation after they have attained the age of six years and three months, This would show that upanayana goes back to an Indo-Iranian origin.
Confining ourselves to Indian literature, we find that the word 'Brahmācharya' is twice mentioned in the Rigveda, meaning the life of a religious student. We also get a direct reference to a student who has just performed his upanayana ceremony. This ceremony is also referred to in later works; the Vedic student was called 'Brahmachari' and the guru 'ācharya'. By the time of the Upanisadas, the ceremony became very simple. Upānayana was no more than going to a teacher and being admitted as a pupil. By the time of the Grahyasutras, the upanayana ceremony was fully developed, for they lay down all the regulations and every possible detail of the ceremony. The development of the ritualistic side of the samskara was complete by the time of the sutras. It went on changing from the Vedic period to the present. Nowadays, it is used in the sense of a ceremonial farce performed sometimes before the marriage of a Brāhmin and in which the boy is usually invested with the sacred thread. It is a common, nay compulsory, ceremony every Brāhmin is required to undergo.

From the orthodox point of view, this ceremony should be performed before the age of eight, but in practice it
is deferred even up to the age of seventeen or later.

This Upanayana ceremony is conducted, as we have already said, by purohitas. They perform it by invoking the originator of the gotra purusa. In these matters, among smartas, the Sringeri matha has the highest and final authority. Thus, every religious ceremony is, directly or indirectly, connected with a matha.

**LINGADHARANA AND DIKSHA**

Among the greater number of Virasaivas, after the birth of a child, the parents send for the family guru, who is a representative of the five acharyas from whom the father claims descent, or, in his absence, of his local agent. Lingadharana is compulsory for every member of the community. Some scholars are of the opinion that the Lingadharana ceremony performed at the time of the birth is the only Diksha. Diksha should be performed only when a person is old enough to understand its implications. To quote S.C. Nandimath, "Probably on
account of the influence of other surrounding systems and probably also through the confusion of some Viṣṇuśāivas and the Aradhyaśa, who are closely akin to one another, there are at least two Dikshas to be performed for a member, one at the time of his birth and the other when he reaches his eighth year, probably in imitation of the upanayana of Brāhmans.58

**Līṅgadhārana:**

Usually the Jangama ties the līṅga around the neck of the child, besmears it with vibhuti, places a garland or rudraksha round its neck, and imparts the panchākshari mātra to the child (Namḥ Śivaya). As the child is incapable of understanding the sacred mantra is merely recited in its ear by the guru, who obtains a solemn promise from the parents, or those who take spiritual and physical responsibility for the child, to take care of the līṅga and the child, till the latter is old enough to take care of itself.
Diksha:

Diksha is defined in Siddhāta Sikhamani in the following terms: "Diksha means that the knowledge of Siva is imparted by the guru, and as a consequence the fetters of life are destroyed." It is the acharya of some Virasaiva matha that performs the Diksha. It is a significant ceremony, which opens the door of Virasaivism, and is used also to admit a non-Virasaiva into the fold. It is a simple rite, combined with ethical preachings and with the mysticism of the Śiva yoga, which contains features of modern hypnotism and mesmerism.

In the initial stages of the Śaiva movement, there was probably no other ceremony than initiation. It is stated in Śaiva literature that four principles are very important, viz., the idea of absolute surrender to Lord Śiva; the supremacy and efficacy of the names of Śiva; the indispensability of holy association with the Śaiva literature; and the supreme necessity of a guru.

With the expansion and development of religious institutions, these ceremonies also underwent a process.
of modification and became more and more formal and esoteric in character. Though the detailed procedure of these ceremonies is not uniform, yet there is general agreement on fundamental points. The following are some of the principal steps of the initiation ceremony in respect of which all Śaiva works agree:

(a) The person seeking initiation ('vatu') is required to keep himself clean in body and mind from the day before the ceremony, and observe a strict fast.

(b) On the day of the initiation itself, the rite of purification and breathing exercise takes place after the morning bath.

(c) He is then taken to the mandapa erected for the purpose of this ceremony, where he is asked to bow before the ācharya and the senior members assembled there. He is then acquainted with the history of the sect to which he belongs, i.e., about his gotra, and sutra, trading his origin to one of the principal ācharyas.
(d) The main part of the ceremony takes place at the next stage. Here, the 'vatu' is asked to take an oath to surrender himself to the important fundamental principles of the sect. This process consists of a few steps and, at the end of each step, the seeker is required to prostrate himself before the ācharya. In this process, the mantras are revealed to the candidate for daily meditation or prayer. 62

These are the important instructions which come within the scope of initiation among Śaivas in general. Esoteric interpretations of various tenets, rites and practices of the cult, the theological doctrines, and detailed rules and ways of conduct are laid bare before the 'vatu' at this stage. The 'vatu' at this stage gets an opportunity to probe deeper into the mystery of his religion.

Worship:

Image worship in the traditional Sastric manner is a common feature among Śaiva mathas. But, among the
Virasaiva mathas, it has lost its importance and its place is taken by Istalīṅga worship. As the image is of secondary importance as taught by Virasaiva ācharyas, its worship also is not considered as a necessary part of the regular devotional routine followed in mathas. But, among other Śaiva sects, idol worship is regularly conducted, e.g. in the Śringeri matha, the Chandramauli-svara linga is worshiped by the ācharya twice a day. It is mentioned in all biographies of Sankara that he installed an image of Śaradamba at Śringeri. The worship of this image by the matha is continued till now.\textsuperscript{63}

Though the practice of image worship is considered as of no importance in Virasaiva mathas, yet many a matha continues idol worship. The motive behind the installation of lingas on the tomb of a late ācharya in many mathas was to enhance the outward show and respectability, which helped to attract people towards their institution. This is due to the influence of other Hindu sects. Another reason for installing lingas in mathas might be to get patronage from kings and mānīs, who generally granted land and property for their maintenance and worship. Thus, that the images in these mathas serve
only a decorative purpose, can be inferred from the fact that daily services and all the principal devotional functions are held before the ṛāharya, and not before the images.

However, in māthas affiliated to the Śṛṅgeri mātha, worship of the Chandramaulīsvara liṅga and various images like Ganapati, Sarada etc., is daily conducted under the guidance of the ṛāharya. The mode of worship at Śṛṅgeri is noted below:

After the daily bath is given to the image with appropriate mantras, the image is worshipped with Sādasopacara, or sixteen kinds of offerings, on special days. On ordinary days, worship is performed with duropacaras, consisting of pāda, arghya, acahamaniya, panchamaruta, gandha, akshata, puspa, dhupa, dipa, naivedya. The thousand (sahasra) names of Śiva are daily recited. A perennial light is kept burning night and day. After puja, the ṛāharya gives dārsan to all devotees. Thus, the view of idol worship accepted by the majority of Hindus is that it is a symbol of God, an aid to the mind of a devotee to concentrate itself on the Divine
and become one with it. Prayer and worship are directed, in fact, not to the idol, but to the spiritual power which directs the universe and is conceived by the worshipper in the particular form that makes a special appeal to him. The idol is only a concrete symbol meant to aid mental concentration. 64

A form of relic worship is prevalent in almost all Saiva matha. The relic worship in different forms has been in vogue amongst Indian religious sects since times immemorial. It has been in use among Jaina, Buddhist and other sects also. But the Buddhists made it popular. Hence it is not a particular feature among Saivas. Foot-impressions cut on stones, and footwear (paduka) supposed to be of an acharyas, are carefully preserved. They are worshipped regularly with incense and offerings. The places where such relics are kept are called Gadduges. Every Saiva Matha has one attached to it. In the same way, foot-impressions, footwear and other articles supposed to have been once used by acharyas, are objects of worship in the houses of devotees. Almost all Saiva mathas are places where deceased acharyas are buried, and therefore carefully protected and preserved,
and disciples pay their homage to them on their death anniversary.

**Daily Services and Prayer:**

Usually, image worship is conducted by the ācharya in a maṭha or by a single devotee; an entire group of devotees cannot take part in it. Hence, various types of congregational religious services were introduced in the daily religious routine of maṭhas. These services continue from early morning till the early hours of night. Singing of devotional hymns and songs composed by ācharyas or devotees, *kirtanās*, chanting of mantras, reading and explaining of puranas, and prayers to the accompaniment of musical instruments are the chief features of these daily services, which are a regular routine of the maṭhas. Hence, in all activities in the maṭhas, whether religious or secular, the sacred names of Siva must be uttered. Thus, a Saiva devotee starts all work, from morning till evening, by uttering the name of Siva.
Occasional Functions:

The following are some of the important types of functions observed in the matha: (i) festivals, (ii) ceremonies connected with death anniversaries of acharyas and founders of the mathas, and with the investiture of a new acharya, (iii) special devotional functions and fasts. These are conducted in almost all mathas regularly. It is on such occasions that they hold cultural activities, and the devotees of the particular matha assemble to discuss future plans. These functions are conducted under the guidance and supervision of the acharya.

Pattabhisheka of Maridevaru:

This ceremony, in which Maridevaru (acharya-designate) is formally raised to the headship of a matha, is one of the solemn functions of the matha. This is done, usually, with great pomp. This is also known as the 'Simhasanarohana' ceremony.
When the followers of a particular matha consider the death of the head to be imminent, they formally request him to invest the acharya-designate with the headship of the matha. The dying acharya, accordingly, orders garlands and other necessary things. The Maridevaru will take his seat. The acharya gives him a few instructions relating to the maintenance of the matha and finally places a garland round his neck; and after seeking the permission of the assembled disciples, the he proclaims him as the acharya of the matha. Then the acharya ties the pattavallari on the forehead of the Maridevaru, takes him by his hand and places him on the Holy throne. Then he hands over the seal and the ring as symbols of transfer of authority, and prostrates himself at the feet of the new acharya.

After these formal ceremonies, the new acharya invites a few acharyas of neighbouring mathas to invest him with the position, honour and dignity of a mathadipati. The invitees formally acknowledge the new acharya by offering presents and blessings on an appointed day. Unless a new acharya is formally recognised in the above manner by other acharyas of other mathas, his opinion and judgement on various religious matters may not be on disciples, and
his position in any assembly of fellow-ācharyas may be questioned.

Religious Rites:

The death anniversary of the late ācharyas are usually observed with due reverence in all Śaiva mathas. Even the birthday of the ācharyas is observed with pomp.

Śaiva writers have said that religious fasts on ekadasi and on other special days are of no avail if they are not accompanied by Bhakti. But they have not altogether ruled out the necessity of observing religious fasts. Upavasa, or fasting, on the eleventh day of the moon is considered equally efficacious among Hindus. Some practise fasting on any days which they think good. The disciples of a particular matha observe fast on the occasion of the death anniversaries of their ācharyas.

The observance of fasts is spread over all the months of the year and is intended to serve as occasion for intensive contemplation of God. Fasts are meant to be a
holiday from worldly life, giving opportunities to man
to look within and search his heart.

Customs and Manners:

In order to complete the picture of a matha here an
attempt will be made to discuss briefly the customs and
manners followed by both ācharyas and devotees. As regards
the Śaiva householders, there is nothing peculiar in their
outward show which could distinguish them from those of
other sects but for their frontal ashmarks (Vibhuti dharana)
while the Viśaivas wear the Istalīṅga on their body.
But those who lead an intensely devotional life by keeping
close contact with their mathas and ācharyas, are called
sādhus; and some of them, celibates living within the
four walls of mathas, are worthy of special consideration.

Celibacy:

The first thing to strike us is the practice of
celibacy. How celibacy came into practice after the
Buddha's time among Hindus, has been discussed earlier. Here, it is necessary to state that it is not a compulsory practice in all Śaiva mathas. Expecting a few purely monastic mathas like Śringeri, there are five mathas of Śīrāśaivas where the ṛācharṣyas must be Naistika Brāhmaṇacarīs. Celibacy is optional in the case of some other Śaiva mathas. Even in those mathas where the ṛācharṣyas are expected to be celibates, they can at any time, if they so desire, marry. But in such cases, the ṛācharṣyas forfeit the privilege of residing in the matha. Married persons can, however, reside in the proximity of a monastic matha and have the benefit of participating in religious discussions and prayers. This is a common feature among the Śīrāśaivas.

The life of a purely monastic matha, where none but ṛācharṣyas are allowed to stay, is, however, not absolutely cenobitical. The ṛācharṣyas live in separate rooms, where they sleep and dine in their own way. Caste distinction is scrupulously observed by the ṛācharṣyas in the matter of dining and social practices in the mathas.

Certain ecclesiastical offices are exclusively held by Brāhmaṇins. For instance, none but a smartha Brāhmaṇ can
serve as a puṣjari of the image of the deity installed in the Sṛngeri maṭha. So also, in Vīraśaiva mathas and temples, none but a Jangama can serve as a puṣjari. For example, the chief puṣjari of the Kedara and Śrisaila temples are Jāngamas. Apart from this, no discrimination is made between a Brāhmin and a non-Brāhmin, or Jāngama and non-Jāngama, in the mathas. All devotees, irrespective of caste, meet together in the prayer services and take their position according to their status. Usually, the Brāhmins and Jāngamas are engaged in distributing offerings to the deity after the prayer services are over. But there is no bar to employing others from the sub-castes for such posts.

Maintenance:

Acharyas maintain purity and cleanliness with regard to body, clothes and, as a rule, work on their utensils, water, sleeping and dining rooms. They are proud of their purity and excellence in washing. But in practice, they often perform these with the help of juniors attached to them in the matha. The intervals between the different
prayers or services are utilised for some kind of work. The ācharyas maintained themselves partly by begging and partly on the gifts of votaries and visitors. The ācharyas had also to look to their daily needs.

Food:

The Śaiva ācharyas are vegetarian. An ācharya should be a tight-rope walker, balancing his way between the twin abysses of laxity and excessive austerity. If in some mathas the ācharyas are not in the habit of taking some kinds of food, it is not because of any prohibition but simply as a matter of convention.

An ācharya's food normally includes various preparations of rice, ghee, butter, milk, sugar, fruits, soup and bread. Milk and its products are very liberally used. All vegetables, with only a few exceptions, are allowed, but irratant and excitant food is generally eschewed in the interest of celibacy. The chewing of tambula (betel-leaf and lime) is largely in vogue.
Usually, the ācharyas are very careful in taking food, and only food cooked by a person who is initiated and belongs to the same order is taken. Clay or mud pots are invariably used in cooking and are discarded after one meal. But where clay pots are not easily available, utensils made of brass and bell-metal are used in view of their durability.

Dress:

The dress of an ācharya is usually of saffron colour (kavi); cotton, silken and woollen cloth is used in preparing the monk’s robes. Usually, as ācharya possesses three garments; a dhoti (loin-cloth), a shirt and a shawl (towel) and an undervest. But a waistcoat, a turban and a long shirt most probably came to be used by ācharyas and other dignitaries of the matha in imitation of the royal officers when contacts with the royal court came to be frequent. The head-dress also came to be in use after contact with the royal court developed.
Footwear of hide or skin has never been in use; instead, wooden footwear (including some made of sandalwood) or of coir is commonly used, and a kind of indigenous sunshade made of palm leaves has been in use from earliest times; and elephant and a horse were also maintained by the ācharya in the matha.

Guru-Sisya Relationship:

An ācharya, as the religious head of a matha, naturally commands respect and obedience. Moreover, he is a spiritual guide and guardian. His enviable position is based neither on legal nor on physical power, but on moral and religious grounds. All Śaiva works have waxed eloquent on the merits of serving one's guru. As the ācharya is invariably also the guru, he is regarded as the representative of God. Theoretically, the ceremony of initiation, which purports to lay all that belongs to the disciples at the feet of the guru, tends to make the former a close follower of the latter for the rest of his life. In practice, the disciples are taught to look upon
their guru as God incarnate. According to Saivas, the propitiation of the guru automatically leads to the propitiation of God. He is looked upon as the human God. The padapuja of the guru is a common and a popular act among Saivas.

Nowadays, the relations between the ācharya and the devotees has become more or less stereotyped and depends, to a certain extent, on material considerations. But in the early stages of the Saiva movement, the relationship, as revealed in the ancient works, was of an ideal type. The outward formalities are still present, but the spirit seems to be gradually waning, owing to the onslaught of the present material civilisation.

Marriage:

Neither the celibate ācharya nor the devotees are required to take a vow of perpetual celibacy. They can, if they desire, come back to the householder’s life and marry. There are many examples where an ācharya has resigned and accepted married life.
Cultural Activities:

Performances of devotional plays are frequently held on all important occasions in the mathas. As most of the ancient mathas were established on banks of rivers, boat-races were held on festive occasions and served as diversion to the inmates of the mathas.

We have seen how the matha gradually became at a later period the only organisation through which Saivism was propagated and stabilised in Karnataka. The part played by these institutions in other spheres of Karnataka life is also worth noticing. During few centuries of its existence, the matha has been enriching the moral, social and educational life of the area. Its contribution to literature and art is no less important. But these cultural effects are not altogether independent of religion. We can rather say that these may be termed as by-products of the religious movement. We shall now deal with the moral and social impact of the matha.
Socio-Religious Activities:

Karnataka is the home of many religious sects with various shades and grades of culture, and heterogeneous beliefs lived side by side for many centuries. Even those who professed Saivism were not uniform in their religious and cultural practices. Consequently, the foundations of society were very weak. The cementing bond of unity of belief and practice was lacking. They believed in different gods and observed different practices. The matha, which served as the religious organ in Karnataka, supplied a common and simple religion based on ethico-devotional codes of conduct. As a result of the establishment of Vīrāsaiva mathas, the people living throughout Karnataka developed a sense of unity among themselves. The people worshipping Śiva observe the same religious practices, read the same scriptures and pay homage to the same set of ācharyas. Thus mathas supplied some of the principal elements for the unification and laid the foundations of the Karnataka society as well. We cannot separate the social life of any place altogether from its religion. This is far more true of the Hindus. The social, economical and ethical principles of an Indian have always been
derived from religious principles. What is religious is necessarily considered to be moral. The Saiva sects of Karnataka inherit and blend into their texture much of the recognised ethical and social ideas of the larger Indian thought. The universally accepted principles of right living have been accepted and recognised to be criteria of a virtuous life, while long recognised errors of conduct have been deprecated. The mathas have acted more or less as guardians of morality, and religious fervour by close vigilance over their disciples. By maintaining regular agents at different localities, and by personal visits, the ācharyas tried to tone up the moral life of the devotees. The ācharyas used to stay several weeks in a locality. They not only took cognisance of the moral attainment of the people, but gave instructions whenever necessary, on living and right conduct.

The ācharyas of the branch mathas, generally selected from amongst the disciples, were placed always at the disposal of the villages for their guidance. Moral turpitude on the part of a devotee used to be adequately dealt with by the ācharyas in consultation with the elders.
In maintaining discipline, order and morality among the people, the matha and the ācharya have been playing a prominent role in these days. There is a Śaiva matha (especially a Virasaiva matha), big or small, and an ācharya in every village of Karnataka. The matha is the institution around which all cultural activities of the village are centred. This matha is only a branch, or a miniature, of the parent matha.

The matha is, among other things, at once a court and a theatre. The elders assemble here on various occasions to discuss matters that fall within their jurisdiction. Once, they used to try cases of moral and social delinquency on the part of any villager with the help of the head of a matha, and mete out punishments according to the nature of the offence. Besides cases of a moral nature, even minor criminal and civil cases were formerly tried there.

With the introduction of the British judicial system, the hold of the matha in this regard gradually decreased. But in religious and moral matters, decisions taken at the matha by the elders under the guidance of the ācharya...
are still valid. The final appeal in such cases lies to the head of the matha to which the parties belong. His decision, popularly known as Ādesa, Bahiska-patra, Nirupa, Vyavasta, is considered to be binding and final in religious matters. Like the ecclesiastical courts of Europe in the Middle ages, the matha has been serving as the dispenser of justice, specially in those cases where morality and religion are involved. All contracts made binding by religious oaths generally come under the purview of the mathas.

The matha has also been serving as the village public hall, and collective functions are generally held there; congregational, chanting of prayers on all important occasions, religious recitations and dramatic performances are also conducted in the mathas.

Thus, the matha, with the ācharya as its leader in the village, has been not only responsible to a great extent for keeping up the moral tone of society, but has contributed towards the maintenance of peace, concord and orderliness by providing the villagers with an adequate forum.
The most important social contribution of the śaiva matha is the upliftment of the backward classes and minimisation of the rigour of caste distinctions. So-called untouchables and backward classes were freely taken into the religious fold, and the portals to a better mode of living and a higher conduct of life were opened to them. In this respect, śaiva mathas in general, and Vīrāśaiva mathas in particular, functioned more or less on the lines of Christian missionaries. Though inter-dining and inter-marriages between the various classes were not prescribed, yet the spiritual bond and fellow-feeling fostered by mathas reduced to a considerable extent the distinction between different castes and sub-castes. Members of the so-called untouchables have been found to live in fellowship with members of the highest class, and, subject to certain limitations, they could take part in all the functions of the mathas.

Educational Contribution:

'Education', in common parlance, is taken to mean some kind of instruction, knowledge, training or skill
in any sphere of human activity. The scope of education is coextensive with the varied interests of human life. In its wider sense, education may be described as a creative process of the progressive development of the individual and social life of a nation. As an agency, or a group of agencies, of cultural advancement, it has been an essential element in human civilisation all through the ages.

From ancient days up to the advent of the British, education was not a concern of the State. Here and there, we find some pathasalas managed by private individuals. 'Forest colleges' or 'Gurukulas', where specialised studies were carried on, have been known from a very remote time of Indian History. Taksasila, Nalanda, Kasi, Kanchi etc., are famed in Indian literature as great ancient centres of higher education and learning. The education that was imparted in ancient Indian centres was 'an education of the kind that lifted the savage to the sage and the saint, the barbarous to the fraternal, the warring to peace'.

With the development of the temple and the matha,
... the responsibility of imparting education came under its domain. The matha, with the influence of Buddhism, became the centre of both primary and higher education. Buddhist monastic colleges were the first systematic educational institutions. They taught not only Buddhist studies but also Brāhmin and secular branches of learning. With their inspiration, the Saiva mathas and their ācharyas voluntarily took upon themselves the responsibility of enlightening the people. All the important Saiva mathas used to maintain (and are still maintaining) a regular band of scholars whose duty was to impart education, especially in respect of ancient scriptures and learning. The Saiva doctrines were, no doubt, studied, but other branches of study such as Vyakarna and Nyaya and Kavya were not neglected. The ācharyas were almost entirely devoted to a course of ethical excellence and intuitive gnosis leading to a spiritual awakening. They took upon themselves the task of education. There are many examples to show that ācharyas were greatly responsible for diffusing knowledge amongst the mass.

Like the Christian monastery of medieval days, matha was a religious centre, a school and a library. Not only
existing books were preserved with the utmost care, but others were imported from other places. Every matha usually possesses a library consisting of manuscripts to the extent of a few thousand. The larger mathas once contained manuscripts, some of which are being preserved in different antiquarian institutions. It is not that only religious scriptures were preserved, but books on music, dance, medicine, literature, philosophy and painting. Some rare Sanskrit manuscripts have been recovered from matha libraries in Karnataka.

Moreover the books that were preserved were not left to lie fallow. They were industriously and assiduously copied, and worn-out ones were replaced with new copies. (The manuscripts were written on two materials. One was cloth, painted black and called Kaditas, and the other palm-leaves. The preparation entailed a laborious process, no doubt, but a set of persons were specially entrusted by affluent mathas with the work of preparing manuscripts. The copying of manuscripts was considered a meritorious deed.

This work of the acharyas was an incentive to the
growth of Saiva literature, learning and scholarship and was needed to preserve and defend the tradition and doctrine among themselves. The custom of holding philosophical conferences and doctrinal debates among themselves not only contributed to the growth of critical philosophy and logic, but also resulted in transforming monasteries into active centres of education, learning and literary activity.

**Types of Education:**

The education imparted in the Saiva mathas was neither exclusively Saivite nor exclusively monastic. Non-Saivite studies and the secular arts and literature seem to have received their due share in the educational curriculum. We can divide this broadly into four types:

1. Spiritual Education.
2. Moral Education.
3. Literary Education.
4. Technical Education.
1. Under this may be placed the teaching of Śaiva philosophy and literature and the essentials of spiritual progress. Besides this theoretical aspect of spirituality, the practical ways and means of truth-realisation, such as yogic practices, mystical trances, mastery over the body and the mind were taught. Scriptural study became an aid in spiritual education and self-cultivation as a matter of course.

2. Moral instruction was of primary importance. Both the epigraphs and literature testify to the high moral conduct and ethical excellence of Śaiva ācharyas. Moral precepts and rules of conduct were taught through practical examples. The students learnt the rules of purity, cleanliness, food, etiquette, respect for all forms of life, obedience to elders and so forth. The practice of the five moral precepts (pañcasāla) may be taken to have been the first moral lesson taught to the students in the mathas.

3. Literary education may have been compulsory for all the students in the matha. Monastic as well as vocational education had progressed considerably under
the supremacy of the ācharya. Reading and writing, study of the Āgamas and books of general knowledge seem to have been compulsory elements in the education of a Śaiva monk.

4. Technical education, with special reference to architecture, sculpture, painting, weaving, basket-making, seems to have been part of Virasaiva education.

Literary Contribution:

In literature, the contribution of Śaiva and Virasaiva ācharyas is no less considerable. It would not be an exaggeration to say that early religious literature in Karnataka (especially in Kannada literature) is practically a product of Śaivas. It is true that a certain amount of literature was produced in royal courts, but the output of the courts was not as extensive as that of the mathas. Translation of Sanskrit scriptures into Kannada by Virasaiva ācharyas continued unabated till modern times. A detailed survey of the literature produced in the mathas has already been made in the earlier chapters.
(i) Translation and Adaptation: Many Sanskrit works were translated into Kannada verses by the ācharyas and devotees. All other Saiva writers were directly or indirectly influenced by religion. Some of them translated Sanskrit works while residing within the precincts, while others derived inspiration, or received orders, from the ācharyas.

(ii) Theological Writings: There are several works of a theological nature with special reference to the Bhakti cult, both in Sanskrit and in Kannada. The superiority of the devotion to Śiva, types of Bhakti, the need for a guru and initiation, the merit of holy association and such other topics have been dealt with in all the works of this class. Sayana, Vidyāranya as well as Sivasaranas mark the beginning of this type of literature. Some of these works are of the nature of compilations. Devotional verses collected from the puranas have been classified and rearranged, according to the subject-matter, into different chapters. Many commentaries on old works were also written.

(iii) Biographies: The Saiva movement in Karnataka
gave birth to a new branch of literature in the form of biographies (puranas). These works on the lives and deeds of Śaiva ācharyas cannot be truly called biographies; they rather come under hagiography. Hero worship colours the biographer's approach to the lives of the ācharyas or saints, and, as a result, supernatural and exaggerated accounts are frequently to be met with. Written from a devotional point of view they record the day-to-day experiences and incidents of the saint's life, personally witnessed by the authors or handed down by tradition. Hence, these works may be considered to be essential sources of information of the Śaiva faith and movement. These works further throw light upon the socio-religious conditions of Karnataka during the last few centuries.

We can divide these works into two kinds: The *caritra* type concentrates mainly upon the individual lives of different ācharyas, while the other type mainly traces the history of different ācharyas in a chronological order, dealing with the life and works of successive heads of a matha. This type is also known as *matha-vamsaValli*. Almost all the ancient mathas have such chronicles. These works are found in both verse and prose, and both in
Kannada and Sanskrit.

Similarly, the life of every important Saiva ācharya or religious reformer has been treated in one or more biographical works. There are a few voluminous works running to several hundred pages, where almost all the early Saiva or Virasaiva saints' lives and activities have been narrated. All these types of religious puranas are not only important from the point of the detailed lives and activities of the early Saiva ācharyas and reformers, but are also valuable for the exposition of Saiva ideals and tenets. For these reasons, the reading and interpreting of the puranas has been part of religious services conducted on all important occasions in the mathas.

(iv) Devotional Songs: Devotional songs and lyrics produced by the ācharyas and devotees are numerous. These devotional songs, expressing lofty sentiments in language of poetic beauty, are called stotras, i.e., With all their lofty ideas, literary beauty and heart-moving music, the songs not only became the solace of spiritually distressed hearts, but also came to be a potent factor in attracting the masses towards Saivism.
With the growth and spread of the matha organisation, the popularity of these songs increased and became a regular practice with mathas to begin the daily as well as occasional devotional services with a song.

The popularity and esteem enjoyed by these devotional songs inspired many others, mainly the acharyas of mathas, to write songs on the lines of these older works, and they continue to be written to this day.

Artistic Activities:

Music: The cultivation of the musical art in medieval Karnataka was assiduously carried on in mathas. Devotional songs, like vacanas mentioned earlier, set to tunes of various classical ragas, were sung with scrupulous care. Deviation from the original tune of these devotional songs was never allowed. Almost all the ragas employed in the songs are usually found in ancient musical treatises. Bajananas and kirtanas with some musical ragas are regular features of the matha.
Painting: The painted ceilings and walls of many mathas are evidence of the artistic sense. The medieval biographies of saints as well as matha chronicles contain descriptions of mathas having painted ceilings and walls where stories from Siva puranas are portrayed, with various decorations and designs. For instance, the wall of the Huchchappana matha, on the bank of the Tungabhadra near Anegondi, is covered with beautiful paintings. Beautiful creepers with floral designs, as well as war and dance scenes, were carved on the panels of front doors and the gate.

The art of book-illustration by means of miniatures was largely cultivated from the 17th century. All the illustrated manuscripts have not yet been published, and hence no serious attempt has been made to study the technique of religious painting. Many such illuminated manuscripts are available. The painter's skill was generally requisitioned to decorate the labour of penmanship.

Illustrations are of two types, viz., (1) decoration and (2) thematic. In the former type, the borders of each page are painted with various designs. In the latter type, the story narrated in the manuscript is illustrated.
in vivid detail. This type of illuminated manuscripts, so far recovered, are found in museums. A few more illuminated manuscripts are definitely known to be in existence in different mathas of Karnataka.

In short, the cultural history of Karnataka, in respect of fine arts and crafts, of education, learning and literature, since the beginning of the 10th century A.D., up to the advent of the British, centred round the monasteries.
CONCLUDING REVIEW.

Though the origin of the māthas in Karnataka could be found in the eighth century itself, the real beginning was in the tenth century A.D. By the end of the tenth century, the Kālāmukha monasteries began to appear. By the end of the 12th, their successor, the Vīraśaiva mātha, appeared. This development is marked by the expansion of the activities of the mātha. Throughout Karnataka, proselytizing activities on the part of Vīraśaiva missionaries took place. But the reformers of the first few decades of the 12th century had to confront opposition from the rival faiths. By the beginning of the 15th century, Vīraśaivism had overcome all opposition, and the Vīraśaiva mātha had taken deep roots in the soil of Karnataka under the royal patronage of Vijayanagara. Their missionaries found a more congenial and accommodating atmosphere to preach their faith. Consequently, numerous branches of māthas were established by the Jangamas. The period between the 15th and the 17th centuries may be called the era of the growth of the branch māthas among the Vīraśaivas. As a result, every village in Karnataka
inhabited by the Virasaivas came under the religious influence of these mathas and gradually they even penetrated the neighbouring areas. The five original mathas of the Virasaivas claimed a strength of thousands of branches.

At the same time, the Virasaiva mathas and the Sringeri matha received a setback when the Vijayanagara rulers came under the influence of the Vaishnavas.

Under the patronage of the Keladi rulers, many of these Virasaiva mathas as well as the Sringeri matha were revived and restored to their former position, and many new Virasaiva mathas came into existence. The latter were allowed to pursue their evangelical vocation.

The impact of Western civilisation during the 19th century and the growth of rationalistic ideas amongst the people have come in the way of the further expansion of the Virasaiva mathas. A process of gradual decadence has already set in. However, in spite of many disadvantageous developments, it is still surviving as a living institution. Particularly on the villagers, its influence is very great.
The importance of the matha does not lie only in its religious activities. It has contributed much to the development of culture. It has created a rich devotional literature, patronised and popularised classical music, encouraged the art of manuscript writing, boosted handicrafts, and elevated the socially backward communities by presenting before them a higher and healthier code of life. Loosening the rigidities of the caste system by reconciling the value and equality of all beings at the spiritual level, the spread of Kannada, encouragement of primary education, the popularisation of ethical virtues like kindness, non-violence, obedience, devotion, through their act and conduct among the devotees, and above all the fostering of a spirit of fellow-feeling or spirit of unity amongst persons of different parts of the country—these are some of the notable contributions of the monastic movement in Karnataka.

But no institution can claim perfection, and the matha is not an exception. The unusual multiplication of Vīraśaiva mathas during the 17th and 18th centuries and after, cannot be ascribed solely to religious causes. Allurement of money, power and prestige cannot be altogether ruled out among the motives behind the foundation
of so many mathas. Brothers and other members of the same family are frequently seen founding different mathas instead of devoting themselves to the cause of their ancestral matha. The history of several mathas contains accounts of friction among members of the same family on the question of succession to headship and establishment of separate mathas. For example, the history of the Virakta mathas, as depicted in Niranjana Vamsa Ratnakara, furnishes illustrations of such internal dissensions. The offerings given by the disciples, and the honour and prestige associated with the headship of the matha were also reasons for the establishment of new mathas. Moreover, the principle of hereditary succession to the headship (Putravarga Pattada matha among Vīrasalvas), as adopted by most of them, sometimes elevated unworthy persons to the headship, resulting in internal differences and the lowering of the image of the mathas.

The mathas began to consider themselves fortunate if they could somehow, through the help of influential disciples, procure honoured seats in the royal court. The greatness of a matha no longer depended upon the religious attainments of its ācharyas, but upon the power and prestige
secured in the royal court. Mathas favoured by kings began to get precedence over mathas without such patronage, in other spheres also. As a result of constant contact with the court, mathas favoured by the kings and nobles began to enhance their outward show by adopting courtly formalities, pomp and grandeur. Others tried to imitate them as far as possible.

- The craze for power and prestige and the lust for wealth and property gradually tended to replace simplicity by formality. The intimate and sincere relationship between the guru and Sisya, as we find in the early period, gradually gave place to a formal relationship. Direct approach without an intermediary ceased to exist. On the whole, the relationship between the religious heads and their disciples became to a certain extent artificial. Of course, it would not be true to say that all mathas developed the above characteristics; it is specially true in the case of mathas which imbibed courtly formalities.

The multiplication of mathas adversely affected the country in another way also. During the later period, mathas served as an asylum to those who tried to escape the
necessity to labour for a living. Hundreds of able-bodied persons, putting on devotees' garb, sought refuge in mathas.

The later history of the mathas is also marked by the growing spirit of conservatism and orthodoxy, in place of the catholicity which had characterised the early period of the movement.

In some mathas, women and specially members of the Backward classes were debarred from entering the prayer-hall. Intolerance of the beliefs of other sects, undue supremacy given to tradition, attention paid to the letter rather than to the spirit of rules and regulations, and similar trends have made the matha a less progressive institution.

Because of this gradual loss of dynamic quality, the matha at present no longer enjoys the same enviable status that it used to enjoy formerly. Unless it adapts itself to the changing circumstances, its future cannot be assured.
NOTES

1. For the study of the general aspects of the Śaiva and Virasaiva mathas we are to rely upon the conventions, traditions, usages, etc. I have consulted various heads of the mathas and the experts in the field about different customs and practices followed by the mathas. Myself being the head of Hirematha, Davanagere, intimately acquainted with the customs and rituals of the mathas, hence I have made personal observations regarding the practices prevalent among the Virasaiva mathas.

2. Though it was an old institution, it became powerful and colourful under the Kalamukha acharyas. It is believed that Sankaracharya in the early part of the 8th century revived this old institution and gave a new dimension to it. But the major share of credit goes to the Kalamukhas, who popularised and systematised this Institution in Karnataka on a large scale. We yet have epigraphical evidence from the 10th century onwards to this effect.

3. IA, IV, p. 333.
4. Monier Williams, A Sanskrit English Dictionary
6. EC, VII, Sk. 102.
7. AR, of 1960, No. 357.
8. Ibid., No. 667.
9. Ibid., No. 671.
10. EC, VII, Sk. 276.
11. Sringeri, Balehonnur etc. can be cited as examples.
12. EC, V, Bh. 117 and Sankaracharya matha at Puri.
13. SII, IX, No. 135.
16. Ibid., IX, No. 135.
17. EI, XII, p. 290.
19. ARIA, 1958-59, No. 646.
20. EC, VII, C1, 18.
21. MAR, 1943, No. 20.
22. EC, VII, Hc. 60.
23. EC, IV, Cl. 30.
24. EC, VIII, Tl. 43.
25. EC, VII, Sk. 27.
27. EC, VII, Sk. 126.
28. Ibid., Sk. 102.
29. MAR, 1936, pp. 97-98.
30. EC, VII, Sh. 28.
31. Ibid., Jl. 10.
32. SII, XX, No. 40.
33. SII, XV, No. 37.
34. MAR, 1919, p. 15, Para 34.
35. Ibid., p. 6, Para 19.
36. SII, IV, No. 355.
37. SII, XV, No. 56.
38. MAR, 1919, P.14, Para 32.
39. The Kurubas are even now the followers of the Revenasiddha sampradaya. The Jangamas usually conduct the ceremonies. So it can be surmised that the Kurubas constituted the disciples of this matha.
41. Guruvamsa Kavya by Kasi Lakshamana Sastri, the asthana Vidwan of Sacchidananda Bharati II (1706-41) is such an example. The contemporary historical events also find mention along with the history of the Sringeri matha in this work.
43. EC, VIII, Tl. 88,81; SII, IX, part I No. 95 (AR, No. 230 of 1918) Ibid., No. 98-160.
44. Ibid., Tl. 53, 183; SII, IX, part I, No. 135; XI, part II, 139.
45. Ibid., Tl. 80,60,54,40; EC, VII, Sk.27 ; SII, IX, p.664; SII, XV, No. 37 (BK, No. 106 of 1929-30).
46. SII, XV, No. 13 (BK, No. 212 of 1926-27).
47. EC, VIII, Tl. 69.
48. Ibid., Tl. 91.
49. MAR, 1943, P.129.
51. Among Virasaivas, the acharyas designate get a special training at the Sivayogamandir (near Badami). There they are given all the training necessary for an acharya. Usually, the acharyas are selected from among these trainees.
52. It is interesting to note that even an other than a Jangama can earn a diksha by his good conduct. After this, he is treated on an equal footing with a Jangama.

53. It closely corresponds to the second birth of the Hindus.


55. *Rig.*, X. 109, 5.

56. Ibid., III, 8, 4, 5.


58. Ibid., pp. 67-68.


61. The Brahmins trace their origin to one of the seven Risis; Gautam, Angiras, Kashyapa, Jamadagni, Vishwamitra, Vasistha, and Kaundinya.

The Virasaivas invariably trace their origin to the Panchacharyas. Moreover, every Virasaiva socio-religious ceremony takes place before the five Kalasas, which represent these five acharyas.

62. The Gayatri is revealed to the Brahmins; the Panchankshari or the Shadakshari is revealed to the Virasaivas.

63. Many inscriptions of the Sringeri matha reveal that they were given grants (for daily worship of these images) by various kings, queens and officials of various dynasties of Karnataka.