CHAPTER III

POSITION OF SIVA 
IN THE SCALE OF HINDU GODS

From the study of the religious history of the Hindus in India, it is known that there are five main sects, which have acquired an important position. These are the Vaisnavas, the Saivas, the Saktas, the Sauras and the Ganapatyas, which are the most well known religious sects. The Saiva cult is a phase of Hinduism. The system of thoughts offers it's own theory of knowledge, explication of mind and ideology of ethics.

The spread of Saivism in India depends on the human intention to follow the ritualistic faith as well as the religious stream. When this cult formed in an exact shape is difficult to deduce. Both the Vedic literature and the epic literature bear the close testimony about Saiva cult as well as the magnanimous entity of the adorable god. The account of Varahamihira, the famous astronomer of 5th century A.D. mentioned the condition of the Hindus. According to this book the adoration of Krishna, Siva and other gods were very popular in India for a long time. It has the millions of followers in all strata of the society.

From the description of the Chinese globe troter Hiuen Tsang, it is clear that the Chinese pilgrim during the time of his travel in 7th cent. A.D. was familiar to the religious conditions of India. Hiuen Tsang’s accounts tell us that the person saw the shrines at Kanouj, Karachi and Varanasi. The narratives of Greek tripper Megasthenes of 4th century B.C. is also important. Megasthenes produced a vivid information of the worship of
Lord Siva. He narrates the Lord Siva as the Indian Dionysios, the Lord of mountain.\textsuperscript{33}

South India also had the same tradition about the adoration of Lord Siva. The Pandya King of 6th century B.C., it is assumed that they were the worshipper of Siva. The successors of the Pandyas also followed the Saivism. Except the Pandyas, there were few other dynasties, like the Pallavas, Kakatiyas and Chandellas initiated Saivism for their spiritual progress. Mahadev Chakrabarty says about the above mentioned fact as follows, "The Eastern and Western Chalukyas were of Saiva persuasion; so were the Pallavas, Cholas, Pandyas, Kakatiyas, Chandellas, Paramaras, Gahadavalas, some Kings of Assam and Kashmir and of Bengal and many of them either issued bull type coins or had as their insignia or emblem the bull-banner."\textsuperscript{34}

God Siva has acquired an honourable position in the mind of his votaries. From Neolithic age to present time he can possess his popularity. Among the Brahmanical Triad, Brahma is the god of creation, Vishnu is the Lord of existence and Siva is the mightiest power for the destruction. Three fold phases of living world are controlled by the aforesaid triad.

Siva is considered as older than the two main divinities as well as the other less important gods of Brahmanical sect. In the age of Neolithic culture, the phallus like objects were considered as the symbol of man power and fertility. As a result, the symbol was worshipped by the member of the society. In the second phase of Mehergad culture, we have the evidence of some bull figures, which may be treated as the prototype of the zoomorphic representation of Lord Siva. Third phase of the same culture shows few delineation of bull on the potteries. Harappan culture tells the story of the chalcolithic period of Indian civilisation. The device of the Lord...

\textsuperscript{33} Me Crindle, J. W., Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian, 1960, pp. 34ff, 110-12.

\textsuperscript{34} Chakrabarty, Mahadev, The Concept of Rudra Siva through the Ages, 2002, p. 84.
of the beast, shown on the Indus seal proves that the civilised people were familiar with the adoration of Lord Siva. It is significant that there was no evidence of the worship of Vishnu and Brahma found in the site of Indus valley.

Linga cult was doubtlessly popular in the time of Indus valley civilisation. M. Aurelstein and John Marshall are to be credited as they informed us about the phallic evidence of the culture of Harappa. Three specimens are noted in this connection. The first specimen is ideally shaped and found by Aurel Stein at Mughal Ghundai in North Baluchistan. The second type of specimen is common with the usual shape. The third group is considered as the miniature model, which used like an amulet. From those evidences, it is clear that both devotions and rituals to the Lord Siva were familiar through the mass population of Indus valley. Besides the mother goddesses, prototype forms of Pasupati and different types of phallus were acknowledged as the main divinities of the society of the aforesaid culture.

Among the domestic animals bull is the symbol of strength and virility. Simulteniously, it has an ideal relation with the generative power of ancient agricultural activities. So, bull is also eligible to get homage from it’s votaries. Religious practice connected with the pre-historic bull figures is not determined and we have not any concrete example to establish the validity of the relation between bull and Lord Siva. Despite of that, it is not wrong to assume that archetype configuration of Harappan Pasupati has the relation with bull. The seal of Harappa has the depiction of ascetic figure, which made on the background. The bull is represented as one of the animal with the main figure.

Evidences of phallic symbol and bull adoration in the Indus valley confirm that the primitive worship of Siva was organised for the reminiscences of creativity. Siva had also a close relation with the fertility
and was considered as the protector of the beast. So, it is true to say that in primitive phase the Siva had his auspicious aspects among the population of pre-Aryan culture. Besides that he was the only male deity, who acquired the special respect from the votaries of bygone age.

In the period of Rigveda, the phallic worship is condemned. Fifth hymn of the twenty first verse in the seventh mondala of the aforesaid text says that Indra was prayed to prevent the community, who was habituated in sīna (phallus) worship. They were treated as the destroyer of the holy rite of the Aryans. The fact is further corroborated by R. G. Bhandarkar in his book entitled ‘Vaishnavism, Saivism and Minor Religious Systems’. During the time span of Rigvedic culture, Agni and Indra possessed the highest rank among the other gods and goddesses of the society. Agni got importance for accomplishing the sacrificial ceremonies and Indra was eulogised for his protective power and vigour. It is memorable that the idea of the protector of animals was popular to the Vedic people. But the credence is ascribed on the Pushan, who identified as an incarnation of Sun God. The fact is very clear that the Lord Siva had no importance in the phase of Rigvedic culture.

The concept of Siva was gradually changed in the later Vedic society. During the time of Rigveda and Yajurveda, the fearful feature made the conception of Rudra which doubtlessly awe inspiring. The seers of Rigvedic hymns frequently apprehended about the dreadfulness of Rudra. The god is attached with the various types of disaster, storm, epidemic, etc. Ascetics of Rigveda requested him not to do any harm as a malevolent spirit. In Yajurveda, he is described as the malevolent power, though some of Rudra’s aspects are narrated here containing the pacific characteristics. Siva’s composite character comprising both bhinignant and malevolent forms is also corroborated by the Atharvaveda. In case of

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37 Dutta, Ramesh Chandra, Rigveda Samhita (Vol I), 1976, pp. 228-229. (Hymn. 1/114/8).
Brahma and Vishnu, the religious ideas of Vedic people are quite different from the Puranic religious thought. In the Rigveda Brahma is narrated as the sole supreme being, which represents us the henotheistic introspection of earlier people. Vishnu is identified with Sun God Aditya during Rigvedic period and also in later Vedic period.

During the later Vedic period, the Lord Rudra was able to reach the all classes of man, either of elite class or of the lower class. Mainly the awe-inspiring image increased his acceptability among the mass population of the society. As a result, it is reflected that the god was praised by the ascetics, the representatives of the higher class and described as the god of thieves and criminals, the members of the dark world. On the basis of the aforesaid fact, the assumption may be nourished that the Lord Rudra obtained the first stage of his universal acceptability among the Indian people for his fearful attribute.

The two great epics of India, viz., the Ramayana and the Mahabharata also bear the testimony of the popularity of Lord Siva. The Ramayana says one hundred eight names of Lord Siva. Some notable names are as follows—Bhuta, Bhabya, Mahasuli, Kala, Pinaki, etc. Both Vaishnava and Saiva sects exploit the epics for their own interest. The magnanimity of Lord Siva is reported everywhere in the great epic Mahabharata. Episode related to Uma’s asceticism, annihilation of Madana, penance of Bhagiratha, etc. are described in the epic literature. More than the glorification of Lord Siva, the Pasupata religious sect is acknowledged as one of the main religious streams in India.

Most probably the wedlock of Siva with Uma was propagated as a myth during the period of two epics. The announcement of the aforesaid event proves that the general people accepted the god and goddess as the representatives of their own family accordance with their own imagination.

In the Pauranic age, manifold auspicious achievements of Siva were narrated in the Pauranic text. During this period, he was treated as the Lord of mountain, the commander of the creatures, the great cause of the
genesis and the swallower of the fatal poison. Girisha, Pasupati, Bhuva and Nilkantha were the names, which indicate the aforesaid attributes. Eighteen big Puranas and eighteen Upa-puranas tell different aspects, myths and iconography of Lord Siva. Probably the Puranas took their unabridged form within 7th century A.D. It may be said that during this period, homage, offered to Siva by his votaries got a new dimension. The Puranas such as Vayu, LINGA, Karma and Matsya declare the glory of Siva.

The encyclopedic text viz. Siva Purana has a list of thousand names of the Lord Siva. There are six samhitas in the aforesaid text, viz. Jnana Samhita, Vidyavesvara Samhita, Sanatkumara Samhita, Kalasa Samhita, Vayabija Samhita and Dharma Samhita. Both Jnana Samhita and Dharma Samhita have the nomenclature of Siva’s thousand names. If we assess the aforesaid names, it is clear that mightiness of Lord Siva influenced the general people.

Lord Siva may have been placed on a commanding position in the ancient Indian literature. As for example, the works of Kalidasa and Bharabhi may be mentioned. On the basis of the magnanimous episode of Siva, Kalidasa created his immortal epic of art viz. Kumarasambhava. Bharabhi wrote Kiratarjuniyam, where Arjuna’s conflict with Siva was narrated. Dandin and Banabhatta, the two famous litterateurs of prose romance in Sanskrit, gave the acknowledgement to Siva, as the most powerful divinity. The great poet Kalidasa was most probably a follower of Saivism. In the Raghuvamsam, he started the epic with an auspicious stanza comprising the eulogy of Ardhanarisvara. Similarly benedictory hymn (nandi) of the Abhijnana Sakuntalam says the adoration of Lord Siva, containing eight manifestations of his cosmic entity. Sudraka, the famous dramatist made the beginning of work with the prayer of Nilalohita Siva and his consort. Siva had also a dominating position in ancient and

18 Tattwamanda, Swami, Vaisnava Sects, Saiva Sects, Mother Worship, 1984, p. 45.
medieval Bengali literature. In 12th century A.D. the songs of Mainamoti was compiled. The work was done by the Nath sect, who was influenced by the Saivas and Vajrajanic Buddhists.

Numismatic and epigraphic sources are valuable and most essential for reconstruction of history. Numismatic evidences prove that the worship of Siva was a common matter to the people of North Western part of India since the pre-Christian era. From the devices of coins, produced by indigenous and foreign rulers, it is clear that the other parts of India had also worship of Siva. During the phase of 2nd cent B.C. to 1st cent A.D., there are many coins, issued by the rulers of the Punjab, carry the evidences of bull form of Siva. The fact establishes the glory of the god and patronization of royal power for the adoration of Siva. Some examples are given as the numismatic sources of Siva’s representation or it’s symbolic depiction. Trident was shown as the device on the coins of the Sivis, a tribal clan of ancient India. Battle axe, trident and bull are designed on the coins of Sivadasa, Rudra and Dharaghosha of Audumbarayanas. On some copper coins of 2nd cent A.D., the tribal rulers of Kanindas kept the mark of their devotion to Lord Siva. We find the standing figures of Siva, holding in his right hand a trident, battle axe and his left hand, from which hangs something like tiger skin. Legend of this type of coins tells that the icon is of Lord Chatreswara. Among the foreign rulers, Maues, Gondophares and Wema Kadphises were credited for issuing the coins with the device of Lord Siva’s figure or emblem. The most noteworthy manifestations of Siva, specially from iconographic view point are appeared on the coin device of Wema Kadphises, Kanishka and Huvishka. On the coins of Vastudeva, Siva is shown with his vehicle Nandi. Mihirakula, the Huna invader of 6th cent A.D. acknowledge his respect to Siva supplying the coins with Vrisadhwaja and trident. The gold coins of Sasanka (Fig.27) are mentionable as those

have the evidences of the figure of Vrisabahana Siva with full moon on background.

Epigraphs, belong to fifth cent A.D. to twelfth cent A.D. focus the light on Saivism as well as the popularity of Siva to the royal patrons and the adorers. The Kings, who patronized the installation of different types of inscription, were not always Siva, but they are deeply respectful to Lord Siva. Besides them, some rulers were initiated to Saivism. Those inscriptions convey us different names and adjectives of Lord Siva. Mathura Inscription and Udayagiri inscription of Chandragupta II mention the god as Maheswara and Sambhu respectively. Mandasore inscription of Yosodharman narrates him as Sulapani. The Damodarpur copper plates of Budhagupta and Joyadatta of 5th century A.D. convey the facts related to wide practice of Siva's adoration in his phallic emblem. Egra copper plate of king Sasanka and Nidhanpore copper plate of Bhaskarbarman represent the facts that both the kings were the devoted admirers of God Siva. The religious belief of Sasanka to Saivism is further corroborated by the account of Hsien Tsang. Pala and Sena periods witness the trend of Siva adoration with the familiarity of the god's various forms. Kesava Prasasti, dated in the 26th regnal year of Dharmapala, tells the establishment of a Chatturrnukha linga of Siva. Narayanapala's Bhagalpur grant refers to a religious assembly of the Pasupata teachers. The Rajibpur Sadasiva image inscription of Gopala III is significant from the standpoint of Sadasiva cult, well known in late mediaeval Bengal. It is also noteworthy that there are some epigraphs, which bear the evidence of benedictory hymns, offered to Siva. Nimdighi inscription of Gopala III, Deopara Prasasti of Vijayasena, Naihati plate of Ballalasena and Barrackpur plate of Vijayasena have the eulogy of Siva's glorification. The seals, attached with the copper plates

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4° Chatterjee, Rama, Religion of Bengal During Pala and Sena times, 1985, p.135.
bear the figures of Sadasiva, who seems to be the main adorable god of this dynasty.

Sacred places, where shrines of Lord Siva are situated, support the evidence of popularity of this god. Pilgrims come to the holy places with their fervent devotion and try to reach the attainment of virtue. Most of the Siva shrines have the phallic forms of Siva, which proves the magnanimity of the phallic symbol.

In the descriptions of the Sivapurana and Nandipurana, twelve places are considered as the resort of Jyotirlinga Siva. The concept of Jyotirlingas and their piousness to the devotees were propagated to general people by the great philosopher Sankaracharya.

It is in the Indian tradition that the phallic shaped stones were collected from Kailas region of the Himalaya by the devotees of Siva and latterly those were established in the popular and well known shrines of Siva. Almost thirty in number were taken into account as the holiest places for the Saivas during the time of Acharya Sankara.

Noteworthy, twelve places got the status of the shrines of Jyotirlingas. Those Jyotirlingas are as follows—Sri Somanatha (Gujarat), Sri Mallikarjun (Andhrapradesh), Sri Mahakaleswara (Ujjayini, M.P), Sri Omkareswara (Madhyapradesh), Sri Kedarnatha (Uttarakhand), Sri Bhimasankar (Near about Pune, Maharashtra), Sri Tryambakeswara (Nasik, Maharashtra), Sri Baidyanatha (Deoghar, Jharkhand), Sri Nageswara (Duarka, Gujarat), Sri Rameswara (Rameswaram, Tamil Nadu), Sri Vishweshwara (Varanasi, U.P.), and Sri Ghrishneswara (Doulatabad, Maharashtra). Besides the aforesaid holy places, there are few representations of the lord, which attract the devotees. Among them Amarnatha of Jammu and Kashmir, Chidambaram of South India, Tarakanatha of West Bengal are important.

On the basis of temple architecture and their establishment, the fact is clear to us that Siva got the patronization of kingly power as well as of general people. From the 6th cent A.D. the different dynasties of South
India like Chalukya, Chola, Rashtrakuta made the colossal structure in respect of Siva. A few of those are as follows—Someshwar, Pattadakal, Sivakanchi, Sundaresha Minakshi, etc. The Brihadiswara temple, a monument dedicated to Siva is the magnificent achievements of Rajaraja. In the nineteenth year of his reign Rajaraja begun the construction of the temple. The plinth of the temple is 45’72 square m, the shrine is 30’48 square m, and the vimana 60’96 m. high. Rajendra Chola, the son of Rajaraja built another imperial scale Siva shrine at the Gangakand Cholapuram, presently known as Ulkottai. Both the structure signify the supremacy of the earthly ruler as well as the divine ruler Lord Siva.

Temples of Khajuraho have the great attraction and constitute a landmark in temple architecture. In the Western group of Khajuraho temples, there are few dedicated to the Siva. Those are as follows— Lalguan-Mahadeva temple, Matangeswara temple, Viswanatha temple and Kandariya Mahadeva temple.

Depictions of erotic scene and sculptural embellishment on the temple wall prove that once mass population came to the temples for performing their rites and rituals related to the adorable god. The Chandellas, builder of the aforesaid temple complex may be treated as the deeply impassioned group for their efforts to make those temple structures.

Besides holy places of Saivas, Bengal can claim credit for the innumerable shrines, offered to that god. Specially terracotta temples show the unique examples of excellent art on their terracotta plaques. In temples terracotta art, Lord Siva has acquired an important position. Iconisation of Siva and Parvati with Nandi, Haribara, Vrisabahana Siva with Gauri and phallic forms, represented in temple shrine are frequently manifested. The terracotta plaques, where we find Siva’s various forms and legends are in many cases attached with the architecture related to different gods or goddesses. The fact tells that religious co-existence was very popular in

mediaeval Bengal. In some cases, the life styles of Saivite mohantas are designed in the terracotta plaque. Somewhere the life style of the votaries, who considered as the general people is also represented.

On the basis of the information, collected from paintings, it is clear that both in scroll painting and oil painting, Lord Siva gets importance. A scroll painting, preserved in the Asutosh Museum of Indian Arts, Calcutta University shows Parvati’s negotiation between Siva and Ravana in a conflict. Kalighata Patas, kept in the Indian Museum collection represent the figure of Siva with trident and bugle. The scene of Siva’s marriage is depicted in Kangra School of painting’s representation. Lord Siva is manifested as a good husband or as an affectionate father in few of the instances of the scroll paintings. Siva with his consort Durga and Siva, Carrying his son Ganesha are the noteworthy depiction of the aforesaid example. It is rememberable that those delineations of Siva are more human oriented than the divine dignity of the god. Artists of Bengal School of paintings also remember Lord Siva and acknowledge their homage by making picture. Abanindranath Thakur, Nandalal Basu, Pramad Kumar Chatterjee, Kalipada Ghosal, Ajit Krishna Gupta are the renowned artists, who claim the credit for the pictorial presentation of Lord Siva.

Chalochitra, an important type of pictorial art is considered as the cause of rejoice in the field of folk art. This is painted on the crescent like decoration behind the image of Goddess Durga. The figure of Siva generally exhibited here with his consort and retinue, which obviously considered as the symbolization of the happy family in Bengalee society. Here Siva is compared with the head of the family, who is eager to belong in society with his close relatives like wife and progenies.

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There are innumerable specimens of wooden objects, dolls and toys, collected and displayed in the museums of Bengal. Different aspects of
Siva’s divinity have been represented on those artistic works and the event proves the holiness of Siva among the mass population.

Lord Siva has acquired a dominant position in the museum collection as the god is the possessor of the different types of anthropomorphic and non-anthropomorphic images. It is rightly assumed that the iconic collection of Siva figures can be a major part of the archaeological museum or of art museum. There Siva images are largely displayed beside the images of Vishnu and Buddha. The paintings and the folk art specimens, which considered as the treasure of museum, also bear the evidence of different aspects and mythology related to Lord Siva. So, it is right to ascertain that as a social institution, museum can determine the importance of a particular divinity on the society and to make appraisal it’s evolution in the field of religious activities.

Ascertaining the position of Lord Siva in the Hindu society, it may be said that the god is characterized by the huge number of diversions. For his inscrutable work, Lord Siva is mentioned as Mahadeva. As the receptacle of high range of dignity and divinity, he is glorified as Devaideva. Sanctity and pacific nature of the god make him Siva, which means auspicious. With the dawn of civilization, archetype Siva got the adoration of people as the symbol of male power. Gradually he was changed and imagined as the protector of the living beings. Though Siva’s destructivity is too much familiar in Indian mythology, yet it is mentionable that Siva as a whole is the creator, the sustainer as well as in few cases the destroyer. From the early phase to modern age of Indian religious system, Vishnu and Siva confirm their nobleness to the devotees. Specially, worship of Siva by the royal family or elite class of the society and simultaneously by the general people, emphasizes the universality of the deity.
Spread of Saivism in India

Saiva religious system mainly stands upon the devotion of the votaries. During the early phase of Indian culture the idea of the non-Aryan god of fertility and procreation was mingled with the Vedic Rudra, the incarnation of fearfulness. Both the Rigvedic and Yajurvedic texts praise the Lord Rudra. Satarudriya section of the Yajurveda proves the familiarity of the god in the society. In fact Vedic Rudra has different attributes and manifold names. He is the roaring fearful god, the god of storm and sometimes identified with the god of fire. On the one hand, he is a destructive deity, who brings diseases upon men. He has also an auspicious character for his healing influence.44

The Pauranic idea of Siva is also an amalgamation of the both Aryan and non-Aryan aspects. This concept of Rudra Siva is fairly narrated in the Pauranic literature. Here pacific aspect of Rudra Siva was depicted with the ominous characteristics of the god.45

The Setasvatara Upanishad declares Siva as Mahadeva, which shows the superiority of the god. Vedic concept of Rudra reach the culmination in the age of Upanishad and the Saiva faith was more or less, in consonance with the main trend of the Upanishadic thought.

Famous grammarian Panini was contemporary of Gautam Buddha. Panini mentions few denominations of Siva in the sutras of Astadhyayi. The Paniníya Siksá, familiar in the name of Panini and a latter phase grammatical work tells that the lore of word is originated from Maheswara and Panini was able to be well-versed in the science of grammar by the grace of Maheswara. Some of the Buddhist religious texts mention Siva as a

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44 Dowson, John, Classical Dictionary of Hindu Mythology, p. 296.
45 Chatterjee, Bhaskar, Culture of Bengal through the Ages, 1998, p. 48.
follower of the Buddha. The Chullabagga and Samyuktanikaya give the acknowledgement to Siva as Deva or Devaputra.\footnote{Banerjea, J. N., Panchopasana (in Bengali), 1994, p. 131.}

In the time of Alexander’s invasion, there were some tribals, who deeply devoted to Siva, Sivis, resided in the Punjab were the strong follower of Saivism. According to the accounts of Kartius and Deodorus the Sivis used mace as an important weapon in the time of battle. During the phase of Mauriyan rule, the position of Siva and the expansion of Saivism are not accurately determined. The Arthasastra of Kautilya says that the Siva was considered as a secondary divinity. The witness of Arthasastra informs that the god was not treated as the most popular one among the mass population of the whole empire.

Patanjali, the writer of the Mahabhashya was patronized by the Pushyamitra Sunga. So it is the fact that the date of Patanjali was of first half of 2nd cent B.C. Patanjali refers a group of votaries, who carried iron spear and mentions them as Siva Bhagabatas. Most probably the Siva Bhagabatas are the predecessors of the Pasupatas. It is also important to note that Patanjali gave the examples of the compound words (samashadha pada) like Brahma-Prajapati, Siva-Vaisravana and Skanda-Vishakha in connection with the explanation of the Paniniyan sutra “devatadvande ca”.

Saivism got an organized shape during the 2nd cent A.D. Depending on a particular philosophy it extended all through the land of India. Lakulisha was the first preceptor, who made Saivism popular among the general people. During 2nd cent A.D. he was originated at Kayarohana in Vrijukaccha Desa. Different religious ideas of the Saivas and rites and rituals of them are conjoined and reconstructed by the aforesaid personality. Lakulisha had four disciples—Kushika, Garga, Mitra and Kaurushya. These four disciples have to be credited for the inception and extension of different branches of Pasupata system. In the belief of
Pasupatas, the Lord Siva indicates five ways for the liberation of living soul. The ways are as follows—Karya (action), karana (cause), yoga (meditation), vidhi (method) and dukhanta (end of sorrow).

Pasupata Saivism gained its familiarity in the North India as well as in East India within Gupta period. But when it was able to reach on South India is not very clear. Hieun Tsang said that he had observed a big temple of Lord Siva when he was travelling through the Malaykuta Pradesha of South India. Hemabati inscription of 943 A.D. describes that Lokulisha had the re-birth as Muminatha Chilliuka and made the name of aforesaid preceptor, a famous one to the local people. Someshwar Suri, a well-known Pasupata worshipper took a vital role for the extension of Pasupatism in South India.

Religious development of South India had a turning point during the 6th and 7th centuries A.D. Vaishnavism and Saivism were powerful in this phase. In this connection, the Arabaras of Vaishnava sects and Nayanaras of Saivite sects are noteworthy. Nayanara ascetics, sixty three in number were deeply devoted to God Siva. Among those ascetics three were credited to make songs of Lord Siva. Those songs, made by Appear, Sambandhar and Sundarar were the cause of attraction to the worshipper of Siva and considered as the Devaram Stotram in South India.

Agamanta, Suddha and Vira Saivism were also flourished in South India. It was the credence of Agamantins that the Agamas, twenty eight in number had been originated from the holy face of Lord Siva. Possibly the Agamas were compiled within 9th century A.D. The followers of Agamanta Saivism nourished the thought that the mantra with five syllable such as ‘Namah Sivaya’ had been the holiest pronunciation for any type of ritualistic work. Taking initiation from the spiritual teacher is considered as a compulsory duty among the follower of aforesaid sect. Agamanta Saivism is quite discernible from Vedantic Saivism. According to their

assertion, the Vedas came out of Siva as unawares as his breath, where the Agamas were personally preached by Mahadeva.

Basava was credited for the making of full formation of the Vira-Saiva philosophy. He was the first historical personality, who offered the doctrin of Vira-Saivism for mass consideration. From the story of the Basava Purana, it is appeared that he was a strenuous supporter of the sect. According to the legend of the Bijalraya Charita and Basava Purana, he was of 11th cent A.D. Basava taught the adoration of linga or phallus as a chief feature of this system. The imitators of Vira-saivism were preached the importance of reverence to the spiritual teacher (guru), the phallus and the organization (samgha).

Kashmir, the remote part of North India begot some preceptors of Saivism, who manifested their religious facts according to the philosophical realization. The first preceptor of Kashmir Saivism was Vasugupta. The date of Vasugupta is first half of 9th cent A.D. Kashmir Saivism has two branches, which stand upon the ideology of the Spanda Sastra and Pratyavijna Sastra. The formation of Kashmir Saivism is built on the basement of philosophical speculation and the path finders of this sect are well versed in different types of knowledge.

Saivism, as a Brahmical sect took a vital place in Indian culture. The system covers different parts of human imagination and creativity. The trace of Saivism is found in all classes of people of India as well as of Bengal. Both image and phallic worship of Siva are prevailed here. Different classes of society involved themselves in the adoration of this god. Saivism spreaded eastern India very widely after adoption of it by the rulers. Sources like literature, inscriptions, coins, images and shrines tell the story of Saivism's acceptability in Bengal. Local inhabitants of Bengal, who considered as general public were also respectful to the divinity of Siva. As for example we can find many big and small shrines in the districts of Bengal. The event tells that local people established those shrines so that they could successfully perform their rites and rituals. Selected members of
the society were deeply thoughtful and may be credited to make new doctrine related to Saivism. Ultimately the assertion may be made that the Saivism proceeded all through the country including the different regions with its sectarian philosophy, devotee's imagination and the various iconic representation of the god.