Saivism is one of the most primitive cults in ancient India. So the history of this cult is somewhat obscure and the origin of it can be traced to hoary antiquity. As a cult of religion Saivism is traced to Indus Valley Civilization and Culture. The people of Indus Valley worshipped a male deity who may be regarded as the prototype of Śiva. A seal of Mohenjo Daro shows the figure of a deity seated in a Yogic posture surrounded by animals with two horns on the two sides of the head-dress bearing three visible faces and with phallus standing straight. The idea of Śiva as Paśupati and a Yogin is no doubt supported by the figure of this deity. Again, an another seal of Harappa also contains the figure of the same deity surrounded by many animals, specially with the figure of a bull, a trident and a man standing before a two-storied building. This figure is also taken as the figure of Śiva. Thus numerous evidences of such other types prove that the God worshipped
by the people of the Indus Valley Culture was the primitive type of Śiva. Hence it is presumed that as a cult of religion Śaivism had its origin in the pre-vedic period. But as a systematic philosophy it came to us in the later period. During the pre-Upanisadic period it was thoroughly a practical cult. But from the Upanisadic period onwards it was under the influence of Vedic ideas and a philosophical thinking analogous to Upanisadic ideas developed.

As a cult of religion Śaivism is supposed to have some connections with some forms of worship (such as, Phallic worship) prevalent in the Indus Valley Culture of the pre-Vedic period. Scholars, of course, differ in their opinions in this respect. But the seals mentioned above show that in all probability the līṅga worship which is associated with all forms of Śaivism had some connection with phallic worship.

The word 'līṅga' connected with the Śiva Cult has later been shorn of its implication in the original phallic cult and has been associated with various mystical and metaphysical powers. The word 'sīśna-deva' has been used with contempt as referring to a group of people who are either sensually inclined or worshipped sīśna or the phallus. The word 'līṅga' has been used in Indian literature in various other senses. It means a sign of something. It also means in the context of the Lord that in which everything merges after dissolution.
Śiva does not appear originally in the Vedic Pantheon. The Vedic God Rudra has been later on identified with Śiva who was a God of non-Aryans in the process of assimilation of the ideas and culture of the non-Vedic people to those of the Vedic Aryans. The 16th Chapter of Suklayajurvedasamhitā is of great importance in showing this process of assimilation. The concept of 'Rudra' means that which is terrible and destroyer. He has been described in the Rudrādhyāya as Ugra, Bhima and Ghora. But he has also been associated with the ideas of universal good and happiness. He has been described as Śāṅkara, Mayobhava and Śiva. He has also been described as the protector of animals and all beings. He is not only the God of the upper-caste people but of the lower-caste people also including the non-Aryans, the people living on the hills etc. Strangely in this chapter on Rudra, He has also been described as one whose Phallus is always strong and erect due to Brahmacarya. This shows the connection of Śiva Cult with the pre-Aryan phallic worship.

As a religious cult Śaivism was prevalent in almost all parts of India in some form or other. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas are known as Śaivas and Pāśupatas. The Guptas worshipped the Lord Śiva. Different seals and coins collected show that the Kings of the pre-Christian and early-Christian era were the worshippers of Śiva. Śiva is also revealed through Kuśāṇa coins. Sanskrit literature of India abounds in
passages with reference to Śiva in all ages. The Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad has established the most elevated idea of Rudra-Śiva. In addition to the Upaniṣad, Pāṇini and Patañjali are the sources of our informations about this God, Rudra-Śiva. They both mention Śiva as the name of the Lord. The Atharvasiras Upaniṣad mentions the name of Pāṣupatavrata which consists in besmearing the body with ashes and which releases the worshipper from the fetters (pāśas) with which he is tied (paṣupāśa vimokṣaṇa). The Mahābhārata mentions the Śiva cult as a form of religion side by side with the Vedic religion. Śiva is noted here in various names as Rudra, Śiva, Mahādeva, Giriśa, Kapardi, Kṛttivāsa, Hara and Bhava. All these names are also traced in the later Vedic literature. The Rāmāyana also alludes to this popular aspect of Śiva.

Śaivism, as a cult of religion, was divided into various sections and sub-sections. In the Brahma-Sūtra it is divided into the Saivas, the Pāṣupatas, the Kārunika-Siddhāntīns and the Kāpālikas. Vācaśpati Miśra in commenting on the Bhāṣya of Śaṃkara in Vedānta mentions the same four sects of the Saivas; while Bhāskarācārya in his commentary on 'Brahma-sūtra' reads Kathakasiddhāntīns in lieu of Kārunikasiddhāntīns. Rāmānuja on his 'Śri-bhāṣya' mentions Śaiva, Pāṣupata, Kāpālika and Kālāmukhas as the Śaiva sects. He also mentions that the Kāpālikas and the Kālāmukhas are the Śaiva sects of anti-Vedic character. Mādhavācārya in his 'Sarvadarśan-samgraha'
deals with the Nakulīśa Pāśupata, the Śaiva-darśana based on Śaivāgama and the Pratyabhijñā or the Kāśmīr Śaivism. The Vāmana Purāṇa mentions the following sub-sects viz. Śaiva, Pāśupata, Kālādāmana and Kāpālikā. Nāradīya Purāṇa mentions the names of those who are Siddhānta Mārgīs, Pāśupatās, Mahāvratadharās and the Kāpālikās. Guṇaratna uses the term 'Mahāvratadharās' in lieu of Kāpālikās while commenting on Haribhadra's 'Ṣaḍ-darśana-samuccaya'. But the Śiva Purāṇa calls the Kālāmukhas by the name of Mahāvratākās.

So from the above divisions we find that the Pāśupatās and the Śaiva Siddhāntīns have been accepted by all, but the problem arises with the other systems. V.S.Pathak has tried to identify the Kāpālikās with the Mahāvratadhara. Rāmānuja, on the other hand, has described the Kālāmukhas as Mahāvratadhāras and also as Lāguṇadhāras. R.G.Bhandarkar has identified the Mahāvratīns with both the Kālāmukhas and the Kāpālikās. Hence it seems that the Mahāvratīns were a class of ascetics among the Pāśupatās who followed a life of strict austerity. So broadly the Śaiva sects may be divided as : (i) the Pāśupatās, (ii) the Siddhāntīns, (iii) the Kāpālikās, (iv) the Kālāmukhas, and (v) the Kāśmīr Śaivism or the modern Śaivism.

But there is another important sect of Śaivism which perhaps remained outside the ken of those authors. Even Mādhavācārya, in his 'Sarvadarśana-samgraha', has not
mentioned the name of this sect. This sect is known as Vīra Śaivas or the Liṅgāyaṭṣ. We know of this sect from the 'Anubhava-Sūtra' of Mayi Deva and also from the teachings of Allama and Gorakṣanātha.

All these schools of Śaivism uniformly adhere to Lord Śiva or Paśupati as the Supreme Lord. But their religious practices show differences. In all cases the practice of the different forms of worship and secret yogic practices are predominant. The Paśupatas or the Nakulīśa or Lākulīśa Paśupatas mention Yoga and Vidhi as means of worship leading to the attainment of the final goal of life which is the cessation of all sufferings. The Siddhāntīns who are mainly the followers of the Śaivāgamas recommended Kriyā, Yoga and Carya as means of worship. Thus they laid great stress on bhakti. The Kāruṇikas also lay much emphasis on the element of bhakti. They are called the followers of Śaivāgamas by Prof. S.N. Dasgupta. The Vīra Śaivas who are also called the Liṅgāyats adhere to the specific practice of liṅgadhāraṇa i.e., holding the signs of Śiva on the body. The Kāśmīr Śaivism is practically an Upanisadic doctrine associated with the name of Śiva as the Supreme Lord and the Tantras as the source of the mode of worship following mainly the Yogic practices leading to 'Śatcakrabhedā'. The Kāpālikas and the Kālāmukhas are the ascetics of horrible unsocial practices which kept them outside the ken of the society.
The Kāpālikas used the human skull on their body and also ate and drank from the pots made of human skull. They emphasized the six marks they used, such as, a necklace, an ornament, an ear-ornament, a crest jewel, ashes and the sacred thread which was supposed to help them to attain the highest bliss. The Kālāmukhas also were a religious class eating food in a skull, besmearing the body with the ashes of the dead body, eating the ashes, holding a club, keeping a pot of wine and worshipping the Lord as seated therein. These they practised for obtaining the desired results in this world as well as the next.

The Śaiva religion has very often been associated with the Śākta form of worship. The Śaivas and the Śaktas emphasize the aspect of Śiva and the aspect of Śakti respectively and their religious practices are intermixed. The doctrine of 'Sāmarasya' of Śiva and Śakti is found in different forms in almost all forms of Śaivism. It has, however, been worked out in full details in the Pratyabhijñā philosophy which may be said to be the final and the most consistent form of Śaiva school of philosophy. All forms of Śaivism emphasise the practice of initiation or the dīkṣā. The place of guru or the preceptor is of prime importance. Śaivism also has an inclination towards the cult of bhakti and self-surrender to the Lord but it is not of too much emotional nature as in the case of Vaiṣṇavism. The Lord is considered to be the Supreme Being not bound even by the laws of Karma.
and liberation or the cessation of suffering is absolutely His gift and ultimately depends on His pleasure. Not pure knowledge but religious practices for the transformation of body and mind are recommended by all forms of Śaivism. It is, therefore, more of the nature of Kriyā-yoga.

(ii)

Śaiva religion, though pre-Vedic in its origin, its philosophical thought came later after being influenced by the Upaniṣads or some other systems of Indian Philosophy. It is, therefore, pro-Upanisadic. Among the above mentioned divisions the Pāṣūpata or the Mahāpāṣūpata or the Nakulīśa Pāṣūpata school is probably the earliest. The Pāṣūpata-sūtras were composed by a sage Lakulīśa, although Śrikanṭha is believed to be the founder of the Pāṣūpata school. Bhandarkar believes Lakulīśa to be the original founder of the Pāṣūpata school. There is a doubt whether Śrikanṭha was a historical figure or not as we find Śrikanṭha mentioned as one of the siddhas with a mythological aura. Many scholars maintain that Lakulin or Lakulīśa was the disciple of Śrikanṭha. But Lakulīśa was in all probability the first to have put the philosophical ideas of the Śaiva cult in recorded writing. The Pāṣūpata-sūtram with the commentary of Kauḍinīya is regarded to be the most authoritative text on Pāṣūpata system.
Between Nakulisa and Kauṇḍinya the names of about fifteen teachers are found in the works of Rāśikara (14th Century A.D) and Guṇaratna in his commentary on the 'Ṣaḍ-darśanasamuccaya'. The 'Pāncārtha-bhāṣyam' of Rāśikara is also recorded an original writing of the system. The 'Pāncārtha-bhāṣyam' is believed to have been written in the 4th Century A.D. and Lakulisa is believed to be a person of 2nd Century B.C. Kauṇḍinya and Rāśikara are, however, believed to be identical, Rāśikara being the gotra-name of Kauṇḍinya.

The Pāśupatas discuss five main subjects viz. Kārya (effect), Kāraṇa (cause), Yoga (meditation), Vidhi (behaviour) and Duḥkhānta (cessation of suffering). The Kārya and the Kāraṇa are the two ontological categories. The Supreme Kāraṇa is Lord Himself. He is one and without a second. His classification is based on a difference of guṇa and Karma only. He is the Ultimate cause, the creator, the helper and the destroyer of the world. He does His function out of His nature as playful being. He is the eternal ruler (Pati) and Sādya i.e., naturally powerful. He is called Pati because He possesses the highest powers which are not the result of any action but which abide in Him permanently. So He creates whatever He likes. This is His greatness. Kārya is the effect. The entire universe created by Paśupati is called Kārya. The Kārya is three-fold viz., Vidyā, Kalā and Paśu. Vidyā is a quality of the Paśu (paśugaṇa vidyā) and is of two kinds: Knowledge (bodha) and Ignorance (avodha). The former is
essentially either Vivekapravṛtti or Avivekapravṛtti. But from the stand-point of object it is four-fold or five-fold. The Vivekapravṛtti is manifested by a valid source of knowledge and is called Citta. It is by means of the citta that an animal is conscious of the world, with the help of the light of caitanya. The second type of Vidyā (avodhavidyā) is described as paśvartha-dharmādharmika.

Kalās are the unconscious effects that constitute the pāsās or the fetters which bind the soul with impurities or malas. Kalās are of two types - Kāryakalā and Kāraṇakalā. The former is of ten types: The five tattvas (pṛthivi etc.) and the five guṇas (rūpa etc.). The latter is of three kinds: five senses, five motor organs and three inner organs i.e., buddhi, ahaṃkāra and manas. Thus briefly speaking, twenty-four elements of the Sāmkhya system minus the last one i.e., the 'Mahāt' or the great Universe are taken as kalā in the Pāṣupata system.

All conscious effects are called Paśus. The Paśu is either Sānjana (Impure) or Niraņjana (Pure). He is impure so long as he is connected with the body and the senses, but he becomes pure when he is bereft of the body and the senses.

Yoga is defined as the communion between ātman and Īśvara through the medium of citta (ātmesvara samyoga yogaḥ). It means a steady union of the soul with God. Its first requisite
is detachment to worldly things. It is of two kinds —
one is active (Kriyātmaka) in the form of japa, dhyāna etc.
and the other is cessation of all actions (Kriyoparama).
The latter is again technically known as Śāmvidgati. The
result of yoga is not kaivalya (as in Śāmkhya and Pātañjala),
but realization of Supreme Power (paramāśvarya) accompanied
by cessation of suffering. This yoga, according to the Pāṣupatas,
cannot be attained by mere knowledge, but by a certain course
of action called yoga-vidhi. So vidhi is the activity which
brings about merit (dharma) and is of two orders, the primary
and the secondary. The primary vidhi is caryā which again is
of two types — vrata and dvāras. The vratas are : (a) ash-
bath (bhasmasnāna), (b) ash-bed (bhasma śayyā), (c) upahāra
or niyama consists of laughter (hasita), song (gīta), dancing
(nṛtya), huḍukkāra (muttering dum), obeisance (namaskāra) and
chanting (japya), (d) japa and (e) circumambulation (pradakṣiṇa).

The dvāras are : (i) krāthana (feigning sleep when really
awake), (ii) spandana (trembling limbs like a paralytic),
(iii) maṇḍana (limping or walking as if legs are disabled),
(iv) śṛṅgāraṇa (acting with amorous gestures at the sight of
a beautiful and youthful lady), (v) avitat-karaṇa (doing un-
social, despicable and insane acts), (vi) avitad-bhāṣaṇa
(uttering of meaningless or contradictory words). The secondary
vidhi is purificatory, subsequent ablution for putting an end
to the sense of unfitness from begging, living on broken food
etc. It is auxiliary to the primary vidhi.
Duḥkhānta is the end of all sufferings. The cessation of suffering for the Pāśupatas is not only the attainment of freedom from the pain but is the possession of the supreme powers of the Lord which are the powers of both knowledge and action (dṛk-kriyā-śakti). Duḥkhānta is of two types — anātmaka and sātmaka. The former is absolute cessation from all pain. But the latter is the realization of power which consists in dṛk-kriyā-śakti. Dṛk-śakti consists of dūra-darsana, śravaṇa, manana, vijñāna and sarvajñatva; while the Kriyā-śakti consists of manojavitva, kāmarūpītva and vikaraṇādharmitva. This two-fold śakti is collectively called Supreme Lordship. According to the Pāśupatas, duḥkhānta can be attained by the grace of the Lord who is to be pleased by practical acts or rituals. Kaunḍinya says that the liberation from sorrow cannot be attained by knowledge (jñāna), disinclination (vairāgya), virtue (dharma) and giving up of one's miraculous powers (aisvarya-tyāga), but by grace (prasāda) alone ('tasmāt prasādāt sa duḥkhāntaḥ pṛāpyate. na tu jñāna-vairāgya-dharmaîśvarya-tīgamātṛād ityarthaḥ'). For the Pāśupatas Rudra-sāyujya is the nature of liberation and it signifies a state of communion of the soul with the Lord. The soul in its inherent nature is of the nature of the Lord. Its powers are covered by the malas or impurities which constitute the pāśa. The Pāśupata philosophy is dualistic in respect of its attitude regarding the relation between the finite soul and the Lord. Liberation is not absorption in
the being of the Lord, but a communion with Him sharing His powers of knowledge and action.

The Siddhāntīn school of Śaivism or Southern Śaivism advocates the authority of Śaivāgama. This is based on 28 Śaiva-āgamas and flourished from the 11th to the 13th century. Prof. Dasgupta says, 'The Śaiva Siddhānta school sprang forth as a school of Śaivism in the 13th century with Meykandadeva and his pupils Arulnanti and Umapati'. The principal literatures of this school are Mṛgendrāgama, Pauṣkarāgama, Svayambhuāgama, Bhoja's Tattvaprakāśa and Aghora Śivācārya's Vṛtti. The āgamic literature is pretty extensive, but its philosophical achievement is rather poor. They have some elements of philosophical thought, but their interest is more on religious details of the cult of Śaivism. There is, therefore, a good deal of ritualism and mantras and details of worship of Śiva, though some of them contained a general philosophical view underlying the cult which is enunciated in their separate section called Vidyā-pāda. But most of these āgamas still lie unpublished, and yet they form the religious kernel of Śaivism as practised by millions of people in different parts of India.

It is believed that Southern Śaivism was originally taught in Tamil countries in Tamil language. But such a contention is not authoritative. The tantras or the āgamas are believed to teach the same truth in the ways of
self-realization as the Vedas. The Vedas were meant for the upper classes only and Vedic rites were restricted to the Brāhmaṇas. The āgamas are meant for the people of all the strata of society. Hence there was no bar in propagating the teachings of the āgamas in the local languages. This along with a patriotic feeling of the Southern scholars appear to be responsible for the view that most of the āgamas were originally composed in the Tamil Language. The āgamic Śaivism was predominant in the South, Pāṣupata in Gujrat, Vīra-Śaivism in kannarese-speaking areas and Pratyabhijñā in Kāśmīr. The Śaiva practices were spread out in the whole country in some form or other from the time of the Vedas, particularly from the time of Atharva-veda in which the Brātya God or Śiva has been eulogized.

The Siddhāntīns deal with three categories — Pati, Paśu and Pāsa. The first category is Śiva or Pati. He is the instrumental agent of all the activities of production, maintenance, destruction, veiling up of the truth and liberation. Thus He is the designer of this world and things manifest themselves in the natural course. Mādhava says that Śiva is the intelligent Being, the instrumental cause of the orderly arrangement of the different parts of the world. He is the universal agent, but not irrespective of the actions done by living beings. If God be accepted as the instrumental agent, irrespective of Karma, He would be liable to the imputation
of partiality and cruelty. Here lies the difference between the Pāśupatas and the Siddhāntīns, though, of course, they possess the same view in respect of the highest goal of man. For the Pāśupatas the Lord is the possessor of absolute sovereignty and is not in any way bound to confer His dispensation on the finite self according to their Karma ('Karma- Kāminaśca maheśvaram apekṣante, na tu bhagavān Iśvarah Karma puruṣaṁ vā'pekṣate. ato na Karmāpekṣa Iśvarah')\textsuperscript{16}. He may dissolve the karma at His pleasure. But, according to the Siddhāntīns, the Lord does not lose His absolute sovereignty by conferring dispensation on the souls according to their Karma.

The paśu or the soul, for the Siddhāntīns, is of divine nature and is essentially akin to Śiva. It is essentially the possessor of infinite powers of knowledge and action. These powers are obscured by the malas for which the soul is incapable of realizing its essential nature in the state of bondage. The individual soul, though identical in nature with the Lord, retains its distinctness through eternity. The three kinds of paśus are the vijnānākala, pralayākala and sakala. The three kinds of pāśas are the mala, māyā and karma. Māyā is also called Rodhasakti or the power of the Lord by which He hides His own nature and also the inherent nature of the soul. The five powers or actions of the Lord are present in their perfect forms in the Lord but are finitized and contracted in the finite
self by the power of māyā. The finite souls are all-pervasive or vibhu. The vijñānākalas are those whose Karmas have been exhausted and are free from the bodies but have not yet realized their essential powers which are the same as those of the Lord. They are free from the Kalās which constitute the senses and the bodies by vijñāna or yoga. They are the highest in the order of the paśus. The pralayākalas are also disembodied in the state of dissolution. But the malas and the karmas remain attached to the souls in order to be revoked after the next cycle of creation starts. The ordinary souls (sakala) are bound by the three pāśas — of mala, māyā and karma. So long as the pāśas are active there is suffering. But the pāśas being ripened they become inactive and then all the sufferings of the jīva are dissolved. The Lord then assumes the shape of the ācārya and initiates the souls and leads them to the path of salvation. So it is said:

"Paripakvamalānetān utsādan hetuśaktipātena
Yojayati pare tattve sa dīkṣayācārya murttisthaḥ"\textsuperscript{17}.

The Vīra Śaivas follow the Bhedābheda doctrine of philosophy, not of course in conformity with the view of Advaita Vedānta, nor akin to qualified monism, but rather appears to be a compromise between the Śaivas and the Vaidikas. They are the stalwart followers of Śiva and they carry a liṅga or phallic emblem of Śiva on their body. They have, therefore, the popular designation 'Liṅgāyaṭ'. The main literatures of this sect of
Śaivism are, Siddhānta-śikhāmāni of Renukācārya, Siddhānta-siddhānta-paddhati of Gorakṣanāth, Anubhava-sūtra of Mayideva, Basava-Purāṇa and Śripati Paṇḍit's commentary on Brahma-sūtra. Śripati Paṇḍit lived towards the later half of the 14th century and was one of the latest commentators on the Brahma-sūtra. This commentary is called 'Śrikarabhāṣya' and is accepted as the fundamental basis of Vīra-Śaivism. Śripati Paṇḍit interpreted the Brahma-sūtra substituting Śiva as the Supreme Lord in place of the word 'Brahman'. In other words, the word 'Brahman' and 'Śiva' have been used there non-differently.

There is a controversy among the scholars regarding the identity of the founder of this sect. Some say that the school of Vīra Śaivism dated from the 2nd Century A.D. or even earlier. But it seems that Śaṅkara, Vācaśpati and Ānandagiri of the 8th and the 9th centuries did not know anything of this sect of Vīra Śaivism. Even Mādhavaśārya of the 14th Century A.D. seems to be quite ignorant of this sect as he had mentioned nothing about it in his 'Sarva-darśan-saṅgraha'. But Prof. Dasgupta presupposes that the kernel of Vīra Śaiva thought is almost as early as the Upaniṣads. To him, it may be found in a more or less systematic manner by way of suggestion in the writings of Kālidās who lived in the early centuries of the Christian era. "The Suta-Saṁhitā (6th Century A.D.) a part of the Skandapurāṇa", he says,
"seems to teach a philosophy which may be interpreted as being of the same type as the Vīra-śaiva philosophy propounded by Śripati". 18

But there is a general tradition that Basava, a Brahmin, and the prime minister of king Vijjala of Kalyāna (1159-1167) was the founder of the Vīra-śaiva sect. The sect is, therefore, supposed to be originated about the middle of the 12th Century A.D. But this is not correct. Several evidences show that the system was prevalent prior to Basava. The story of the birth of Nandi as Basava, as told in the Basava-purāṇa, indicates that Basava was born to reorganize this sect which might have had its origin earlier than the 12th Century. It is also mentioned in the same Purāṇa that the practice of liṅgadhāraṇa seems to have been in vogue even before Basava. Moreover, Basava himself did not say anything about the doctrine of Śat-sthala. These two are the indispensably necessary items by which Vīra Śaivism can be sharply distinguished from the other forms of Śaivism, apart from its philosophical peculiarity. Hence it seems that Basava was not the actual founder of this sect of Vīra-śaiva. He may be credited with building a strong structure of philosophy on the foundation of Vīra-śaiva mysticism that had been practised by the earlier saints. Dr.J.N.Banerjee 19 observes that Basava was successful in enhancing the social prestige of the Śaivas and particularly the Vīra-śaivas by the exercise of his political power,
though his contributions to this cult and philosophy are negligible. But Pdt. Gopinath Kaviraj is of this opinion that Basava was no doubt a very important figure of this sect and was at least the reformer of the same, though not the actual founder of it. He says, 'What Gautama had been to Buddhism and Mahāvīra to Jainism (according to tradition) Basava was to this Śaiva faith', 20. But whatever that may be, it is most probable that the Vīra Śaivism as an organised sect started in the 11th Century.

The portion 'Vīra' of Vīra Śaivism does not bear any philosophical significance. The Siddhānta-sīkhāmani gives a fanciful interpretation of the word 'vīra'. The word 'vi' indicates there knowledge of identity with Brahman and 'ra' means pleasure in such knowledge.

viśavdenocye vidyā, Śiva jīvaikyavodhikā!
Tasyāṁ ramante ye Śaiva Vīraśaivāstute mataī 21

Thus the term 'vīra' signifies a follower of Śiva who always delights in the knowledge of the oneness of Śiva and jīva. But Prof. Dasgupta does not agree to this view of Siddhānta-sīkhāmani. He says, 'such an etymology, accepting it to be correct, would give the form 'vira' and not 'vīra' .... Moreover, most systems of Vedantic thought could be called vīra in such an interpretation, for most types of Vedānta would feel enjoyment and bliss in true knowledge of identity. The word 'Vīra' would thus not be a distinctive mark by
which we could distinguish Vīra-śaivas from the adherents of other religions. Most of the Āgamic Śaivas also would believe in the ultimate identity of individuals with Brahman or Śiva. He holds that Vīra-śaivas were called vīras or heroes for their heroic attitude in an aggressive or defensive manner in support of their faith. He also suggests that the militant attitude of these śaivas who defied the caste rules and customs gave them the name of Vīra Śaiva.

The Vīra-śaivas are much more influenced by the Vedānta but their philosophy is a further development of the philosophy of Śaivāgama with a strong monistic bias emphasising the sense of aisvarya or the divine majesty in the Supreme Being. It advocates a kind of Bhedābheda-vāda with the addition of the doctrine of 'Sthala' and 'Liṅgadhāraṇa'. The central teaching of this Śaivism is that of realizing the identity of the finite soul with the Lord. This identity includes difference and is not, however, 'avibhāga' of the Kevalādvaitins. Vibhāga is retained, but there is identity in nature.

The Supreme Reality is called 'Sthala' by this system. He manifests Himself in six ways in the double aspect of liṅgs and aṅga. The liṅga is Śiva, the Lord, and the aṅga is jīva, the finite soul. The doctrine of 'Ṣat-sthala' is their peculiarity by which they differ from both the Pāśupata philosophy and the philosophy of Śaiva-siddhānta based on Śaivāgama.
To the Vīra-śaivas the Lord is the Supreme Self, the Purṇahantā. The creator and the created are the dual manifestations of the Lord by His power or śakti which is in the Lord and yet is not identical with the Lord, but is homogeneous in character with Him. The finite is essentially of the same nature with the Lord which is obscured by the three-fold pāśas. The nature of liberation is sāyujya or samyoga (the communion) with the Lord of which the soul is a part. Devotion is essential for the attainment of liberation. As in the other forms of Śaivism dīkṣā or initiation by the preceptor is the means for the attainment of liberation, the Vīra-śaivas speak of six-fold contacts or the Śaḍāṅga-yoga as means to liberation. Thus the view of the Vīra-śaivas is a kind of 'bheda-bhedā', not, of course, of the nature of Rāmānuja's philosophy but more akin to Śaṅkara's school. The soul, for the Vīra-śaivas, is Śivamaya or as radiant as the Śiva or is essentially of the same nature and powers as those of Śiva but the liberation, for them, is not complete merging in the being of the Lord as is in the case of the Śaṅkarites. Gopinath Kaviraj also admits that Śiva and Ātman are in all essentials one and the self-same thing, both being of the nature of Pure Existence, Consciousness and Bliss — in fact, the Being of one is the Being of the other. But a mysterious difference still persists through which the one appears as the Lord and the other as the servant and so forth. It is a state not
describable in the language of man ... This state is called 'bhāga-yoga'.

There are, however, shades of opinions among the Viśva-saivas and the school of Śrī-kanṭha appears to be a deviation from the above view in respect of the relation between the Lord and the finite soul. Śrī-kanṭha wrote a commentary on Vedānta maintaining the Śaiva tendency but basing his views on the Upaniṣads. He, however, closely follows the line of the Viśiṣṭādvaita-vāda of Rāmānuja. The Ultimate Reality, for him, is Śiva accompanied by Umā, His power. The Lord is of the nature of existence, consciousness and bliss; but He is personal. Creation, maintenance, dissolution, obscuration or tirodhāna of the knowledge of the individual souls and grace or ādāna are His acts. Existence, consciousness and bliss are His qualities, so He is never unqualified. He is both the efficient and the material cause of the world. He admits of internal differences or svagata-bheda. God's grace is the essential condition for liberation. Thus his philosophy is a mixture of Advaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita and Śaivism. He believes in a kind of avikṛta-parināma-vāda i.e., the theory that God remains unchanged while transforming Himself into the world.

Not much is known about the Kāpālikas. They could not gain a status of esteem in the society because of their horrible practices of drinking and indulging in sex-pleasure and also of their mode of unclean living. They mainly
worshipped the Kapālin form of Śiva and seem to be a sub-sect of the Pāṣupata system. They are usually adorned with garlands of human bones, take their food from human skulls, drink wine from the skull of a Brāhmaṇa, and offer oblations of human flesh to the fire.

Kapālikas were also known as Somasiddhāntīns or Śiva Śāsanas as there is a good deal of similarity between the Kapālikas and the Somasiddhāntīns and even in some respects they are identical. But this is wrong. The Somasiddhāntīns were a sub-sect of the Pāṣupata system and this sect was founded by one Soma Śaṁmā mentioned in the Vāyavīya-saṁhitā of the Śiva-puṟāṇa. It seems, therefore, probable that the Somasiddhāntīns were a branch of the heterodox Pāṣupata system and they were variously known as Śiva-Śāsana etc. in different places.

This sub-sect of the heterodox pāṣupata i.e., the Kapālikas appear to have attained some popularity in the Punjab and North Western India in the six-seventh centuries A.D. Yang-Chwang saw this sect at Kapisa and other places. Śaṁkarācārya is said to have met with the Kapālikas in that region on his sojourn to Ujjain. Even the Nīmāṇda copper-plate of Sarvavarman informs that a Kapālika sect lived in the Punjab. An epigraph of Hammira of Ranathambara shows that this particular sub-sect was developed sometimes after Lakulīśa Pāṣupata in the vicinity of Udaipur, in Rajasthan during twelfth
Century A.D. All these Kāpālikas are right-hand Kāpālikas. The left-hand Kāpālikas were found in Kāmarupa (in Assam), Nepal, Maharashtra in the middle of the Seventh Century A.D. Thus a wide-spread existence of the Kāpālikas almost all over India is attested by all the above sources.

The earliest literary references to the Kāpālikas occurs in the Maitrī-upaniṣad, where they are called 'thieves' and says 'one should not reside with them'\(^25\). In the Buddhist Cullavagga\(^26\) there is the reference of the sages who carried skulls and dressed themselves with pieces of cloth and were to be found in the cemeteries. This proves that the Kāpālikas lived as early as the time of the Buddhist work. The Purāṇas also mention the name of the Kāpālikas. Kurma-purāṇa\(^27\) describes this sect as an important section of the Śaiva faith. Of course, this text distinguishes the Kāpālikas from the Pāśupatas as well as from the other Śaiva sects. The Kāpālikas were the worshippers of Śiva, but their practices probably show the influence of the Tantric practices on Śaivism. They also accept 'Pañcamakāra'. The Kāpālikas are practically Śāktas, specially the left-hand śāktas, according to J.N. Farquhar. He says, "Kāpālika ascetics are practically Śāktas: The characteristic elements of Śākta worship, human sacrifices, strong drink, and sexual licence, appear, and with them the Śākta jewellery of human bones, the elaborate system of yoga and the super human powers that spring therefrom"\(^28\).
The Kāpālikas may be broadly divided into two groups — Brahmanic and non-Brahmanic. This division depends on the cruelty and ugliness of their own practices. The Brahmanic Kāpālikas are right-hand Kāpālikas and were found in the Punjab. They followed the injunctions of the Atharva-Veda. South India, on the other hand, was primarily the home of the non-Brahmanic or the left-hand Kāpālikas. But whatever that may be, the Kāpālikas did not believe in Karman but they worshipped Bhairava whom they regarded as the creator, helper and destroyer of this Universe. The non-Brahmanic Kāpālikas did not believe in the Caste-rules; and all Kāpālikas observed the mahāvrata i.e., eating meal and drinking wine in skulls and smearing the body with ashes. They know the essence of six marks and their right uses. Thus, they attain the highest bliss by means of yoga. The six marks are — the necklace, an ornament, an ear-ornament, a crest-jewel, ashes and the sacred thread. The Kāpālikas bearing these marks gain release.

Actually, the Kāpālikas have no new philosophical doctrine of their own. They are of the same opinion like the Pāśupatas. They uphold the Sāmkhya view of Prakṛti, Mahaṭ etc. and also some kind of yoga on the syllable 'om'. Their final aim is liberation i.e., cessation of all sufferings. They are the hedonists like the cārvākas and their aim is Kāmasādhana (Kāpālikameva Kāmasādhane). So their view is a state of salvation in which there is no sense if pleasure should not be aimed at.
The Kālāmukhas were also a religious class of the same type of Kāpālikas. This sect of Śaivism were very influential in the Karṇātaka region in the ninth to the early thirteenth centuries. The Kālāmukhas also were a religious class eating food in a skull, besmearing the body with the ashes of the dead body, eating the ashes, holding a club, keeping a pot of wine and worshipping the God as seated therein. These they practised for obtaining the desired results in this world as well as the next. The Kālāmukhas seem to have been so called as they marked their forehead with a black streak; and they are said to be born of Nara and Rākṣasa and they appear to have been more extreme than the Kāpālikas. Rāmānuja describes the Kālāmukhas as Mahāvratadharas and also as Lāguḍadharas.

The Kālāmukhas did not contain any added philosophical tenets. It is the same as propounded by the Pāśupatas. Of course, they adopted many new practices in course of their sādhanā for salvation, but their end is one and the same.

Most probably the influence of the Kālāmukhas was greatly reduced by the revival of the Liṅgāyaṭs or the Vīra-śaivas in the 12th Century A.D. who were more liberal and progressive in their outlook. At that time several maṭhṣs of the Kālāmukhas were converted into Vīra-śaiva maṭhṣs. For instance, the Kālāmukha maṭh at Puvallī of Selgaun district was converted into Vīra-śaiva maṭh. Thus their existence gradually disappeared from South India especially from the Karṇātaka.
The latest development of Śaivism or the most consistent form of Śaivism is Kāśmīr Śaivism. It is completely monistic or Advaitic in nature basing its metaphysics on the Upaniṣads. Of course, it has its transition from the early Śaivism (which will be discussed later on). This form of Śaivism is commonly known as Pratyabhijñā philosophy or Trika philosophy. But it is called Kāśmīr Śaivism as the originators and the writers who revealed it and enriched its literature belonged to and flourished in Kāśmīr. The basic texts of this philosophy are Somānanda's 'Śivadrṣṭi', Utpaladeva's 'Īśvara-pratyabhijñā-kārikā', Abhinava Gupta's 'Tantrāloka', 'Vimarsinī', Kṣemarāja's 'Pratyabhijñā-hṛdayam' etc.

This system of Kāśmīr Śaivism is a master work of Absolute Theism combining the two lines of philosophy and religion into one brilliant concept of Reality. The Supreme Reality is the Parama Śiva who is one with His Śakti or Citi-Śakti. The Citi-śakti or Parama Śiva has the two-fold powers of prakāśa and vimarsa. In the aspect of revelation or prakāśa the Reality is Śiva and in the aspect of Vimarśa the Reality is Śakti. The Lord is both transcendent and immanent. In the immanent aspect He pervades and manifests the Universe and in the transcendent aspect He is beyond all modes or modifications. The selves and the world are His manifestation or ābhāsa. If we call it appearance, it is real appearance and not unreal as with the Śāmkarites.
In fact, every bit of the entire Universe is the Lord Himself and the Lord is omnipresent in each of His manifestations. There is no real division. It is Lord Himself that by His māyā descends into the multiplicity but there is no diminution of His power in any of the manifestations. 'Pratyabhijñā' really means recognition. The individual under the contracting function of māyā has lost its knowledge of self as of the nature of Parama Śiva and is identical with Him. The Lord converting His essence by māyā has become finite. Vidyā removes the veil of māyā and the self recognises itself as the Lord in liberation and becomes identical or realizes its identical nature with the Lord. The Supreme Reality, however, is not impersonal but is a Supreme Person or Purṇahantā. The Self possesses the power of knowledge and action of the Lord. In fact, everything is Śiva and Śiva is everything in full.

In our next Chapters we shall deal with several metaphysical problems in the light of Śaivism. But our discussion will go through the main systems of that philosophy viz., Pāśupatas, Siddhāntīns, Kāśmīr Śaivism and in some cases the Vīra Śaivas as the others have no real philosophical issue of their own.
References


9. *Śri-bhāṣya* II. 2, 35.


27. *Kurma-Purāṇa*. Ch. VI.