



RELIGION IN MEDIEVAL ANDHRA: A- STUDY

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abstract

The religious history of the Reddi period is more or less a continuation of that of the age of the Kakatiyas. The dominating cult was the PasupataSaivism. It profoundly influenced the life and activity of the people of this period as no other cult then flourishing did. In fact, it was the religion of the royal family. The Reddi kings were Saivites and most of their vassals and dependents also professed that religion.

KERWORDS:saivism, pasupata, kapalika, kalamukha, vaisnavism

Introduction:

Saivism was an ancient cult, and of the many schools of Saivism flourishing in the Andhra country prior to the Reddi period, the Pasupata School was the most important. According to tradition current among the Saivas of the Andhra country, the PasupataSaivism was propagated by acaryas beginning with Sveta and ending with Lakulisa of the Yogacaryaschool. The latter is said to have been Nakulisa was a historical personage who can be traced to the first century A.D. Karohana, the modern Karwar (in the Lata country), which is traditionally connected with Lakulisa, was the chief establishment of these LakulisaPasupataSaivas. It is said that Lakulisa had four pupils, namely, Kusika, Gargya. Maurusa and Maitreya¹. Each one of these acaryas, who had his own matha or establishment, was the founder of a branch. Karohana, Kadambaguha, Amardaka², and Teramibi were some of the seats of the early acaryas of the Pasupata school³. This PasupataSaivism spread far and wide in the country to the south of the Vindhya from very early times.

Objectives

1. To find out religion in medieval Andhra
2. To find out different sects in Saivism
3. To find out different influences of religion in contemporary society

As early as the seventh century A.D., we come to know of the existence of the acaryas of this Pasupata School in the Andhra country from the copper-plate records of the Eastern Calukyas of Vengi. There is reason to believe that the early spread of the Pasupata Saivism in the Andhra country was mainly, due to the efforts of acaryas whose pontifical seat was Terambi. The yet-unpublished Ellore plates of the Eastern Calukya king Visnuvardhana III of the eighth century A.D., mention two Sivacaryas, Vama Siva and Purusa Siva, disciples of Brahma Sivacarya of Terambi⁴. This village seems to be identical with Terambi modern Terahi, five miles east of Ranod, more commonly called Narod in the State of Gwalior⁵. Later on, this Pasupata School was further strengthened and consolidated by Sivacaryas of the Golakimatha⁶, who originally belonged to one of the branches referred to before, with the active support and personal interest taken by their royal pupils, the Kakatiya monarchs of Warangal. They established their mathas in different parts of the country which were unmaintained by grants of villages.

The same Pasupata school found ready support at the hands of the Reddi kings who were also followers of the same order. The *Sivacaryas* were *gurus* of kings and *sthanapatis* of temples as in the previous period. Srisailam, Tripurantakam, and Daksharam were some of the principal strongholds of the Pasupata School. We are unable to know clearly the manners and customs, and rites and rituals of the Pasupata Saivas. No contemporary work of that school which describes them, has come down to us. However, a passage in the *Tarkarahasyadipika* (a Jain work), a commentary on the *Saddarsana-samuccaya* composed by Gunaratnasuri, pupil of Sri Devasundarasuri (circa. 1363 A. D.) of the Tapagaccha, refers to the manners and customs of the Saivas. As this work was composed in the fourteenth century, we can rely on the information given in this work, though in some respects it is 'fantastic and incredible'. The passage is quoted below:

"Let the-abstract, which will be narrated hereafter of the doctrine of the Naiyayikas' (i.e.) of Saiva teachings, be heard." Yaugas is another name for Naiyayikas, (and) first their individuality constituted by special characteristics and others will be spoken of and they bear staves (and) wear a broad piece of cloth over the privates. They cover (their upper body) with woolen blankets and bear matted hair. They smear their bodies with ashes, and put on the sacred thread. They hold water-pitchers, and take tasteless meals. They generally live in forests, bear gourds hanging from (their) shoulders, eat bulbs, roots and fruit (of trees), and take delight in the duties of hospitality. Some have wives and others not. Those without wives are the best among them. They are engaged in the performance of the five fire penances, and even bear a consecrated linga in their hands or matted hair. But those, who have attained to the perfect state of self-restraint, wander naked. After washing their mouth, feet, and so forth in the morning, they draw three stripes at a time of ashes on their body, while meditating on Siva. The lay-worshipper patron, while doing obeisance, folds his hands and utters "Om, a bow to Siva", and similarly the preceptor responds with "to Siva a bow". And they, in assemblies asseverate that even he, who, after resorting to the Saiva initiatory consecration for twelve years, gives it up, obtains absolution, be he a male or a female slave. To them Isvara (Siva) is God, omniscient, and causing creation, destruction, and so forth. The following are his eighteen incarnations :- (1) Nakuli; (2) Saushya-Kausika, (3) Gargya, (4) Akaurusha, (5) Maitrya, (6) Isana, (7) Paragargya, (8) Kapi-landa, (9) Manushvaka, (10) Kusika, (11) Atri, (12) Pihgala, (13) Puahyaka, (14) Brihadarya; (15) Agasti, (16) Santana, (17) Rasikara,

and (18) Vidyaguru. These are their *tirthes* to be venerated. The mode of their worship and prayers should be cognized from their scriptures.....They are distinguished into four sects, such as Saiva and so forth. It has been said; "The ascetics who use a seat, ashes, cloth for privities, matted hair and sacred thread, are four-fold, in consequence of the difference of their own practices and so forth." Saivas, Pasupatas, Mahavratadharas and Kalamukhas are the four principal divisions amongst these ascetics. Their sub-divisions, again, are Bharatas, Bhaktas, Laingikas, Tapasas, and so forth. As regards the taking up of the religious vow in the case of Bharatas and others, there is no restriction about the castes, such as Brahmanas and so forth. He who has devotion for Siva may become any *vrat*i (taker of religious vow), such as Bharata and others. But in philosophical sciences, Naiyayikas, being devoted to Sadasiva, are called Saivas. Vaisesikas, however, are Pasupatas. Hence, the teachings of Naiyayikas are designated Saiva and Vaisesika philosophy Pasupata.....⁷

The description given in the above passage refers to the Pasupata Saivas in general. Hence, it may be taken to apply also to the Pasupata Saivas in the Telugu country. The passage clearly shows that the Pasupatas wore "a consecrated linga in their hands or matted hair". In fact, according to the Saiva scriptures linga; has to be worn on *kaksa*, *karakantha*, *uttamanga*, *vaksasthala* and so on.⁸ This is corroborated by the Telugu works, *Basava Puranum* and *Prabhulingalila*⁹ Even at the present day brahmanas of the Saiva sect in the Andhra country wear a consecrated linga on their bodies. The movement to revive Vedic sacrifices, sponsored by the nobles and early kings of this period, was greatly responsible for averting the *avaidic* influences of the cosmopolitan cult of Saivism of the Canarese country, engineered by the great Saiva reformer Basavesvara, minister of the Kalacuri king Bijjaladeva, and in maintaining the Vedic character of Saivism, the principal religion of the Andhra country. The popular Saivism seems, however, to have been encumbered by a number of religious practices and beliefs, gathered around it during its contact with other schools of Saivism, namely, the Yogic Saiva cult of the Natha Siddhas, and the Sakta Tantric cult which flourished in this period and had their own respective following. These two cults also left an indelible impress both on the Telugu literature and on the religious life of the people. The impress can be clearly detected from the different sets of terminology, peculiar to each of the cults, used in the contemporary Telugu literature.

The cult of the Siddhas or the Nathas, who were adepts in the practices of four kinds of *yogas* and wore believed to have been perfect in all the *siddhis* including *kayasiddhi*, was popular in this period. The followers of this cult are called Nathapanthi yogis or Siddhas. The Natha gurus are nine in number, of whom AdiNatha, the first *guru*, is Siva himself. Mina Matha alias MatsyendraNatha, GorakshaNatha, Caurangi, MeghaNatha, VirupakshaNatha, Siddha NagarjunaKhanikaNatha and Vyali Siddha were the other Nathas. It is said that Mina Natha heard, while in the womb of a fish, a discourse on yoga taught by Siva to his consort Parvati, and after he was born, he entreated lord Siva, the ParamaYogin, to teach the yoga and bless him. Siva, who was kindly disposed towards him, taught the yoga and made him an expert in all *vadas* (sciences), all *mantras* (magical formulas), all medicines, and all the *siddhis*. SvatamaramaYogindra in his "*Hathayogapraddipika*" refers to MatsyendraNatha and his disciple GorakshaNatha as the first teachers who propounded the science of Hathayoga"¹⁰.

This Natha cult, or the Siddha cult as it is otherwise called, appears to have been closely allied to the Tantric cult; for, we come to know that the *kulacarasection* of the Tantras is said to have been introduced by Mina Natha'.¹¹

The adventures of these Natha gurus are described in the contemporary Telugu *dvipadakavya*, *Nava NathaCaritra*, written by poet Gaurana. By the time he wrote this work there was already a Telugu *padyaprabandha* on the same subject, written by an earlier Saiva poet, named Srigiri¹². However, at the instance of MuktiSantaraya, the pontiff of the Bhiksamatha, one of the five Saivamathas situated on the Sripavata, the famous Saivaksetra (Kurnool district), Gaurana wrote this *Nava NathaCaritra* in *dvivadametres* and dedicated it to him. Nagarjuna Siddha one of the Nava Nathas, is said, in this work, to have visited the countries of Malayala, Barbara, Magadha, Andhra, Pandya and Cola and propagated this Siddha cult,¹³ and is referred to as *Rasayoga Sastranirmata*,¹⁴ the originator of the science of *Rasayoga*, and as having written many works on this science. We are informed that Nagarjuna Siddha, one of his disciples, came to Srisailem with the object of transforming that mountain into a lump of gold by his skill in *Rasavdda*.¹⁵ His attempt was however foiled by lord Visnu, who came to him in the guise of a brahman just at the critical moment¹⁶ and killed him.

The prevalence of the yogic cult of the Natha gurus in the Andhra country seems to have been responsible for the production of the literature, dealing with the adventures illustrative of their supernatural powers and spiritual attainments. Works of this kind, no doubt, must have enhanced the popularity of this cult; and stories relating to the greatness of the attainments of the Siddhas were of common currency. These Nava Nathas are alluded to in the Telugu works of the period like Jakkana's *Vikramacaritra*¹⁷ and the influence of this cult is perceptible in some of the stories in it. *Siddhastirasvatamantra*, one of the numerous Siddha *mantras*, believed to make the practice of that *mantra* proficient in all branches of learning, is referred to in the contemporary Telugu works¹⁸. Vallabhamatya, son of Tippaya and the author of the drama *Kridabhiranuim*, is said to have been favoured with the wealth of *Siddhamrasvata* by the grace of god Bhairava¹⁹. The lore of the Nava Nathas, as narrated by the famous Siddhas, was read to the people in public halls²⁰, like the Puranas and the Itihasas in these days, and explained to them. This was one of the forms of literary propaganda carried on in those days to spread a cult. Even to this day the man in the street believes that the Siddhas go at their will to any place they wish, possess magical stones (*mams*) yielding their possessors all that they wish, know the art of alchemy (turning everything into gold) and all medicines and *mantras* that endow invulnerability and longevity and supernatural powers. As these Siddhas were adepts in *Rasavada* (science of Chemistry), experiments in medicinal preparations using *rasa* (Mercury), and *gandhaka* (sulphur), were made, during this period, and *rasavaidya* was greatly improved in the Andhra country. This yogic cult of the Siddhas was responsible for producing Vemana, a hathayogin and an alchemist, towards the end of this period.

The prevalence of the Tantric cult in the Andhra country during this period is suggested by the terms used in contemporary Telugu literature, like *Bhairavi cakra*,²¹ *Bhairavayogu Yoginicaakra* and the like. Terms like these creep into the literature and language of the country, only when the cult to which they belong is prevalent there. In this way both the Telugu language and literature were enriched by the terminology of the

respective creeds and philosophies that once flourished in the Andhra country. The Tantras enunciate the worship of Sakti, the female energy of Siva, chiefly devoted to AnandaBhairavi. This worship, being centred chiefly in mystic circles, is known as *Bhairavatantra* or *Cakrapuja*, in which there was free use of liquor (*matsya*), eating of meat (*mainsa*) and fish (*matsya*), communion with women (*maithuna*) and eating a kind of food (*mudra*) (generally known as *Fanca-Makaras*). Followers of this form of worship were called kaulas and the custom they practised was known as *kulacara*. The *kulacara* section of the Tantras is said to have been brought down to earth by the Siddha Mina Natha.²² *Bhairavatantra* is alluded to in the contemporary Telugu work, *Kridahhiraṃ*.²³ Bhairava yogini is referred to in a story in Jakkana's *Vikramakacaritra*.²⁴ Self-immolation was a Tantric practice and the existence of *Campudu-gudi*, a temple to commit suicide, was indicative of the prevalence of the Tantric cult in the country. *Yoginikakra* is referred to in one of the stories in the contemporary Telugu work, *Simhasanadvatrinṣika*.²⁵ *Ranamukudupu*, a rite observed in this period to satisfy Bhutas and Pretas by an offering of food soaked in blood in the field of battle at night, is said to have been a Tantric rite.²⁶ In the contemporary Sanskrit work, *Vemabhupalacaritam* written by Vamanabhatta Bana, we find a passage describing the worship of the goddess AdiBhairavi in the temple of candi (*candikayatana*) in the Vindhya forest by king Peda Komati Vema during one of his campaigns.²⁷ This worship, which was conducted according to the *kulacararites*, included the offering of *sura*, (liquor) also. All these instances unmistakably point to the fact that the Tantric cult also spread in the Andhra country during the period under review. However, the extent of its popularity or of its following cannot be ascertained with the evidence available.

The influence of the gurus or *acaryas* of these cults on the people of those times was very great. Members of the Ghoderaya family were the Saiva gurus of the Reddi royal families of Kondavidu, Rajamahendravaram and Kandukuru. Some of the members of this Ghoderaya family are known to us from inscriptions and Telugu literature. Ghoderaya Gangayadeva was the guru of Prolaya Vema Reddi." The latter is said to have acquired the grandeur of the kingdom only by the grace of his guru Gangayadeva. Ghoderaya Tripurarideva and his son Bhimayadeva were the gurus of the kings of Rajamahendravaram.²⁹ Both of them are mentioned in an inscription at Palivela³⁰ (East Godavari district), dated in Saka 1345 (corresponding to the cyclic year Sobhakṛt). This record registers some gifts made by King Virabhadra Reddi and his queen Anitalli at the command of their gurus, on the banks of the Gautami during the *puskarm* festival. Here in this record the father and son are mentioned as Tripurarijiyyangaru and Pinumayyamgaru (wrongly written for Bhimayyamgaru). Sivalinga Reddi of the Kandukuru family furnishes commentary on the *Girisasiruti Suktimala* the following genealogy of his gurus, the descendants of Gahgadhara or Gangayadeva.³¹

Gangadhara

Tripurantaka

Srigiri

Tripurari

Bhimesvara

Srigiri

Besides these there were many other religious divines, like Sankaramuni, who, for their scholarship, conduct, penance, and devotion to God, were highly esteemed by kings and people alike, and were their guides and philosophers.

Next to Saivism, Vaisnavism was the most important religion of the period. Vaisnavism underwent a great change after the death of SriRamanujacarya. He brought into his religion a cosmopolitan outlook. There were other acaryas who differed from him to a certain extent and interpreted their scriptures according to their own light. However, there was not a dominant personality who could stand comparison with that great acarya and make his co-religionists follow him implicitly and accept his interpretation. Hence, the differences silently accelerated a cleavage in Vaisnavism into two distinct schools, one consisting of the followers of Sri Ramanuja and the other comprising those who were averse to his cosmopolitan outlook and love of reform.³² This acceleration of differences seems not a little due to the revival of Vedism. The Reddi kings, after the establishment of a kingdom in the East, revived Vedic sacrifices and patronised scholars who were proficient in Vedic lore. There was a big movement in Vijayanagar also to resuscitate Vedism, sponsored by Harihara I. and his brother Bukka I, under the able guidance of their guru Vidyanaraya. These attempts indirectly resulted not only in preserving, as has previously been stated, the Vedic character of Saivism in the Andhra country, but also accelerated the progress of the revivalist movement in the Vaisnava religion. This schism, which was dormant in the Vaisnava Church for a long time, became more explicit during this period. Some of the Vaisnava acaryas were desirous of maintaining their hold on the people, and yet, of preserving the brahman supremacy, and the purity and Vedic character of their religion. Venkatanatha, or Vedanta Desika as he is popularly called, and Pillai Lokacarya and his brother Alagiya Manavala Perumal Nainar became the leaders of the two parties into which the Sri Vaisnavas were divided. Through the efforts of these acaryas and their teachings, the two opposite schools of Vaisnavism which were till then hazy, soon crystallised into two well-defined sects, the Vadagalai, or the Northern school, and the Tengalai, or the Southern school. Vedanta Desika³² was the leader of the Vadagalai School, and Pillai Lokacarya and his brother, of the Tengalai School. The social and religious conditions prevailing in the early post-Kakatiya period in the Deccan country were indirectly responsible to a great extent for hastening this change in the Vaisnavism, and this was of the momentous periods in the history of Vaisnavism both in the Tamil and the Andhra countries.

Though Vaisnavism penetrated into the Andhra country long before the Reddi period, and had, for its strongholds famous holy places, like Srikurma, Simhachalam, Sarpavaram and Bapatla, it really began to capture the hearts of the princes and the people alike, only during this period. Though Vedamarga-pratisthacaryas, like Margam Pahindimukkula Vira Tiruvengalakumara, were able to secure the patronage of some of the local feudal chiefs of the Telugu code dynasty³³, in the southern coastal region, the progress of Vaisnavism in the Andhra country till this period was very slow, and the efforts of the earlier acaryas to spread that religion on a large scale bore fruit only during this period. The many illustrious Vaisnava families, like the Bhattars, the Kandadais, and the Tirumalais, came and settled in the coastal Andhra country, and propagated the Vaisnava faith.

The Bhattars were an illustrious family of scholars of Srirangam. Srivatsacinthaguru, or Srivatsacinthagamisra as he was generally called, was the first and foremost disciple of Sri Ramanuja, and the

founder of the family of Bhattars. He is better known in the Srivaisnava chronicles by the name of Kurattalvan. He was born in the village of Kuram near Chingleput, and belonged to the Haritasagotra and Apastamba Sutra. His son was ParasaraBhatta. I who was nominated to the pontifical seat at Srirangam by Ramanuja. In this family, was born ParasaraBhatta, the seventh in descent, who went on a tour to the Andhra country, where many kings and nobles became his disciples. MummadiNayaka whose capital was Korukonda, near Rajamahendravaram, was one of them, and he made a grant of the village of Kottallaparru to his guru as guru-daksina. He was also called Sriranaga-var dhana, a title which he probably assumed, as Gopinatharao thinks, after he become the disciple of parasara Bhatta.³⁴ It is probable that Parasara finally settled at Korukonda for, from the Korukonda pillar inscription³⁵ of MummadiNayaka we come to know that Parasara died at that place.

After the death of ParasaraBhatta, MummadiNayaka seems to have become the disciple of the Kandadais. An inscription³⁶ at Simhachalam dated in Saka 1286, mentions MummadiNayaka as the disciple of KandadaAyyangar. We do not know if this Kandada Ay yangar had anything to do with KandadaiAnrjaii, a disciple of BrahmaatantraSvatantrajiyar, who was contemporaneous with Vedanta Desika.

Another illustrious family of the Vaisnava teachers was that of the Tirumalais. The Srivaisnava teacher TirumalaNallandiCakravarti, also called NallanuCakravarti, came and settled in the Andhra country. He had five sons, TirvengalaCakravarti, AlaghariCakravarti, AubalaCakravarti, SridevaCakravarti and Govinda Cakravarti.³⁷ This family seems to have belonged to the Guntur district. A record at Rompicherla³⁸ (Guntur district) mentions a certain Ramadasu, a disciple of NallandiCakravarti. Another record at Karerhpudi³⁹ (Guntur district) dated in Saka 1318, records the decision of his son NallanuGovindaCakravarti in a certain dispute.

Besides these there were other acaryas also of the Dravidadesa who toured the Andhra country and propagated their religion. During the tour, they visited many a royal court and had religious disputations with the teachers of other faiths there. Each acarya who was successful in such wrangles was assured of a big following of converts to his faith, besides innumerable presents in the form of jewels, land, etc. One of such acaryas was Vedantadesika's son and disciple Varadacarya, also known as Nainaracarya. In a Vaisnava sectarian work called *Guruparatnparaprabhava*, he is said to have gone to the court of a certain SarvajnaSingamaNayaka, son of MadhavaNayaka, and defeated SakalyaMalluBhatta and established the Vaisnava religion. Thereafter the same chief became his disciple and honoured him with the gift of a palanquin and other paraphernalia.⁴⁰ Nainaracarya's father, Vedantadesika, is also stated to have composed three works, the *Subhasitanivitattvasandesa* and the *Rahasyasandesa* for the delectation of the same chief.⁴¹ However, the identity of that chief still remains a puzzle, though he seems to be one of the Recerla kings (Padma Velamas) of Rajukonda and Devarakonda.

Though the earlier Reddi kings, like ProlayaVema, Anavota, and Anavema, and the rulers of Rajamaheniravaram, were staunch Saivites, KumaragiriReddi, KatayaVemaReddi, and the later rulers of Kandukuru, were followers of Vaignavism. Their conversion to Vaisnavism, however, did not affect their attitude to other sects. They were tolerant of other faiths and extended to them their patronage without any partiality.

These Saiva and VaiSnava teachers were great scholars in Sanskrit and Telugu, and several Telugu poets of this period were the pupils of either the Saiva gurus or Vaisnavaacaryas. Many Telugu poets flourished during this period as a result of the interest created, and taste developed. in Telugu literature by these religious preceptors.

One notable development in the religious life of the people, which affected brabmans as well as the other castes during this period, was the cleavage between the Saivas and the Vaisnavas. Vedism or the religion of Vedic sacrifice and ritual, though popular for a time at the beginning of the age, gradually lost its hold, yielding place to cults, like Saivism and Vaisnavism, which were growing more and more popular and attaining great importance. Those were the times when Vaisnavism strove hard to capture the hearts of the public and reign supreme. These two cults changed altogether the aspect of religion till then in vogue. The Saiva and the Vaisnava teachers vied with one another, the former in maintaining the hold which they already had on the common people, the latter in spreading their religion all over the country. They both zealously tried to convert to their respective faiths the kings, and nobles the country and their subjects, and make them their disciples. They became the custodians of this neo-Hinduism of cults, the law-givers, and the interpreters of *dharma*. The teachers of each cult gathered around them as many disciples as possible, and revived the drooping spirits of the nation, which suffered greatly owing to foreign aggression and oppressive rule, and maintained their preeminent position as the accredited teachers of religion and leaders of society. With this new turn the religion had taken, the emphasis in this age shifted from caste to cult, and from sacrificial Vedism to a popular religion of creeds and *vratas*. Members of the Hindu society, whatever the caste to which they originally belonged, became divided chiefly into the two important sectarian groups, the Saivas and the Vaisnavas. Teachers of these two *samayashad* their respective *mathas* or monasteries at different places in the country, with their regional pontiffs.

The Smartabrahmans who belonged to neither of the two sects, were not unified like the Saivas and the Vaisnavas under one or more religious heads. No doubt, it is true that there were *mathas*, founded by Sri Sahkaracarya centuries before. The pontiffs of these *muthas* were, however, unable to make any headway, or to exert their influence on the brahman society in general. This was probably due to the several political and dynastic changes, religious conflicts, and, above all, to the rise and expansion of Saivism, which had been flourishing under royal patronage in the country south of the Vindhya, for some centuries before the Reddi period. The lack of royal patronage to the premier *matha* at Sringeri is borne out by the absence of inscriptions recording grants of land or *agrharas* to it. In fact, inscriptions give us to understand that that *matha* became a religious and social power only from the middle of the fourteenth century, under the patronage of the first Vijayanagar dynasty.⁴² The weakness and the disunion of the Smarta community, and brahmanism in general, was recognised by some of the thinking section of the people, and the result was the revival of the religious and social power and influence of Sri Sahkaraciirya, the high-priest of the Smartabrahmans'.

On the east coast in the Reddi kingdom there was no such move. The Reddi kings were Saivas and had Sivacaryas as their gurus and guides. They patronised Saivisin. However, after the downfall of Konda-vldu, the influence of the Jagadguru of the Sringeri *mathas* spread over the eastern Andhra country which formed part

of the Vijayanagardominion. With the revival of the power of the pontiffs of the Sringerimatha and the spread of their influence, the Smartabrahman community also fell in line with the other sectarian communities.

The temple and the *matha* were the two prime religious institutions which exercised, as before, their beneficial influence, in strengthening the purity of the religious life of the people in general, and promoted some of the traditional arts and crafts. Both these institutions were maintained by royal as well as public patronage.

In its conception, the temple was a sectarian religious institution. Saivas worshipped in Siva temples, and Vaisnavas in Visnu temples. The popular forms of Siva worshipped during this period were Svayambhu Sri Mahadova, Tripurantaka, Kalyarja Candra-sekhara, Istakamesvara, Mallesvara or Mallinatha, Mailaradeva, Vira-bhadra, Kala-Bhairava and so on. The aspects of god Visnu known from inscriptions to have been worshipped during this age were many, and they are Gopinatha (Ananta Gopinatha, Varada Gopinatha, Prasanna Gopinatha, Bhuvanamangala Gopinatha), Kesava (Cenna Kesava, Prasanna Kesava, Prasanna Cenna Kesava), Nrsimha (Santa Nara-simha, Laksmi Narasimha, Yogananda Nrsimha) and Rama (Ghantala Ramanatha, Raghavesvara), and Janardana. S'risailam, Tripuranta-kam, Daksharam, Palakollu (Ksiramam), Bhimavaram (near Samalkot), Gudipudi and Amiravati, were the reputed Saivaksetras, of which the last five were renowned as Pancaramas. Srikurmam, Sirahachalara, Sarpavaram, Srikakulam, Bapatla, and Ahobalam were the principal Vaisnavaksetras of this period.

Besides these Siva and Visnu temples, there were some others which were special to some communities. The Vaisyas had their temple of goddess Kanyakaparamesvari or Vasavikanyaka, their tutelary deity. Some of the trading communities had their own special temples to patronize and worship, like those of Nagarasvara and Gauresvara. The horse-dealers worshipped the goddess, Guralaparamesvari⁴³. The members of the Visvakarmakula also seem to have had their own temple for worship. Banala Lingana, a member of the Visvakarma family, built in Saka 1327 a temple of Cenna Mallikarjuna (Siva), and endowed it with a grant of land.⁴⁴

Another interesting feature of this period was the growth of *parivaradcvata* in the Siva and Visnu temples. It was a prevalent custom of those days to get the images of Alvars (twelve in number), and Hanuman consecrated in Visnu temples. One other feature was to consecrate lingas in the name of deceased persons, and set them up in temples and worship them. A certain brahman Manciraja brought two lingas from Sripurvata, after the death of his

Eldest brother Mallinatha who was honoured by King Anavota Reddi and set up one of them in the temple of god Manduka Sambhu of the village of Mamkesvaram, designating it Ravintmtula Parvata Mallinathalinga in Saka 1175.⁴⁵ Pinna Bhtlpala's servant. Nara Bhupala, Allada Reddi's commander, constructed a stone temple, and consecrated therein a linga called Alladesvaralinga, presumably after the death of his master, Allada Reddi, and granted some lands for worship to the temple.⁴⁶ The charities made to temples in the form of lands, villages and otherwise, were placed formally under the charge of the respective communities to which the temples belonged.

Matha was the other religious institution which played an important role in diffusing knowledge among the common people. The pontiffs of the Saiva and Vaisnavamathas were highly learned and cultured personages, proficient in their respective scriptural lore. They encouraged learning and patronised scholars and poets. Of the five Saivamathas⁴⁷ of the Kakatiya period, which were situated on the holy Sriparvata, only Arasamatha and Bhiksavrttimatha find mention in the scriptures⁴⁸ of this period? We do not know the pontiff of the Arasamatha. The head of the Bhiksavrttimatha during the period under review was Mukti Santa Bhiksavrttiraya. He encouraged the Telugu poet, Gaurana, to write *Nava Natho Caritrasan* account of the Nava Nathas as a dvipadakavya in Telugu. At the instance of this same sivayogisvara, poet srinathaworte his *Sivaratn-mdhatmyamin* Telugu, and dedicated it to his devoted disciple and attendant, Mummadi Santayya. In this way, the pontiffs of Bhiksavrttimatha not only imparted religious education to their folk but also advanced the cause of Telugu learning by patronising men of letters. Galakimatha "whose spiritual influence extended over three lakhs of villages" was a famous institution that flourished during the Eakatiya period, and had its branches at Mandaram (present Mandadam in the Guntur district), Tripurantakam (Kurnool district), and Puspagiri (Cuddapah district). We find no references in the records of the post-Kakatiya period to the famous Galakimatha established by Visvssvara Sivacarya in Saka 1183 at Mandaram⁴⁹. Only the matha at Tripurantakam and Puspagiri⁵⁰ find mention in the inscriptions, though nothing is known about them. We have no evidence of any of the Vaisnavamathas that flourished during this period, either from literature or from inscriptions.

Popular religion consisted in the periodical worship of gods Siva and Visnu according to the Saiva and Vaikhanasa Agamas respectively by Saivites and Vaisnavites, observing *vratas*, and worshipping village goddesses, and other religious practices, like the performance of *japa* and *tapa*. Saivas worshipped their god Siva six times^{50a} a day at fixed periods. The chanting of *Tiruvymoli* and *Tiruppavu* in two Vaisnava temples of the Andhra country was in practice from long before the Reddi period⁵¹, and *vrttis* in temples were granted for this service.

The worship of heroes, and hero stones also became part and parcel of popular religion. There are references in contemporary literature⁶² to the worship of heroes with flowers and other offerings. Every year festivals were held in honour of local heroes in different localities and ballads⁵³ commemorating their deeds of heroism were sung to the accompaniment of music and dance. The Annual festival of the heroes was a solemn and grand festive occasion, which not only served to perpetuate the memory of the departed heroes but also to sustain and cultivate heroic spirit among people.

Conclusion:

This worship developed into a regular cult, called *Viracaramin* in the Telugu country, with some, following. The temple in this period was a full-fledged institution with its elaborate service and office establishments. It was more or less a state within a state with its full administrative machinery of police, accountants, supervisors, treasurers and servants. The temple was the nucleus around which the ancient village developed. Hence, there was hardly any village without a temple. Towns grew, and commerce developed around famous religious centres, holy tirthas and temples. The number of temples generally grew in

proportion to the size and extent of the village, and in accordance with the intensity of the charitable and religious zeal among the public. The number of temples in towns and capital cities was great. Raghavesvara, Mtila-sthatiamMailaradeva, Nagarasvara and AngadiGopinatha, were some of the temples at Kondavidu, the capital of the Reddi kings that find mention in inscriptions.

REFERENCES:

- 1) Ep. Ind., Vol.I, P.273.
- 2) "Rajendra Cola (the Cola emperor) is recorded in the Agamanta works to have brought Brahman Saiva teachers to the south from the Amardakamotha on the banks of the Godavari with the following results:"An impetus was given to the spread of Saivism and very large number of original works belonging to the Agama school of Saivism was ritten." (T.A, Gopinatha Rao in E.R.E., Vol. II. Part I, p.4. S.v. Saivism)"
- 3) Ep.Ind., Vol. I, pp.351-361
- 4) This copper-plate, which awaits publication, was discovered in a village near Ellore (West Godavari district). The passage in the grant referring to the *Sivacaryas* who were the *sthanapatis* of a siva temple in the village of Vasanthuru (identical with the modern village of Vasantavada, Elloretaluk) is quoted below
- 5) Ep.Ind., Vol. I. p. 35.
- 6) J.B.O.R.S., Vol. XIII (1927), pp. 137. ff,
- 7) A.S.R., 1906-07.' pp. 190-192
- 8) *Vatulagama*.
- 9) Bs. Pr., II, p. 33.
- 10) I. H. Q.. Vol. XVI (1040), p. 307.
- 11) Ibid. Vol. VI, pp. 178 ff.
- 12) Vide, Chapter IX on Literature (Telugu). The work is now extinct,
- 13) Nv. or, V, p. 211.
- 14) Ibid. V. p. 249.
- 15) Ibid, V. pp. 232 -33
- 16) From the above passage we come to know that there was one Siddha Nagarjuna, adopt in *Rasavada*, and a disciple of NathaNagarjuna specially trained by him.
- 17) Ibid, V. pp. 232-243.
- 18) Vk, Cr., VI. V.4
- 19) Vk, Or., V, Pr. 163.
- 20) Vk. Cr., 11., Pr. 51, P.35
- 21) Vk, Cr.,II,Pr, 51, p. 35.
- 22) "In the *Bhairavicaakra*, or the circle of Bhairavi, where Ranks gathered to worship sakti, all castes were admitted, meat of every sort excepting perhaps beef was allowed, and every worshipper was required to contract marriage which was tolant to the mid of the gathering"—*Maha-ParinirvanaTantra*, VIII, 177;
- 23) IX, 268-9-J.I.H, Vol. IX, p. 121.
- 24) J.A.S.B., New Series, Vol. XXIX (1933). p.75.
- 25) Rd. Rm., v. 240.
- 26) VK. Cr., VII, v. 15; Also see Hr. VI., II, v.109.
- 27) Sra. Dv., II, vii, v.98.
- 28) VV., Cr. p. 26, f. n.
- 29) *Vemabhupalacaritam*, pp.187-189.
- 30) Bp. Ind. Vol VIII, Madras Museum plates, v.18. p.15.
- 31) Ka. Kh.,I.v. 50. See also introductory verses iu the *Sivalilavilasam* (Appendix to chapter IX, Literature).
- 32) 8. I. I., V, No.114
- 33) J.B.B.R.A.S., Vol. XXLV. pp. 126-186; 277 ff.
- 34) "An impersonation of orthodoxy and a doughty champion of Brahmanical supremacy, the sole authority on the Bhasyas and the most profound living scholar and writer in Sanskrit, he (Vedanta

- Desika) represented all that was traditional and conservative in Vaisnavism, and all that was obnoxious in the eyes of the new party (?) (Tengalaism). They (the leaders of Tengalaism) looked upon him, therefore, with a sullen and grim hatred. They considered him narrow and fanatical, reactionary and unsympathetic."--Ibid, " *The life and time of sir Vedanta Desika*, by Sri V. Rangachari, M A,
- 35) N.I.D. Mr. Nos 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65 and 66.
- 36) Ep. Ind., Vol. XIV, pp. 85-88; Srirangam plates of Mummadi Nayaka, vv. 34-42, pp. 92-93. "The village granted to Parasara Bhatta VII was evidently enjoyed by him for some time before he died. His mother, who survived him (v. 48), seems to have thought of allowing the relatives of the deceased to inherit the village; but in the mean while she changed her mind and gave it away to the god Ranganatha taking Him. As she says, as the greatest of all relatives which must have goaded her to take the course which she chose.-P. 84.
- 37) There is a Tolugn manuscript in the Government Oriental Manuscripts Library, Madras, by name *Srirangaraja Bhattamvamsavali* (S/5-2-38) which furnishes an account of the Bhattars of Srirangam. The Bhattar families that settled in the Andhra country find special mention in it. According to this work the genealogy of the Bhattars is given as shown under. Srivatsa Chinnaisra Paras'am Bhattar (adopted Sarvajha Bhattar) Sri Ramapulla Bhattar (alias Vyasa Bhattar) . Vrigvijaya Bhattar alias Ranga Bhattar Sudarsana Bhattar (Srutaprakasacarya) Sarvajna Bhattar (adopted by Parasara Bhattar) Vedaeyara Baattar alias Vyasa Bhattar. Parasara Bhattar Sri Ranga Bhattar alias Sri Ranganatha Bhattar
- 38) Parasara Bhattar. The work states that it was Parasara Bhattar, younger brother of Vedaeyara Bhattar, and son of Sudarsana Bhattar who came and settled at Korukonda. In that case he must be the fifth in descent and not the seventh (*tadudi Saptapurusa-kulam*) from the founder of the family as the grant says. The statements made in this *varnsavali* and the genealogy given there seem to be incorrect.
- 39) Ep. Coll... No. 44 of 1912: Ep. Rep. 1912, para 68, p. 87.
- 40) S. I. I., Vol. VI, No. 841. See also 1084, and 1090, and J. A. H. R. S., Vol. XI, pp. 212-213.
- 41) B. J., I. v. 11.
- 42) Ep. Coll., No. 300 of 1915.
- 43) Ibid. No. 556 of 1909.
- 44) Ep. Ind., Vol. XIII, p. 222; and Vol. XXV, pp. 828-24.
- 45) Ibid.
- 46) "There are over 30 inscriptions recording grants made by or under gurus of the Sringeri Matharangl; in date from 1892 to 1758 A.D., The Sringeri Dharmapitha or religious throue was established, as mentioned above, by Sankaracarya, the great Saiva reformer of the 8th century. The Celebex scholar Madhava or Vidyanaya (forest of learning), author of the Vedabhashya who was instrumental in founding the Vijayanagar Empire in 1336. Was the head of the establishment at that time?.. In gratitude for Vidyanaya's services, Harihara established the matha at Sringeri in 1846 and he and his brothers richly endowed it...."--*Mysore Gazetteer*, Vol. V, pp. 1176-77.
- 47) Ep. Coll., No. 205 of 1936.
- 48) N.I.D., Vol. III, O.
- 49) 83, pp. 1060 ff.
- 50) Ibid, O. 78, pp. 1037 ff.
- 51) S. I. I., V. No. 135.
- 52) The five *mathas* situated on the Srisailem Hill were Arasamatha (also mentioned as Arasi:matha in inscriptions), Bhiksamatha, Ganamatha, Kalumatha (or Silamatha) and Sarangamatha.
- 53) Ep. Coll., Nos. 380, and 309 of 1915.
- 54) Ep. Coll., No. 91 of 1917, Ep. Rep. 1917, para 83, p. 128.
- 55) Ep. Coll., No. 823 of 1905; N. 272 of 1905.
- 56) S. I. I., Vol. V, 82, 66.
- 57) -Vk. Cr., II, prose 51, p. 86.
- 58) The singing of some of these ballads which roused the enthusiasm of common people and infused and nurtured heroic spirit in them, was made into a regular profession and some communities lived by them. In this way, some communities were exclusively entrusted with the task of perpetuating these ballads; for instance, the heroic ballad of *Katamaraju-katha* relating to Katamaraju of the Yadava (Golla-Bhepherd) clan who gained a victory in his fight with Nallasiddhi, the Telugu Coda king of Nellore, was entrusted to the charge of Kommu people, a community of the cobbler caste, who made it their profession to sing only that ballad and chiefly subsist by gifts and *rartanas* given to them by the

members of that clan. The Yadavas respect the Kommu people greatly, in as much as they preserved and propagated the ballads glorifying them. It has been an age-long custom observed by the Yadavas not to take food without offering it beforehand to a member of the Kommu community, whenever he comes to his house. Some of the Pikilis(one of the communities of the Gollas) also made it their profession to sing this *Katamarajukatha*. These professional ballad singers of the Pikilis and the Kommu attend the annual festivals of the goddess Ganga, the tutelary deity of the Yadava clan. On such occasions, it has been the time-honoured custom among the Pikilis not to sing the *Katamarajuballad* unless and until it was first sung by the traditional singers, the Kommu people. In this way, this cult of the heroes gave rise to some communities of professional ballad singers who were experts in the art of singing ballads. The ballad of the heroes of Palnadu also was sung to the accompaniment of music and dance. This is referred to in Vallabhamatya's *Kruhibhiramam*. From the above verses it is clear that the ballad of the Palnati heroes was sung by a female, and that men playing the roles of different characters, danced expressing emotion and sentiment by gestures and movements in accordance with the spirit of the ballad sung, as in Kathakali, and that the *dvipadaprabandhas* were sung and not merely recited, in olden days.

