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LAKULEEHA AND PASHUPATA PANTHA (SECT) AS MENTIONED IN THE INSCRIPTIONS OF BAGALAKOTE DISTRICT



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ABSTRACT:

Saivism played dominant role in the history of India with particular reference to Karnataka. It was existed along with the other religions like Vaishnavism, Jainism, Shaktism. Before the entry of religion like Islam, Christianity the study of Saivism. So that Karnataka had also many sub-sects of Saivism. Dr. Iranna Pattar had made instant study on this Saiva sub sect in Karnataka. The study also brings light to the broad senses from the epigraphs, besides main literary works, referring to the Saivism. It also given not only like 63 paraton, the influence, its philosophy and the study since in the religion comparison of society but also micro study of sub-sects of savisim both in epigraphs, temples,

architecture in the regional level needed to be study.

In view of above reason Saiva subject like Lakulisha and Pashupata of Bagalkot district the result of them are studied briefly in this article.

KEY WORDS: *Lakulisha and Pashupat*

INTRODUCTION:

Bagalukote was a Taluk in the Vijayapura District and became an independent district center on August 15th 1997. The district about 642 inscriptions of the districts has been published so far. The purpose of presenting the article is to highlight the activities of Lakuleesha and Pashupata sect in the region. The region is treated as a center place of North Karnataka. It is around 208 Kms inside the western coast of Deccan up lands (Dekkan Prastha Bhoomi) of India. Geographically, Bagalakote district approximately has 6593sq KMS of land area between the Latitudes of 15.28 to 16.33. North and Longitudes of 78.49 to 76.28 East. The district is surrounded by Vijayapura district on the northern side between Kalaburgi and Raichur districts on the eastern side, Dharwad district on the southern side and Belagavi district on the western side. This district consists of six talukas and they are Badami. Bagalukote, Bilagi, Mudhol, Hunagund and Jamakhandi. The major rivers like Krishna, Malaprabha and



Ghataprabha are flowing in the district finally they join at Koodala Sangama they are the life beats of this district. The taluks of the northern part contain black soil, the southern part of Badami and Hunagund taluks have a flat geographical area with sand mixed red soil. This district is graced annually with most medium of rains and much of sun light.

Political history :

Many historical evidences related to the medieval times are found in Bagalkote district. The remains of the sites of the Early Stone age, Middle Stone age, Upper stone age, old stone age and the sites of New Stone age, Chalcolithic period are located in this region. Many inscriptions of the Shatavahanas, Rashtrakootas, Kalyana Chalukyas, Nolambas, Kalachuris, Sevunas, Vijaya Nagara and Adilshahi are available in this district. It shows their rule in the region. Regarding the religious history as per the published epigraphs.

Shaivism, Vaishnavism and Shaktism were existed in the region. Since the ancient times Shivas devotees were called Shaivas, Vishnu's devotees were called Vaishnavas or Bhagavatas Shaktas were the devotees of Shakti or Mother goddess.

Shaiva religion comes to be known as the most ancient religion as many sthavara lingas (fixed lingas) were found in the Harappa and Mohenjodaro excavations. Some of them are big and some of them are small and they resemble the lingas worn on the body thus shaiva religion is the most ancient.

We see that the very early Shaiva Religion is in the practice with many sects and branches due to the philosophic differences or the personal understandings. There is a confusion in their names and in their numbers they are referred to by Agamas mythical, Brahmasootra Bhashyas and many other work in various ways. While Shri Ramanuja mentions Shaiva, Pashupata, Kapala and Kalamukha in his discourses; Shri Shankaracharya gave a reference to four sects as Shaiva, Pashupata (Karunika) Siddhanta and Kapalikas. According to Haribhadra, the interpreter of Haribhadra Soori's Shaddarshana Sammurchaya, Shaiva, Pashupata, Mahavratadhare and Kala Mukhas are the four sects of Shaivas the names to Shaiva Pashupata, Kapalika and Kalamukha are there in the Yamunacharyas Aagama Purana (Mythical)

In the poetic Vachana of Knowledge Mari Father "Yogi, Jogi, Shravaka, Sanyasi Pashupata Kalamukhi Aaru Bheda Mooraralli Adagi Eradu Alidinge olagagittu.

Bandu Nindu Samaya Roopavagittu
Samaya Horagadudu Sadashiva Moorti lingakke Shaktinamanilla³

Six periods are hiding in three. Two are being destroyed. Only one has taken the shape of the Time. But since six also does not possess the name of Shakti they are excluded by the time of period (Veerashaiva). In his Samaya Pareekshe, Brahma Shiva mentions the names of Kalamukha, Kapala, Pashupata and Shaivas.⁴ Shaiva Religion grew up as various sects Pashupata is also a one among them.

Shaiva Religion had spread throughout India. As the times passed, Shaivism became propagated and had many types. They are Lakuleesha, Pashapata and Kalamukha. The existence of Pashupata sect is being noted since Harappan period. There is an opinion that, Lakuleesha is one of them. Sometimes there are debates that, Lakuleesha and Pashupata are not the same sects, but they are two different wings of the same religion. It is said that Shiva is Pashupati and shiva himself takes the incarnation of Lakuleesha.⁵ The sects as Pashupata Kalamukha, Lakula and Maheshwara, almost seem to be in more or less proportions. In the work of Madhvacharya "Sarve Darsha Sangraha" considered Lakuleesha as Pashupata and called Lakuleesha and Pashupata sects with one single name and made

the collection of the theories. Of this sect Shankaracharya, in his oral interpretation of his "Brahma Sootra" is called Pashupata as Maheshwara. Pashupata sect is seen in "Shantiparva" in Mahabharata.⁶ In that, Bhattaraka descended to the world as Lakuleesha and lived in a place called Karohana of Lata Desha. He nominated four of his students Koushika, Gargya, Kourusha and Maitreya to propagate the Pashupata religion. They propagated the religion to all the places.⁷

It comes to the knowledge that Lakuleesha was being described as Lakulopa laxita Karaha. The Lakula bearing Shiva's idol on the coins of Havishka who ruled from 54 BC to 25 BC. He might be Lakuleesha. Therefore it comes to the knowledge that Lakuleesha sect and Pashupata sect are one and the same and they have come from the ancient times.⁸

It is not just that the Chinese traveler Hu-en-Tsang has mentioned the name Pashupatas for twelve times and Maheshwara temples at some places. Those Pashupatas were giving donations to those temples.⁹ It comes to the knowledge that the Lakuleesha temples had spread from Rajaputan to the Deccan Mysore. M. Chidananda Murthi opines that, the Lakuleesha Pashupata sect might have come to Karnataka from Gujarat.¹⁰ In this sect the Lakuleesha and sculpture is placed outside the Mahakooteshwara temple of 537-757 A.D. of Badami Chalukyas in Karnataka and the ruined statues of Lakuleesha in the central cellar of the temple built independently for Lakuleesha at Badami the ancient monuments of Lakuleesha pashupata in Karnataka to way us back to 6th century A.D. It is a fact of surprise that there are no references found about the word Pashupata till the tenth and eleventh centuries other than which comes in the kigga inscription, approximately of 700 A.D. Therefore we have to say that Lakuleesha Pashupata religion was not so dominating in Karnataka from the sixth century to tenth century.¹¹

References to the Lakuleesha and Pashupata sects were visible in Karnataka around tenth century in the inscriptions here and there. Accordingly, totally four inscriptions of the references to the Pashupata religion were found in Bagalkote District. They belong to the times of Kalyana Chalukyas and Devagiri Seunas. Thus totally four inscriptions are available in the different places. One of Prabhurajavarma period belonging to Kalyana Chalukya's and Devagiri Sevunas period. One of Trilokyamallidevas period and one belonging to the period of Devagiri Yadava king Permadi Devarasa's period are being published they are observed like this before .

An inscription belonging to the period of Kalyana Chalukyas period with date 2.3.1100, among the inscriptions referring Pashupata in Bagalkot is very important. That itself is the inscription seen on the southern wall of an Siddheshwara temple to Shirur village of Bagalkot district. The inscription refers to the grants of four mattars (measurement unit) made by Acharya Prasanna Rusi Pandia Deva of Siddheshwara temple to the tank called Bachisetti tank.¹² This inscription is on Deccan wall of Siddheshwara temple of Shirur, Bagalkot taluk belonged to Someshwara I (1049A.D.) refers to the construction of temples and the grants to the temples made to Tejorasi Panditha Sthanacharya of the temple. In the beginning it says varaha incarnation, surrounded by Kolhapur Mahalaxmi along with 64 yoginis. She is sitting on a lion. This inscription says that a grant is being given to the hostels for the students and the khandasphuti, renovation to the temple for dhoopa, deepa, gandha, naivedya, nratyopahara (Incense light, sandal, offerings, Dance, refreshment) to Lord Siddheshwara and to yatis by Sri Marasingha to the extent of 300 nivartana lands of Shripura village. It states that this Marasingha was the son of Gourabbe who was the daughter of Mookana who was the son of Mahalaxmi Padapadmopajeevi Prabhuaja Varma (A human taken birth at the feet of Mahalaxmi). It comes to the knowledge that there are Vishnu, Vinayaka, Chandī, Hanuma, Hatakeshwara and Mallikarjuna idols and Torana Mantapa, Kapila Teertha Constructions, and Nandi, Mahakali, Bhairava, Durga, Aditya Chandeshwara, Shanmukha, Saraswati statues in Shripura. It comes to the knowledge that Prabhu

Marasingha had constructed three tanks and ornaments for the above said figures.

The inscription informs that Marasingha gave this copper inscription to Tejorasi of Simharshi, who belonged to the Malayala saint generation of Uttareshwar Gods Matha (Ashram)¹³

Another inscription belonging to the same period refers to the same matter. In this inscription, it refers him as “Dhyana Mounanurata Parama Pasupatacharya Chaturajjataka Sakala Mahasthanama.

The third inscription is also on the southern wall of the same temple and it belongs to 1062 A.D. This inscription refers to the fact that PrabhuMarasingha donated one thousand “Gadanya” for the renovation of Sri Siddheshwara temple along with praising Mahalaxmi of Kolhapur in the beginning. This inscription continues and says that one thousand (1000) golden coins were given to the hands of five hundred (500) great people or Mahajanas of Aayuvadaka village and informed (suggested) to spend one hundred and fifty (150) gadyanas for the meals processes of twelve (12) Brahmins, every year from the interest amount coming from that. Along with it, it says that two hundred (200) golden coins were given to the hands of Mahajanas of the same village 40 gadyanas said to be used for another expenditure which comes annually in the form of interest from the 200 (two hundred) golden coins given. He gave another 100 gadyanas into the hands of Mahajans for another expenditure. It comes to the knowledge that, totally he gave 2200 gadyanas and suggested to spend 290 Gadyanas which come from the interest.

The forth inscription is in Kandakallu village Hunagunda taluk, Bagalkot district. It belongs to Yadava Peramadi Devarasa of Devagiri. It comes to the knowledge that his Maha Mandaleshwara Devarasa and his dictactors as Heggade Achayanna Kaudagaleyanna, Keshiraja and others gave the grants to Manikeshwara god. It comes to the knowledge that this grant is being collected by Devara Sthanika (Temple Supervisor) Parvatarashi.¹⁵

Sthana Patees (Position Holders)

There is a reference of Tejorashi Pandita and Parvatarashi Pandita in these four inscriptions. The inscription on the Deccan wall of Sri Siddheshwara temple at Shirur village of Bagalkote Taluk informs that Acharya Prasanna RashiPandita Deva of Siddheshwara temple increased the wealth of the temple by constructing a tank called Bachisetti tank in the landlords of agricultural farm, out of the grants given to him and out of the grants to build a tank in the lands of the temple.

“Shri Siddheshwara devara Sthanadacharya Prasanna Rashi
Pandita Devara Poladolage Bachisettiya Kerege Bitta Keya
Kelagu”¹⁶

In another inscription in the same village, it comes to the knowledge that Marasingh gave a copper inscription and honoured Singh Parshe Tejorashi belonging to the Malayala saint generation of great scholars and great austerity of Uttareshwara Abbey to admire his scholarship and for practicing and propagating the Pashupatha sect.

..... Ru Dharmma Vrayamam Nadeyisuvarall
Shri Mathada melall Uttareshwara Devasya Mathe Samsthatapaswinaha Tesham.
Mukhyo Mahayapragnyo Malaya
Lakyabhudha sthitahall Tashehipyotra Mahamune: padam
Prakshalya Vidhina Bhoomirdhdhattati Bhaktitill Singha Parsha stapo Mukhya: Tejorasi
Mahayate: Prabhuna Marasinghena Dattam Tu-Tambra Sasanam”¹⁷

In another inscription of the same village it comes to the knowledge that he was being praised as pasu Pasupatacharya.

In the inscription kept on the wall of Veerabhadreshwar temple of Kandagallu village of Hunagund Taluk of Bagalkot district it comes to the knowledge that Parvatarashi of the gods since his name was being referred in the inscription, he would have been with great knowledge and philosophy.

We observed the above said four inscriptions available at Shirur Kundagal, Badami and Mahakoota in Bagalkot district and came to the conclusion that they were the most important centres of Pashupata Lakuleesha sects.

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