

A Re-Reading On The Veera Saivism: Meaning, Origin, Scriptures And Sects With Special Reference To Mahakaleshwar Temple Irumbai

Mrs. N. Santhi¹, Dr. S. Thanigaivelan², Dr. R. Velmurugan³, Dr. K. Govindaraj⁴

¹PhD. Research Scholar, Part Time (External), Annamalai University, Annamalai Nagar

²Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, Annamalai University, Annamalai Nagar

³Associate Professor, Department of History, K. M Center for P.G Studies (Autonomous) Lawspet, Puducherry.

⁴Assistant Professor, Department of History, Thiru. A. Govindasamy Govt. Arts College, Tindivanam.

Corresponding Author - Dr. K. Govindaraj, Assistant Professor, Department of History, Thiru.A. Govindasamy Govt. Arts College, Tindivanam.

DOI: 10.47750/pnr.2022.13.S09.552

Abstract

Veera Saivas were faithful worshippers of Siva. **Panchachara**, **Astavarna** and **Shatsthala** represent three cardinal principles of the Veera Saivas. The Veera Saiva philosophy states that the soul sometimes becomes exposed to the influence of the clouding of the mind and hence acquires impurity. The Saiva agamas (the scriptures of Saivism) mention the following seven branches of Saivism. Some form of Siva and Linga worship was prevalent 3500 to 5000 years ago. During the tenth century Saivism was eagerly supported in Karnatak by the Kalamukhi and Pashupatha schools. This paper portrays Mahakaleshwar temple at Irumbai, which has southern counterpart at Thiru Ammber Mahalam at Ammbar near Mayiladuthurai and northern counterpart Mahalam Temple at Ujjain Maharashtra Respectively.

Introduction

The word "faithful" has been suggested as the meaning of the word 'Veera' in the sense that the Veera Saivas were faithful worshippers of Siva. In the present context, there is a more subtle and sublime meaning to the word Veera. The Veera Saivas are supposed to uphold the three cardinal principles of **Panchachara**, **Astavarna**, and **Shatsthala**. One overcomes one's flaws and attains self-awareness and self-enlightenment by using these three principles consistently, thoroughly, and with severe discipline. To bear the demanding requirements of the aforementioned values, one must be courageous and dedicated. In other words, "Veera" implies that a person has overcome his or her rage, passion, and wants as well as their shortcomings and is prepared to continue on the path to moksha (salvation).¹

Veera and Saiva are the two words that make up the noun Veera Saiva. Everyone who worships Lord Siva is known as a Saiva. According to some authors, the term "Veera" signifies "brave" and "heroic." In fact, this is how the word is defined in the dictionary. The phrase "Veera Saiva" eventually came to refer to the adherents of the Veera Saiva faith as a result of the events that transpired in Kalyana after King Bijjala was killed. People had to have the courage to publicly practise their faith since doing so would expose them to ongoing danger to their lives.²

The soul in the Veera Saiva philosophy:

God "hides in the centre of the soul." The mind and the soul are two distinct entities. God is a component of the soul. The soul unites with the Maker when a person reaches lingaikya (death). According to the Veera Saiva philosophy, the soul might occasionally be subjected to the effect of a clouded intellect and therefore acquire impurity. As a result, human impulses have the power to enslave the soul. Before one to advance spiritually and, ultimately, earn salvation, these desires must be set aside. As a result, a person's mental condition is determined by the harmony of their spirit.³

Three Divisions of Saivism

Everyone agrees that Veera Saivism is a contemporary offshoot of Saivism (the religion that worships Lord Siva). Saivism may be traced back to the Indus Valley Civilization, which flourished around 5000 B.C. Saivism has several branches in the past. The following seven branches of Saivism are mentioned in the Saiva agamas, or Saiva scriptures. "It appears that Veera Saivism was not a component of the original Saivism from the Siva agamas." The Philosopher did not oppose the caste system; this is a historical truth that he chose to ignore and reverse; as a result, his opinions do not warrant further examination.⁴

A living religion is Veera Saivism.

The most notable characteristic is that the based versions were written by individuals who had little concern in telling the truth or recording historical events. Veera Saivism is a progressive living religion because it mimics and reflects real life.⁵ **Scriptures of Veera Saiva**

The Veera Saiva texts include nothing that a person cannot encounter in their daily lives. This indicates that, in contrast to other religions, neither our Saints nor God Himself revealed the commandments to them, nor did they sit down and ponder and write their thoughts into a logically acceptable format, nor did they receive any visits from "angels" to reveal the secrets of their religion. They weaved and sung into vachanas what they learned from living on the anvil of life on our mother earth (a vachana is a pithy saying written in a free style in the vernacular language). The scriptures of the Veera Saiva faith are composed of these vachanas, which were authored by individuals from various walks of life, including a prime minister, a cloth-weaver, a washerman, a cobbler, a carpenter, a rope-maker, and a robber (of course, after he had given up his profession).⁶

Literature of the Veera Saiva and Vachana

According to certain authors, the term can also refer to someone who is a devoted, faithful, and unflinching follower of Siva. Since they had to be bold to fight against the societal inequalities of the 12th century, this is also a plausible explanation for the name Veera Saivas. The Shunyasimhasan and the riches of the vachana literature that had gathered over the years were taken by the Sharanas after they left Kalyana (the pontifical seat). The Shunyasimhasan, Siddharameshawara's house, is still there in Sholapur. In Ulavi, a sizable contingent of Sharanas travelled under the direction of Channabasava and his mother Akka Nagamma.⁷

Religious Groups Related to Veera Saivism

Given that the armies of the Kings were continuously pursuing and harassing them, they had to have the audacity to publicly worship their religion. Because they were suspected of killing King Bijjala, the Sharanas faced certain death if they were apprehended. Dr. P. B. Desai has noted that the King was killed by his own brother, who was attempting to steal the throne. Jain Kings persecuted the Lingayats for 150–200 years (1320–1380 A.D.), and other dynasties attempted to repress the VeeraSaiva faith. The Veera Saivas Lingayats occasionally had to keep their religious connections a secret to protect their reputations. According to a statement, "Because of their ardent commitment, the movement's members referred to themselves as VeeraSaivas, i.e., brave Siva followers."⁸

The History of Veera Saivism

To be quite honest, it is fairly challenging to pinpoint the the day, let alone the year, of the Veera Saiva religion's founding, let alone the identity of its creator. As previously indicated, it is in all respects a branch of the Saiva faith. There is proof that Siva and Linga worship was practised in some form between 3500 and 5000 years ago thanks to the discovery of the Indus Valley Civilizations and the research of Father Heras and Sir John Marshall.

Veera Saivism components

Additionally, it is well acknowledged that the populace of that time worshipped small lingas. Saivism, the cult of Siva, is extremely old indeed; thus it is only logical that many characteristics of Saivism are also present in Veera Saivism. However, Schouten rejects the claim that Veera Saivism and Saivism are related. The Basava movement was part of the overall rebirth of Saivism, which had already peaked in Kashmir during the eleventh century and had received the enthusiastic support of the Kalamukhi and Pashupatha schools in Karnatak. However, Basava and his contemporaries' teachings do serve as the foundation for Veera Saivism's distinctive religious and social beliefs, devotional culture, and community structures.⁹

Literature about Veera Saivism

The Vijayanagar Empire, which promoted the arts, literature, and other religious beliefs practised in its realm, greatly aided Veera Saivism's resurgence and literature. The Veera Saiva religion was remarkably supported and generously supported by King Devaraya (1426–1446). His cabinet included two Lingayats. Veera Saivas were responsible for the founding of the Vijayanagar Empire. According to legend, Channarasa's Prabhulinga Leele was recited in front of the King at the court. This example was followed by other Kings.¹⁰

Veera Saivism, the official faith

Veera Saivism was recognised as the State Religion under the Keladi Dynasty (1550–1763). Additionally, Changaleva Kings of Coorga made it their official religion (1350 - 1850). The following kingdoms are prominent examples of those that supported the VeeraSaiva religion: Chitradurga, Pavugada, Sira, Kittur, and Belavadi are the first five. A Dutch clergyman named Abraham Rogerius, who resided in India from 1632 to 1642, wrote the first description of the VeeraSaiva faith to be written outside of India by a Westerner.¹¹

Early Description and Veera Saivism

In 1651, he released a book with the working title "The Open Door to the Hidden Paganism." He said, "This sect brands their forehead with three or four lines of ash from the burnt-out cow-dung." He is referring to the Jangamas. A particular stone or idol, which they refer to as a Lingam, is worn by some of them around their necks, while it is also worn by others in their head hair. When they are eight or ten years old, they have their kids wear it covered in wax and tied with a small piece of thread around their arm. People that wear this Lingam do so to demonstrate and publicly declare that they have only faith in Eswara and do not acknowledge any other gods. Just like Brahmins, the shudras who wear this Lingam abstain from consuming flesh and all forms of life. Italian traveller Pietro Della Valle is another early Westerner to describe Veera Saivism (1663). He travelled to Ikkeri, where Veera Saivism was the predominant religion, in Keladi, Karnataka.¹²

He describes his observations of a Veera Saiva Guru procession, a "married jangama," and the sitting-down funeral of a Lingayata.¹³

The text didn't define what "married Jangamas" actually meant. Most likely, it refers to priests in North Karnataka called "Ayanavaru." These people are religious and do pujas, christenings, and funerals. Compared to their Catholic counterparts, they are identical to Protestant or Baptist priests. They're a married couple. Abbe Dubois (1821), a missionary who visited South India, comes next.¹⁴ Due to the personal bias of his Brahmin guide who travelled with Dubois on his adventures, his fascinating portrayal of Veera Saivism as it appeared in his book was contaminated. It must be admitted that Christian missionaries' and clergy's stories and publications frequently exhibit skewed and prejudiced perceptions of Veera Saivism due to need. Vachana Literature contains Veera Saiva Scriptures.

The free-style literary works known as Veera Saiva vachanas are recognised as the scriptures of the Veera Saiva faith in addition to the Sivagamas. They stand for the sublime because they were forged in the fire of daily existence. The essence of life can be found in what is read. The finest way to live, the most honourable way to suffer, and the most pleasant way to die are all taught by them. Every human being can experience a tremendous moral awakening thanks to the vachanas. They educate men how to like and adore the right and distinguish the right from the wrong and send a pulse of fellow-feeling through all home, civic, and social connections.

There is "genuine sublimity, beautiful beauty, Puritanical morals, and magnificent strains of poetry" in the vachana literature. It is a true treasure trove of wisdom and goodness. Since the majority of the vachanas are musical compositions with pleasant melodies, they may be repeated during group prayer and praise. The vachanas' explanation of the truth has the capacity to "awaken an acute moral sensibility in the human person." They provide a man a strong sense of spiritual success and self-purification, as well as an elevated elevation.

The sects of Shaivite

From the Early Vedic Period through the Puranic Period, Saivism, a theistic system of Siva worship, and a proliferation of Shaivite cults and schools of thought all contributed to Rudra-ascendancy to dominance. The result of this multiplication is Siva's continued importance today. These parts will do the same for the appropriate cults/sects and traditions as the preceding sections did for Rudra's transition from a wild Vedic deity to the Supreme God of Puranic and Tantric writings.¹⁵

Early Vedic and Purana Vedic Siva worship Due to his fierce character, Rudra was to be worshipped outside of town boundaries and out of fear rather than out of reverence per se. The goal of this devotion was to persuade Rudra to change into Siva, the auspicious (Gupte, 36). The likelihood of Rudra worship during the Vedic period is suggested by this as well as at least one reference to him as the bringer of prosperity and the liberator (see Book 7, Hymn 59, stanza 12 - Rigveda), but they in no way imply that he is more important than the other deities in the Rigveda.¹⁶

The Upanishad and Veera Saiva

In fact, the Vedas include references to Rudra's inferiority to gods like Indra, Agni, and Vayu. Therefore, there is no such thing as a theistic system built around Rudra. Up to the time of the Smritis and the Dharma Sutras, this pattern persisted. Some academics explain Rudra's incorporation into the major Pantheon by stating that Rudra, who they believe to be a non-Aryan deity, betrayed the daughter of the well-known Aryan deity Daksha (Gupte, 36). He was granted the ability to destroy after integration. The Svetsvatara Upanishad, one of the most ancient Upanishads devoted to Rudra's splendour, has the first unmistakable evidence of a tradition of a theism centred on Rudra-Siva. He is referred to be the Supreme Being who both causes and transcends the cosmos in the aforementioned Upanishad. Similar omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient traits are ascribed to Rudra in the Atharvasiras Upanishad (a later Upanishad devoted to Rudra's ultimate nature), strengthening the theistic tradition.¹⁷

Growth during the Gupta Dynasty

Thus, it may be said that the first mention of a Shaivite tradition dates from sometime between 200 BC and 100 AD (Flood, "Blackwell Companion", 205). While the Upanishads may have had some influence on the development of Saivism, the Puranas make clear references to Shaivite literature. According to Gavin Flood, the Smarta Brahmin modes of worship and the Gupta dynasty's rule (between 320 and 550 CE) are when the Puranas were created. The Siva Puranas include common information on genealogy, caste obligations, and cosmology as well as distinctively Saiva issues such as placing the Siva emblem (linga) in temples, descriptions of Siva's forms, and information on the first Saiva sects. The Mahesvara Sankara was referring to was a puranic devotee who would be taken to Siva-Loka at death after having lived a life of devotion and responsible performance of societal obligations.¹⁸

The Mahesvara adhered to the Smarta observance of social responsibilities, the varnasramadharma, and observed Vedic home ceremonies. He was also entirely orthopraxic. (Blackwell Companion, Flood, 205). He was therefore in line with traditional Brahmanical society. On the other hand, other Shaivite organisations that are on the periphery of orthopraxy and do not have the same degree of adherence to Vedic thinking are also mentioned in the Puranas. These tribes are divided into four major subgroups: Pasupata, Lakulisa (a group that is connected to Pasupata), Saiva, and Kapalika. While the Pashupatas and Saiva Saiddhantikas somewhat adhered to Vedic doctrine, sects like the Kapalika completely rejected it. As a result, the Puranic worship of Siva points to ongoing conflict between devotion to Vedic and Tantric principles, which led to the diversity of schools of thought in later Saivism.¹⁹

This period's non-Puranic cults differ from the two Puranic groups in a number of respects. Both conceptually and ritually, it appears that there were substantial differences made in the move from Smartha worship to non-Puranic forms of devotion. The latter had to go through an initiation (diksa) into the cults of their affiliation for two major reasons: earning magical abilities to enjoy pleasure in higher realms (bhukti) or achieving release in this life (mukti) (Flood, "Blackwell Companion", 206). The upper (or outer) route (atimarga) and the path of mantras are divided further into two types (mantramarga). Atimarga devotees alone desire emancipation, but matramarga devotees also seek bhukti.

The Lakulas, the Kalamukhas, and the Pasupatas

There are sects that practise atimarga, including the Pasupatas, Lakulas, and Kalamukhas. The Pasupata Sutra is the scripture of the Pasupata. The Pasupatas considered this passage to be revelation. In accordance with the legend, Siva entered the body of a young Brahmin who had been cremated and brought it to life as Lakulisa, the "Lord of the Staff," who subsequently imparted the text's lessons to his four students.

Lakulisa is unmistakably identified as a person in Puranic literature, and D.R. Bhandarkar places him in the second century AD (Banerjea, 450). Since Pasupata is the earliest known sect, extrapolating this date to the time of the founding of the first Shaivite sects would be inconsistent with Patanjali's Mahabhyasa's mention of "Siva-Bhagvata." Thus, it may be concluded that Lakulisa was probably not the originator of Pasupata Saivism but rather its primary propagandist.²⁰

There can be no doubt about his significance and appeal in the early Saivism movement given that he is identified as the 28th manifestation of Siva in the Puranas. The Pasupata Sutra's teachings transformed him from a householder who was hardly an orthopraxic Brahmin into an ascetic. This non-conformity, however, did not include adhering to conventional mainstream traditions that marginalised women and lower castes and restricted asceticism to male Brahmins. The alteration of the varnasramadharma phases of life to include a transcendent fifth stage (siddha), in which the Pasupata achieves union with Siva, was one area, however, where this non-conformity did spread. (Blackwell Companion, Flood, 207).²¹

The Lakula embraced an extreme version of Pasupati religion. The Lakula ascetic mimicked the terrifying appearance of his deity Rudra by carrying a begging bowl made of a human skull, a pole with a skull on top, a garland made of human bones wrapped in ash, and either having matted hair or a shaven head. (Blackwell Companion, Flood, 207). The Bhairava tale of Siva's atonement for chopping off Brahmas fifth head serves as the foundation for this kind of praxy. The Lakula's objective is to replicate Sivas's panhandling till he reaches Banaras (Kapalamocana). The Kalamukhas sub-sect was created by the Lakula sect, following the pattern of sects and sub-sects spurring the formation of new sub-sects. During the 11th to 13th centuries, this group was particularly well-liked in Karnataka and even attained governmental authority. (Blackwell Companion, Flood, p. 208)²²

The non-Puranic sects have a propensity to depart from orthopraxy Brahminical tradition as they develop and spawn new sub-sects, either quietly as in the case of the Pasupata or consciously as in the case of the Lakulas and Kalamukhas. The Kalamukhas even rose to political prominence, indicating a wider acceptance of the puranic cults that appear to be quite radical. Additionally, the various range of ceremonial and theological subtleties point to various interpretations of the essence of worshipping Siva and the God himself, suggesting the emergence within Saivism of a complex and reflective social and cultural environment.²³ ways of cleansing awareness and means of realising oneness with Siva, this, by this theological conclusion, justifies their existence. (Blackwell Companion, Flood, 222) One of the most well-known Saiva cults, both within the mantramarga and within the whole Saiva heritage, is said to be the Saiva Siddhanta. This custom most likely originated in Kashmir and persisted until the ninth and eleventh century CE. According to Gavin Flood, "there was also a dualistic Saiva tradition inside Kashmir, theologically expressed in the Saiva Siddhanta, which was superseded by a non-dualistic one somewhere between 9th and 11th century CE" (Flood, "Kashmir Saivism", 225). The Saiva Siddhanta is dualistic (dvaita), maintaining the separation between the self and Siva and asserting the existence of three different ontological categories: the Lord (Pati), the self (pasu), and the link (pasa).²⁴

Being essentially Tantric, the Siddhanta religion also adheres to earlier Vedic notions of impurity and purity. "Liberation is obtained by Siva's grace (anugraha), via initiation (diksa) by a teacher, in whose body Siva

has been installed (acaryamurtistha). In order to become an ontologically separate entity on the level of Siva with his abilities and freedom from the cycle of life, the devotee must engage in particular practises during his life to cleanse his soul. This culminates in him becoming this being upon death.²⁵

The non-Saiddhantika branch of Tantric Saivism, also known as Left Saivism, rests its doctrines on the Bhairava Tantras. These texts are about the Saivas, ascetics tribes that lived in cremation sites and worshipped the fierce manifestation of Siva known as Bhairava. These tribes are commonly referred to as Kapalikas, or "skull-men," because, like the Lakula Pasupata, they carried a stick with a skull on top and a begging bowl on their heads. The Kapalika gives extremely less attention to Vedic heritage and, as a result, to concepts of purity and impurity when compared to the orthopraxy Siddhanta. Flood writes in "Blackwell Companion" that he must imitate Sivas' horrifying shapes and "wrap himself in the ashes from the cremation site, serve his gods with the unclean ingredients of blood, flesh, drink, and sexual fluids from intercourse unfettered by caste limitations." In actuality, the deities in the faith wanted these offerings of filthy material. Many of the cults in this tradition have a reputation for being fairly severe.²⁶

However, current organisations like the Aghori of Banaras are proof of the influence of "leftist" Tantrism. The Krama, Kaula, and Trika groups make form the Kashmiri Kula ensemble under the "vama" or Kapalika (non-dualist) school of Saivism. Out of the Kula ensemble, Kashmir Saivism was predominantly influenced by the Trika tradition. (Flood, "Blackwell Companion," 212) At this point, it must be clarified that calling the Trika tradition "Kashmir Saivism" is a widespread misunderstanding. "The word Kashmir Saivism (which is also the title of the book in issue) appears to have entered common usage with the release of Jagdish Chandra Chatterji's book. However, this usage of the term inaccurately indicates that Kashmir had a single lineage of Saivism, whereas in fact there were several variants that were sharply split both doctrinally and ritualistically (particularly the Trika, Kaula, Krama and Saiva Siddhanta).²⁷

This problematic term's ambiguity has to be clarified right away since it leads to a misinterpretation of the Saiva milieu in Kashmir. As has been claimed by scholars like Abhinava Gupta, the majority of the vama traditions do not adhere to the dichotomy between ritual purity and impurity since they have a non-dualistic conception of the world (highly influential in both Krama and Trika traditions). This fact's explanation is rooted in a different religious disagreement between the left and the right. The status of matter, or more precisely the foundation of matter, maya, is at issue in this conflict. Both believe that maya is what the universe is made of. According to the Siddhantas, Maya is the universe's "material cause" (upadanakarana), whereas Siva is just its "efficient cause" (nimittakarana).²⁸

In contrast, maya is an expression of pure awareness for the left (Flood, "Blackwell Companion", 224). However, monism requires that a manifestation be the same as the relevant pure awareness. This suggests that there cannot be a qualitative separation between the manifestation and the absolute, pure awareness. Different meanings of freedom are caused by the clash between various interpretations of maya. For the Siddhanta, emancipation is the elimination of impure material from the self which, since it is a substance, can only be done by action (i.e., ritual activity) (i.e., ritual action). The ultimate knowledge, not action, is what the Non-Siddhantas consider to be freedom since it recognises the self's oneness with the absolute rather than the eradication of matter. The orthoprax "Brahmanical-householder" Vedic tradition, which had already gained popularity in the Puranic cults, is divergent from the Tantric Saiva traditions.²⁹

This is clear from the overt nonconformity that is first seen in thought with opposing notions of purity and caste and then in behaviour as a result of the former. However, this does not imply that the earlier Vedic concepts had vanished entirely. While upholding the primacy of their Tantric texts supposedly revealed by Lord Siva himself—over Vedic ceremonies, the Saiva Siddhanta lineage did follow the Smarta Brahmins' customs. Tantric traditions, on the other hand, also exhibit thorough theological investigation and subsequent justification of practise and devotion on both the right and left sides. Perhaps the diversity of schools of thought was what gave rise to a forum for discussion and introspection. However, in other, less "esoteric" cults, this phenomena of thorough examination to align oneself with or against Vedic ideals wasn't as constant. Because of the difficult and somewhat esoteric character of the Kaula and Siddhanta cults, cults affiliated with books like the Svachchanda Bhairava Tantra and the Netra Tantra gained popularity.³⁰ "These tantras deal with exorcism, protective rituals,

and achieving desired outcomes" (like seduction and harm to enemies). 30 Possession appears frequently. (Blackwell Companion, Flood, p. 216) These cults also display hints of a different tendency, which is the trend of combining non-Siddhanta and Siddhanta beliefs into one amalgam and using that mixture as a novel way to worship. For instance, while having unclean modes of worship, both the Svachchanda Bhairava and Netra cults adhere to the Saiva Siddhanta's ritual purity. (Blackwell Companion, Flood, 215) This pattern may be seen in the Isanasivagurudeva-paddhati cults as well (probably in Kerala). The work is essentially a "Saiddhantika," although it appears to be unique in the tradition because of its unusual subject matter, which obsesses about possession and exorcism. (Blackwell Companion, Flood, 215) Additionally, this school of Saivism practises Tantric worship while adhering to Vedic principles (varnasramadharmas).³¹

Saivism in the South, namely Tamil Nadu, is where the Vedic vs. Tantric conflict is reconciled into a symbiosis of fervent devotion. During the Chola dynasty's rule (about 870–1280 AD), we see that Saivism enjoys royal support, as evidenced by the flourishing of the large temples at Cidambaram, Tanjvur, Darasuram, and Gangaikondacolapuram as well as the creation of the renowned Chola bronzes. Unlike the majority of other forms of Saivism, this one worships Siva as Nataraja rather than the Linga. It's interesting to note that, rather of being only permanent objects of worship, the Nataraja idols seen in the main temples actually march during festivals.³²

Saivism in Tamil Nadu is linked to Vedic orthopraxy and is also connected to aristocracy. The Brahmins who participate in daily worship identify as totally Vedic. (Blackwell Companion, Flood, 219) However, within the same tradition, the regal and Vedic components of Tamil Saivism coexist with the exact opposite. The 63 Saiva saints, the Nayanmars, and their devotional songs add fervent devotion and poetry to the theology and ritualism (or lack thereof) of the religion. The Saiva Bhakti movement, which rejects caste division, austerity, and formal, ceremonial temple worship in favour of a direct, personal relationship with Siva, is one manifestation of Tamil Saivism.³³

The Bhakti movement was highly prominent and evolved in response to the tyranny of lower castes, maybe as a result of the individual freedom to connect with the Lord independently of Brahmin authority. The Otuvans, a lesser caste of singers, are known to have sung songs to Nataraja idols, emblems linked with Brahmanical rulers of the big temples, during festival processions. Some of the Nayanmars themselves were from lower castes. (Blackwell Companion, Flood, p. 218) This serves as another another example of Tamil tradition's deviation from its royal and Vedic-orthopraxic tenets. Summarizing these perspectives leads to either an antagonistic dichotomy of two opposing factions engaged in a fight for dominance or a coexisting relationship between two different kinds of worship that is founded on a cosmic connection.

Thiru Ammber Mahalam near Mayiladuthurai and Mahalam in Ujjain, Maharashtra, are the southern and northern counterparts of this Mahakaleshwar temple in Irumbai, respectively each in turn.³⁴ Saivism in the South, namely Tamil Nadu, is where the Vedic vs. Tantric conflict is reconciled into a symbiosis of fervent devotion. Here, we see that Saivism enjoys royal support during the Chola dynasty's (c. 870–1280 AD) rule, with the major temples at Cidambaram, Tanjvur, Darasuram, Gangaikondacolapuram, and Irumbai flourishing and the renowned Chola bronzes being created. Unlike the majority of other forms of Saivism, this one worships Siva as Nataraja rather than the Linga. It's interesting to note that, rather of being only permanent objects of worship, the Nataraja idols seen in the main temples actually march during festivals. The Mahakaleshwar cult was also limited to three locations in India. Irumbai Mahakaleshwar Temple served as a connecting point to the other two of the three.

Reference

1. H.H.Mahatapasvi Shri Kumarswamiji , 'Veera Saivism: History and Fundamental Concepts'.p.26
2. **Ibid.**
3. B.A.,Shri Kumarswamiji, **Prarthana Yoga** p.35
4. **Ibid.**
5. B.A.,Shri Kumarswamiji, **Sandeshgalu**, p.20
6. **Ibid.**
7. B.A.,Shri Kumarswamiji, **ViraSaiva Darshan Yoga** p.67
8. **Ibid.**
9. B.A.,Shri Kumarswamiji, **Mukanna** p.46
10. **Ibid.**
11. B.A.,Shri Kumarswamiji, **Kal-Pravaha** p.17

12. **Ibid.**
13. Mark S. G. Dyczkowski, **The Canon of the Saivagama and the Kubjika Tantras of the Western Kaul Tradition**, p. 21,
14. **Ibid.**
15. Sastri, **The Sivadvaita of Srikantha** p. 19
16. **Ibid.**
17. V. D. Mahajan, **Ancient India**, p. 376
18. Shri Kumarawamiji, B.A. **Sandeshgalu, Op.Cit.**,p.20
19. V. D. Mahajan, **Op,Cit.**,p. 376
20. **Ibid.**
21. Hoiberg, **Students' Britannica India**, p. 160
22. **Ibid.**
23. Muller-Ortega, **The Triadic Heart of Śiva: Kaula Tantricism of Abhinavagupta in the Non-Dual** p. 32,
24. V. D. Mahajan,**Ancient India**, p. 376
25. **Ibid.**
26. Lorenzen, **The Kāpālikas and Kālāmukhas**, p. 177
27. **Ibid.**
28. Majumdar,**The History and Culture of the Indian People**, p. xix
29. **Ibid.**
30. Feuerstein, **The Yoga Tradition: its history, literature, philosophy and practice**, p. 344,
31. **Ibid.**
32. Dasgupta, **A History of Indian Philosophy**, p. 7
33. **Ibid.**
34. P.B. Desai, **The History of the Vijayan Agar Empire, Popular Prakashan Private Limited, Bombay 1956**. p.15