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Paper : **Indian Religion and Philosophy**
Module : **Śaivism**


ज्ञानं विद्यायै विद्युन्मयी

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Component-I (B) – Description of module:

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E-Text (Quadrant-I):

1. Introduction

Hinduism, as a philosophy, as a way of life and also as a course of faith has served the whole world like a light house. It is basically a progressive religion and has left its impact in all the spheres of life. Hinduism is unique in the sense that it has no single founder or a single source book. It grew gradually over a period of several thousand years. When we go deeply into it we will find that it is the product of a number of races and a number of cultures with several forms of practices. It evolved out of the varying faiths of various groups of the community as it was absorbing and assimilating all the diversified social movements and cultural practices of India. Hence it is often referred as '*Sanātana Dharma*' which means in English as endless custom or endless religion. According to Karan Singh, "Hinduism calls itself *Sanātana Dharma* or eternal faith because it is based not upon the teachings of a single preceptor but on the collective wisdom and inspiration of great seers and sages from the very dawn of Indian civilization." Philosophers often do not want to refer it as a mere religion as it permits free thinking and includes an indefinite number of customs. As a system, Hinduism is as vast and amorphous as the sea. It is based upon a theory of the immanence of God in all things. Generally Hinduism is associated with a multiplicity of Gods, and it does not advocate the worship of one particular deity. Deities are represented by a complexity of images and idols symbolizing divine powers. The most fundamental of Hindu deities is the Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Śiva. Other popular deities comprise Ganeśa, Kriṣṇa, Hanumān, Śrī Rāma and a number of Goddesses. But the common belief of Hindu

people is that three Gods rule the world-Brahma, the creator, Vishnu, the preserver and Śiva, the destroyer. These three Lords have consorts and they are Goddesses too. Consort of Brahma is Saraśwati, goddess of learning, Viṣṇu's consort is Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and prosperity and Śiva's companion is Parvati who is worshipped as Durga or Shakti. Hinduism encourages the worship of many Gods in many forms but it must be understood that behind these myriad forms is the same all-pervasive divinity that is mirrored in thousand different ways.

2. Śaivism : An Overview

Today the popular Hindu worship revolves around three major deities- Śiva, Vishnu as himself and his major incarnations and the Goddesses. Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism are the very popular forms of Hindu faith with large number of followers. Śaivism worships Śiva as the Supreme Being and the worship of Śiva is probably the oldest of Hindu traditions. Śaivism regards Śiva as the source and essence of the universe. The temples dedicated to him are characterized by Linga (phallus) which is symbolic of the attributes of Śiva. The name Śiva signifies 'auspiciousness,' and he is adored as an embodiment of grace and wisdom. But he is also referred as Rudra or the fierce.

Śaivism is more than mere theology. It is a philosophy that attracted the attention of ancient and modern sages and thinkers. The characteristics of Śaivism are the exaltation of Śiva above all other Gods, the highly concrete conception of the deity, and the intensely personal nature of the relation between him and his devotees. According to some scholars, the most typical expressions of Śiva worship have been found in Indus civilization sites and some of the seals found there were interpreted as representing Siva Mahayogi and Śiva Pasupati. From the excavations in Mohenjo-Daro- Harappa sites, Sir John Marshall says, "Side by side with this earth or Mother Goddess, there appears at Mohenjo-Daro, a male god, who is recognizable at once as a prototype of the historic Śiva." But some other scholars like K .A. Nilakanta Sastri have a counter-opinion and they advocate the Vedic origin of Śaivism. They believe that the word Śiva has been derived from *Rudra*, one of the Vedic deities. In Rig Veda the word 'Śiva' is not used as a proper name, but as an attribute of various deities. The name came to be applied euphemistically to the God of terrors and there is none more powerful than *Rudra*. The qualities of *Rudra*, as in *Rgveda*, reveal that he was an atmospheric God, quite fierce destructive, and physically attractive. He is the Lord of animal sacrifices and is associated with the distinctive powers of nature such as the storms, lightning and forest fires.

Just as the *Gita* reflects the intense theism of Vaiṣṇavism, so also the Svetasvatara expound the supremacy of the Śiva as the result of the theistic strain of thought developed in the Upanishads. On the one hand, Śiva is identified here with the eternal Absolute. On the other hand, he is the God of all Gods, potent for good and evil. He is the great Master, the giver of

boons, Rudra, the great seer, the supreme Lord and so on. He is attained by true tapas and then comes the removal of all bondage. The evolution of Śiva is found in Yajur Veda where around hundred names are attributed to him. These names include Pasupati or God of animals, Nilgriva or the blue-necked etc. In the great epics also we find references of Śiva and the Mahabharata refers to one thousand and eight names of Śiva. In the *Rāmāyaṇa*, Śiva is associated with origin of Gaṅga. In *Purāṇas*, Śiva is described as *Ardhanāreśwara*, mixture of male and female principles. He is also presented as a teacher of truth and as silent yogic who meditates in peace. In this position facing South, He is known as Dakshinamurti. Siva as a Dancing Lord (Natarāja) is another powerful representation. The reference to Śiva in ancient Sangam literature onwards is a witness to his powers and popularity in Tamil country. The literature of Tamil Śaivism describes him very exalted terms and with strong moral emphasis. In this Śaivism all harsh elements of the Śiva have practically disappeared and he is considered to be the compassionate father of to all things living. A bhakti movement of Śaivism is only traceable to South India and it reached a great height. Thus we see that Śaivism developed in the course of time, in ritual practices and in philosophical concepts of God, soul and world. Now we will deal the different schools of Śaivism.

3. Different Sects of Śaivism

Śaivism is not just a dominant religious tradition, but it is also a philosophy which has evolved metaphysical doctrines on different issues of universal concern. It considers Śiva (*Patī*) as the ultimate Reality and it deals with relation between *Patī* with the 'Individual Soul' or *Pasu* and the world at large and among themselves. According to G.V.Tagore, Śaivism is a school of Indian philosophy which believes that there is some ultimate principles- *Paratattva*: at the basis of the universe, which, within itself creates, sustains and withdraws within itself (annihilates) the universe. It believes: that principle is both immanent and transcendent to the universe. For the sake of convenience of linguistic expression, it is called 'Śiva,' (the Auspicious). Hence the school came to be designated as Śaiva (Śaivism)." The sacred literature of Śaivism is called *Śaivagama* and it is placed side by side with the Vedas. Mādhvacharaya refers to four schools of Śaivism- Nakulisa-Pashupata, Śaiva, Pratyabhijna and Raseshvara. Besides these we find mention of two more sects- Kapalika and Kalamukha. Śaivism of the 'Śaiva' type is further divided into Vīra Śaivism and Śaiva Siddhānta. For the sake of convenience we can say that Kaṣmir Śaivism or *Pratyabhijñā* system is monistic and idealistic. The dualistic school of Śaivism is Śaiva Siddhāntism and their school is Siddhānta Śaivism. The Śaiva school of Srikantha propounds qualified monism or qualified non-duality like *Viśiṣṭādvaita* of Rāmānuja. This school of Śaivism is called Śivādvaita. Another powerful school is Vīra Śaivism or *Līṅgāyata*. Hence we can say that the most important schools of Śaivism are – Kāṣmir Śaivism, Siddhānta Śaivism, Śivādvaita and Vīra Śaivism. These are originally based on *Śaivāgamas*. The Vedic School

of Śaivism is Pāsupatism. Śaivism Vedic or *Āgamic*, shares some common fundamental concepts and technical terms. They are *Pati*, *Paśu* and *Pāśa*. The śaivites believe that both the Vedas and the Agamas are poured by Lord Śiva and no human author has been attributed for their existence. Though Pāsupatism shares the fundamental concepts of Śaivism along with others, it is treated separately as it is non-*āgamic*. Now let us have a detailed look in to these schools of Śaivism.

4. The Pāsupatism

The Pāsupatas are the oldest Śaivite tradition in the North. In them ascetic tendencies were much in evidence. The term Pāsupatas means 'pertaining to 'Paśupati.' Paśupati is the 'the Lord of *Paśu*'s and in the Vedic literature Paśupati is the name of Lord Śiva. The historical founder of Pāsupatism is Lakulisa. He explained his system in 168 pithy *sūtras*. He composed five *sūtras* and they are:

1. *sadyojatam prapadyami*
2. *sadyojataya vai namah*
3. *bhave bhave nati bhave*
4. *bhajasva mam*
5. *bhavodbhavaya namah.*

It was Rasikara kaundinya, another commentator of *Pāsupatasūtras*, who created a philosophical school on the basis of these Sutras.

4.1. Main Tenets of Pāsupatism

Although the doctrines of Pāsupatas express closeness to the doctrines of Sāṃkhya and Yoga philosophy, they distinguish themselves from these schools as they emphasize their Śaiva monotheism. The Pāsupatas recognize the reality of God (*Pati*), the individual souls (*Paśu*) and the world. God is the Lord (*Pati*) and he has the supreme power of knowledge and activity. He is the independent cause of the world. His will is absolute and He is the First Cause or the cause of the causes.

Five categories recognized by the Pāsupatas include effect, cause, *yoga*, *vidhi* and *mokṣa*. The effects are ten kinds. They are the five elements of earth, water, fire and ether and the five qualities of smell, taste, color, touch and sound The *Pāsupatas* recognize thirteen causes also. They are the five organs of knowledge, the five organs of action and the three internal organs-*manas*, *buddhi* and *ahamkāra*. Yoga is the relation of soul to God through the mind. It consists in activity such as recitation of mantras, meditation etc and also in consciousness of God without any activity. *Vidhi* is the observance which achieves virtues. *Mokṣa* is absolute extinctions of pains. It is also attainment of super human powers of

knowledge and activity. The super normal powers of knowledge include the supernormal vision or *darśana*, super normal hearing or *śravaṇa*, knowledge of all intelligible objects or *manana*, complete and undoubted knowledge of the scriptures or *vijñāna* and omniscience or *Śaivajñātva*. The three kinds of supernormal powers of activity are *manojavatva*, *karmarupitva* and *vikāraṇaśarmitva*.

God is independent. The souls are dependent. They are produced by him and are eternal products. They are called *Pasu* because they are fettered by bonds (*Pāśa*). The impurity (*mala*) defiling the souls are five folds. They are false knowledge, demerit, attachment, causality and lapse. It is the root of sin as it binds the souls to the samsara. Purity is the complete removal of these *malas* and the means for it consists in-observance, recitation of mantras, meditation on God, constant recollection of Him and achievement of fruits. Their Yogic practice consists of a meditative contact with Śiva in solitude. *Mokṣa* is not mere absolute negation of pain. But it is also achievement of divine sovereignty. It is proximity or *sāmīpya* or God, which puts an end to rebirth.

Though Pāśupatism is considered as the most ancient and the only Veda based school of Śaivism, it is not seen in its pristine purity today. The followers of this school of Śaivism were slowly transformed into the school of Vīra Śaivism.

5. Kaṣmir Śaivism

Kaṣmir Śaivism the fourth main system of Advaita is based on Śaiva agamas or tantras which are accorded the same authority and status as the Vedas. Vasugupta, Sammananda, Uptaladeva, Abhinavagupta and Kshmeraja are the most eminent writers of this system and it has voluminous literature. Kashmir Śaivism is also known as *Spanda* or *Trika* system. The Trika is so called either because it accepts as most important triad, Siddha, Namaka and Mālini, out of the ninety-two Agamas recognized by it or because it explains three modes of knowledge or Reality,, i.e., non-dual (*abheda*) non-dual-cum-dual (*bedha bheda*) and dual (*bedha*). It is also called the *Pratyabhijñā* system. The details of this system are given in another module and so let us pass on to the next important School of Śaivism.

6. Śaiva Siddhānta

The chief sources of Śaiva Siddhānta are the 28 *Śaivāgamas* and the hymns of the Śaiva Saints. The great period of Śaivism was when the 63 saints called *adiyars* showed the people the way of devotion to Śiva. Meykanda Devar's *Śivajñānabodham* is the basic text of the Śaiva Siddhānta. Arulnandi's *Śivajñānasiddiyar* is commentary on *Śivajñānabodhanam*. Nīlakanta who wrote a commentary on the *Brahmasūtra* interpreted that work in the light of Śaiva Siddhānta. The main categories of Śaiva Siddhānta are *Patī* (god), *Pasu* (soul) and *Pāśa*. According to this system God, soul and matter are all real (*anadīnityaporu*). So it is a pluralistic realism.

6.1. God or Patī

The supreme reality is called Śiva. He is referred to as '*Patī*' which means that he is the Lord of all beings. He is regarded as beginningless, uncaused, the all doer and the all knower who frees the individual souls from the bonds which fetter them. God is designated by such names as Mara and Śiva. He is called Śiva because he is the supreme bliss. Eight qualities are usually attributed to Śiva. They are independence, purity, self knowledge, omniscience, and omnipotence, freedom from *malas*, benevolence and bliss. Sakti is the intermediate link between Śiva, the pure consciousness and matter, the unconscious. Absolute in itself is called Śiva and the Absolute in relation to objects is called Sakti. Śiva described is Śaiva Siddhānta is featureless (*nirguṇa*) in the sense that he transcends the qualities of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. He is the *Tuṛīya* for the fourth stage. He has eight forms (*aṣṭamūrti*) and five functions. The eight forms are earth, water, air, fire; sky the sun, the moon and the sentient man. The five functions are *śṛṣṭi* (creation), *stīti* (preservation), *samhāra* (destruction), *tirodhana* (obscuration) and *anugraha* (grace). The whole evolution of the world is for the sake of the soul's release through the grace of God. The Siddhānta does not favour the concept of *avatāra*.

The most fundamental category of Śaiva Siddhānta is that of *Patī*. The other two namely *Pasu* and *Pāśa* are dependent in him. *Pasu* is individual soul and is also a reality. Souls are by nature infinite, omniscient and all pervasive but because of their association with impurities or *malas* they experience themselves to be limited and become subject to birth and death. The soul is called *Pasu* because they are bound by the *Pāśa* or rope of impurities just like the cattle are bound by the ropes.

Pāśa means the bond that binds a *jīva* to the course of transmigration. It is otherwise called as mala in Śaiva Siddhānta. It has three aspects- *āṇava*, *karma* and *māyā*. They are known as the *pāsājāla*. *Āṇavamala* corresponds to nescience or *avidyā* in Advaita. Due to these impurities the infinite soul thinks it to be finite or atomic. This *avidyā* is present in all beings beginningless and multi form. Only by the eradication of these the *jīva* can attain liberation.

Karmamala is produced by activities of beings. The soul bound by *āṇava* is engrossed in activities. Actions bring merit and demerit leading to future birth. *Māyāmala* is the material cause of the world. It makes the soul enjoy the worldly pleasures. *Māyā* or *Prakṛti* is the stuff of which the world is made.

The three *malas* together constitute the bondage of the soul. A soul is either *sakala*, *pralayakala* or *vijñānakala*, according to as the nature of impurities present in it. The soul as it exists with all the three impurities is called *sakala*. The soul when it is rid of *māyā* alone is called *pralayakala*. The *vijñānakala*, is the soul in which only *āṇava* remains. It is fit for release. It attains release when through the grace of Śiva, the impurity of *āṇava* is removed from it. According to this system sin is the threefold bond from which we have to attain emancipation. We must get rid of *āṇava* or *avidyā* which darkens the light of the soul,

neutralize karma which produces re-birth, and remove *māyā* which is the basis of all impurities. The grace of God (*arul*) is the road to freedom. It demands child like trust in Śiva. He is full of, love and is waiting to receive the recognition of the soul. The teacher or the guru plays an important role in the scheme of salvation. Śiva himself is said to live in the guru looking at the discipline through the eyes of the guru. The path to release consists of four stages-*carya*, *kriyā*, *yoga* and *jñāna*. The first stands for external act of worship like cleaning the temple, gathering flower etc. This is called *Dasamarga*. Its goal is *salokya*, residing in the realm of god. The next stage is *kriyā* which means intimate service to God, first like a good son. It is known as *satputramārga* and the objective is *samīpya*, attaining nearness to god. The third discipline is *yoga*. Through this method one become more intimate with god, as a friend with a friend. It is called *sakhamārga*. It leads to *sārupya*, or gaining the forms of God. The fourth is *jñāna* which is the direct means to perfection. It is known as *sanmārga* because it takes the soul straight to God. Its aim is sayujya, union with god. This union is called Advaita in Śaiva Siddhanta. It regains its infinitude and omniscience. It enjoys the bliss of Śiva though it does not share with the latter his five functions. Thus without becoming identical with god, the soul enjoys his nature.

7. Śivādvaita

As distinguished from the teachers of Kaśmir Śaivism and Śaiva Siddhānata, Srikanta, the exponent of Śivādvaita, adopted *Brahmasūtra*, and not agamas as the authoritative text to establish his theory. He interpreted the *Prasthānatraya* in terms of Śaivism rather than Vedānta and here we see that Brahman has been replaced with Śiva. He was probably a contemporary of Rāmānuja and his philosophy resembles to a great extent, the qualified monism of Rāmānuja. Srikanta's *Brahma Mimāmsā-bhāṣya* resembles Rāmānuja's *Śrībhāṣya* in many ways. He refutes Śāṅkara's doctrine of the 'attributelessness' of the Brahman. For him, the Brahman is the basis of all auspiciousness and is hence called Śivatattva.

In *Brahma Mimāmsā-bhāṣya*, Srikanta tries to reconcile *Śruti* and *Āgamas*. He affirms the equality of authority between the two. According to him, Śiva is the author of both Sruti and Agamas. Like other Śaiva sects, Srikanta also builds his system on the three main categories of *Patī*, *Pasu* and *Pāśa*.

Brahman is called Śiva because it is full of all auspicious qualities and free from taints. He is the Lord of all *jīvas* (*Pasus*) and is hence called *Paśupati*. He is the cause of creation, preservation and destruction of the world, concealment or embodiment of souls and bestowal of grace on them. Hence the five functions or *pañcakṛtya* of Śiva are creation, maintenance, destruction of the world, *tirodana* and *anugraha*. He is the supreme reality. He is imminent in the world, which is transformation of his supreme energy (*parā-śakti*). He transcends it as its Inner ruler. Śiva and Śakti together is Brahman. The Supreme Lord is

qualified by Sakti. It cannot exist apart from Brahman. As heat is inseparable from fire, so Śakti is inseparable from Śiva or Brahman. Śakti is different from and identical with Śiva, the energizer. Causation is transformation or *pariṇāma*. It is a transformation of *Cit-Śakti*, which is non-different from Brahman.

Srikanta does not believe in the creation or origination of *Pasus* or individual souls from Śiva or Brahman. The *jīva* has co-status with but not identity with Brahman. Srikanta holds that the embodiment of the *jīva*, despite this co-status with Brahman, is due to some beginningless transgression on the part of the *jīva* that the Lord willed to conceal the true nature of the *jīvas*. He points out that the *jīva* is soiled by beginningless *ajñāna* or *āṇava*, karma and *māyāmalas*. He recognizes four *malas*- *āṇava*, *karma*, *māyā* and *rodha*. He regarded karma as a beginningless and the most powerful bond. *Rodha* or absorption is the power of the Lord but due to its effect it is regarded as *Pāśa*. The soul is forced to enter or leave a body assigned to him for experiencing the fruits of acts committed by him according to his good or evil predilections. Srikanta states that *jīva* is atomic in size but is encased in a *liṅgaśarīra* constituted of the seeds of his future body. He transmigrates to another species with his *liṅgaśarīra*. Like a lamp illuminating a room of any size, this atomic *jīva* enlivens all the body irrespective of its size.

Lord conceals the true nature of the *jīva* and entangles it in bondage. He removes the veil and grants its release. Bondage and release depend upon his will. Srikanta strongly recommends the path of *bhakti*. When Śiva becomes pleased, all the *malas* or bondage is destroyed by His grace. When all the *malas* are washed off, the original Brahman like qualities or powers of *jīva* which were so long veiled become manifest. Srikanta emphasized that the released soul enjoys bliss like the Śiva but not become merged in Śiva or Brahman. The similarity between the two is in the sameness of bliss. The liberation is called *sāyujyata* and it is similarity in appearance and enjoyment. Thus we see that Srikanta reconciled the *āgamic* and *Upaniṣadic* teachings in his of Śivādvaita.

8. Vīra Śaivism

Vīra Śaivism is said to have been emerged in Karnataka region to curtail the significance of Jainism. Vīra Śaivism or *Liṅgāyata* religion gained momentum during the beginning of the 12th century and was based on the twenty eight *Śaivāgamas*. The term Vīra Śaivism means 'a staunch follower of Śaivism' and it insists on the worship of Śiva in the *Śivaliṅga* form only. The *liṅga* is not necessarily a phallic symbol of the *Liṅgāyata*, rather it is regarded as a concentration of fire and light which purifies the body and mind of the individual.

There are two views among Vīra Śaivism as to the founders of their sect. According to one view, it was founded by five ascetics or teacher saints, namely, Revanasiddha, Marulasiddha, Ekorama, Panditaradhya, Visvaradhya. They are believed to have been born out of the Śiva-lingas. The other view regarded Basava as the founder of Vīra Śaivism. He

broke from traditional Hinduism and vehemently protested against meaningless rituals by refusing to undergo the sacred thread ceremony. He advocated equality of status to women, abolition of caste system, dignity of labour and such other advanced views in those days. His *vacanas* express his intense devotion to Śiva. His visualization of *Śivaliṅga* as 'more brilliant than a thousand suns, incomprehensible yet blissful which renders him speechless' certainly show that he was a great mystic saint.

A systematic presentation of Vīra Śaiva philosophy is found in Sripati Pandits, *Srikara Bhasya*, a commentary on the *Brahmsūtra*. He wrote a lucid commentary on the Brahma Sutra and has shown that the agama-based faith; i.e., Vīra Śaivism has full support of the *Brāhmanical prasthāna*, the *Brahmasūtra*. It is a synthesis of Vedas, *Upaniṣads* and *Āgamas* and this *Bhāṣya* is like a wish-yielding tree to *mokṣa* seeking Śaivas.

Like the other Śaiva sects, Vīra Śaivas also regard Śiva as the Supreme principle who controls both *Pasu* and *Pāśa*. His specialty is that he is a synthesis or receptacle of contradictory characteristics such as *sat*, *asat* etc. Sripati adopts the term Brahma for *Patī* which is characterized by five functions i.e., creation, maintenance and annihilation of the universe, concealment and grace. According to him Lord is the cause of the world and world is the effect. The Lord extends the universe at the time of creation and withdraws it within at the time of *pralaya*. He held that the world is real and eternal.

Though the relation between *jīva* and God is like that of the body and the embodied, God is eternally free. All things are accommodated in *akāśa* or the sky but it is free from all blemishes etc of those worlds contained within it. The supreme Śiva, though the cause of everything and immanent in everything is untouched by their blemishes. Though there is difference in terminology almost all sects of Śaivism recognize 36 *tattvas* or categories out of which the first twelve are esoteric and the next twenty-four are those of *sāṅkhyās*. All these *tattvas* are evolved out of the śakti-the will power of Śiva. The Supreme Śiva is independent and his body is not karmika. *Jīvas* are seen to experience miseries etc due to their beginningless *karmamala*. Śiva removes this and absorbs the *jīva* within him. Due to the beginningless mala, the *jīva* and Śiva are at first separate but like rivers merging in to the sea, the Pasa or *jīva* becomes one with Śiva. Attainment of such a state is the culmination of spiritual experience.

Śaivism holds that *mokṣa* is liberation from three type of bonds or *malas* i.e. *āṇava*, *karma*, and *māya*. Vīra Śaivism believes that it is only due to Śiva's grace that one can get liberated. It has prescribed *dīkṣa* or initiation into the Śaiva spiritual path as the condition precedent for all aspirants to *mokṣa*. Sripati asserts that by the knowledge about God one gets release from all bonds. By realization one attains the supreme Śiva-*tattva*. He holds that even by *bhakti* or devotion to Śiva one can achieve the four types of liberation like *sālokata*, *sāmīpata*, *sārupata* and *sāyujyata*. He recognizes the *jīvanmukti* concept of liberation and

says that the *jīvanmukta* realizes that Śiva is in everything. The realization is that he is the Brahman and he is always absorbed in the results of the karmas. After the fall of his body or death he loses his individuality and merges into or become identical with Śiva.

To conclude, we can say that Śaivism which insists on the worship of Śiva is not just a dominant religious tradition. It is also a philosophy which has evolved metaphysical and other doctrines including the concept of *mokṣa* which shows the necessity of the descent of god's grace or *anugraha* for liberation.

9. Summary

Śaivism is an ancient religion in the broad sense of the term. It has many followers in all strata of society all over India. The supreme reality is called Śiva and *Śivalinga* is the symbol of the ultimate Reality which Śaivas designate as *Patī*. Śiva is regarded as beginningless, uncaused free from defects, the all-doer and the all-knower, who frees the individual soul from the bonds which fetter them.

