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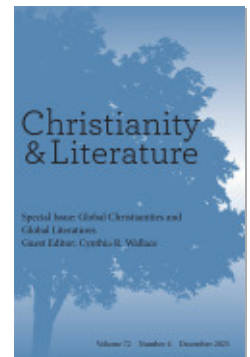
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Christian Perspectives of Lingayatism: The Trajectory of Lingayat Identity and Literatures in Colonial Karnataka¹

Vijayakumar M. Boratti

Abstract. Recent postcolonial scholarship gives an impression that Western Christianity was an overarching religion, which reinforced Orientalism and self-imposed the task of civilizing/modernizing the local literatures and traditions. In this article, I enter into these debates, tracing a trajectory not only of Christianity in the colonial period but also local traditions and literatures. In this connection, I focus on the Lingayat literatures of south India, which are understood to be exclusively the product of colonial modernity and Western Christianity. It stands on the premises that knowledge production in colonial India evolved through the intermediary relations and participation of both local scholars and Western orientalist. I argue that these relations were neither integrated nor harmonious. Rather I highlight the collaborative, competitive, resistant and appropriative energies of local vernacular voices in defining and representing their literatures and traditions vis-à-vis Christianity.

Keywords Lingayats, Christianity, missionaries, postcolonialism, theology

Although we have learned that colonial power was not monolithic and that colonialism cannot be conflated either with Christianity or with European influence, we are, even today, prone to view nineteenth-century literature as a by-product of this political divide, either as a colonial construction or as a nationalist reaction.²

Recent postcolonial studies on the relationship between colonialism and religion in colonial India have been preoccupied with the trope of the colonialism–Christianity divide. Theological historians and literary theorists have revisited and critiqued colonial history of “imagined” Hinduism and “protestant” Hinduism within this framework of the divide.³ These studies hold colonialism and Christianity responsible for framing Indian faiths and religions within the framework of dichotomous categories such as Christianity–heathenism, secularism–religion, modern–tradition, and

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civilizing–civilized and are castigated for their role in reinforcing colonial designs of imperial ideology, power, and the imposition of Western philosophical standards and application of what Sharada Sugirthrajah terms “Western Protestant hermeneutical principles” to understand Indian traditions.⁴ Although such studies are welcome insofar as they review the political and religious dynamics of the divide, they have not made a decisive contribution beyond problematizing it and have not seriously paid attention to how local religious traditions or literatures have responded to the “artificial” conceptualizations generated by such simplistic categories.⁵ Consequently, a certain complacency has set in in such studies, and it has led to neglect of the complex, multilayered historical processes that are involved in close connection with the divide. In this essay I critique this complacency with a focus on the “protestant” Lingayat tradition of colonial Karnataka.⁶

One of the important “protestant” Hindu traditions is the Lingayat tradition of south India. Scholars who have studied the Lingayat tradition and its literatures in the postcolonial context argue that in the nineteenth century it was brought within the framework of Western morality of a secularized/ideological Christian ethos. These scholars argue that secularized Christian interpretations were extended to explain the “inherent” radical, protestant, and vernacular ideas of Lingayat religion. Tejaswini Niranjana, while tracing the colonial history of Virashaivism (another nomenclature of Lingayatism), was one of the foremost to criticize both “European and Indian commentators [who] persist in discussing Virasaivism in terms of Puritanism and Protestantism.”⁷ She argues that the nexus between power and knowledge in the colonial period consolidated Western discourse of Virashaivism, and colonial subjects perpetuate it by comparing Virashaivism to Protestant Christianity. Sidestepping a direct criticism of colonialism, Robert J. Zydenbos exposes the failure of historians and theologians to see through the *politics* of interpretation in the colonial period in constructing Lingayat literature (especially Vacanas) as the embodiment of egalitarian values.⁸ He holds that the secular dimension of Vacanas is a modern construction and is parallel to a Christian Protestant perspective. Much earlier than Zydenbos, Blake Michael, while examining the origin of Virashaiva sects, points out that the European scholars as well as colonially trained apologists have evaluated oriental patterns from normative protestant Christian patterns.⁹

Toeing a similar line of argument and exposing the shortfalls in the construction of Lingayatism as part of egalitarian *bhakti* (devotion) movement in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Elaine M. Fisher critiques the Christian framework structuring the studies dominantly in the colonial modern period. She argues that metanarratives of Christian Europe and the trope of the Protestant Reformation have imposed limits to grapple with diverse archival evidence of the Lingayat tradition.¹⁰ According to Clara Joseph, these “scholars of diverse methodological and ideological positions start from the premise that colonialism is Christian. And all of them assume

that Christianity is Western."¹¹ Postcolonial critique of the Christianity-colonialism nexus, thus, conflates Christianity with the West and colonialism. Conclusions of these formulations "dominate both popular and academic discourse to this day, including anti-colonial and post-colonial discussions."¹² However, such theorization fails to consider two crucial points: Firstly, it ignores the precolonial presence of Christianity and its dynamism in South Asia.¹³ Secondly, it does not consider indigenously evolved Christianity and Lingayatism and its role in shaping local literatures and traditions. The postcolonial scholarship gives an impression that Western Christianity was an overarching religion that reinforced Orientalism and self-imposed the task of civilizing/modernizing the local literatures and traditions. Added to this, postcolonial studies that focus on the colonial encounters in India show no engagement with the work of early Christian writers in the *bhashas* (Indian languages) and their interface with Christian world.¹⁴ In the backdrop of complaints in contemporary India about the non-Indianness of the minority communities, Mrinalini Sebastian's arguments and questions are worth mentioning here. She holds,

it seems worthwhile to take a careful look at Christian missionary documents in order to understand better the social matrix in which the missionaries worked and also the nature of the encounter between them and "the natives." What role did "native Christians" play in this encounter? . . . What does such an encounter tell us about those crucial decades in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries?¹⁵

With specific reference to the encounter between Christianity and Lingayat traditions, many postcolonial critics of colonial/Orientalist history seem to have an essentialist, homogenous and linear notion of the process of knowledge production of Christianity, Lingyatism, and Vacana literature. The unidimensional theoretical approach of many postcolonial theorists is oblivious to the fact that the Christian ethos was vulnerable and underwent frequent and varying interpretations in accordance with diverse local experiences and traditions. Literal meanings of the Gospel or Christian ideology in such circumstances paved way for on-the-ground maneuvers that resulted in varying experiential output.

In this essay I enter into these debates, tracing a trajectory of not only Christianity in the colonial period but also local traditions and literatures. In this connection, I focus on Lingayat literatures, as they were interpreted and brought out with the help of modern print technology, which are understood to be exclusively the product of colonial modernity and western Christianity. Such a perspective begins by pointing out that knowledge production in colonial India evolved through the intermediary relations and participation of both local scholars and Western orientalist. Knowledge production, in this case, presents itself, to quote Helen Buzelin, as "the expression of the relations between the various intermediaries that have participated in its production."¹⁶ I argue, however, that these relations

were neither integrated nor harmonious. Rather I highlight the collaborative, competitive, resistant and appropriative energies of local vernacular voices in defining and representing their literatures and traditions vis-à-vis Christianity. The dichotomous categories, therefore, are not self-sustainable in the backdrop of such colonial relations. In this essay I demonstrate through three case studies that Christianity's engagement with Lingayat tradition and literature was not determined by monolithic imperatives, be they colonial, Christian, or secular. The Lingayats' self-imagination of their religion and philosophy, too, played a crucial role in changing the perceptions of the Christian missionaries and the politics of representation. My article takes up three historical cases of Christian-Lingayat perceptions of Lingayatism to register heterogeneous enunciations at different times: The Rev. Wurth's English translation of the thirteenth-century hagiography of Basavanna (1864), an important religious icon of the Lingayats; *Christian Chinnappa's* (a native catechist of Basel conglomeration) Kannada treatise on Lingayat philosophy and literature (1874); and the Rev. E. W. Thompson's English speech on the history of Lingayats (1910). Although the first two interventions are tethered to the Christian ideology of propagating the Gospel and demonstration of deficiencies in the native literatures, the third, under the circumstances of Lingayats' newly emerging identity, represents the historiography of Lingayats in a sectarian form hitherto marginalised by the "official" records of the colonial government.

Basel Missionaries, Lingayats, and Modern Times

When I know your *shastras* [customs] better, I shall be able to understand your way of thinking, and talk to you with understanding.¹⁷

This view of the early Basel missionary Hermann Mogling, reflecting a general pursuit of many missionaries, was born out of his interactions with a Lingayat saint in June 1838. Mogling's words show more than a basic keenness to know, a naïve curiosity, and an interest to engage with the Lingayats on their own terms. It reflects on their approach and attitude to the local traditions. The Basel missionaries in Karnataka, under the stewardship of the Rev. Samuel Hebich and the Rev. Hermann Mogling, began propagating Christianity in Hubli-Dharwad, north Karnataka, in the early 1830s, and the first Basel mission station at Dharwad was set up in 1837. The most important group of people in this region was the Lingayats who, the missionaries thought, were favorably disposed towards them. They found Lingayats, as remarked by Joseph Mullens, "much more open to the gospel . . . and naturally much better prepared to appreciate its ennobling doctrines" than others, especially Brahmins.¹⁸ By the time the Rev. Wurth began his missionary activities in these regions, especially in Gadag, Lakkundi, and Betageri (of north Karnataka) during the 1840s, preceding missionaries such as William Carey, John Hands, Samuel Hebich, Hermann Mogling, and B. H. Rice had sown the seeds of modern linguistic and literary traditions. They also had written evangelical accounts in their reports, documents and catechists' chronicles. Wurth continued this legacy.¹⁹

The Rev. G. A. Wurth's translations of *Basava Purana* and *Chennabasava Purana* (the two important Lingayat hagiographic poems about Basavanna and Chennabasavanna, respectively) into English, akin to Mogling's aim of understanding the local literatures for interaction, emerge not only as efforts to understand and interpret the Lingayat scriptures but also to expose the scriptures' ambiguities and justify the relevance of Christianity for the natives. The missionaries of Wurth's generation firmly believed in what Hume terms "the theory of inerrancy of the Bible" whenever they privileged it over other non-Christian sacred books.²⁰ The translations bear the marks of this belief and exhibit religious battles between Lingayats and Christian missionaries who, as Saurabh Dube rightly remarks, played a critical role in the former's "making and unmaking of historical forms, social identities, ritual practices and mythic meanings-enacted over time."²¹

Wurth's Translations of "Heathen" Literature

Gottlob Adam Wurth was born in Pleidelsheim, Wurttemberg, on September 18, 1820. He entered the Mission College in Basel in 1840 and made an excellent use of his six-years' stay as a student of philological and theological studies. In 1845 he was sent to India for missionary purposes. Hubli was his first station, where he was assigned to preach. Very soon he mastered the Kannada language and became well versed in Sanskrit, too. Itinerating remained his chief activity and he preached the Gospel in several places in north Karnataka from 1851 to 1866. He was one of the members of the Revision Committee of the Bible in Kannada and translated the Old and New Testaments into Kannada for pedagogical purposes in collaboration with the Rev. G. Weigle in 1861.²² He also collated and published a collection of ancient Kannada poems under the title *Prakkavya Malike* (1867) and helped Mogling in publishing the Kannada version of *Basava Purana* (in lithograph style) that was included in the school curriculum in 1850. Wurth died in 1869.

Wurth's translation was not merely a linguistic activity. It exemplifies the classic case of inter-relationships between translation, literature, and religion. His translations cannot be divorced from his evangelical activities. The interpretations, which find place in Wurth's prosaic translations of the two hagiographies, are intended to expose a series of deficits in the Lingayats: a lack of absolute faith, irrationality, polytheism, violence, and an inability to reason. In this interpretative act, he enjoyed considerable leeway in the matter of selection, deletion, and addition in his translations, allowing him a freedom of interpretation. The "discovery" of deficits seems a self-defence strategy of Wurth's (probably true of other missionaries as well) in the circumstances of the religious and doctrinal resistance he faced during his proselytizing journeys.²³ The intention behind the challenges and resistance hurled by the native Lingayats was to thwart the influence of Christianity on the Lingayats. These challenges were supplemented by scriptural challenges to the Gospel. Wurth reports one such case where an anonymous author wrote a book on Christianity and criticized it vehe-

mently for its reformist zeal.²⁴ A series of such confrontations and interventions on the part of both the Lingayats and the missionaries, thus, were not just examples of naive intellectual curiosity but an extension of religious conflicts between the bazaars and mutts (religious centers of the Lingayats).²⁵ It was against this backdrop that Wurth straddled registers of evangelism, translation, and condescension for the two puranas.

By paraphrasing the mammoth Kannada puranas, Wurth became the first scholar to introduce them to the West. He does not attempt versification of the Purana, for the translated lines are used intermittently for mere "illustration" of the heathens' moral degeneration. These two puranas are the most sacred texts of the Lingayats, regularly recited at local traditional schools and religious centers. While the *Basava Purana* depicts the life of Basavanna, the *Chennabasava Purana* illustrates the life of Chennabasavanna, the former's nephew. These two puranas are concerned, for the most part, with doctrinal injunctions, soteriology, recitals of mythology, praises of Lingayat saints, and accounts of their miracles. They narrate the tales of religious triumphs of these saints over rival groups, their divine interventions, the nature of mystical attainment, and devices of achieving spiritual perfection. The former was composed in the thirteenth century by Bhimakavi, and the latter was the creation of Virupaksha Pandita in the fifteenth century. Both are consciously engendered canonical texts for the purpose of spreading the Lingayat faith, and the exegetical tradition of these two puranas had long been in existence. The received tradition of the Lingayats and the reports of the missionaries indicate that access to these two hagiographies was refused to outsiders.²⁶ Only the learned priests, specialists, or the head of a Lingayat mutt had the traditional right to study, recite, and spread its message among the devotees. However, during the time of Wurth, the sacredness and inscrutability of the puranas had been encroached upon by the missionaries. Although the translation of the *Basava Purana* does not contain additional details like footnotes or annotations, the *Chennabasava Purana* is densely annotated, clarifying many references, allusions, and metaphors of Sanskrit and Kannada origin. The literary style of *Chennabasava Purana* is *Vardhika Shatpadi* (a verse form containing stanzas of six feet or lines) and it is introduced in meticulous detail, while there is no such introduction to *Basava Purana*, which was composed in *Bhamini Shatpadi*, another literary style. In the following discussion, I examine Wurth's style of translation with regard to *Basava Purana* and its politics to help us understand the role the Lingayat puranas/hagiographies play in the making, unmaking or re-making of Lingayat tradition and Christian viewpoints.

Lingayats in the Eyes of Wurth

Wurth's translations, published under the title "The Basava Purana of the Lingaits" and "Chennabasava Purana of the Lingaits" in the *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1863-66), seem to establish two

points simultaneously: a deficit of meaning in the puranas and a surplus of meaning in the Gospel. As Anna Jonston argues, demonstrating the deficit was a way of dealing with native resistance to the Gospel and depicting it as “moral decay and intellectual depravity.”²⁷ While the former is achieved by exposing supposedly primitive and uncultured beliefs of the Lingayats, the latter denotes efforts to convince them of the supposed sublimity of Christianity.²⁸

Frequent meta-commentaries in the translations bring out Wurth's attempts at exposing deficits and highlight his premeditated interpretive maneuvers. For instance, with the intention of exposing the false and contradictory image of Basavanna, demystifying his divinity, and demonstrating the untruth of his doctrines, he concludes the translation of *Basava Purana* by highlighting Basava's nexus with King Bijjala to retain power, his flight for his life and his ultimate act of suicide (drowning himself in a well). This castigation of Basavanna is followed by Wurth's defence for the presence of the Christian missionaries in India to redeem the heathens (Lingayats).²⁹ While castigating Basavanna, he purposefully attributes historicity to Basava's personality: “There can be no doubt that the leading facts of Basava's history, his Brahminical descent, his marriage with the daughter of the minister of Baladeva, his employment as prime minister of King Bijjala at Kalyana, his zeal for the propagation of the Lingait creed are historical.”³⁰

These “historical facts” are emphasized to strengthen the authenticity of his critical views. These interpretations were possible for Wurth, as he drew details about Basavanna from other versions of his life history, especially the Jain “believed to be sworn enemies of the Lingayaths” version.³¹ The work of the Jaina poet Linganna, *Rajaavali Kathasara* (a semihistorical document of Karnataka commissioned by Col. Meckenzie in 1824) contains a derogatory version of Basavanna's story. Perhaps it was such accounts that helped Wurth to consider *Basava Purana* as a source of history, allowing him to reconstruct Basavanna's life and heap criticisms upon him.

Wurth's comparison was confined to the textual traditions of the Lingayaths and the Jains, exposing distrust between them and underestimating the importance of Basavanna. His consistent castigation of Basavanna and the Lingayats' false belief in the redeeming power of the former was, many reports of the missionaries point out, due to their failure to maintain consistency between the letter (ethical standards in the puranas) and the spirit (ability to follow the standards honestly). Caste conflicts between and within several sects, ineluctable social oppression, polytheism in quotidian life, and contradictory doctrines in the two hagiographies are consistently cited to expose their primitive way of life and indifference in adhering to the message of Basavanna. The contents of *Basava Purana* in the translation, too, corroborate this notion. The descriptions and symbols of hatred and violence towards *bhavis* (non-believers in the greatness of the God Shiva) such as Jains and Brahmins in *Basava Purana* consolidated Wurth's persistent criticism.

Wurth questions the moral base of the Lingayath religion itself. An extract from his translation of the sixth chapter will make this point clear:

It is remarkable, however, that of this man [Basavanna], whose sanctity is so highly extolled, it is said in the very same chapter, that he was in the habit of supporting twelve thousand profligate Lingaite priests, who lived in the houses of prostitutes in the town of Kalyana. We meet these twelve thousand repeatedly in the history of Basava, and there can be no doubt that there must have been a very large number of profligate men and women amongst the first adherents of the Lingaite sect.³²

Since the Lingayats swore by the truth of *Basava Purana* and worshipped it, Wurth ridiculed them and tried to prove profanity in it. Large claims of sublimity and devotion by the *jangamas* (an itinerant group of Lingayats who spread the tenets of Lingayatism) are thus invalidated with such examples in the translation, and this depiction was intended to expose their immaturity, moral decay, and intellectual depravity.

Wurth's interventions set the tone and texture of future works on Lingayats and their literature. The Basel missionaries did not confine themselves to Lingayat myths to build narratives around them. Gradually, they brought out other forms of Lingayat literatures which contained monotheistic aspects and protestant elements. *Lingait Mata Vichara* (LMV) is the product of this intellectual endeavor.

Christianity as the fulfilment of all that was best in Hinduism . . .

There is no consideration of peculiar needs and aptitudes of the native Christians on whom we depend so largely for the teaching of the Scriptures.³³

The above remarks by the Wesleyan missionary the Rev. Thompson indicate the necessity and inevitability of native Christians in preaching the Gospel to the local people. Thompson urges an inclusive religious approach in the dissemination of a Christian ethos. However, long before Thompson, the Basel missionaries' employment of native Christians for the propagation of the Bible seems to have anticipated the dire need of native converts to convince other natives of the relevance of Christ. The Basel missionaries' LMV is a classic example of the role of native Christians not only in teaching the Bible but also in interpreting the native religious/literary scriptures.³⁴

A gradual increase in the Basel missionary activities met with new challenges, contexts, and experiences. The missionaries faced, to quote the words of Geoffrey Oddie, "real life needs and situations."³⁵ Consequently, they were compelled to devise "radical changes in approach, content, ideologies, theoretical frameworks and tools of teaching" to reconcile themselves to the changing situation.³⁶ We witness persistent efforts of the Basel missionaries to interact with and their gradual inclination to exchange ideas

with the natives in their own vernaculars. The approach of the missionaries was a sympathetic, appropriating, and, at the same time, patronising one. LMV exemplifies these larger transformations taking place in the approach of the missionaries in the nineteenth century. The “discovery” of protestant elements of a non-Brahminical hue in the various streams of Hindu religious traditions was enthusiastically embraced by the missionaries as they considered it analogous to Christian ethos and protestant zeal.

The tenets and ethos of Lingayats’ Vacana literature indeed attracted the attention of the missionaries. The nonconformist and iconoclastic aspects of Vacana literature were studied through a Christian lens. The missionaries were astonished to see many similarities between Christian tenets and monotheistic traditions in this literature wherein priestly/superstitious beliefs/structures are condemned. However, what underlined the interpretation and utilization of Vacanas was the pride of the missionaries that these indigenous literatures constituted “Christianity as the fulfilment of all that was best in Hinduism” [i.e., Lingayatism]. With this pride at the core of their belief, they indulged in comparative interpretation of Christianity and Lingayat traditions and it reflected, as argued by Pinch, formative moments of the “shift from the confident evangelism of the first half of the nineteenth century to the later more comparative posture.”³⁷

LMV as “Fulfilment” Tract

LMV is the first ever attempt to edit and interpret Vacanas exclusively as an embodiment of protestant ideas.³⁸ It is written by Chinnappa, one of the many catechists stationed in Hubli, a commercially important town in north Karnataka.³⁹ I. M. Muthanna opines that it shows the “emotional expressions of a recent convert impressively.”⁴⁰ The reports of the Basel Missionary Society indicate that Chinnappa was a weaver by profession, and he was baptized into Christianity in 1851 and was made a catechist in 1858. In the missionary reports, he is identified as *Christian* Chinnappa. He was well trained as a catechist before being ordained and was made a school teacher in one of the Mission schools in Hubli.

The imagined conversation between the two native characters Charantappa and *Upadeshi* (councilor) Paulappa⁴¹ in LMV shows the theological differences between Christianity and the Lingayat religion and at the same time foregrounds the isomorphic aspects which could lead the native (Charantappa) to understand the falsity of his religion and realize the truth of Christ.

LMV follows a pan-Indian style of unfolding religious tenets, that is, question-and-answer mode, arguments and counterarguments. On his long journey as a pilgrim to Hampi, the Vijayanagar Empire’s archaeological site in eastern Karnataka and also an epicenter of Lingayat religious activities in the fifteenth century, Charantappa meets Paulappa who asks him to take a rest before he proceeds further. In the conversation that ensues during this time, Paulappa asks many questions of Charantappa regarding

the genesis of Lingayat sect, its founder, evolution, its central religious doctrines, and the ways it spread across Karnataka. Initially Charantappa feels awkward at this series of questions asked by Paulappa and expresses his resentment of him because the latter changed his religious faith (i.e., Lingayat) to become a Christian, and now he is out to “ruin” his previous religion by disseminating the Bible.⁴² Nevertheless, he answers all the questions. He subsequently divulges the essential knowledge of the Lingayat sect, its birth, sacred book, and doctrines on the condition that Paulappa would not share the knowledge with others and keep it “top secret.”

Starting from the birth of Basavanna, Charantappa's narrative echoes the hagiography of *Basava Purana*. He proudly remarks that Basavanna was an incarnation of the God Shiva on the earth. He was born into an Aradhya Brahmin family at the behest of the God Shiva.⁴³ At an early age, Basavanna learnt the Vedas and the Agamas (the sacred and ancient books of the Hindus). The God Shiva himself taught him *Shaiva Shastras* (doctrines of Shiva). Later, Basavanna gave up Brahminical practices as he feared that such practices would make him drift away from the God Shiva. As per the God's wishes, the Lingayat sect was founded by Basavanna to vanquish the Jains and establish *Shiva Dharma*, the religion of Shiva. Charantappa gives an illustration of Basavanna's miracles as the Prime Minister in the court of Bijjala, a king of Kalachuri dynasty. He mentions *Basava Purana* and *Chennabasava Purana* as sacred books of the Lingayats. Later, he outlines the significance of *Ashtavaranas* (the eight main religious doctrines),⁴⁴ *shat-stalas* (the six stages of salvation), and the codification of these doctrines by Chennabasavanna. This is followed by his narration of why Bijjala, the *Shiva Drohi* (the traitor of Shiva), alarmed by the fast spread of Lingayat sect, punished Basavanna's followers.⁴⁵ Disappointed by the king's conspiracy against his followers, Basavanna left Kalyana after giving directions to Jagadeva and Bommaiah, his associates, to assassinate the king. The assassination of the king was followed by an earthquake and darkness in Kalyana and the destruction of the city. Basavanna, after reaching a place called Kappadi, finds divine union with the God Shiva in the *Deva Loka* (the world of the God).

Charantappa's explanation is intermittently interrupted by Paulappa's interrogations. Paulappa applies his sense of reason, Christian sensibility, and enquiry which leads him to consider the hagiographic pride of the Lingayats as hollow and irrational. He does not agree with the fanciful or magical powers accorded to Basavanna, and he considers it as legendary lore that did not lead devotees to the true path of devotion. Secondly, he laughs at the belief that Basavanna was a divine incarnation. He scoffs at the concept of incarnation and remarks that it has lost its meaning in the modern period. Thirdly, he disdainfully remarks that the Lingayat doctrines are not original and they are a mere mimicry of the *Vedanta*: “On closer notice, *Ashtavarana*, *Dashavidha*, *Paadodaka*, *Prasada* are not authentic. They are not innovative. They are dilution of what the Brahmins and Kshatriyas have been following since long time. The Lingayat heads merely

have either added or deleted a few practices."⁴⁶ Considering the idolatry of the Lingayats as antithetical to Christian sensibility, he makes fun of the practice and condemns their polytheistic and superstitious paths to attain salvation or self-realization.⁴⁷ At this moment, Paulappa cites eleven Vacanas of Basavanna, Shanmukhappa, Chennabasavanna, and Ambigara Chowdayya in support of his condemnation of Lingayatism:

You may find these criticisms [Paulappa's denunciations] as indictment. Hence, will not it suffice to quote a few Vacanas which contain thoughts on Guru, Linga, Jangma, Paadodaka, Prasada, Vibhuti, Rudrakshi? . . . Listen to Vacanas acknowledged by your own people. Give up your false conduct and follow the true path.⁴⁸

Idolatry, excessive doctrinal puzzlement, superstitious beliefs, and meaningless practices such as undertaking pilgrimages, worshipping stones, trees, and consuming the holy-water of Guru's feet (*Paadodaka*) are denounced by means of these Vacanas. Paulappa recites Vacanas that condemn the ritualistic injunctions and practices associated with the doctrines of *Ashtavarana*. For instance, a Vacana of Basavanna is quoted to ridicule the practice of worshipping Linga:⁴⁹

It won't be drenched if poured
It won't wither if forgotten
No truth, no truth in worshipping Linga
Not a single morsel looks savor on your face
Kudalasangama Deva
When did you eat? When did I see?⁵⁰

The ritual of offering food to Linga and bathing it in water is lampooned in this verse. It considers these rituals as meaningless.⁵¹ Since no one has witnessed Linga accepting food offered by the devotees, such ritual is a deviation from the right path of devotion. Linga is perceived to be lifeless and offering worship to such a "lifeless image" is senseless.⁵² In another Vacana of Ambigara Chowdayya, a saint-poet of the twelfth century (a rower man by profession) and an associate of Basavanna, the concept of Linga is criticized and devotees of Linga are derided for accepting Linga worship blindly without verifying its relevance. It laughs at the commercial element associated with Linga, that is, buying and selling, as it renders it trivial and unworthy of reverence. The worshipping of Linga is mocked as superficial and pretentious. Paulappa cites several other Vacanas to point out shortfalls in the precepts and practices of Lingayats: "There are other Vacanas which condemn ideas of caste, birth. There is no sufficient time to recite them now. . . . Look, your ancestors have clearly stated that Guru, Linga, Jangama, Paadodaka, Prasada do not help anyone realize salvation. Hence, give up these beliefs."⁵³ Paulappa's other intention in invoking Vacanas is to expose the blindness of Charantappa about his own "radical" literature.

After exposing Charantappa's ignorance and declaring his beliefs false, Paulappa narrates some important snippets from the Gospel to prove the holiness and greatness of Christ. This portrayal of Christ authenticates Him as a historical figure, which implies criticism of the incongruity of divinity attributed to Basavanna. He illustrates the love and affection bestowed on the poor by Christ. He describes Christ's birth on the earth with the noble cause of sacrificing his life to alleviate the problems of the humble people and his tireless efforts to lead them to the path of salvation. He reiterates the Christian notions of devotion and edification and asserts these notions as a superior path for knowing the ultimate truth. At the end of the conversation, Charantappa concurs with Paulappa's advice and admits that he is enlightened now.

In the entire narrative, Vacanas are pitted against Lingayat hagiographies, ritualistic injunctions, and doctrines. Ideological differences between the two are brought out to elevate protestant aspects of Vacanas.⁵⁴ While Vacanas are protestant and reformatory, similar to Christian reformatory values, hagiographies are mythical, fabricated, preposterous, and untrustworthy.⁵⁵ Paulappa holds that such untruthful literatures have led the Lingayats to false theology and the sin of pantheism. The Bible is upheld as *Satya Veda* (knowledge of truth) in contrast to the Lingayat literatures, as the former is written by those who witnessed the pious works of Christ and are historical.⁵⁶

This "discovery" of the Vacanas amounted to phenomenological and synchronic essentialism. The context in which these verses were composed was not considered and the composers' details are not clearly given. All verses are brought onto the same platform and interpreted as antithetical to other Lingayat doctrinal and mythical texts without the consideration of their inter-textual elements. They are stripped of their historical and religious specificities.

Wesleyan Missionary and Awakened Lingayats

They [Lingayats] protest most vigorously against the statement of the *Gazetteer* that their religion was founded by one Basava about the middle of the twelfth century.⁵⁷

The above remarks by the Rev. Edgar Wesley Thompson, of the Wesleyan church, capture in snippets the critical historical moments of the Lingayats in Mysore. His remarks acknowledge and accord legitimacy to the Lingayat sense of history and their religion. Thompson's Mysore days were ones of learning and reconciliation. The larger approach of the Wesleyan church towards the natives had realised the necessity to recognize the voice of the local people, learn from experience, and revise missionary strategies. So, what was objectionable about Basava? Were there new narratives of Lingayatism? What were they? What were the bearings of the new narratives on Thompson's representative politics? Before an in-depth analysis of Thompson's speech, a few words about the Wesleyan missionary and his

tenure in the mission are in order. This introduction will familiarize us with the ideology of the missionary, his personality, and the missionary activities which encompassed his views about other religions and the reasons for noticing the Lingayats' protest. A brief sketch of the Lingayats' protest against the official representation of their history thereafter will allow us to understand the religious reasons for their agitation and Thompson's acknowledgement of it.

The beginning of the Wesleyan Canarese Mission can be traced back to the Rev. Elija Hoole, who was a founder of the Wesleyan Mission Press between 1821 and 1828. Initially a school was started by the Rev. Thomas Hudson, who pioneered modern education in the Mysore region. The school provided English education to a considerable number of students. In 1840, Garrett and Jenkins were appointed as Wesleyan Canarese missionaries. The missionaries of the Wesleyan mission started to preach the Gospel in the streets of Bangalore and later, preaching was expanded to include regions like Gubbi, Hasan, Mandya, Shimogga, and Mysore. The sermon was simple Christian concepts such as the unity of God and atonement of Christ.⁵⁸

The Rev. Thompson was born in Glastonbury, Somerset, to Wesleyan Methodist parents on May 8, 1871. After being educated at Woodhouse Grove and Kingswood, he graduated from Aberystwyth. He attended Richmond in 1893, but his training was cut short in 1894 due to an urgent need for missionaries in India. For the next twenty-five years he worked in the Mysore District, developing a reputation as an evangelist, debater, and effective administrator, as well as cultivating a keen interest in Indian history and Hinduism. He was superintendent of the Mysore Press for a number of years, as well as editing *The Harvest Field* (from 1900 to 1904). He was knowledgeable in both Canarese and Sanskrit. He was tutored by many native scholars in connection with his study of Sanskrit and Kannada scriptures. One of the tutors of Thompson was P. R. Karibasava Shastri, who was a well-known Lingayat Sanskrit scholar and who worked as a Sanskrit teacher in Wesleyan Mission School for fifteen years.⁵⁹ Shastri, in fact, led the protest against official history of the Lingayats in 1880s and thereafter.

At the time of the Rev. E. W. Thompson's seminal speech about religions in Mysore state, the sectarian and social world of the Lingayats had undergone drastic transformations. The Lingayats had become politically aware, religiously vigilant, and desirous of socially upward mobility, and they had begun scripting their own history of Lingayatism for which they did not rely on the western or missionary perspectives. They no longer remained mute spectators to what was being said about them at official and religious levels. They actively participated in the process of knowledge production, and they began contesting the British-missionary-Brahmin discourse of Lingayatism in various platforms and through multiple means. Indeed, the last two decades of the nineteenth century witnessed an increasing public presence of the Lingayats in various capacities such as administrators, school teachers, publishers, Sanskrit scholars, and people's representatives.

A few Lingayat scholars in the Mysore region actively and robustly began restructuring their history, religion, and social world, which allegedly contained “distorted” documentation of Lingayat icons and history. The triggering point of the Lingayats’ anger was the Mysore census report of 1881 which considered them as Shudras (the lowest rank in the social hierarchy of Hindus). Among the Lingayat scholars, P. R. Karibasava Shastri was a prominent person who spearheaded the protest against the official documentation of their social status, history, ethnography, and religion. Ethnographic accounts in the gazetteers of the British Indian government accorded a prime importance to the centrality of Basavanna and his social revolution in the twelfth century. Such accounts recorded Lingayat’s origin during Basavanna’s period, and he was projected as the founder of the sect. He was portrayed as a revolutionary man who revolted against Brahminical domination and Vedic hegemony.⁶⁰ Such documentation ran contrary to the accounts of the Lingayat elites, especially those of the Mysore region. Coinciding with this, Karibasava Shastri and other elite Lingayats of Mysore had begun a campaign for social and religious equality with the Brahmins, and in this direction, they claimed the long antiquity of the Lingayats, predating Basavanna and Sanskrit heritage, to bolster their claims. They refused to accept Basavanna as the founder of the sect and in place of it, they propagated the existence of Lingayat/Virashaiva religion since the Vedic period (five thousand years earlier). To prove and legitimize their claims, the Lingayats published several Sanskrit texts of the Lingayat poets, philosophers, and religious heads of ancient times. They tried to influence the census enumeration by returning themselves as Virashaiva Brahmins. To effectively push forward their Brahminhood, they claimed that they did not constitute a caste but a variety of Hindu religion. They argued on this line to avoid being relegated to a mere status of caste like the Shudras in future census records. These claims of the Lingayat elites generated heated public debates and controversies. Thompson was a witness to these religious and social debates of the times and perceptively comprehended the sensitivity of the issue.

Thompson’s views on religion in the Mysore State were originally outlined in a paper read before the Mythic society of Bangalore for the study of society, history, religion, and literature. The crux of the paper is a deliberate digression from an excessive focus on Sanskrit and Brahminical literatures to understand Hindu religion. Whereas the above-discussed Basel missionaries would not miss an opportunity to run down or ridicule Basavanna or the Lingayats’ sacred scripts, Thompson would rather highlight Lingayatism and the contemporary native wisdom which passionately indulged in remaking of it. Thompson is overtly appreciative of their wisdom in the act. The first two initiatives of the missionaries are more inclined to expose deficiencies in Lingayat beliefs and uphold the theory of inerrancy of Christianity, but Thompson’s approach is guided by his keen interest at highlighting the anti-Brahminism of the Lingayats in the heat of their challenges to Brahminism.

In the beginning of the paper, Thompson discusses popular faiths and various forms of Hinduism having non-Vedic origin in southern India. He builds his line of argument by taking into cognisance the protest against "excessive attention paid to the Vedic religion merging in Brahmanism to the neglect of the popular faiths."⁶¹ His main emphasis is on the study of vernacular literatures which reveal the "religions of the daily life of the man upon the soil."⁶² First, he mentions animist practices in Mysore, Bangalore, and the villages surrounding them. Second, he discusses local and tutelary deities in villages of Mysore such as Mariamma and Durgamma to demonstrate their folkloric genealogy. Third, he puts forth the philosophy behind worshipping various forms of Linga. In the next part of his paper, he throws light on the Brahmins' contribution to the religions of Hinduism, with a major focus on Shankaracharya's *Advait* philosophy and later, Ramanujacharya's *Vishishtadvaita* philosophy. Here, the main arguments of Thompson demonstrate elitism in *Inana maarga* of Shankaracharya and popularity of *Bhakti maarga* of Ramanujacharya which, he thinks, might have been influenced by early Christian missionaries and communities of south India. Thompson does not dwell much on Madhwa sect, and in the last part of his paper he begins an elaborate discussion on anti-Brahminical outburst of the Lingayats.

The heterodox features of the Lingayat community, in relation to the Brahminical religious system and anti-Brahman elements attracted Thompson's attention to this sect. He writes approvingly of the historicity of Basavanna who led anti-Brahminical movement and opines,

The Vira Saivas repudiate Sraddhas [ritual of homage to the deceased], they do not perform sacrifices for worldly ends, and they deny the efficacy of pilgrimages...it would seem therefore that the revolt headed by Basava was in favour of a simpler and more natural ritual, and that he kindled a sectarian fervour for the worship of Siva under the symbol of the linga which was parallel to the bhakti movement among the Vaishnavas.⁶³

Thompson's endorsement of the Lingayats' nonconformist tradition since Basavanna's period on the one hand and proclamation that the Lingayat faith, centered on the Linga worship, predates Basavanna on the other, give credence to the conservative Lingayat elites' position during this period. For the conservative Lingayat scholars, Basavanna was a revivalist of the ancient Shiva cult: a reformer of the Lingayat sect, and not a founder. Thompson agreed with their notion of antiquity and Basavanna as a mere revivalist of Shiva worship, which had prehistoric antecedents. He also brings to our attention another bone of contention of the Lingayat with regard to the census enumeration and quotes their claim approvingly, "they take exception to the further statement of the *Gazetteer* that Basava repudiated caste while they most vehemently object to be classified by Census commissioners or Government pamphleteers with the Sudras.

The Lingayat claim, I think must be admitted, is that their community represents not a single caste, but a distinct variety of Hindu religion."⁶⁴ The Lingayats, under the leadership of Karibasava Shastri, had strongly objected to the government designation of the Lingayats as Shudras, the last of the four ancient *varna* systems (the other three being Brahmana, Kshatriya, and Vaishya) of the Hindu religion and had endorsed the *varna* system within.⁶⁵ Thompson considers the claims of the Lingayats legitimate and projects the Lingayat sect as a "distinct variety of Hindu religion."⁶⁶ His account of hierarchical order of castes within the Lingayat community in his following discussion corresponds exactly with the narratives of the Lingayat elites of Mysore, who had created caste classifications in favour of their arguments against the government gazetteers. He highlights the fact that the Lingayat community originally must have been the actively proselytizing one, but the modern Lingayats had refused to be identified with lower caste Lingayats, especially Pariahs, as they wished to be cleared of social stigma.⁶⁷ Thompson further quotes a Lingayat scholar who writes about the sanctum-sanctorum of the social gradation of the Lingayat community and the classification of Lingayats into different social types: "The distinctions between the descendants of the original founders of the religion and all converts have been maintained from the remotest times and are maintained even at the present day."⁶⁸ The hierarchical social distinctions of the Lingayats, with priestly class at the top (original founders of the religion) and menial classes (the converts) at the bottom, are discernible in the above remarks. The overall intention of Thompson in the paper is to demonstrate the distinctiveness of the Lingayats in comparison with the Brahmins.

At the end of his paper, Thompson's generous and sympathetic views about the Lingayats turn into disappointment at the lack of consistency and continuity of the Basava movement, which had promised a radical social system in the beginning (i.e., the inclusion of people of all castes in the new faith). Thompson's assessment of the Lingayat movement in post-Basavanna's period is compared to the fate and failure of similar kind of liberal movements in India against caste system:

in course of time, as has happened to other movements which began in opposition to the caste system, the religious orders instituted by Basava and his successor and the social and occupational distinctions in the body of the laity hardened into castes. So that protest dies out in complete surrender.⁶⁹

Thompson's concluding remarks give an impression of general history of anti-caste movements in India and their gradual degeneration due to acceptance of the Brahminical social and religious order. Implicit in the remarks of Thompson is a criticism of the anti-caste movement's inconsistency and weakness to sustain its radicalism like Christianity.

Conclusion

The discussion so far demonstrates different strands and ideologies of protestant Christian missionaries on Lingayat religion, literature, and society. It has tried to go beyond “a Christian map of the modern world” by focusing on how local experiences influenced Christian perception.⁷⁰ The origin and ideology of the missionaries discussed above shared similarities, but their aims and intentions differed substantially. Their views were diverse and contradictory, and their missionary activities did not constitute a singular evangelical project. Anna Johnston’s views about colonialism hold true in the case of missionary activities, too, as they do not exhibit a “unitary project but a fractured one, riddled with contradictions.”⁷¹ The discussion has tried to explicate this point and argue that missionary activities demonstrated different kinds of approaches in each location and relied on local experts (either Lingayats or converts) to produce knowledge about them. Wurth, faced with local challenges and intellectual backlash, employed the Lingayat hagiographies to demonstrate their deficiencies while Chinnappa, a native convert, tried to show “partial divine revelations and imperfect spiritual forms” of Lingayat religion and appropriated Vacanas as a repertoire of rationality to prove Christian elements in protestant Hindu literature.⁷² LMV exemplifies the case that it was not only the predetermined socio-religious belief of the Basel missionary that interpreted Vacanas but also its apparent similarities with protestant Christian beliefs such as iconoclast tendencies and antiritualism. It is a case of vernacular literature’s pressure on the Gospel to unfold itself. Thompson’s presentation shows an inclusive approach, moderate Wesleyan Christianity (with underlying Christian impulse) and endorsement of the emerging identity of the Lingayats. He presents a contradictory picture of the Lingayats in comparison to the other two missionaries. However, their conceptualisation, translation, publication, and presentation of ideas did not lead or impact the revival of Lingayatism as a religion either. The local Lingayat scholars did not develop any comparative religious perspective or incorporate Christian categories to examine Lingayat religion in connection with Christianity as they were pressed with the local historical urgency of proving their social status in competition with the Brahmins and other sects. The radical and rational perspective attributed to Vacana literature by Chinnappa or official documents that privileged Basavanna as the central icon of the Lingayats did not determine the contours of succeeding Lingayat concepts. The Lingayats of this phase took religious fervour as their cultural bearing and invoked strongly scripturally sanctioned belief systems by publishing numerous Sanskrit and Kananda Shaiva texts to justify of their assertions of identity. Any further historical study of this period (1860–1920) and its local literary engagements needs to be sensitive to different and varying contexts and ideologies of both Christian missionaries and Lingayat traditions.

Notes

1. Certain parts of this article are drawn from other articles written by the present author.
2. Stuart Blackburn and Vasudha Dalmia, "Introduction," in *India's Literary History: Essays on the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Stuart Blackburn and Vasudha Dalmia (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2004), 7.
3. For critical discussion on these terms see Geoffrey A. Oddie, *Imagined Hinduism*, (New Delhi: Sage, 2006) and Philip Constable, "Scottish Missionaries, 'Protestant Hinduism' and the Scottish Sense of Empire in Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century India," *The Scottish Historical Review* 86, no. 222 (Oct. 2007): 278–313.
4. Sharada Sugirtharajah, *Imagining Hinduism: A Postcolonial Perspective* (London: Routledge, 2003), 25.
5. Krishna Sharma quoted in Philip Constable. "Scottish Missionaries," 291.
6. The Lingayat community is a non-Brahmin, Kannada-speaking, dominant community in south India. It belongs to various castes and religious groups such as the Jangamas (priestly class), the peasants, the traders, the artisans, and the service castes such as Holeyas/Maadigas. It is generally believed that a remarkable religious, social, and reformatory movement arose in the second half of the twelfth century under the leadership of Basavanna, who is believed to have founded the Lingayat religion. This movement is known as Lingayat/Vacana movement. The adherents of this movement called themselves *Shiva Sharanas* (the ones surrendered to the will of God Shiva)/Lingayats (the wearers of Linga, a stone symbol of the God Shiva, around one's neck). According to many scholars, the twelfth-century Lingayat movement contested the domination of the Vedic religion and elite Brahminical supremacy, and attracted people from different walks of life into its religious faith. The movement is also known by other names like Vacana movement because the ideals of the movement were propagated through large number of vacanas (prose-poetic preaching in Kannada language) composed by the Shiva Sharanas. Vacana literally means an utterance, promise or an oath. It forms core values of Lingayat philosophy and theology. It is believed to be the main source for the ethical and devotional teachings of the Shaiva Sharana saint-poets of the twelfth century. Basavanna was an important religious leader who spearheaded the Vacana movement. C. P. Brown (1871), a British officer in Andhra Pradesh, perhaps was the first to notice the "protestant" ethics of Basavanna and his thoughts. See C. P. Brown, "Essay on the Creed and Customs of the Jangams," *Madras Journal of Literature and Science* 11 (Jan.–June, 1840): 143–78.

There is also another stream of religious and social life of the Lingayats. Those who advocate the existence of Lingayat religion before the twelfth century do not agree with many points mentioned above. This school of thought, mostly upper caste/elite Sanskrit intellectuals, believe the long antiquity of the Lingayat religion that predated Basavanna. They do not believe in the idea of egalitarianism as central to Virashaiva theology. Renukacharya, believed to be of the ancient Ramayana period and one of the *Panchacharyas* (five ancient teachers of the Virashaiva theology), is projected as founder of the Virashaiva sect. They claim Brahminical and Sanskrit precedence firmly. They foreground numerous Sanskrit and Kannada Shaivite manuscripts in their support. They do not consider vacana literature seriously.

7. Tejaswini Niranjana, *Siting Translation; History, Post-Structuralism and the Colonial Context* (Oakland: University of California Press, 1992), 181.
8. Robert J. Zydenbos, "Virasaivism, Caste, Revolution, Etc.," *Journal of American Oriental Studies* 117, no. 3 (Jul.–Sept. 1997): 525–35.

9. Michael R. Blake, "Introduction: The Virasaivas and Their Context," in *The Origins of Virasaiva Sects: A Typological Analysis of Ritual and Associational Patterns in Sunyasampadane* (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas, 1992), 1–24.
10. Elaine M. Fisher, "The Tangled Roots of Virasaivism: On the Viramahesvara Textual Culture of Srisailam," in *History of Religions* 59 (August 2019): 1–37.
11. Clara A. B. Joseph, "Introduction," in *Christianity in India: The Anti-Colonial Turn* (London and New York: Routledge, 2019), 3.
12. Joseph, "Introduction," 4.
13. "Colonialism is Christianity" precludes any deep research on the claims of westerners that local monotheistic and protestant traditions are proto-Christian manifestations. C. P. Brown's views (1840) that the tales about Basavanna, the leader of twelfth-century Lingayat movement, might have been borrowed from Syrian churches corroborate this factor. It does not seriously take into account the traditional or intellectual interactions between Islam or between local Christians and Lingayat traditions in pre-colonial period. See Brown, "Essay on the Creed."
14. In the context of Kannada literature and culture, not much attention is paid to examine local Christian literatures vis-à-vis colonialism–Christianity with critical and historical perspective except a few scholarly articles, among which Mrinalini Sebastian's work on the Rev. Uttangi Chennappa is an exception. See Mrinalini Sebastian, "Chennappa Uttangi: A Drishtanta for the Resolution of Conflicting National, Regional and Communal Identities," *Journal of Karnataka Studies* 2, no. 2 & 3 (May 2005–April 2006): 213–36.
15. Christianity is one of the minority communities in India. See Mrinalini Sebastian, "Reading Archives from a Postcolonial Feminist Perspective: 'Native' Bible Women and the Missionary Ideal," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 19, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 5.
16. Helene Buzelin. "Translation Studies, Ethnography and the Production of Knowledge," in *Translation–Reflections, Refraction, Transformations*, ed. Paul St-Pierre and Prafulla C. Kar (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing, 2007), 39.
17. P. Jenkins and J. M. Jenkins, trans., *Journeys and Encounters: Religion, Society and the Basel Mission in North Karnataka 1837–1852* (Documents on the Basel Mission, 1.12 [2007]), www.library.yale.edu/div/fa/Karnataka.htm.
18. Joseph Mullens, "The Lingaits," in *Missions in South India* (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1854), 42; "4th Report of the Basel Mission in South Western India," (Bangalore: Wesleyan Mission Press, 1844), 26. Brahmins are a community who claim to be superior–culturally, socially, and religiously.
19. Wurth's academic and missionary activities were on lines of his predecessors and his translations are notable for introducing the two Lingayat puranas to the Western world. For more details see I. M. Muthanna, "Ninth Chapter," in *Pashchatya Vidwimsara Kannada Seve*, 2d ed. (Mysore: Kannada Service of Western Scholars, 1992), 159.
20. R. A. Hume, "Views of the Bible Held by Missionaries in India," *The Biblical World* 35, no. 5 (May 1910): 309.
21. Saurabh Dube, "Colonial Registers of a Vernacular Christianity: Conversion to Translation," *Economic and Political Weekly* 39, no. 2 (2004): 162.
22. Muthanna, "Ninth Chapter," 159.
23. The fifteenth (1855) and sixteenth reports (1856) of the Basel German Evangelical Missionary Society contain innumerable instances of conflict and encounters between Lingayats and the missionaries.

24. Sixteenth Report the Basel German Evangelical Missionary Society (1856), 23.
25. Mullens, "The Lingaits," 445.
26. Rev. Hiller in Jenkins and Jenkins, *Journeys and Encounters*, 2.6.
27. Anna Johnston, "Introduction," in *Missionary Writing and Empire 1800-1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 7.
28. This is very clear at the end of the translation of *Chennabasava Purana* where Wurth defends the presence of the Christian missionaries dedicated to redeeming the heathens. G. A. Wurth, "Chennabasava Purana of the Lingaits," *The Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 8, no. 24 (1863-66): 98-221.
29. Wurth, "Chennabasava Purana," 221.
30. Wurth, "The Basava Purana," *The Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 8, no. 24 (1863-66): 97.
31. Wurth, "The Basava Purana," 97.
32. Wurth, "The Basava Purana," 71.
33. E. W. Thompson, "The Teaching of Scriptures in English Schools," *The Harvest Field* 10, no. 5 (May 1899): 175.
34. The Rev. D. A. Rees's ethnographic account of the Lingayats acknowledges the significant contribution of a native Christian (a convert from Lingayat faith) in producing knowledge about them. D. A. Rees, "The Lingayats," *The Harvest Field* 5, no. 7 & 8 (Jan.-Feb. 1885): 193-200 and 336-38.
35. Geoffrey A. Oddie, "Empathy or Otherness? Changing Evaluations of Hinduism in the Nineteenth Century," in *Imagined Hinduism: British Protestant Missionary Constructions of Hinduism, 1793-1900* (New Delhi: Sage, 2006), 306.
36. Ashok Kumar M., "Dalits Preaching to Dalits: Lutheran Modes of Combating Caste Marginality in Andhra, South India," *Indian Anthropologist* 45, no. 1 (Jan.-June, 2015): 61.
37. V. Pinch, "Bhakti and the British Empire," *Past & Present* 179 (May 2003): 175.
38. LMV was the first treatise to register the significance of Vacana literature and was part of a series of Canarese tracts published by the Mangalore Basel Missionary Press.
39. The Basel Missionary Press, by this time, had published *Basava* and *Chenna Basava Puranas*.
40. Muthanna, "Ninth Chapter."
41. Charantappa is named after Charamurthy (a wondering monk). Paulappa carries the Christian name Paul, the apostle who spread the teachings of Jesus in the first-century world. The word *appa* (father) at the end of their names indicates an honorific suffix, which is common in south India.
42. Chinnappa, *Lingayata Mata Vichara*, 1st ed. (Mangalore: Canarese Mission Press and Book Depot, 1874), 4.
43. Aradhya Brahmins are a caste in Lingayat community and they claim to be superior to other Lingayats in ritualistic and religious terms.
44. In Lingayat theology, *Ashtaavaranas* refer to the eight virtues that act as shields or coverings protecting the devotee from extraneous distractions and influences of *Maya* (illusion). *Ashta* means "eight" and *Avarana* means "covering/shields." These coverings are: Guru (teacher), Linga (stone image of God Shiva), Jangama (itinerary saint), Padodaka (sacred water), prasada (sacred offering), Vibhuti (ashes smeared on forehead), Rudraksa (holy beads), and mantra (utterances of invocation). The practical employment of these eight coverings has led to protracted ritualistic ceremonies among the Lingayat clergies.

45. Chinnappa, *Lingayata Mata Vichara*, 13.
46. Chinnappa, *Lingayata Mata Vichara*, 32.
47. Chinnappa, *Lingayata Mata Vichara*, 41.
48. Chinnappa, *Lingayata Mata Vichara*, 36.
49. There are two kinds of Linga; namely *stavara* (static) linga installed in temples and *jangama* (wondering, non-static) linga which are worn around neck or across the shoulder. The verse is ridiculing the *stavara* linga as its worship is long, drawn out, and ritualistic as defined by doctrines.
50. I have translated this poem, and I do not claim complete accuracy. It has *Kudalasangama Deva* as divine signature. The poem's line sequence is not strictly followed in the translation.
51. Offering of propitiatory food and bathing Linga is a pan-Indian ritual. It is a part of pleasing deities whose origin can be traced to ancient Vedic and Agamic period. For detailed account of these rituals see C. Banerji. "The Propitiatory Meal," *Gastronomica: The Journal of Food and Culture* 3, no. 1 (Feb. 2003): 82–89.
52. Chinnappa, *Lingayata Mata Vichara*, 33.
53. Chinnappa, *Lingayata Mata Vichara*, 40.
54. Chinnappa, *Lingayata Mata Vichara*, 41.
55. Chinnappa, *Lingayata Mata Vichara*, 28.
56. Chinnappa, *Lingayata Mata Vichara*, 29.
57. E. W. Thompson. "Religion in the Mysore State," *The Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society* 1, no. 2 (Jan. 1910): 142.
58. These details are drawn from B. N. Naidu, "Beginning of Western Education," in *Intellectual History of Colonial India: Mysore (1831–1920)* (Jaipur: Rawat Publications, 1996), 47.
59. B. Nanjunda Swamy, "P. R. Karibasava Shastrigala Samkshipta Jeevana Charitre," in *Niranjana*, ed. S. Shivarajappa and D. S. Sadashivaiah (Mysore: Gurumalleshwara Centenary Committee, 2000), 589.
60. Madras Census Report (1871), 98–100; *Bombay Gazetteer* (1893), 91–96; and *Mysore Gazetteer* (1897), 476. These official records were based on the Lingayat accounts already available thanks to the works of British administrators and the European Christian missionaries.
61. Thompson, "Religion in the Mysore State," 131.
62. Thompson, "Religion in the Mysore State," 132. A focus on the daily life of the common people and their religious life is an aim of a new column *Voices of the People* that he started in *The Harvest Field* when he became its editor in 1900.
63. Thompson, "Religion in the Mysore State," 143.
64. Thompson, "Religion in the Mysore State," 143.
65. For an elaborate discussion on the census controversy, see Vijayakumar M. Boratti, "Lingayat Assertions of Identity in Colonial Karnataka: Caste, Census, and Politics of Representation," *South Asia Research* 42, no. 3 (November 2022): 398–413.
66. Thompson, "Religion in the Mysore State," 143.
67. Many Brahmins had expressed doubts that the claims of the elite Lingayats with regard to their superior Brahminhood are sustainable in view of the presence of several lower castes, such as barbers and washermen, among the Lingayat sect. Lingayat elites of Mysore were wary of the lower castes' presence within the community, and they felt that their presence might contradict the claims of

Sanskrit and Brahminical precedence for the Lingayats (Boratti, *Lingayat Assertions*, 408). Thompson's remarks about the Lingayats' anxiety is in contrast to Christian missionaries' acceptance of pariahs (lower caste, untouchables) into Christianity and the Christians' claim of being a benevolent religion.

68. Thompson, "Religion in the Mysore State," 148.
69. Thompson, "Religion in the Mysore State," 144.
70. Jamie S. Scott, "Mapping the Sacred Across Postcolonial Literature" in *Mapping the Sacred Religion, Geography and Postcolonial Literatures*, ed. Jamie S. Scott and Paul Simpson-Housley, Vol. 48 (Amsterdam: Rodopi B.V., 2001), xvii.
71. Anna Johnston, "Introduction," 31.
72. Philip Constable. "Scottish Missionaries," 289.