We have seen above how different religions, Vedic as well as non-Vedic developed in the region and period under study. One important feature we notice is the simultaneous flourishing of different religions under the patronage of same rulers. Though upheavals are not all together absent all religions by and large receive equal patronage and this is best vouchsafed by the religious monuments. The temples and basadis which have come down to us in abundance throughout the land inspite of ravages of time and other reasons.
This religious fervour expressed itself through the construction of artistic temples. It also found its expression through another creative medium i.e., Literature. Several poets of repute were inspired by the teachings and personalities of different religions and composed kāvyas, to extole them. It is very interesting to note that such kāvyas did not remain as mere religious expositions or praśastis, but were best pieces of creative art providing specimens of excellent literary compositions. It is attempted to review here some such important works of different religions flourished in the period.

Traditionally Kannada literature is classified as Jaina, Śaiva and Vīraśaiva and Vaishnava. The one reason for such classification is not strictly because of the works these different religions propogated but because of the religious affiliation of different poets who chose themes from their own religions for their composition. Yet as pointed above they did not remain merely religious works. They became an instrument in exhibiting the poetic skill and ability of the poet irrespective of their religion involved. We are not discussing here the correctness or otherwise of such classification of the Kannada literature but our purpose is to point
out how religion became in the field of architecture an instrument of creative art.

Almost as a coincidence, this classification has its bearing in chronology. The Jaina period became the earliest period of Kannada literature and was dominated by the poets of Jaina affiliation and the next one by the Śaiva and Vīraśaiva poets and the last one by the Vaishnava poets. Poets of different religious affiliation are found in all the period but such a classification has been based on the basis of predominance. It is also worthy of note that a poet of one religious affiliation has not restricted himself to his own religion in composing a poem or a kavya. They also chose non-religious themes and produced very good kavyas. Pampa and Ranna of the earliest period are the best example of this type.

As noted in earlier chapter this was not a flourishing period for Buddhism though stray centres like Balligave, Dambal and Koliwad are noticed in this period. It was one's surmise that in Karnataka probably Buddhists were the earliest writers and they were producing works in Kannada also. But with the decline of Buddhism such works also appeared to have been destroyed. But such a surmise has no basis at all. It is however a fact that no work of Buddhist religion or of a writer of Buddhist
affiliation has come down to us. Hardly any literature on this religion or by a poet of this religious affiliation has been traced in this period, on the other hand we notice very important and great works of Jaina affiliation in this period.

The famous Pampa, a Jaina poet who is described as 'Ādi-kavi' a pioneer poet belonged to a little earlier or middle of the 10th century A.D. But his impact could be seen on poets of succeeding generation. This poet along with two others, Ponna and Ranna are known as 'Three Jewels' (Ratnatraya) in Kannada literature. Ponna also belongs to the middle of 10th century just a little earlier than the beginning of Kalyāṇa Chālukya period.

Ranna belongs to the earliest phase of the Chālukya rule and was born in 945 A.D. at Mudhol in Jamakhandi taluka of the present day. Ranna received the benevolent patronage of Āhavamalla Taila II, who was responsible for the revival of Chālukya rule. His Ajīthanāṭha-purāṇatilaka is clearly, a religious work extolling the greatness of Ajitānāṭha-tīrtha-kārā. While its poetical excellence can not be denied, it is basically a religious kāvya written after the Jaina Purāṇas, describing in detail the Jaina rituals and Jaina philosophy. The work extolls the greatness of his patron Attimabbe.
who was known as 'Dānachintāmanī'. It is understood, the poet has borrowed the theme from the uttarapurāṇa of Guṇabhādra. The main theme of the story relates to how Ajita who was the son of a king of Ayodhyā gradually withdrew from worldly pleasures and became a Jaina in the process. The poet has described several aspects of Jaina Dharma, which is interspersed with several stories and sub-stories, all to illustrate Jaina Dharma.

Ranna claims to have written two other kāvyas called Paraśurāmācharīte and Chakrēśvaracharīte. Since the works are not actually discovered, speculations have been made by scholars regarding the nature of these kāvyas and their contents. It is generally believed that 'Paraśurāmācharīte' is a religious work containing the story of Paraśurāma from the Jaina point of view. There is considerable controversy regarding the nature and contents of Chakrēśvaracharīte. His other work 'Gadāyuddha' or 'Sāhasabhīmavijaya' is very famous in Kannada literature but it has nothing to do with Jaina literature.

Nāgavarman II was the court poet of Jayasimha II. He has written 'Vardhamānapurāṇa' which relates the life of Vardhamāna the 24th Tīrthaṅkara. Though it is said that from the poetical point of view or literary point of view the work is not of such important but it is of considerable
significance from the point of Jaina philosophy. His other works are not connected with religion but considered as most scholarly works in Kannada language. Mention also is made here of 'Sukumāraśāra' by another Jaina poet Śantinātha who lived during the time of Bhuvanakamalla Somesvara II. It appears that he was closely associated with Santijina basadi at Balligave. In his work he deals with the story of Jaina saint called Sukumāraswamy who is described as upasargakēvalin. This work has considerable influence on a later poet called Rāmachandra Mumukshu, who also wrote on the same Sukumāra in his work 'Punyāśrava'.

Chavundarāya is known for his valourous deeds and more so for his erecting the famous Gommatesvara image at Śravanabelgola. He belonged to the late 10th century during the Chālukya period. He was a great author also. His work 'Trishashti-lakṣaṇa Mahāpurāṇa' is very important for the study of Jaina history and religion. Here he deals with the lives of twentyfour tīrthaṅkaras and other great saints. He closely follows the sanskrit Mahāpurāṇa of Jinasena Gaṇabhadra. The purpose of the Kāvya is to extol the great saints and to expound the Jaina religion. It is the first work, entirely in continuous prose.
Nāgachandra who is also known as Abhinavapāmpa or Pampa II is another important poet of this period. He even constructed a Jaina basadi called Mallijinēndra at Modern Bijapur. His work 'Mallināṭṭhpurāṇa' narrates the story of 19th tīrthaṅkara Mallināṭha. His other work 'Rāmāchāndra charita purāṇa' popularly known as 'pampa-ramayana' is a most matured work of Jainism and presents the Jaina version of 'Rāmāyana'.

Kanti seems to be a contemporary of Nāgachandra or Abhinavapampa. Probably she is the first poetess of Kannada literature. Her work 'kanti Hampana samasyegalu' is an acrostic poem. The female devotees of Jaina faith or Jaina nuns are called 'Kanti'.

Nayasāṇa a Jaina ascetic who lived in 1112 A.D. at Mulgunda in Dharwad district is known for his great work 'Dharmaṅṛitaṁ' a book on morals. It is a collection of 14 stories, discourses of the 14 vows, like forms of virtue, truthfulness, chastity, justice etc. It is interesting to note that he was the first poet to protest against unnecessary use of Sanskrit terms in Kannada poetry.

Brahmasiva, the author of 'Śamayaparīkshā' and 'Traiḥkṣaṭṭhī maṇḍala stotra' belongs to the second half of the 12th cent. A.D. 'Śamayaparīkshā' is a rare piece of work which furnishes the customary and the superstitions of
that period and uphold the supremacy of Jaina faith. Mention also is made here of "Neminathpurana" by another Jaina poet Karnaparya, who lived in C. 1140 A.D. As the name indicates it is the life story of Neminatha, the twenty second tirthankara.

Śrīdharāchārya a Jaina poet, lived in 1050 A.D. probably belongs to the reign period of Somesvara I. His 'Jātaka tilaka' is considered as the earliest known work on Astrology. It is surmised that he is also the author of 'Chandraprabhacharite'. It might be a story woven around the 8th Tirthankara. Unfortunately the work is not available.

The later literary works mention several Jaina authors of the period like Kannamayya, Gajānkuśa, Manasija Chandrabhatta, Śankhavarma, Haripāla, Hamsarāja and the like, whose works however have not come to light.

Some aspects of the lives and works of the Jaina writers of Kannada language explained in the above review, came under the direct patronage of Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa. It is worthy of note that the writer's object seems, not to preach or explain Jainism in classical poetical style but to compose independent literary works in Kannada. Jaina writers selected the language of the common people to write their works, since Sanskrit happened to be
associated with Vedic Hinduism. The Jaina writers of the period worked a lot for the growth of Kannada Literature.

A unique feature of the construction of the Jaina authors is that they achieved two goals at one stroke viz., propagation of Jaina religion and popularising Jaina faith and secondly being the pioneers in laying firm foundation for the growth of Kannada literature.

**Śaiva and Viśaśaiva Literature**

There are hardly any works produced in this period pertaining to the Kālāmukha or the Pāśupata sects. No poet worth the name appears to have Śaivaite in the period and region under study. But a unique feature of this period both in the fields of religion and literature is the rise of Viśaśaiva religion and Viśaśaiva literature. We have seen the development of this religion above. We will briefly review the Viśaśaiva literature of the period here.

Like the Jaina poets the Viśaśaiva authors also use their literary talent in extolling the religion on the one hand and glorifying their religious leaders on the other. There are a few works dealing with the tenets of the new religion. The unique feature however of this literature is a new and bold experiment in Kannada literature.
It is a total departure from the traditional metrical compositions viz., the Vachanas.

Most important among the Vīraśaiva poets who chose the religious themes for his composition was Harihara, who perhaps belonged to Hampi in Bellary district, which became the famous capital of Vijayanagara kingdom in the later days. Harihara's works have two characteristic features, one is introduction of the new type of composition known as Ragale, a sort of blank verse and he was the first to use this extensively. The another feature is writing of biography of Śivaśāraṇas or Vīraśaiva saints. His 'Basavarājadēvara Ragale' is the earliest biography of Basavēśvara, the founder of Vīraśaiva school. In this work the author has successfully tried to depict a very beautiful picture of Śrī Basavēśvara. The work is full of devotion and literary merits also. His Nambiyammāna Ragale' is another biography of Vīraśaiva saint Nambiyanna. He has several other Ragales to his credit like Ragales on Mahādēviyakka, Prabhuḍēva, Revanśiddhēsvara, Tirunilakantha and other well known saints of the period. An important feature of these Ragales is the extasy of devotion which the author has been able to depict.

Harihara's 'Girijā Kalyāṇa' is a traditional Champū style dealing with the episode of the marriage of
Siva and Parvati. He has been rightly described as 'Bhakta Kavi, a poet of devotion' and 'Siva Kavi'. Poet having dedicated his poetic talent to extol the glory of Siva. Harihara is an author of two Satakas or collection of hundred verses also. One is Pampa Sataka which freely exhibits his devotion and dedication to God Virūpāksha of Hampi. Another similar work is Raksha Sataka. Another poet Rāghavānka was a contemporary and the relative of Harihara. His devotion to Siva is well exhibited in his statement that he could not praise any of the record or persons with the tongue which is devoted for the praise of the king of Hampi Virūpāksha.

Like Harihara, Rāghavānka also introduced on a large scale a new form of poetry called 'Satpadi'. His 'Somanātha charitā' preach the story of a Jaina merchant, who was converted into Saivism. His 'Siddharāma charite' a long kāvya dealing with the life of the saint Siddharāma of Sonnalige i.e., modern Sollapur, who was a contemporary of Śrī Basavēśvara. All these works have been ascribed to this poet.

Mention should be made here of another poet known as Kereya Padmarasa who wrote among others a work in Ragale form called 'Dikshābōdhe' which directly deals with the procedure for initiation into Viśvaiva religion.
As mentioned above the most important feature of this period is the Vachana literature, which can be said to have been originated through Basavēśavara though one or two pre-Basava writers of Vachanas are mentioned by scholars. Devaradāsimayya and Allāmaprabhu are said to be two such. But it is clear that it was Basavēśavara who profusely used this form for giving vent to his sentimental thoughts and ideas. Vachana which is a 'speech', literally speaking is a prose form with a poetical rhythm but not bound by any metrical rule. If spontaneity is one feature, simplicity is another feature. The Vachana ends up with the 'ankita' of the mention of the 'God of Choice or Ishtadaiva' of the author. Allāmaprabhu is credited with several Vachanas and other works like 'Śatsthala', 'Ujñāna charitre' and 'Mantragoupya'.

Basavēśavara is credited with quite a large number of Vachanas, each one of which is replete with religious and philosophical thought condemning superstitions, preaching compassion, extasy of devotion, coments on social customs and practices and so on. Good conduct for others, equality of all before God, importance of labour, extreme devotion to Śiva are the cardinal principles putforth by Śrī Basavēśavara. He did not believe in pomp and pageantry like construction of
temples, organising pūjas and the like. He popularised the worship of Ishta linga and disapproval of construction of temples and other rituals. He did not appreciate the social hierarchy and he brought into his fold the lowest of the low and brought the value of lively hood by one's labour. All these have been very efficiently depicted in his numerous Vachanas which have been a class by themselves in Kannada literature. Many of his contemporaries and devotees followed him in composing Vachanas. Important among whom are 'Mahādeviyakka', 'Chennabasavēśvara', and 'Siddharāma'. They have been the best source for the understanding of the development and the tenets of the Vīraśaiva religion and philosophy.

Brāhmaṇa Literature

There is no worthy poet, except Nāgavarmāchārya, who produced Brāhmaṇa literature during the period and region under study. Nāgavarmāchārya was an advaita by faith who lived in c. 1070 A.D. at Belgaum or Balipura which is situated in modern Shimoga district. His work 'Chandra-chudāmani śataka' deals with renunciation i.e., Ānāsāra. Vairāgya is highly appreciated in that work. The poet had an epithet as 'Gunagalla' or the thief of virtues. He is known to have been the first man to write śatakas in Kannada literature.
It is observed that Brahmana poets are not as successful as Jainas or Vīrasaivas, this may be due to their partiality for Sanskrit. However, though their works small in number are unique and sometimes unrivalled.
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