Religion has played a very important role in India from remotest times. It has moulded the individual life and has greatly influenced the social and cultural life also. In fact in India religion has been an inseparable part of the life of an individual as also of the society as a whole. There is reason to believe that even in pre and proto-historical periods man pursued some religious practices or the other though it is difficult to find out their exact nature. Right from the vēdic days religion has served as the foundation of social and cultural life of the Indian people. Religion has never been static or dogmatic. In the passage of time different ideas and ideologies have cropped up in our country and different schools of religion and philosophy have come into existence. The vēdic religion transformed into what came to be known as Hindu religion, in course of time
pervaded the whole of the country. On the same soil we have born religions like Jainism and Buddhism which influenced and continued to influence the large sections of people in the country. It would be an interesting study to know how these different religions have grown and influenced the life of the people in different periods. An attempt is made here to trace the growth, the spread, and the impact of these religions in the early medieval days covered by the role of the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa in the deccan particularly in the Karnataka.

Many scholars have put their efforts to reconstruct the history of Karnataka in general and the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa in particular. Some of the articles in the distinguished journals speak but a little about the subject. No comparative study has been done till now on the religions prevalent in the period under discussion. The major religions have been studied under the various headings so as to provide the necessary background for the work. The geographical and chronological distributional pattern of the temples, the royal patronage, the various rites and rituals performed, vivid forms of the gods under worship, the religious centres and teachers, and the main features of the religions etc.,
have been dealt with here. All the available published sources are utilised to give as complete a picture as possible of the period. The photographs are produced wherever necessary. The present study is restricted to the area ruled by the members of that dynasty. The survey is closed with the down fall of the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa.

The work is divided into six chapters. First chapter provides the historical background and political condition in the period under study. The second chapter gives an account of the growth of religion in India from the early periods with particular reference to the Deccan and traces the growth of the important religious sects upto the beginning of the rule of the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa.

Chapter three deals with the growth of Vaishnava religion, its important features, worship of different forms of Vishnu, important Vaishnava temples and the like. It is tried to highlight the patronage to this religion during the period under study.

Chapter four is devoted to the study of Śaivism, particularly Pāṣupata or Kālāmukha sect which was most predominant in the period under study. It has spread
throughout the length and breadth of Chalukya Kingdom. Brisk religious activities including construction of temples was quite common in this period. Several lineages of teachers flourished in different religions. They contributed most to the spread of education through the Mathas attached to the temples. These aspects have been highlighted in this chapter on the basis of the study of large number of inscriptions available in this region. The rise of the new religion which came to be known as Viśvaśāiva has also been touched upon to the extent that it prevailed in the period under study.

Chapter five deals with religious faiths outside the Vedic pantheon like Jainism and Buddhism. Jainism was a predominant religion in the period under study. Jainism took a new form and shape and it attracted large groups of different sections of society. Extensive temple building activity was a characteristic feature of this religion in this period. Different schools of teachers in the form of Saṅghas, Gachchas, Gaṇas, Anvayas and Balis flourished in different regions, spreading cult of the worship of Jina and the Yakshiṇī and inculcating the basic values of Āhimsā and generosity, spread of language and literature. Buddhism never gained popularity.
It had almost declined though few centres of this religion were found here and there.

Chapter six gives useful information regarding the growth of literature on religion and religious themes. Under the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa Kannada literature gained the high quality and accomplished greater perfection.

Thus the study is based on all the published inscriptions, literary works and the photographs of the temples and images of gods and goddesses.

**Sources:**

The history of religious conditions during the period of Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa is to be reconstructed with the materials drawn from the literary and archaeological sources.

**Literary Sources:**

Literary sources directly or indirectly provide the social and religious conditions in which the characters of history lived and moved and acted. They were written during the period and the royal patronage in more descriptive style. They are of lesser use to the historians. But inspite of such defects they are of utmost
importance. The principal literary works are as follow:

**Sanskrit Works:**

*Vikramāṅkadeva-charita* of Bilhaṇa is an epic which takes high rank among the best poems in Sanskrit. Bilhaṇa was a court poet of Vikramāditya VI. This is a life story of his royal patron. Many facts of history can be gleaned from this work. The great jurist Vijnānesvara also adorned the court of Vikramāditya VI and he has written his famous work *Mitākṣara*, a commentary on *Vājñavalkya Smṛti*. It has helped us to know about the conditions of society and people of that time.

Bhūlōkamalla Sōmēśvara III was himself a renowned author and composed an encyclopedic work called *Abhilāśhitārtha- Chintāmani*, also called *Mānasollāsa*. It contains valuable information on cultural history.

Sōmadevasūri's *Yaśastilaka* and *Nītivākyāmṛita* are the other two valuable literary sources. The *Yaśastilaka* or *Yaśōdhara Charita* was composed in C 945 A.D. and it contains abundant information on the condition of Jainism in the Deccan along with other religions.
Kannada Works:

The period may be said to open with the work of Ranna who competes with Pāmpa and Ponna the celebrated trio of great poets who usher in Kannada literature in its full glory. Pāmpa and Ponna are the proteges to the Chālukya Arikēsari I and Rāṣṭrakūṭa Kṛishṇa III.

The Jaina poets Pampa, Ponna and Ranna made striking contribution to Kannada literature. Pāmpa's Vikramārjuna Vijaya and Adipurāṇa considered to be the greatest poems of Kannada language. They throw light on contemporary society, though they belong to a slightly earlier period. Ponna's Santipurāṇa and Rāmakathā are also great works. Ranna was the court poet of Satyaśraya. His Gadaśuddha or Sahasabhīmavijaya throws light on contemporary social life. His another work Ajitanātha Purāṇa gives the life history of the second Jaina tīrthāṅkara and is very useful for the study of Jainism in the period.

Chāvundarāya, a Gaṅga general, composed the purāṇa called after him, as Chāvundarāya Purāṇa in A.D. 978. It narrates the life story of 24 tīrthāṅkaras of Jaina pantheon. Nāgachandra or Abhinavapampa has written Mallināṭhapurāṇa and Rāmachandrarcharita. Mallināṭhapurāṇa narrates the
life story of nineteenth tirthankara and Rāmachandra
carita also known as Pamparamayana gives the Jaina version
of Rāma legend.

Nayaseṇa of Mulagund in his work Dharmamrita
expounds essential teachings of Jainism. Vaddarādhane
is a Kannada literary work assigned to the 10th century
A.D. It is an anthology of the stories pertaining to the
Jaina religion.

Brahmaśiva was the author of 'Samaya Parīkṣhe',
a work in which different sects are examined.

The Vīraśaiva movement inspired and organised
by Basava in the 12th century has left its deep impress
on religion, social life and literature of the period. The
Vachanas composed by Basava and later by his followers
yield much information regarding a new philosophy of life
and religion.

Telugu Works:

The Śivatvāśāra of Mallikārjuna Pāṇḍitārādhya,
the Basava Purāṇa and Pāṇḍitārādhya carita of Palkurīke
Sōmanētha are the most important works in Telugu literature
and they throw a flood of light on the position of Vīraśaiva
religion.
Archaeological Sources:

The archaeological sources of the religious history of Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa are many and varied and they are the numerous inscriptions found throughout the deccan. They are mostly in Kannada language and some of them are in Sanskrit. They constitute a major source material for the early history of India in general and of Karnataka in particular. The inscriptions are the reliable and authentic source material as they provide the first hand information of the happening of these days. Much of the western Chālukya history is constructed on the basis of inscriptions engraved on stone or copper plates. These inscriptions are quite numerous and provide us an exhaustive information for the present study. The endless variety of details found in these records throw much light on several aspects of religious history. They contain matter of fact, statements about grants, the donors and the donees and speak volumes on the religious conditions of the period.

The inscriptions usually contain an account of genealogy of the king, period of the donation, the purpose of donation, the names of the religious sects, the names of the deities, the types of worships, other religious
activities etc. Such inscriptions are used as the principal sources to reconstruct the religious history of the period of Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa.

**Monuments and Sculptures:**

The sculptures and monastic establishments which are scattered all over Karnataka, supply ample information in reconstructing the different stages of religious history of Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa. Study of monuments will tell us about certain aspects which we cannot know from the study of literature and inscriptions. Temples occupy an important place in the society. They were the centre of socio-religious activities of the people.

The Chālukya style possesses distinct characteristics of its own. They have left behind some of the finest monuments of artistic merit. The temple of Kāśi Viśvesvara of Lakkundi, Mahādeva temple of Ittagi, and that of Mallikārjuna of Kuravatti are the best examples of this style. The temples of Haveri, Harihara, Bankapur, Gadag, Hangal, Haralahalli, and Dambal, to mention but a few, mark the climax of this style and bear out the consummate skill of the architects. The sculpture inside the temple and on the outer wall have a lot to say on
the religious practices and precepts of those days.

The Chalukya rulers, their feudatories, subordinates and local chiefs were all great builders of magnificent temples of architectural eminence.

There are many temples belonging to Śaiva, Vaishnava, and Jaina sects built in this period and scattered all over the deccan.

The master architects of this epoch introduced several innovations of construction, which contributed to the grandeur of the temple edifice. Sculptures are an integral part of the temples, shrines and sanctuaries. Inspired by religious fervour and devotion, images of Gods, Goddesses and deities were chiseled out with meticulous care, and finest models of superb workmanship were produced. The Chalukyas enriched the art heritage of Karnataka.

A study of the sculptures from the different temples of Chalukyas of Kalyāṇa helps us in tracing the growth of sectarian theology and the attempts at sectarian harmony.