



A STUDY OF LITERARY CONTRIBUTIONS OF WOMEN IN ANCIENT MEDIEVAL KARNATAKA

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Abstract:

Throughout the history of Kannada Nadu, hundreds of brave women who fought with their own swords for the protection of the citizens of the state during the attacks of foreigners are seen in Kannada. In contrast, Katakana had great women history who administered villages, divisions, towns, religious groups and social institutions. A woman dedicated everything to the betterment of society from the ancient to at present. Women who perform endless duties within the family have been proving time and time again that their capabilities are not limited to that. His sacrifice, perseverance, bravery and determination are role models for all. Today, International Women's Day, we salute all those brave women. A woman's mind is soft and sweet. Female able, tender; Whatever she was, she was neglected, confined to the kitchen between the four walls. But despite looking like that on the outside, her determination is strong inside. She has shown that she is strong because of her self-proclaimed activism. "They don't have to be leaders only if they are physically strong. Rather, those who have wisdom, intelligence, creativity, and innovative ideas deserve to be leaders. There is no difference between men and women here," Wangari Mathai, a Nobel Prize-winning Kenyan writer, said when turning the pages of history. She has done it; she is doing it. The heroines of Karnataka are a good example of how adventurous and courageous she is.

Key Words: Defence, Administration, land and culture, Rani Abbakka, Portuguese, Hoysala, Umadevi, Bommala Devi.

I. Introduction:

As a force of humanity, as a mirror of society, as a clever administrator, as a daughter of the country, and as a defender of the land, she has shown that she has not fallen behind in the defense of the country. Then, today, and forever, the women who fought for the country at the sacrifice of their lives even when they were only within the four walls, the women who proved that the hand that weighs the cradle can rule the country, have gone down in history. There are also women from Katakana.

Involvement of Women

Let us take a brief look at his achievements. Women in history who immediately come to mind are Shantale, queen of Vishnuvardhana, Rani Abbakka of Ullala, Kittura Chennamma, Belavadi Mallamma, Keladi

Chennamma, Onake Obavva, who fought till their last breath to save their land and culture. Each one has a different story, but the purpose is the same. It is the defense of the state, the defence of the citizens. From there the struggle for the freedom of the country continued. Women fought bravely and sacrificed their lives for the country as no one was less.

All of them are role models for women. A valiant woman of the Chauta dynasty who ruled the coast of Karnataka. A brave woman who ruled Tulunad in the latter half of the 16th century. Abbakka, who was clever as a child, was encouraged by her father and father-in-law who taught her archery and swordsmanship. She learns tactics and military skills from her father-in-law. Ulla was a prosperous port then. After the Portuguese invaded Goa their evil eye naturally fell on Ulla. His four years of continuous attempts to conquer Ulla and the neighboring towns failed because of Rani Abbakka. She valiantly fought and thwarted every attack of the enemy. She attacked and defeated the forts and naval bases where the Portuguese were stationed. Perhaps in the history of the Karnataka coast, there is no other woman who has shown such bravery. Abakka Devi was admired not only in Tulunad but also in Karunad for defeating the Portuguese. Her fame and respect increased. Rani Abbakka, who fought against the Portuguese all her life, died in 1570. That Chautarani's prowess is still an inspiration to all.

In ancient India, women were respected in the family and society. Especially mothers were highly respected. The rank of mothers was superior to that of fathers. But as the days went by, the status of women gradually started to decline. Women's status had declined by the time the Middle Ages were reached. Her legal rights, political rights and educational rights also disappeared. She was the object of satisfying all men's needs. It is a matter of pride that the Hoysala Empire respected women even in the Middle Ages. Especially mothers

were seen with love, devotion and respect. This is evident from many inscriptions of the Hoysalas. Several inscriptions describe the activities of the people of that time, their loyalty, and their beliefs. Many inscriptions state that lakes, temples, and idols of deities were established in memory of their mothers or to bless their mothers. For example, in AD During the reign of Narasimha Hoysala in 1088, Bettagowda's son Pandavagaunda built a lake and a temple and established a Linga of God Choleshwara in his mother's name. Similarly, during the time of Hoysala Vishnuvardhana, the governor of Undigeyahalu and Balavarivana villages, Munijetti K. built a temple for Krishnadeva and gave charity for the upkeep of the temple and wrote in the inscription that its virtue is for his mother. There is a ruined Basadi in the southern part of the village called Valladahalli. Close to that is AD.

In 1287 he donated some land under the Kachi Sea lake to Honnamaragowda of Honnasigere. Kambhadandanayaka named that lake after his mother. Machaiyya Dannayaka, the son-in-law of Anke Dandanayaka, minister of the Devas of the Hoysala Balla, died in AD. In 1314, he built a lake in the name of his mother Mayakka at a cost of three thousand to four thousand Honnas (Gold coins), according to a stone inscription under the lake of Thamadi Nanjaiyava's plain in Awarehalli. What is known from the above-mentioned inscriptions is that the Hoysala people had love, devotion and respect for their mother. Another point of interest is that similarly, many inscriptions reveal that mothers also had the freedom and financial power to donate land to build a temple, or a lake and plant a hero stone in the memory of their relatives. During the reign of Viniaditya, Ketalade's mother Veeraputra had sacrificed his life to protect the cows of the village. This inscription describes how the mother erected a hero stone to commemorate it.

A stone inscription near the door of the Dodda Kaleswar temple in Dodda Hobli explains that the AD. In 1293 Kusakali, grandson of the great Chattavai leader, laid down his head in service. His mother, Chattavva, planted the Veeragall and wrote this episode. Another inscription states that when a son builds a lake for his mother, the mother pays three thousand in the name of her son. Machasamudra Lake in Ainhund Gadyana. This not only shows Mamathe's affection for her son but also her independence and financial strength. History Professor Dr. N. Saraswati, Proposes the main role of women in Hoysala period sculpture, commemorating the contributions of women through sculpture in worldly, spiritual, mythological, social and religious contexts, dance skills, aesthetic sense, decoration, divine beliefs, rituals of female dancers of Hoysala period like Shantaladevi, Bommala Devi, Umadevi. He informed the students about various topics including Women's hairstyles found in sculpture, various ornaments like ole, nose, necklace, hand-knotted tiara, dab etc. various designs, various dance poses, Sita Kalyanadrasya, Durbar image singing, music, Madanike dances, emotional dance poses, Vishakanya idol sculptures, various music. He explained to the students the sculptural art form which reflects the rare fine art skills of different types including tools, Pagade, women wrestlers, tribal

costumes, and mango vines.

There is a stone inscription dated 1145. The inscription mentions that Jinabasadi was built by a virtuous saint named Devaraya. It mentions that the Hoysala Vishnuvardhana gave Suranahalli to his minister Devaraya in appreciation of his praiseworthy knowledge. There Devaraya has made a prayer to build a Jain basadi and pray that its virtues reach his parents. Similarly, Hoysala Gounda, a feudatory of Vishnuvardhana's time, built a basadi in memory of the death of his mother Chattavegaundi and gave it to the Hoysala Narasimhadeva, equal to the temple and the basadi, in front of the residents and farmers of the town. The inscription states that it was donated in 1160. Similarly, another inscription at Nelamangala states that when the governor Khanandiya's grandfather, grandmother and mother Channavva died, he installed a linga on the lake and called it Garanjeshwar and donated certain land to it. Bhujabala Veeraramanatha Devarasana Minister Kambhaya Dandanayaka AD.

A stone inscription near the Shantaleshwara temple at Elegunda reveals something worth noting. That is how a mother has demonstrated her maternal affection towards her daughter and granddaughter. It tells that when that mother Hoysala Vishnuvardhana's mother-in-law Jakkatte died prematurely, her daughter (younger) Shantale and granddaughter Chikka Shantale were built in memory of them two Ishwara temples named Shantaleshwara and Boppeshwara at Elegunda in Niragunda with three parts of the money given by her son-in-law. The inscription - states that Shantale's mother – Machikabbe followed the Sallekhanavrata and attained Nirvana when the queen of the Hoysala Vishnuvardhan's throne passed away. It depicts the love, affections that a mother has for her daughter and the courage, will power and spirit to face difficulties. In this way, the inscriptions reveal that in the Hoysala society, high-class mothers were respected, loved, admired, and financially empowered.

Early literature

The verse form of inscriptions were popular in the 7th century and the Shravanabelagola inscription of Nandisena (7th century), and the Kappe Arabhatta record of 700 in tripadimetre is considered the earliest available lithic records of Kannada poetry. The Karnateshwara Katha, which was quoted later by Jayakirti, must have belonged to the period and was a eulogy of Pulakeshin II. Other Kannada writers of this time whose works are considered extinct are Syamakundacharya (650) who wrote Prabhrta and Srivaradhadeva, also called Tumubuluracharya (650) who wrote the Chudamani (Crest Jewel), a 96,000 verse commentary on logic (Tattvartha-mahashastra). Other sources date the Chudamani to the 6th century or earlier. Bhattakalanka, a 17th-century Kannada grammarian, wrote of the Chudamani being a milestone which demonstrated that Kannada was well suited for scientific works. Gajashtaka, a rare work on elephant management was written by the Western Ganga King Shivamara II around 800 but is now considered extinct. Around 900, Gunavarma I authored the Shudraka and Harivamsha. His writings are considered extinct but references to these writings are found in later years. He is known to have been patronised by King Ereganga Neetimarga II. In Shudraka, he has favourably compared his patron to King Shudraka of ancient times. Sri Vijaya, court poet of Rashtrakuta King Amoghavarsha I wrote Chandraprabha-purana in the early 9th century. A prosody called Guna-gankiyam has been referenced in a Tamil work called Yapparungalakkarigai by Amritasagara and has been dated to the middle of the 9th century.

Kavirajamarga (850) written by King Amoghavarsha I and Sri Vijaya is the earliest available book on rhetoric and poetics, though it is evident from the book that several works and metres of Kannada literature and poetry had existed in previous centuries. Kavirajamarga is a guide to poets (Kavishiksha) that aims to standardize these various styles. The book refers to early Kannada writers such as the 6th century Western Ganga Dynasty King Durvinita, a writer of prose. Hence it is proposed that a considerable volume of prose and poetry must have come into existence prior to 850. Other writers mentioned in Kavirajamarga are Vimala, Udaya, Nagarjuna, Jayabhandu for Kannada prose and Ravikirti (636), Kavisvara, Pandita, Chandra and Lokapala in Kannada poetry.

Jain literature

The Jain age of literature in Kannada has been called as the "Augustan age" of Kannada literature with writings of nearly 200 authors considered important. Jain authors in Kannada are far more than in Tamil or Telugu languages. Kannada is the only language in which a Jain version of Ramayana and Mahabharata exists, in addition to Brahminical version of the same epics. Famous among Jain writers were Adikavi Pampa, Sri Ponna, Chavundaraya, Ranna, Gunavarma I, Nagachandra, Nayasena, Nagavarma I, Aggala, Janna etc. Adikavi Pampa, widely regarded as one of the greatest Kannada writers, became famous for his purana, Adipurana (941). Written in champustyle, it is the life history of the first Jain thirtankar Rishabhadeva. Pampa's other notable work was Vikramarjuna Vijaya (941), is a Jain version of the Hindu epic, Mahabharata, with Arjuna as the hero. Also called Pampa Bharata, it praises the writer's patron, King Chalukya Arikeseri of Vemulavada (a Rashtrakuta feudatory), comparing the king's virtues favorably to those of Arjuna. Pampa demonstrates such a command of classical Kannada that scholars over the centuries have written many interpretations of his work.

Pampa's contemporary was Sri Ponna, the court poet of Rashtrakuta king Krishna III. He received the title Kavichakravarthi (poet laureate) and Ubhaya-Chakravarthi (imperial poet in two languages, for his command over Sanskrit as well) from his patron. He became famous for his Santipurana written around 950, narrating the life history of the 16th tirthankar Santinatha. Other classics by Sri Ponna are Jinaksharamale, a poem in praise of Jainas and Bhuvanai-karamabhyudaya, the later considered extinct but known from citations in later works. Ranna was the court poet of Western Chalukya kings Tailapa II and Satyashraya. He along with Pampa and Sri Ponna are called the "three gems of Kannada literature". Ranna wrote Ajitapurana in 993, a champu writing in 12 chapters on the life of the second tirthankar. His other classics are Sahasabhimavijaya (or Gadayuddha) written in 982, a champu writing in 10 chapters which narrates the story of the epic Mahabharata with particular reference to the duel with clubs between Pandava Bhima and Kaurava Duryodhana. In this writing, the poet favourably compares his parton king Satyashraya to Sahasabhim (daring Bhima). Earlier to this, Ranna was patronised by Western Ganga minister Chavundaraya when he wrote Parashurama charita, in which he compares his patron to Parashurama. In 1105, Nagachandra, a poet and builder in the court of Hoysala Veera Ballala I who was responsible for the consecration of important Jain temples (Jainalaya) wrote the Jain version of Ramayana called Ramachandra-charitapurana. The story which deviates from the Valmiki Ramayana narrates the legend of Rama in a champu of 16 sections. In this work, Rama becomes a Jain ascetic and attains nirvana at the end. A complement to Pampa Bharata by Adikavi Pampa, the effort earned Nagachandra the title Abhinava Pampa. The earliest available prose in Kannada is Vaddaradhane (900) by Shivakotiacharya. The title means "worship of elders". The writing contains 19 stories mostly borrowed from the Sanskrit book Brihatkatha-Kosha and is about Jain tenets. The writing describes issues such as rebirth, karma, plight of humans on earth, social issues of the time such as education, trade and commerce, magic, superstitions and condition of women in society. Janna who was given the title Kavichakravarti (poet laureate) in the court of Hoysala Veera Ballala II was also a minister, builder of many Jain temples and came from a family of such famous writers of the Hoysala court as Sumanobana and Mallikarjuna. His Yasodhara charita (1209) and Ananthanathapurana (1230) are considered to be enduring classics. The former work narrates the story of a king who was about to sacrifice two boys to a local deity called Mariamma. On hearing their story, the king releases the boys and gives up the practice of sacrificing live victims.

In the early 13th century, Andayya wrote the Madana Vijaya (also known as Kavana Gella – victory of Kama or Kabbigara Kava – poets defender or Sobagina Suggi – harvest of beauty). In this unique work, Andayya used only indigenous Kannada words (desya) and naturalised Sanskrit words (tatbhava) totally avoiding assimilated Sanskrit words (tatsamas). In the story, Shiva imprisons the moon and cupid (Kama) in his anger assails Shiva with his arrows. An angry Shiva curses cupid to be separated from his bride, when cupid contrives to free himself of the curse.

Virashaiva Literature :

Among early Shaiva writers Durgasimha who wrote Panchatantra in 1025. He was a minister in the court of Western Chalukya King Jayasimha II. Here he mentions many of his predecessors and contemporaries. Harihara, (also known as Harisvara) was patronised by Hoysala King Narasimha I and wrote the Girijakalyana (1165) in the old champu style describing the marriage of Shiva and Parvati in ten sections. He came from a family of accountants (karanikas) from Halebidu and spent many years in Hampi writing more than one hundred ragales (poems in blank verse) in praise of Virupaksha (a form of Shiva). Raghavanka was the first to introduce the Shatpadi metre into Kannada in his Harishchandra kavya (1165) which is considered a classic even though it occasionally violates strict rules of Kannada grammar.

Prose was the medium chosen by the Virashaiva poets (also known as Lingayat) to write devotional poetry called Vachana Sahitya in the 12th century. They were led by such great saints as Basavanna (a minister in the court of Southern Kalachuri King Bijjala II), Akka Mahadevi and Allama Prabhu. Over 200 Vachana poets (Vachanakara) have been recorded from this period, more than 30 of whom were woman poets. Vachanas are characterized as brief disconnected passages, each ending with one or more names of Shiva. The style was epigrammatical, parallelistic and elusive, dwelling on the vanity of riches and spiritual benefits of the worship of Shiva. These poems are still recited by Lingayat acharyas (priests). The poems have a section called Kalanjnana with a messianic forecast of the future mentioning the arrival of the ideal King Vira Vasanta Raya who would rebuild Kalyani, the geographical centre of the Lingayat movement and restore the Lingayat sect to its full glory. Other famous teachers were Sivalenka, Sripati Pandita, Mallikarjuna Paditaradhy. The five famous acharyas were Revanna Siddha, Marula Siddha, Paditaradhy, Ekorami Tande and Visvesvaracharya. Well-known vachana writers of the time were Chennabasava, Prabhudeva, Siddharama, Kondaguli Kesiraja etc.

Vaishnava Literature :

Rudrabhatta, a Smartha Brahmin (believer of monistic philosophy), was an early Brahminical writer whose patron was Chandramouli, a minister of Hoysala King Veera Ballala II. Based on the earlier work of Vishnu Purana, he wrote Jagannatha Vijaya (1180) in the champu style relating the life of Krishna leading up to his fight with the demon Banasura. Famous among Brahmin writers from the 15th century was Kumara Vyasa. His real name was Naranappa and hailed from modern Gadag district in Karnataka. He wrote the first ten chapters of Gadugina Bharata (1430), a Kannada adaptation of epic Mahabharata in the court of Deva Raya II. The work was later completed by Thimmanna in the court of King Krishnadevaraya. Dedicating the work to his patron king, Thimmanna called it Krishnaraya Bharata. In the 15th century, Narahari wrote the earliest brahminical rendering of the epic Ramayana in Kannada called Torave Ramayana. It is called so because it was written in Torave, Sholapur District, modern Maharashtra.

The Vaishnava Bhakti (devotion) influence on Kannada literature was acute from the time of Vijayanagara Empire, a direct impact of the dvaita philosophy propounded by Madhwacharya of Udipi in the 13th century. Over 150 well-known bhakti saints who wrote thousands of compositions are known. These compositions are broadly classified as general compositions, kavya (poetic compositions) and tatva (philosophical compositions). General compositions are further classified as keertanas, ughabhogas, suladis, vruttanama, dandaka, tripadi, pattadi, sangathya and ragale. The period between the 14th century to 16th century produced the first wave of devotional literature called the Haridasa sahitya (literature). Vyasatirtha who composed songs in praise of Krishna, Purandara Dasa whose compositions marked his devotion to Purandara Vittala (a form of Vishnu) and Kanaka Dasa who praised Adikeshava (a form of Krishna) in his poems were the great trinity of Vaishnava composers in Kannada. The contribution of Purandara Dasa to Carnatic music is immeasurable, and he is called the "Karnataka sangeeta pitamaha" (Father of Carnatic Music). Historians propose the number of his compositions were as many as 75,000–475,000 songs in Kannada and Sanskrit language, though only few

hundreds are available today. He codified and consolidated the school of Carnatic music by evolving several steps like sarali, jantai, thattu varisai, alankara and geetham and laid down a framework for imparting formal training in this art form. He became an inspiration to later day Carnatic composers.

Saint Kanaka Dasa of Kaginele in modern Haveri district, who from various accounts belonged either to the community of shepherds (kuruba) or hunters (beda) or warriors (kshatriya) is an example of a non-Brahmin composer who made significant contribution to the bhakti (devotion) movement. Apart from his 200 compositions, he authored important works namely; Nalacharitre (story of Nala) and Haribhaktisara (devotion to Krishna in a book of morals for children) in shatpadi metre, Nrisimhastava (compositions in praise of Narasimha, an Avatar of Vishnu), Ramadhanyacharite (which narrates the superiority of the ragi millet over other grains in a book meant to address class inequalities) and Mohanatarangini (river of delight) which is a poem in kavya (poetic) style narration of stories of Krishna in sangatya metre.

Secular literature :

Kannada literary works treating algebra, arithmetic and geometry have been written by Rajaditya, Bhaskaracharya of Bijapur, Thimmarasa and others. The 9th century mathematician Mahaviracharya, a native of Gulbarga, was patronised by the Rashtrakuta king Amoghavarsha I. Commentaries on the theories in his ganitasarasangraha (a Sanskrit work) were later translated to Kannada. Rajaditya (1190) showed skill in reducing to easy verse the mathematical subjects (ganita) in his writings called Vyavahara-ganita, Kshetraganita and Lilavati. In the court of Hoysala Veera Ballala III, Ratta Kavi (1300) wrote Rattamala and Rattasutra bearing on the subjects of natural phenomena such as rain, lightning, earthquakes, planets and omens. The earliest available writing on astrology is Jatakatilaka by Sridharacharya (1049), a Jain who also authored a work on general science called Sastrakavita and was patronised by Western Chalukya King Someshvara I. In the field of medicine, Jagadalla Somanatha's Karnataka-Kalyanakara of 1150 prescribing a totally vegetarian and non-alcoholic diet, a translation of Pujiyapada's Sanskrit Kalyanakaraka is the earliest available and is in champu style. Gajanakusha (also known as Gajaga or Narayana) who wrote on erotics in the mid 10th century was a minister in the court of Rashtrakuta King Krishna III, though his works have not come down to us. Chandraraja (1025), who was patronised by Machiraja, a feudatory of Western Chalukya Jayasimha II wrote the earliest available book on erotism called Madanakatilaka, in champu metre in 18 chapters. The writing dwells on the subject as a conversation between the author's patron and his wife.

Govidya is the earliest available writing on veterinary science. It was authored by prince Kirtivarma in 1100 in the court of his brother and the famous Western Chalukya King Vikramaditya VI. Nagavarma I (980), a Brahmin scholar from Vengi in modern Andhra Pradesh who was patronised by Chavundaraya, a Western Ganga minister wrote Chandombudhi (ocean of prosody) addressed to his wife. This is considered the earliest available Kannada writing

in prosody. He also wrote one of the earliest available romanceclassics called Karnataka Kadambari in sweet and flowing champu (mixed verse and prose). It is based on an earlier romance work in Sanskrit by poet Bana and is popular among critics. The earliest known grammarian in Kannada is Nayasena (1112) but his works are considered extinct. Among existing literature, Nagavarma II's Karnataka-bhashabhushana is from 1145. Nagavarma II was the poet laureate in the court of Western Chalukya King Jagadhekamalla II. In this book, the sutras and short explanation are in Sanskrit and the illustrations are from Kannada literature. In 1260, Kesiraja wrote a comprehensive book on Kannada grammar called Sabdamanidarpana (mirror of word jewels). The rules here are set forth in kanda metre and followed by a prose commentary by the author and is considered a writing of high value.

Sisumayana introduced the earliest writings in the sangatya metre in his works Anjanacharita and Tripura-dahana, the later being a poem on the destruction of the triple fortress of birth, decay and death. The earliest known lexicon in Kannada is the Ranna Kanda (990) by the great poet Ranna with each verse ending with kaviratna. Ranna was the poet laureate (Kavichakravarti) of Western Chalukya kings Tailapa II and

Satyashraya and was bestowed the royal attributes of golden rod, royal umbrella and an elephant by his patrons. The earliest books on cookery were written by Jayabandhunandana, Mangarasa. A book on toxicology was written by Mangaraja I in 1360 called Khagendramani-darpana. Among fiction writers, Nemichandra who was patronised by Hoysala Veera Ballala II wrote Lilavati in 1170. This story is a romance fiction

based on an earlier work in 610 called Vasavadatta by Subhandu with the scene of action in Banavasi. A Kadamba prince and a princess dream of each other, meet after many delays and are finally wedded to live happily ever after. Dramas make their arrival into Kannada literature with Malavi-Madhava by Karnaparya (1140) and Subhadraharana and Prabodhachandra by Kesiraja(1260) being the earliest dramas now considered extinct. Of the once that are available, Mitravinda-govinda by Singarraya (1680) is a Kannada version of Sriharsha's Ratnavali. Writings of local history made their appearance after the fall of Vijayanagara Empire. Some well-known works of history are Maisururajara-charitre, Chikkadevarajavamsavali (17th century), Keladinripavijaya by Linganna, the last book being an important source of information on the origin of Vijayanagara Empire, etc. Among Biographies, Rajanripa- vijaya, Kanthiravanarasaraja-vijaya, Chikkadevaraja-vijaya (17th century) and Bijjalara- charite etc., are well-known works.

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