

**SILVER JUBILEE YEAR**

ISSN 0021-4043  
A QUARTERLY  
ON  
JAINOLOGY

**VOL. XXVI**

**OCTOBER 1991**

**No. 2**

# **Jain Journal**



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**JAIN BHAWAN PUBLICATION**

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## Book Review

**THE ILLUSTRATED MANUSCRIPT OF JAINA RAMAYANA** by Muni Kesaraj, Shri Dev Kumar Jaina Oriental Library, Arrah, 1991. Pages XII + 82 + Bha. Price Rs. 850.00.

Rāma, the eldest son and successor of king Dasaratha of Ayodhyā, is one of the foremost personages of Indian proto-history. He was born in the line of Ikṣvāku of the celebrated Solar race of ancient Indian Kṣatriyas, and was noted for his super qualities of head and heart, his noble ideals, exemplary character and remarkable achievements. The renowned Sanskrit epic *Rāmāyaṇa*, composed by the sage Vālmīki, who is said to have been the first poet of classical Sanskrit usually assigned by modern scholars to the second or first century B.C., has immortalised its hero Rāma and the latter's life-story. Rāma was not, however, confined only to the Brahmanical tradition as represented by Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa*, but has been equally claimed, esteemed, and revered in the Sramanic tradition as well, the other equally ancient and celebrated current of ancient Indian culture.

During the past two milleniums or so, Rāma's story has diffused not only over the entire length and breadth of the vast Indian sub-continent, but also penetrated into the Indianised kingdoms of Greater India, at least in the south and the far east, influencing the life, art, literature and folklore of the peoples inhabiting those regions. Vast literature in different regions, styles and forms have been produced relating to Rāma's life-story in its entirety, or to certain episodes or particular characters connected therewith. In the Brahmanical tradition, especially with the emergence of the Bhāgavata Dharma and its Vaiṣṇava cult and later of the Rāma cult itself as a sub-branch of the Vaisnavite creed, Rāma gradually came to be accepted as an important incarnation of the God Viṣṇu. Hence numerous temples dedicated to him were erected and many sites haloed by their association with him came to be sanctified as popular places of pilgrimage. Public recitations of *Rāma-kathā*, depiction in painting and sculptural art, and enactment of *Rāma-līlās* vastly added to the popularity of the lore.

Of the three religious systems—Brahmanical, Jaina and Buddhist—

which prevailed and vied with each other for ascendancy, during the ancient period of Indian history, the greatest credit of popularising the story certainly goes to the Rāma cult of the Vaisnavite sect of the Brahmanical religious system, whereas Buddhism seems to have been the least interested in Rāma and his story. The *Daśaratha-Jātaka* and a few other stray references are the only Buddhist sources which allude to Rāma and his story. The Buddhist version, brief and inadequate as it is, is also materially different from Vālmīki's version. According to the Buddhist story, Sītā was the sister of Rāma who was a Prince of Vārāṇasī and a Bodhisattva, that is, the Buddha in the making. After having undergone several human births, Rāma is said to have been finally born as Śākyaputra Gautama the Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, who attained *parinirvāṇa* (about 501 B.C.), the ultimate goal, and with it, ceased to exist as a spiritual entity. After its foundation, Buddhism, for a time, rapidly spread in India and even in most of the other Asiatic countries outside India. But, after the 7th to 8th century A.D., it equally rapidly began to decline, and by the 12th-13th century A.D. although it had become the principal religion of parts of Central Asia, China, Korea, Tibet, Burma, Japan, Malaya Archipelago, Ceylon, Java, Sumatra, Cambodia, Anam, etc., it had almost vanished from India proper. And, it was just then that Rāma worship and his life-story were beginning to get widely popular.

The case was different with Jainism of which the religious and cultural traditions were as old, if not more, as those of Brahmanism. It too, had no doubt materially suffered a gradual decrease in the number of its adherents, and loss of royal patronage and popular support, especially in the face of sometimes quite aggressive and sometimes unobtrusive but deep onslaught of revived Brahmanical Hinduism, during the premediaeval and early mediaeval centuries. Nevertheless, Jainism has continued to prevail in almost every region of the country, to have its following in most of the principal castes, classes or communities of its indigenous population, and to possess a vast and varied cultural heritage. As such, the Jainas have not only preserved and kept alive Indian proto-historical traditions, like Puranic Brahmanism, but considerably helped in popularising and immortalising Rāma and his achievements in its literature from the earliest times down to the present.

In fact, Rāma has all along been revered in Jaina tradition as one of the sixty-three pre-eminently auspicious personages of proto-history including the 24 Tīrthaṅkaras, 12 Cakravartins, 9 Balabhadras, 9 Nārāyaṇas and 9 Pratinārāyaṇas. He was the eighth, Balabhadra, as Lakṣ-



*Sri Sankar Dayal Sharma, Vice-President of India,  
releasing the Illustrated Jaina Ramayana*

maṇa was the eighth Nārāyaṇa, and Rāvaṇa, the eighth Pratinārāyaṇa. Rāma performed many heroic deeds, ruled over his kingdom as a just and popular ruler, abdicated his throne, renounced worldly life and pleasures, practised austerities as an ideal ascetic, obtained *kevala-jñāna* becoming thereupon Arhat-Kevalin, the perfect man-god, and finally attained *nirvāṇa* or *mokṣa*. Since as an ascetic he came to be designated Padma or Padma Muniśvara, the Jaina Puranic account relating his story has usually been called the *Padma-purāṇa* or *Padma-carita* (Apabhramsa *Pauma-cariu* and Prakrit *Pauma-cariyam*). Not only Rāma himself, but his parents, brothers, wife Sītā, the veritable paragon of virtue, brother-in-law Bhāmaṇḍala, friends and allies like Hanumāna, Sugrīva and Vibhīṣaṇa, and his arch enemy Rāvaṇa, the notorious king of the golden city of Laṅkā, are living characters in the Jaina version of the Rāma story. The principal events and their sequence are more or less the same as in Vālmiki's *Rāmāyaṇa*, the earliest and main source of the Brahmanical version. In fact, the earliest available Jaina version of the story is the *Pauma-cariu*, composed in Prakrit verse, by saint Vimala, in Mahāvīra *nirvāṇa* year 530, that is, only three years after the beginning of the Christian era, thus within a century or so of the publication of Vālmiki's *Rāmāyaṇa*. In his prologue Vimala explicitly avers that the chief object in writing his *Pauma-cariu* was to present and publicise the true account of Rāma's story, as handed down to him in the Jaina tradition which reached back to Rāma's own times,

and thus to disprove and dispel many misconceptions, misunderstanding, and erroneous ideas that were for some time past being circulated by a Brahmanical version, obviously alluding to Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa*. And there is reason to believe that Vimala's *Pauma-cariu* seems to have set the trend for the later Jaina writers of the Rāma story. No doubt, one other version of the story also became current in the Jaina world, and it was represented by Guṇabhadra's *Uttara-purāṇa* (circa 850 A.D.) which seems to have been based on the Puranic works of Nandi Muni, Kuchi Bhattāraka and Kavi Parmeśvara, who belong to the 3rd or 4th century A.D. A few later Jaina writers, like Puṣpadanta (965 A.D.), Cāmuṇḍarai (978 A.D.) and Mallisena (1050 A.D.), in their respective Apabhramsa, Kannada and Sanskrit *Mahāpurāṇas* followed Guṇabhadra's version. But, the majority of the Jaina writers both of the Digambara and the Svetāmbara sections, like Sanghadāsa (6th century), Ravisena (676 A.D.), Svayāmbhū (c. 800 A.D.), Bhadreśvara and Hemacandra (12th century) followed Vimala's version, which came to be the most popular.

There are a number of significant peculiarities of the Jaina *Rāmāyaṇa* distinguishing it from Vālmīki's epic such as, in the Jaina version : (1) Rāma is a direct descendant of the Tīrthaṅkara Rṣabhadeva who was also known by the name of Ikṣvāku and was the founder of the city and kingdom of Ayodhyā : of his eldest son Bharata the first Cakravartin of Bharata-kṣetra and after whom this country came to be called Bharatavarṣa : and of Bharata's son and successor Arkakīrti, the founder of the Solar race. (2) Rāma and all the other principal characters, male and female, of the story are followers of Jainism. (3) Rāma never indulged in the pastime of hunting birds or beasts, and never ate meat or drank wine. (4) Rāvaṇa and his people were not inhuman demons but were highly civilized human beings of the Rākṣasa clan of the Vidyādhara race, and so were Pavanañjaya, Hanumāna, Bāli, Sugrīva, Aṅgada, Nīla, etc., who were not sub-human monkeys, but a clan of the Vidyādharas whose totem or insignia was a 'monkey'. These Vidyādharas were also followers of Jainism, and many of them, including Hanumāna, his lieutenants Nīla, and Mahānīla, and Rāvaṇa's son Meghanāda, renounced worldly life, took to asceticism and attained salvation. (5) Rāvaṇa was killed in battle by Lakṣmaṇa, and not by Rāma. (6) Rāvaṇa's wife Mandodarī was a pious lady, revered as a satī. (7) Sītā, revered as one of the 16 Mahāsatis of all times, was actually the daughter of Rāvaṇa by Mandodarī, and came to be accidentally adopted and brought up by Janaka in Mithilā. (8) The episode of Sītā's *svayamvara* is different from Vālmīki's version, and is the one preferred by later Brahmanical writers even. (9) Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa

each married several maidens during the period of their exile. (10) Lakṣmaṇa, when struck by Indrajita's *śakti* at the battlefield, was cured by a princess named Viśalyā whom he consequently married. (11) The meeting of Hanumāna and Vibhīṣaṇa and the former's winning over the latter as an ally of Rāma. (12) The episode of Candrahāsa sword and the accidental killing by Lakṣmaṇa of Śambuka, the son of Rāvaṇa's sister Candranakhā, which event finally led to the Rāma-Rāvaṇa war. (13) The reason of Sītā's punishment by Rāma, birth of her sons Lava and Kuśa, her meeting with Rāma, the fire ordeal her renunciation, asceticism and, after death, her being born as a celestial being in the heavenly abode. (14) The war of Lava and Kuśa with Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa and the reunion. (15) The bright spots in the character of Rāvaṇa. These and many other minor details of the Jaina *Rāmāyaṇa* came to be adapted or adopted by a majority of the non-Jaina later writers in India and outside. There is no doubt that the Jaina version came to have a great impact on the development of the Rāma story in general. We have now, besides Goswami Tulsīdāsa's *Rāmacaritamānasa* and several other Hindi *Rāmāyaṇas*, the Bengali versions of Kṛttivāsa and Candrāvatī, the Gujarati *Rāmāyaṇa-sāra*, Marathi *Rāmāyaṇa*, Telegu *Dvipada Rāmāyaṇa*, Kannada *Trove Rāmāyaṇa*, Kambana's Tamil *Rāmāyaṇa*, Java's *Rāmāyaṇa Kakavin* and *Serat-Kand*, Malaya's *Rāmākīrti* and *Rāma-jātaka*, Cambodia's *Rāma-Kerti*, Indonesia's *Seri-Rama* and *Hikayata-mahārāja-Rāvaṇa* and the Kashmiri, Tibetan and Khotanese versions. Many of the peculiarities of these different regional non-Jaina *Rāmāyaṇas* are foreign to Vālmīki's epic, but are ultimately traced to the Jaina versions of the story, especially to the works of Vimalasūri, Sanghadāsa, Ravisena, Sayambhū, Guṇābdadra and Bhadreśvara.

The Jaina literature dealing with the story of Rāma, fully or partially, is also quite vast and varied. Some 250 compositions, big or small, are known to have been produced, of which 25 are in Prakrit, 71 in Sanskrit, 22 in Apabhramsa, 82 in Hindi, 17 in Kannada, 2 in Tamil, 4 in Gujarati, 3 in Marathi, and 2 in Urdu. The earlier and more important of these works have also been printed and published. This fact has facilitated an analytic, critical and comparative study of the Jaina and non-Jaina versions. Dozens of modern researchers, both Indian and Western, have considerably contributed to these studies, which have also incidentally elicited the value and importance of the Rāma literature of the Jainas.

The present publication, the *Rāma-Yaśo-Rasāyana*, composed in Hindi verse, by Keśarāj Yati, a Jaina ascetic of the Śvetāmbara sect, at

Antramugpura (probably Āmrapura or Amer near Jaipur in Rajasthan) in Vikram year 1680 or 1623 A.D. is in the main based on the Rāma-story as found in the *Triṣaṣṭi-Śalākā-Puruṣa-Carita* of the Śvetāmbara Ācārya Hemacandra (circa 1150 A.D.). There is nothing significant about the language, style, and poetic qualities of the work. Its value lies in the 213 coloured miniature paintings illustrating the story, which adorn the incomplete manuscript preserved in Sri Dev Kumar Jain Oriental Library of Arrah (Bihar). These paintings seem to have been wrought in the Rajput art of the Jaipur region, sometime about the middle of the 19th century, at the instance of some Sthānakavāsī monk or nun, or their devotees. There is reason to believe that Keśarāj's work had somehow become more popular with the followers of this sect of the Śvetāmbara Section, during the past two centuries or so. The paintings bear distinct stamp of some peculiar beliefs of this sect. Keśarāj's original text also seems to have been altered at places.

A few words may here be added relating to the nature of metrical composition of the present work, *Rāma-Yaśo-Rasāyana*, and to the chief characteristics of the paintings which illustrate the text in the manuscript under publication. The eminent scholar, Dr. Rai Anand Krishna, has, in his Hindi preface to his volume, very ably, though briefly, discussed both these aspects.

The work is composed in *dohā* and *dhāla* metres, the former being a couplet and the latter a bigger stanza, both of which were popular forms in mediaeval Hindi poetical compositions and could be sung or recited in different *rāgas* or tunes, as indicated in the text itself. In fact, it appears from these indications along with specified burdens, refrains and models, that the text was used or meant to be used also as a piece of folk-singing or recital in public, probably with the accompaniment of prevailing musical instruments. This aspect of the work needs deep probing at the hands of musical experts.

As regards the miniature coloured paintings which illustrate the present manuscript, they are more than 200 in number, representing a variety of themes, viz., natural scenery, rivers, mountains, trees, shrubs, sky, clouds, light and shade, buildings like temples, shrines and palaces, animals and birds, male and female human beings including royalty, soldiers, demonical Rākṣasas, monkey-men, war scenes, worshippers, monks and nuns. The last two have been depicted in the guise of those belonging to the late mediaeval Sthānakavāsī or Sādhumārgī subject of the Śvetāmbara section of the Jaina community. It shows



that the paintings were wrought at the instance of some ascetic or lay devotees of that particular sub-sect. The colour-scheme suits the themes.

As assessed by Dr. Rai Anand Krishna, these paintings seem to have been executed in the latter half of the 19th century A. D. in the Marwar School of Western Rajasthan, which included Jodhpur, Bikaner and Jaisalmer, in a style which is nearer to the Mathano style, yet is independent of it. The paintings bear visible traces of the influence of the Jaipur art, the Timurid or Muhgal art, and, at some places, also of the Western or European art. Some figures are quite vivid, full of life and feeling, whereas some others are wooden and lifeless. On the whole these paintings have enhanced the value of the present publication. They also provide good material for deeper and specialised study.

—Jyoti Prasad Jain

## Books Received

JAIN, BHAGCHANDRA 'Bhaskar' (ed), *Prākṛt Dhammapada*, Prakrit Bharati Academy, Jaipur, 1990. Pages 212. Price Rs. 150.00.

Text with Hindi and English translation and Introduction by the editor.

JAIN, JAGADISH CHANDRA, *The Jain Way of Life*, The Academic Press, Gurgaon, Haryana, 1991. Pages xxi + 98 Price Rs. 100.00.

A Treatise on the fundamentals of Jainism presented in a simple non-technical manner.

JAIN, KAPOOR CHAND, *Bibliography of Prākṛt and Jaina Research*, Sri Kailash Chand Jain Memorial Trust, Khatauli, U.P., 1991. Pages xxxiv + 130. Price Rs. 60.00.

It gives details of some 677 Jain Research papers published or unpublished to date in India and abroad.

MAHOPADHYAY VINAYSAGAR (ed), *Naladiyara of Ācārya Padumanar*, Prakrit Bharati Academy, Jaipur 1990. Pages 31 + 200. Price Rs. 120.00.

Text in Tamil with English translation by G. A. Pope and F.W. Elic, Sanskrit translation in verse by S. N. Shreeram Desikan, Hindi translation in verse by T. E. Shreenivas Raghavan and an Introduction by Mandan Mishra.

PAGARIYA, RUPENDRA KUMAR (ed), Sri Candrasūri's *Sirimuṇi-suvvayaḥiṇimdacariyam*, L.D. Series No. 106, L.D. Institute of Indology, Ahmedabad, 1989. Pages 8 + 24 + 341. Price Rs. 70.00.

Text with introduction.

SADHVI MADHUSMITA SRI, *Bhāratiya Rājñiti : Jain Purāṇ Sāhitya Sandharbh-men* (in Hindi), Sm. Durgadevi Nahata Charity Trust, New Delhi, 1991. Pages 332.

A tract on Indian Political Thought as revealed in Jaina Pauranic literature.

SANGAVE, VILAS, *The Jaina Path of Ahimsā*, Bhagawan Mahavir Research Centre, Solapur 1991. Pages 75. Price Rs. 20.00.

A tract on the concept and practice of *ahimsā* in Jainism.

SHAH, NAGIN J. (ed), *Jayanta Bhaṭṭa Viracita Nyāyamañjarī*, L.D. Series No. 108, L. D. Institute of Indology, Ahmedabad, 1989. Pages 14 + 313. Price Rs. 120.00.

The present volume contains 4th and 5th *Āhnikas* of the great work with Gujarati translation by the editor.

SHASTRI, RAJENDRA MUNI, *Jain Sāhitya-me Śrīkṛṣṇa carit* (in Hindi), Prakrit Bharati Academy, Jaipur, 1991. Pages XV + 296. Price Rs. 100.00.

Life of Śrīkṛṣṇa as depicted in Jaina literature.

SHASTRI, YAJNESHVAR S. (ed), *Śrīmad Umāsvāti Viracitam Praśamarati-prakaraṇam*, L.D. Series No. 107, L.D. Institute of Indology, Ahmedabad, 1989. Pages 12 + 55 + 104. Price Rs. 90.00.

Text with English translation, introduction and detailed critical notes.

SHASTRI, YAJNESHVAR S., *Traverses on Less Trodden Path of Indian Philosophy and Religion*, L. D. Series No. 109, L.D. Institute of Indology, Ahmedabad, 1991. Pages vii + 290. Price Rs. 120.00.

A collection of some excellent research papers by the author.

SOLOMON ESTHER A. (tr), *Śrīmad Appayyadikṣita's Siddhāntaleśa Saṅgraha*, L.D. Series No. 114, L.D. Institute of Indology, Ahmedabad, 1990. Pages 30 + 591. Price Rs. 95.00.

Text with the Gujarati translation by the author.

# Jaina Monuments of Pudukkottai Region

A. Ekambaranathan

The Pudukkottai region occupies more or less than central part of Tamilnadu and it is bound by the districts of Trichy on the west, Ramanad on the south, Thanjavur on the north and north-east and partly by the Bay of Bengal on the east. In ancient times, it was ruled by the minor chieftains like the Muttaraiyars and Irukkuvels whose political fortune depended largely on their over-lords like the Pallavas, Pandyas and Colas. The region abounds in Jaina edifices of religious and aesthetic importance. Interesting series of natural caverns with stone beds inhabited by ascetics of the Jaina persuasion, relief sculptures depicting the Tirthankaras on the overhanging rock of the caverns or on the nearby boulders and structural temples are found in almost every part of the region under our purview. A systematic study of the monuments of the same area would throw a flood of light on the various aspects connected with the history of Jainism in this part of our land.



*Tirthankara, Mosakkudi*

## 1. Sittannavasal

Sittannavasal, about 16 kms. from Pudukkottai town, is the oldest and most famous Jaina centre in the Pudukkottai region. It possesses an early cave shelter of the Śramaṇas and a medieval rock-cut temple with excellent fresco paintings.

### A. *The Jaina Cave :*

One of the steep hills in the village contains a spacious cavern at an almost inaccessible height. It is locally known as Eladipattam on account of the seven holes cut into the rock, serving as steps to reach the shelter. There are seventeen stone beds cut in rows, containing at one end a raised portion serving as pillow lofts. Among them, the biggest is legibly incised with a Brāhmī inscription assignable to a period from about 2nd century B. C. to 2nd century A.D. Some more inscriptions of the 8th century A.D. are found engraved on the nearby beds. The Brāhmī inscription reveals that the stone bed (*adhittanam*) was caused to be made by one Ilayer of the village Cirupavil for the benefit of the recluse Kavuti Iten who was born at Kumalur (Kumattur) a village in Eruminadu.<sup>1</sup>

The places referred to in the record remain unidentified. However, Eruminadu is taken to be the same as Maḥiṣamaṇḍala or the present Mysore region.<sup>2</sup> If this identification is acceptable, it would bear testimony to the contact between Jaina adherents of Karnataka and Tamilnadu even in the remote past. Kavuti Iten, the presiding monk of the monastic establishment at Sittannavasal, could have come from Karnataka to spread the gospel of the Jina into the South.

The same cavern continued to be the 'holy abode of Śramaṇas' in the 7th and 8th centuries A.D. also. Names of Mendicants such as Tolakunrattu kadavulan, Tirunilan, Tiruppuranam, Tittaicharanan, Śrī Purnacandran and Nityakaran Pattakali are engraved on the other stone beds.<sup>3</sup> They were no doubt monks who resolved to spend their lives in isolation at Sittannavasal.

### B. *The Rock-cut Temple :*

The neighbouring hill, not far away from the natural cavern, possesses a rock-cut temple, consisting of a rectangular shrine preceded by a front *maṇḍapa*. The weight of the roof is borne by two free-standing pillars in the middle and two pilasters in *antis*. They are simple with a square base and top an octogon middle portion. Their

1 T. V. Mahalingam, *Early South Indian Palaeography*, pp. 245-250

2 *Ibid.*, p. 247

3 *Annual Report on Epigraphy (ARE)*, 388/1914

voluminous capitals are trapizoidal in shape and are provided with the wavy design (*tarāṅga*) bound by a *paṭṭa* in the centre. The front wall of the shrine is adorned with pilaster motifs having circular lotus medallions on the square parts. The basement mouldings of the shrine are rather simple and exhibit architectural style of the 7th century A. D.

The shrine has a row of three Tīrthaṅkaras carved almost identically on the rear wall. They are shown seated in *padmāsana* and are crowned by triple umbrellas. These images are said to represent Ṛṣabhanātha, Neminātha and Mahāvīra, even though their cognisances are conspicuously absent in them.<sup>4</sup>

The lateral walls of the *maṇḍapa* contain two niches accomodating bold reliefs of Parśvanātha and the other probably of a preceptor. The image of Parśvanātha is majestically shown seated in *dhyāna*, but depicted with a single umbrella above the head. The nearby label inscription refers to it as '*Śrī Tiruvasiriyān*'<sup>5</sup> which means a great Ācārya. (figs. 1 and 2)

Sittannavasal became a prolific Jaina centre in the subsequent centuries also. Monks like Śrī Pritivinachan, vitivali (?), Śrī Ankala etc., came to be associated with this Jaina organisation in the 8th century A.D.<sup>6</sup> The natural cavern in the neighbouring hill continued to serve as the abode of the monks in the 8th century A.D. as is evidenced by stone beds and names of resident monks.<sup>7</sup>

The *maṇḍapa* of the rock-cut temple seems to have dilapidated in the middle of the 9th century A.D. Hence, Ilangautaman, a teacher from Madurai, repaired the inner *maṇḍapa* of the same Arhat temple during the regin of Śrīmara Śrī Vallabha (815-862 A.D.)<sup>8</sup> It was at that time, paintings were also executed on the ceiling of the shrine, *maṇḍapa* and on the massive pillars in front. We also hear of yet another renovation of a structure by one Ennarunji vallal in the 9th century

<sup>4</sup> ARE, 326/1960-61

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 325/1960-61

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 331, 324/1960-61

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 388/1914

<sup>8</sup> South Indian Inscriptions (SII), Vol. XIV, No. 45

A.D.<sup>9</sup> But it is uncertain whether the renovation was done to the rock-cut edifice or some structure. In about the 10th century A. D., two monks, viz, Tiruviraman and Śrī Kayavan,<sup>10</sup> got associated with the rock-cut temple.

Paintings are found on the ceiling of the shrine and the *maṇḍapa* and they form a class by themselves. The main theme is the *Khatika-bhumi* where the good ones, rejoice while washing themselves, as they pass on from region to region in order to hear the discourse of the lord in the *śamavasaraṇa* structure.<sup>11</sup> The lotus tank contains ducks and fishes gleefully swimming amidst lotuses and lillies ; elephants playfully plucking out lotus flowers, buffaloes immersing their body into the water and a few monks gathering flowers for offering worship to the Tīrthaṅkaras. The most magnificent of the paintings are the king wearing a lovely crown, accompanied by his queen, and two female dancers of exquisite feminine grace and charm, executed on the cubical portions of the pillars. "The coiffure of the dancers, the lines composing the face, the contour of the body in beautiful flexions, the attitude of the hands in rhythmic dance motion are the work of a great master."<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately, much of the paintings at Sittannavasal are obliterated due to the ravage of time, yet they throw welcome light on the art of painting under the Pandyas.

## 2. Tenimalai

Tenimalai, also known as Tenurmalai in the Tirumayyam *tāluk*, was one of the early Jaina centres of the Pudukkottai region. The hill on the eastern side has a natural cavern locally known as Andar madam (monastery of mendicants), which once served as the abode of Jaina ascetics. The overhanging rock is roughly cut in the form of a drip ledge in order to carry rain water away from the cavern. Accumulation of thick sandy deposit on the floor of the cavern over centuries forbids our knowledge about the existence of stone beds. The simplicity of the shelter with the crudely cut drip-ledge lends it an early age c.200 B.C.-300 A.D.<sup>12a</sup> Inscriptions in Brāhmī characters, generally

<sup>9</sup> *SI*, Vol. XVII, No. 400

<sup>10</sup> *ARE*, 329, 330/1960-61

<sup>11</sup> C. Sivaramamurti, *Panorama of Jain Art*, p. 253

<sup>12</sup> C. Sivaramamurti, *South Indian Paintings*, pp. 57-58

<sup>12a</sup> A. Ghosh (ed), *Jaina Art and Architecture*, Vol. I, p. 101

met with in early Jaina resorts, are however conspicuous by their absence here.

The Tenimalai ascetic abode was in continuons occupations by Śramaṇas till about the 9th century A.D., as is evidenced by epigraphs and sculptural representations of Tīrthaṅkaras. The adjacent boulder has bas-reliefs of three Tīrthaṅkaras each canopied by triple umbrellas and flanked on either side by *cauri*-bearers.<sup>13</sup> They are shown seated in *yogāsana* and, bear stylistic features of the 9th century A.D. Among the three images, the first was caused to be made by one Srivalla-Udanaseruvotti as is revealed by a lithic record inscribed underneath the sculpture.<sup>14</sup>

An inscription engraved on the nearby rock states that while the ascetic Malayadhvaṇa was performing penance at Tenurmalai, a certain Irukkuvel chieftain visited the place and gave an endowment of land *pallicchandam* for the maintenance of the monk.<sup>15</sup> It is worthy of note that a local chieftain of the Irukkuvel family whose name is not indicated in the record, had extended patronage to the Jaina recluse Malayadhvaṇa. The Irukkuvels were feudatories of the Cola monarchs and they held sway over the region around Kodumoalur in Pudukkottai.

### 3. Narttamalai

Narttamalai, situated about 18 kms from Pudukkottai on the way to Kiranur, is one of the important Jaina centres in early medieval times. The hill in the village, commonly known as Samanarkudagu or the hill of the Jainas, contains two rock-cut temples, one dedicated to Śiva and the other to Arhadeva. The Jaina rock-cut got converted into a Viṣṇu temple probably in the second quarter of the 13th century A.D. and thereafter came to be called a Patinenbhumi-vinnagaralvar Koil.

The temple in its original form contained a rectangular sanctuary and an *ardhamanḍapa* supported by massive pillars. It is not possible to ascertain which Tīrthaṅkara was the principal deity of this temple as the shrine is empty now. A fragmentary inscription in characters

<sup>13</sup> C. Minakshi, *Administration and Social Life under the Pallavas*, p. 259

<sup>14</sup> *Pudukkottai State Inscriptions (PSI)*, No. 10

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 9



of the 9th century A.D. built into the platform of the nearby Śaiva rock-cut, mentions the name of the Jaina monk, Śrī Nemicandradevar.<sup>16</sup> He could have been a recluse looking after the management of the temple. Another lithic record dated in 1204 A.D. while registering an endowment made to the Śiva temple, states that the gift excluded the 2 *ma* of land belonging to the Arhadeva temple of Tirumanaimalai at Narttamalai.<sup>17</sup> Apparently, the rock-cut shrine was of Jaina affiliation and the hill bore the name Tirumanaimalai.

Subsequently, it was converted into a Viṣṇu temple. The lateral walls of the *maṇḍapa*, at this time, was made suitable to accommodate twelve identical bas-reliefs of Viṣṇu. Besides, a structural addition in the form of a *mahāmaṇḍapa* was also built by the same time. This conversion could have taken place around 1228 A.D. during the reign of Maravarman Sundara Pandya I. His inscription engraved therein speaks that the western temple was consecrated and in it were installed the idols of Viṣṇu and his consorts.<sup>18</sup>

It is said that there was a structural temple dedicated to Karu-manikkaperumal (Viṣṇu), then known as Tirumerkovil or western temple during the reign of Kulottungacola I (1070-1120 A.D.) and it must have subsequently fallen into ruins, and that about a century later, in the reign of Maravarman Sundara Pandya I (1228 A.D.), the Jaina cave temple was converted into a Hindu shrine and the idols of Viṣṇu and his Devis were installed in it. The materials of the original Viṣṇu temple must have been used for the *mahāmaṇḍapa* in front of the cave temple. The twelve figures of Viṣṇu must have been cut out of the rock when the cave temple became a Viṣṇu shrine.<sup>19</sup> Thus some of the epigraphs found at Narttamalai help to establish the cave temple's affiliation to the Jaina faith.

#### 4. *Aluruttimalai*

Aluruttimalai, also known as Ammachatram hill near Narttamalai, has a natural cave on its northern slope, containing four polished stone beds cut on the floor. Two of them are hewn together as to form

<sup>16</sup> *ARE*, 298/1968-69

<sup>17</sup> *SII*, Vol. XVII, No. 390

<sup>18</sup> *PSI*, No. 281

<sup>19</sup> *Journal of Oriental Research*, Vol. VIII, pp. 25-26

a double bed, while the others are single beds carved separately. The absence of inscriptional or any other datable evidence makes it difficult to ascertain the period of its first habitation by Jaina monks. However, on the analogy of the caverns at Sittaunavasal and Madurai region, it may also be of a great antiquity dating back to the early centuries of the Christian era.

The over-hanging rock of the cave was carved with two bas-reliefs of Tīrthaṅkaras seated in *dhyāna* posture and surmounted by triple umbrellas above the head. These images, probably representing the first and the last Tīrthaṅkaras, bear stylistic features of the 10th century A.D. It is thus clear that these '*darśana bimbās*' are not co-eval with the founding of the stone beds. Such is the case with many of the hill resorts of the Śramaṇas in Tamilnadu.

Fragmentary inscription in characters of the 10th century A.D. on the Aluruttimalai reveal the provisions made for offerings and lighting of lamps in the temple of Tiruppalimalai alvar in Vadasiruvaynadu.<sup>20</sup> Besides, some lands were also donated for conducting a festival of seven days in the same temple.<sup>21</sup> Obviously, the Aluruttimalai was then known as Tiruppallimalai and the Tīrthaṅkara images carved on the overhanging rock were called Tiruppallimalai alvar. The place was included in the territorial unit of Vadasiruvaynadu. It is worthy of note that a seven day festival had been celebrated in this cave temple.

During the reign of Sundara Pandya I (1216-1238 A.D.), one Dharmadeva Ācārya who was the disciple of Kaṇaka Candra Paṇḍita, made a gift of 2 *ma* of land as *pallicchandam* in Periyapallivayal to the god Tirupallimalai alvar.<sup>22</sup> Yet another record of the same king also mentions the names of Dharmadeva and his preceptor Kaṇaka Candra Paṇḍita.<sup>23</sup> They were, no doubt, recluses associated with the management of the Jaina establishment of Aluruttimalai. The cave, thus, had been a *palli* of the Jaina sect from about the early centuries of the Christian era down to the 13th century A.D., after which it lost its religious importance.

<sup>20</sup> ARE, 209/1941-42

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 210/1941-42

<sup>22</sup> PSI, No. 474

<sup>23</sup> SHI, Vol. XVII, No. 397

### 5. *Bommaimalai*

Not far away from Alurutimalai is a small hillock locally known as Bommaimalai on the southern side of the village road branching off from the Pudukkottai-Trichy main road. It's original name was Thentiruppallimalai. On account of the rock-cut sculpture of a Tīrthaṅkara carved on the vertical surface of a boulder near a rock-shelter, it came to be called Bommaimalai.

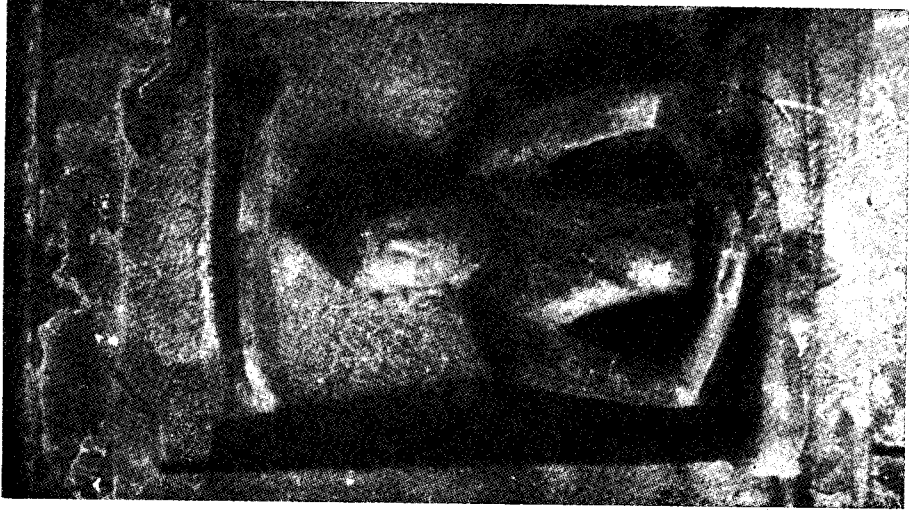
The Jaina establishment of this place received a land grant as early as 753 A.D. during the reign of one Konerinmaikondan. Accordingly, the village Korramangalam belonging to the subdivision of Tensiruvayilnadu, was granted as *pallicchandam* for the maintenance of the monks and for the offerings and worship of the deities of both Tiruppallimalai (Alurutimalai) and Thentiruppallimalai (Bommaimalai). The gift which was made tax-free, included the dry and wet lands, gardens, tanks and house sites lying within the four boundaries of Korramangalam. Besides, several taxes like *kadamai*, *antarayam*, *viniyogam*, *achchu*, *kariyavaratchi*, *vettippattam*, *panchupili*, *sandivigrahaperu*, *lanchinaiperu*, *tarivari*, *cekkirai*, *tattolipattam*, *idaivari*, *inavari* and *ponvari* collected from the villagers were also granted for the same purpose. The income from the land had been allotted on 2 : 1 ratio to these two *pallis* respectively. It was agreed to inscribe the gift-deed on both the hills. The boundary stones of the land granted were marked with the symbol of triple umbrella.<sup>24</sup>

### 6. *Sadaiyarparai*

Sadaiyarparai is a small hillock in Tirukogaranam within the town limits of Pudukkottai. About half a kilometer from the Tirukogaranesvara Śiva temple, is a boulder containing an image of a Tīrthaṅkara shown seated in *dhyāna* posture. It is a medium sized bas relief, said to be of Mahāvīra, exhibiting stylistic features of the 9th century A.D. The image together with the nearby rock shelter, serving as the abode of monks, was once known as Perunarkilicholaperumpalli.

An inscription engraved by the side of the image, belonging to the reign of Sundara Pandya I (1217 A.D.), records a gift of land as *pallicchandam* to the deity (alvar) of Perunarkilicholaperumalli for various offerings by the Nattavar of Tenkavinadu. Besides, taxes collected

<sup>24</sup> PSI, No. 658



*Fig. 2 An Ācārya  
Sittannavasal Rock-cut Temple*



*Fig. 1 Pārsvanātha  
Sittannavasal Rock-cut Temple*



*Fig. 3 Mahāvīra, Chettipatti*



*Fig. 4 Mahāvīra, Kannangudi*

from the above land like *kadamai*, *antarayam*, *viniyogam*, *achchu*, *kariyaratchi*, *vettipattam*, *panchupili* etc., were also endowed to Tenkavinattuperumpallialvar, the presiding deity of Sadaiyarmalai.<sup>25</sup> It is evident that Sadaiyarparai came to be a Jaina centre probably from the 9th century A.D. and continued to be so till the 13th century A.D., after which its history remains unknown to us. The Jaina establishment was variously called Perunarkilicholaperumpalli and Tenkavinattuperumpalli. Perunarkilli was of the Cola kings of the Sangam age. Perhaps, it was in memory of the Cola king, the *palli* came to bear his name. The place belonged to the *nadu* unit of Tenkavinadu, hence also named after the same

### 7. Malayakkoil

Malayakkoil is a village 18 kms away from Pudukkottai town in the Tirumayyam *tāluk*. The small hillock in the village contains two rock-cut temples dedicated to the Śaiva faith. However, the place seems to have had some connection with Jainism. An inscription, fragmentary in nature, engraved on a boulder to the left of the entrance into the rock-cut temple mentions the name Guṇasena who enunciated the art of learning *Parivadini*, the seven stringed instrument.<sup>26</sup> It is held that Guṇasena was a Jaina monk who resorted to a life in isolation at Malayakkoil.<sup>27</sup> This would show, among other things, the keen interest evinced by the Jaina friars in the sacred art of music.

### 8. Puttambur

Puttambur, situated 12 kms from Pudukkottai, lies on the north-eastern side of the road leading to Bhutalur. It had been a centre of various religious sects like Jainism, Saivism and Islam. At the outskirts of the village, a dilapidated brick structure was noticed. On clearing the rubbles, the foundation of a temple and an image of a Tīrthaṅkara were brought to light. The Tīrthaṅkara sculpture is shown seated in *dhyāna* posture, measuring 4' in height.<sup>28</sup> It exhibits stylistic features of the 12th century A.D. It is said that this image had been worshiped by the Hindus mistaking it for Lord Gaṇeśa. Locally, it was called

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 530

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 4

<sup>27</sup> M. S. Venkatasamy, *Jainism and Tamil*, p. 134

<sup>28</sup> *A Manual of Pudukkottai State (MPS)*, Vol. II, pt. 2, p. 993

by them as 'Mottaipillaiyar' which means Gaṇeśa with a tonsured head.<sup>29</sup>

Though the ruined Jaina temple and the Tīrthaṅkara image at Puttambur are datable to the 12th century A.D. the village had Jaina affiliation as early as the 9th century A.D. This is revealed by an inscription of Aditya Cola (888 A.D.) from the famous Pārśvanātha temple at Chittampur in South Arcot District. It mentions that certain Matiyān Arintigai of Puttambur in South Kulamangalanadu, a sub-division of Cholanadu, made an endowment for lighting a perpetual lamp in the Kattampalli at Chittampur.<sup>30</sup> Obviously, Puttambur was a Jaina settlement in the 9th century A.D. and one of its inhabitants had been attracted to make an endowment to the Pārśva temple at Chittampur which is about 350 kms from his native place. Puttambur and Kulamangalam retain their old names even to the present day and are found in the Arantangi *tāluk* of Pudukkottai district.

### 9. Chettipatti

Chettipatti, otherwise known as 'Samanar kundu' in Kulattur *tāluk*, is yet another prolific medieval Jaina centre with a dilapidated structural temple, locally called 'Vattikoil' dedicated to one of the Tīrthaṅkaras. The edifice had a shrine and a front *maṇḍapa*, both enclosed by a *prākāra* wall. Except the basement, the other components of the temple have disappeared due to the ravages of time. The sculptures of Mahāvīra, Pārśvanātha and *cauri*-bearers which once adorned the niches of the structure are kept on the site itself. Besides, two pillars with lion base, originally supporting the roof of the *maṇḍapa*, are also placed by the side of the loose sculptures.<sup>31</sup>

Among the sculptural vestiges, the figure of Mahāvīra and the head of a Pārśvanātha image are worthy of note. Mahāvīra is shown seated on a pedestal without the *simhāsana*, *cauri*-bearers, creeper design, *prabhāvalī*, triple umbrella etc.,. Simplicity and grandeur are fully manifest in this icon of Mahāvīra. (fig. 3) The head of Pārśvadeva is an exquisite specimen of plastic art illustrating the best tradition of the Cola workmanship. The five-hooded serpent canopy, smiling coun-

<sup>29</sup> M. S. Venkatasamy, *op. cit.*, p. 136

<sup>30</sup> *ARE*, 201/1902; *SII*, Vol. VII, No. 828

<sup>31</sup> *MPS*, Vol. II, pt-2, pp. 1022-1023

tenance of the Tīrthaṅkara, his curly hair arranged in small circles, half-closed elongated eyes, prominent nose etc., portray stylistic features of the 10th century A.D.

There are three individual sculptures of *cauri*-bearers, carved upto the middle part, which formed part of the decoration of the temple wall. The sculptor's mastery in carving is easily judged from a separate sculpture of a lion, the mount of Ambikā Yakṣi, a simple theme so beautifully executed.<sup>32</sup>

An inscription in 10th century characters, found on the basement of this ruined temple, mentions the names of Dayapalar and Vadirajar who were the disciples of Matisāgarācārya.<sup>33</sup> Apparently, Matisāgara was the principal monk looking after the administration of the temple. His disciples, Dayāpāla and Vādirāya, would have rendered valuable services to their Guru and the temple. The history of the temple after the 10th century A.D. remains in oblivion as there is no evidence of the later period.

#### 10. Kayampatti

Kayampatti is a hamlet near Chettipatti in the Kulattur *tāluk*. Its ancient name was Tiruvennayil. Ruins of a Jaina temple in the form of a mound had been noticed by the side of the local tank, Vennavikulam, in the village. The mound came to be called 'Samadar tidal' or the mound of the Jinas. Though the ruined temple has completely disappeared, an image of a Tīrthaṅkara and an inscribed stone slab have survived the ravages of time. The sculpture of the Tīrthaṅkara is seen seated on a throne in *siddhāsana* posture, crowned by a triple umbrellas and attended on either side by *cāmaradhāris*.<sup>34</sup>

The inscription engraved on a stone slab and planted by the side of the Vennavikulam mentions Ainurruvap-perumpalli and Tiruvayatalamadam. Besides, it also refers to one Jayavīra Perilamaiyan.<sup>35</sup> It is known from this record that the Jaina temple was called Ainurruvap-perumpalli and the *maṭha* attached to it was Tiruvayatalamadam.<sup>36</sup>

32 C. Sivaramamurti, *op. cit.*, pl. 59, 61, 63

33 MPS, Vol. II, pt-2, p. 1023

34 *Ibid.*, p. 1023

35 PSI, No. 1083

36 M. S. Venkatasamy, *op. cit.*, p. 133



Jayaviraperilamaiyan could have been a monk or an official looking after the temple and the monastery at Kayampatti. The temple seems to have been built by the members of the Tisai Ayirattu-Ainurruvar, a merchant guild of the medieval period, as its name indicates. It may be said in this connection that mercantile groups like Nagarattar, Narpattennayiravar, Ainurruvar etc., had made liberal contributions to many of the Jaina temples in Tamilnadu.

#### 11. *Annavasal*

Annavasal, a hamlet near Sittannavasal, was also a Jaina centre in ancient time. Though the Jaina temple of the village has disappeared in course of time, two images representing a Tīrthaṅkara are found on the western side of the local tank. The first is a headless one, shown seated on a pedestal in *dhyāna* posture, flanked on either side by fly-whisk bearers and surmounted by scroll design. The other image, said to be of Mahāvīra, possesses almost identical features of the former icon, but smaller in size.<sup>37</sup>

#### 12. *Kannangudi*

A fine sculpture of Mahāvīra is reported to have come from the village Kannangudi. The Tīrthaṅkara is seen seated on a *śimhāsana* in *yoga* posture. Decorative features like the semicircular *prabhāvalī*, creeper design and triple umbrellas are beautifully depicted in this bas-relief. The contemplative calmness of the face, the half-closed eyes suggesting *dhyāna*, broad shoulders, the sturdiness of the torso etc., exhibit the style of the 11th century A. D.<sup>38</sup> But unfortunately its lips, lower part of the chin and the right palm are partially damaged. (fig. 4)

#### 13. *Sempattur*

Sempattur, a village 2 kms away from Puttambur, had a Jaina temple built by the side of the local tank called Palliyurani. The structure got dilapidated due to the passage of time and many of the stone blocks from this ruined edifice had been used in the construction of the Chokkanachchiyar shrine at Puteambur. Besides, three of the

<sup>37</sup> MPS, p. 1018

<sup>38</sup> C. Sivaramamurti, *op. cit.*, pl. 62

lion-based pillars from the same Jaina temple now adorn the Śīva temple at Tennangudi.<sup>39</sup>

At present, Jaina vestiges in the form of sculptures of a Tīrthaṅkara and a Yakṣi and a few lion-based pillars are found near the Palliyurani tank of the village. The Tīrthaṅkara, shown seated in *yogāsana*, is a small figure while Ambikā Yakṣi, also shown seated on a pedestal, is bigger in size. The basal part of the Yakṣi image contains an inscription in 10th century A. D. characters. It records that the Yakṣi sculpture was caused to be made by Jayankonda Cola Muvendavelan of Kulamangalanadu.<sup>40</sup> He is said to be an official working under Rajaraja Cola I. Kulamangalam is a village, bearing the same name, in Alangudi *tāluk*. The administrative unit of *Nadu* in the present context derived its name after the village Kulamangalam.

#### 14. Pudukkottai Museum

Isolated Jaina sculptures found in some villages in and around Pudukkottai have been collected and preserved in the Government Museum at Pudukkottai. They include stone sculptures and bronze images of Tīrthaṅkaras. Among them, the specimen from Mosakkudi deserves special mention. It is a slender figure, shown in *yoga* posture, with the arms and legs conventionally represented. The arms are not placed as usual on the legs kept in *padmāsana*, but held above the legs. The body is neither massive nor rigid. The other features like *simhāsana*, *cāmaradhāris*, *prabhāvali*, creeper design etc., are conspicuous by their absence. The triple umbrellas is the only accessory motif found in this image. The simplicity and grandeur of the sculpture could be assigned to the style of the 8th century A.D.<sup>41</sup> (p. 97)

A standing image of Pārśvanātha canopied by a five-hooded serpent and a seated figure of Mahāvīra with a triple umbrellas shown above the head, reported to have come from Vellanur and a few miniature images of Mahāvīra from an unknown provenance, all datable to the 13th-14th century A.D., are some of the Jaina sculptures preserved in the Museum.<sup>42</sup> Besides, there are five bronze images also found in

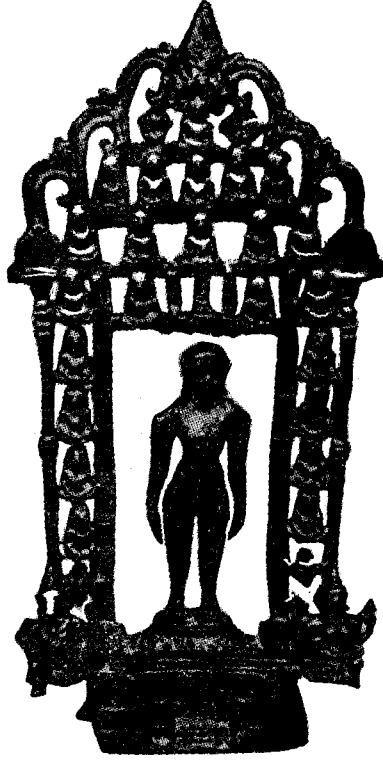
<sup>39</sup> MPS, Vol. II, pt-2, pp. 990-996

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 995

<sup>41</sup> M. S. Chandrasekar, *Guide to the Principal Exhibits in the Government Museum, Pudukkottai*, fig. 32

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 122

the museum collection. One of them depicts Ādinātha standing on a pedestal and is surrounded by a *prabhāvalī* accommodating miniature figures of the other Tīrthaṅkaras arranged in tiers. At his foot level are shown Gomukha Yakṣa and Cakreśvarī Yakṣi. The *pīṭha* in its central part contains the bull cognaisance of Ādinātha. The other four bronze images are said to have dug up from Pudukkottai town itself. Two of them represent Pārśvanātha while the others may be Mahāvīra. They lack the classical idiom and may be assigned to the 15th-16th century A. D.



*Adinatha, Pudukkottai Museum*

# Status of Woman in Jaina Society

Vilas Sangave

Religion and Society are closely bound together in Indian life and the former influences the social life of a people to a great extent. The religious independence given to Jaina women had its repercussions in the social field also. Equality of opportunity accorded to women in the religious sphere was manifest in several social spheres of action.

In ancient times almost in all patriarchal societies the birth of a girl was an unwelcome event and this gave rise to practices like the female infanticide and neglect of female children. The custom of infanticide of girls crept into some sections of Hindu society during the medieval period and at the time of the advent of the British rule in India the evil custom was confined to a microscopic minority in Hindu society. As the whole Jaina philosophy is based on the main principle of *ahimsā* or non-injury to living beings, it could not be expected at all that female infanticide might have been practised in Jaina society at any time. Similarly, we do not find that female children were purposefully neglected even though they might have been regarded as a burden on the family. According to Jaina Law the unmarried daughters and sisters are entitled to maintenance out of the family property and the expenditure on their marriage must be met from the same source. Further, in the absence of the father, the guardianship of the younger sisters upto the time of their marriage devolves on their elder brothers.

The females were not only spiritually and physically not neglected, but in education also they were given equal treatment with the males from the very beginning. During the period of the ascendancy of the Jains in India, it is patent that the family, the Church, the school and the state served as powerful agents for the spread of education among women.

As a result of this high type of education received by women, many women used to enter the teaching profession and to remain unmarried throughout the life in order to carry on their spiritual ex-

periments unhampered. The Jaina tradition has preserved the memory of Jayantī, a daughter of king Sahasrānika of Kauśāmbī, who remained unmarried out of her love for religion and philosophy. When Mahāvira first visited Kauśāmbī, she discussed with him several abstruse metaphysical questions and eventually became a nun. It is a fact that the cause of women's education in India suffered a good deal after about 300 B. C. on account of the new fashion of childmarriage that then began to come into vogue. Accordingly, the female education among Jains declined and at present the male literacy is five times than the female literacy in the Jaina community. Still the position of the Jaina females is decidedly better than that of the females as a whole in India and in the extent of literacy Jaina ladies stand next to Parsee, Jew and Christian ladies. The Jaina women not only kept up the pace of female education but at times made original contribution to literature. Along with men Jaina women also added to Kannada literature. The greatest name among them was Kanti who, along with Abhinava Pampa, was one of the gems that adorned the Court of Hoysāla King Ballāla I (A.D. 1100-1106). She was a redoubtable orator and a poet who completed the unfinished poems of Abhinava Pampa in the open court of that ruler. Similarly a Jaina Lady Avvaiyara, the Venerable Matron' was one of the most admired amongst the Tamil poets.

Of all the important events in the life of a woman, marriage is the most singular one. When a woman enters the institution of marriage she is called upon, in course of time, to rear and bring up the next generation. This makes her condition more precarious and of necessity she has to depend for the time being on the help and cooperation of her partner. Inequality of sex is the most obvious fact of the societal situation and the weaker sex has to adjust itself with the stronger one. The fate of a woman is, therefore, determined by her position in various aspects of marriage. A well devised marriage will give her the desired protection, otherwise there is every possibility that her life would be ruined. Marriage, thus, occupies an important place in the consideration of the social status of women.

Though marriage, according to Jains, is more in the nature of a civil contract and completely bereft of religious necessity, yet it was made obligatory for all persons, men and women, by the Jaina lawgivers. Those who do not wish to follow the life of renunciation and asceticism from an early age were advised to get married. Marriage was made equally compulsory for both women and men. Out of the eight forms of marriage the most prevalent forms of marriage in Jaina

community at present are the Brahma or Prajāpatya. There is no marked distinction between these two forms of marriage and they can perhaps be considered one and the same. It has been observed that this marriage is contracted without any exchange of money and the bride is given by her father as a gift to the bridegroom. To give away a daughter to the best available bridegroom out of sole regard for her happiness without receiving any consideration whatsoever recorded a marked ethical advance and definitely helped in making the status of both the parties equal. As regards the age of marriage in Jaina community it can be noticed that in ancient times marriage was recommended only for grown-up persons ; that the age-limit was lowered in medieval times and that at present adult marriage is the order of the day. In this respect it can be said that these are the very stages through which the Hindus also have passed. The part to be played by a bride in the settlement of her marriage depends on the age of the bride at the time of marriage. As the child marriage was not favoured by Jaina law-givers, it could be maintained that the brides have a more or less effective voice, in the selection of their partners in life. That is why the Svayamvara form of marriage was considered as the ancient and the best form of marriage. While determining the qualifications of parties to the marital union utmost care was taken to see that a bride was given to a person who was free from all sorts of bodily deformities and diseases and endowed with virtues and good family connections.

In the married life sufficient importance is given to the wife for the valuable role she plays in bringing family happiness. A wife is regarded as the keystone of the arch of the happiness of the home. It is emphatically said that a compound of brick and mortar does not make a home but the wife who follows the family traditions constitutes a home. In the domestic sphere she wielded all powers and was regarded as the presiding mistress of the house. It will be noticed from *Mahāpurāṇa*, *Śāntipurāṇa*, *Padmapurāṇa*, *Harivamśapurāṇa* and other *Purāṇas* that when the queens used to visit the Durbars, the kings themselves used to welcome them by standing and to allow them to sit by their side on the thrones. Even though polygamy was allowed, monogamy was the rule and polygamy the exception. As only a small rich and ruling section of the society followed polygamy, there was no general deterioration in the position of a woman. With a view to counteract illicit relations complete fidelity between husband and wife was regarded as the ideal of married life and for that purpose at the time of entering the householder's stage both the husband and wife have to take a vow of not keeping extra conjugal sexual relations.

In spite of the various precautions, if the married life does not become successful, the dissolution of wedlock is permitted under specific circumstances and the wife is allowed to contract another marriage. This means that divorce was allowed under certain conditions. In fact the practices of divorce and widow remarriage were governed by local customs and to that extent the position of women in this respect varied from place to place. When a woman becomes a widow she is placed in a precarious condition and the treatment accorded to her has an important bearing on her social position. The lot of the widow helps to find out the attitude of society towards women as a class. The first question to be dealt in connection with a widow was whether she was allowed to survive her husband, or she was compelled to die with him. Hindus adopted the policy of sacrificing the wife at the husband's death right from 300 B. C. upto 1829 A. D. when the custom of *sati* was prohibited by law. Contrary to this we do not find any instance of self-immolation or the custom of *sati* in Jaina texts.

Apart from self-immolation there were three courses open for widows in ancient times. They could either pass their remaining life in widowhood, or have some children by levirate (*niyoga*), or remarry regularly. The second course was not prescribed by the Jainas ; the third course was regulated by local customs and in all probability was adopted by a very small sections and, therefore, the first course, which was considered more honourable, was open to the Jaina widows. As the full religious freedom was allowed to females, widows could devote their time for their spiritual upliftment and thus carve out a respectable position for them in their family and in the minds of people in general. Again a Jaina widow inherited the property of her deceased husband and hence could pass her widowhood without any serious economic difficulty. Further, Jaina widows were free from the ugly custom of tonsure followed by the Hindu widows from about 1200 A. D. Among Jainas only nuns are used to be shaved and it is suggested that this practice might have given rise to the custom of the tonsure of widows in the Hindu society.

In conclusion it can be said that inspite of traditional practices of early marriage and widowhood persisting in the Jaina community, the granting of religious independence to women had very healthy repercussions on their social status. Thus, they commanded voice in their family affairs and wielded uncommon influence in the shaping of their children's destiny. Moreover, they enjoyed many legal rights of inheritance and possession of property and had ample opportunity of managing their domestic business independently.

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# Modern Science and the Principle of Karmons in Jainism

Kanti V. Mardia

## 1. *Karmons and the Karmic Personal Computer*

Einstein said that

Religion without science is blind,  
Science without religion is lame.

Jainism is science with religion. Every aspect of Jainism is based on understanding the cosmos, and the living and non-living entities in it. Modern science is capable of illuminating part of the truth. It explains matter in terms of forces and small particles. Electricity, through electrons, gives rise to light in the room ; radio-waves through electric-magnetic forces, result in sound on a loudspeaker and so on. Jainism explains life through interaction of such invisible small particles and the soul. The small particles are *Karmic Particles* or *Karmons* and they create a *Karmic Force*. We keep on absorbing these karmons through activity, and throw some out after their effect have taken place. Thus the soul has a *Karmic Computer* attached to it. This personal karmic computer keeps all the records—it also dictates some tasks from previous records *i.e.*, past lives. For example, your karmic computer has a message for you to read this issue—to think about the Jain religion. This is a good activity and therefore the soul absorbs positive karmons. These positive karmons lead to positive fruition. Also positive action reduces negative karmons and the soul gets purified. Thus the karmic matter and the soul form a type of nuclear reactor say, *Karmic Reactor* and the purification is like the emission of powerful energy from this karmic reactor.

Jainism uses words like *Bandha* (karmic fusion), *Āsrava* (karmic force-lines) etc. to describe these activities. Just as the basis of modern physics is its forces, Jainism is based on karmic force. As modern science believes in the interchangeability of matter and energy, in the

same way the reaction between karmic matter and soul take place. Jains have used the word *Pudgala* (—*pud* = join, *gala* = break) for this mass-energy equivalence. There is no such word for this concept in modern science because the terminology of modern science is derived from Greek/Latin.

## 2. *Karmic Fusion and Vegetarianism*

Our aim is to minimize the intake of these karmons. That is one of the reasons why vegetarianism has become part of Jainism. True Jains will not even eat onions etc. but will eat apples etc. You might wonder what is the reason for this ? The reason put forward is that there are more 'life units' in an onion than in an apple. From one apple tree, one gets a large number of apples but from one onion one gets only another onion. Thus an onion must have more life units than that of an apple ! Therefore the consumption of onions gives rise to the intake of more karmons than apples. You can extend this idea to other foods—thus Jains operate a very strict type of vegetarianism.

## 3. *Karmons and Obscuration of Knowledge*

To bring rationality into thinking one should also look at Jain Logic. Jainism believes in *Syādvāda* so that everything is conditioned by our knowledge at a particular time—and there is nothing absolutely known unless the soul is "perfect",—that is, when the divine quality of *Jainness* is fully developed. Soul with karmic matter is like crude oil compared with petrol the more refined it is the more power it has. Non-absolutism in thinking is what is recommended in Jainism. This principle operates clearly in the scientific research ; yesterday the smallest particle was the proton—today it is a quark and so on.

Also Jain logic recommends relativity in thinking or holistic principle called *Anekāntavāda*. Consider the example of the six blind men and an elephant. One who touches the tail says it is a rope, one who touches the leg says it is a pillar and so on. What one requires is to look at every aspect of life and matter. This story was popularized in the West by J. G. Saxe (1816-1877). The poem by J. G. Saxe is worth quoting :

### The Blind Men and the Elephant

*It was six men of Indostan  
To learning much inclined,  
Who went to see the Elephant  
(Though all of them were blind),  
That each by observation  
Might satisfy his mind.*

*The First approached the Elephant,  
And happening to fall  
Against his broad and sturdy side,  
At once began to bawl :  
"God bless ! but the Elephant  
Is very like a wall !"*

*The Second, feeling of the tusk,  
Cried, "Ho ! what have we here  
So very round and smooth and sharp ?  
To me 'tis mighty clear  
The wonder of an Elephant  
Is very like a spear !"*

*The Third approached the animal,  
And happening to take  
The squirming trunk within his hands,  
Thus boldly up and spake :  
"I see", quoth he, "the Elephant  
Is very like a Snake !"*

*The Fourth reached out an eager hand,  
And felt about the knee.  
"What most this wondrous beast is like  
Is mighty plain," quoth he :  
"Tis clear enough the Elephant  
Is very like a tree !"*

*The Fifth who chanced to touch the ear,  
Said : "E'en the blindest man  
Can tell what this resembles most :  
Deny the fact who can,  
This marvel of an Elephant  
Is very like a fan !"*

*The Sixth no sooner had begun  
About the beast to grope,  
Than, seizing on the swinging tail  
That fell within his scope,  
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant  
Is very like a rope !"*

*And so these men of Indostan  
Disputed loud and long,  
Each in his own opinion  
Exceeding stiff and strong.  
Though each was partly in the right  
And all were in the wrong !*

#### 4. *The Purification Path*

In short, according to Jainism, time, space, life, non-life (matter) exist and will exist forever—the universe is self-regulating ; life is mainly regulated by karmons unless these are all removed. How can these be removed ? A path of purification is prescribed. It is not easy since Jainism believes existing karmic matter can only be removed (before predetermined duration) through austerity, otherwise the personal karmic computer will keep on working. It prescribes self-restraint rather than self indulgence. Einstein, when he tried to define his concept of religion, said

*"...a person who is religiously enlightened appears to me to be one who has to the best of his ability, liberated himself from the fetters of his selfish desires."*

This is, indeed, a definition of Jainism !

# The Doctrine of Anekanta and its Significance

B. K. Khadabadi

*Ahiṃsā*—non-violence or non-hurting, *aparigraha*—putting limitation to one's worldly possessions and *anekānta*—non-absolutism are the fundamental tenets or doctrines in Jainism ; and they prominently stand as unique contribution to human thought and life. Among these *ahiṃsā* holds the key position ; the other two can be said to be its extended forms on other realms of man's life. *Ahiṃsā* plays the cardinal role in man's ethical discipline ; *aparigraha* or rather *parimita-parigraha*—limited possessions or *icchā-parimāṇa*—putting limitation to one's desire, happens to be its one extended role on man's socio-economic plane and *anekānta-dṛṣṭi*—non-absolutistic attitude, the other extended role on the plane of thought.

Philosophically speaking *anekānta* is the name of Reality which is complex and according to which every object possesses indefinite aspects or characteristics. Dr. T. G. Kalghatgi elucidates it as follows<sup>1</sup> : *anekānta* consists in the many sided approach to the study of problems. It arose as an antidote to the one-sided or absolute approach (*ekānta*) to the study of Reality of philosophers in those good old days Pt. K. C. Shastri explains the same at some length and with a few technicalities and illustrations<sup>2</sup> ;

Any object, by virtue of its possessing several characteristics, is *aneka-dharmātmaka*—*dharma* meaning characteristic, and hence, *anekāntātmaka*. An object may be said to be *nitya* imperishable from one point of view and *anitya*—perishable from another point of view at the same time This statement, on the face of it, seems to be contradictory, but is the right one for having the full and correct knowledge of the object or Reality. Because from the point of view of *dravya*—substance, the object is imperishable and from the point of

<sup>1</sup> *Jaina Logic*, Ahimsa Mandir, New Delhi, 1981, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Bharatiya Dharma evam Ahimsa*, Ahimsa Mandir, New Delhi, 1983, pp. 143-151,

view of *pariyāya*—modes or modifications, it is perishable.<sup>3</sup> So an object or Reality always possesses an indefinite number of characteristics, which could be of contradictory nature and, hence, one has to take a total or synthetic view of it. An acceptance or conviction of this kind of view is *anekānta*; and the acceptance or conviction of one of those points of view is *ekānta*. Hence the *Nayacakra* declares.<sup>4</sup>

*eyaṅto eyaṅao hoi  
aṇeyaṅto tassa samūho*

Acceptance of one point of view is *ekānta*, and that of totality of the points of view is *anekānta*.

To explain this doctrine of *anekānta*, Jainācāryas have given several illustrations to which Pt. K. C. Shastri refers. I would reproduce here one of them:<sup>5</sup> A few blind men gather near an elephant. Each of them feels by touching one limb of the animal and tells to others that the elephant is like that particular limb. The rest of them do not agree. Then there arises a quarrel among themselves. By that time a normal man (with full eye-sight) arrives there and explains to them: That each one of you have seen by touching one limb of the elephant though it is not true it is not false either. The elephant's trunk being like a fleshy fat rope, it appears like such a rope to one. Its legs being like the pillar, it appears like a pillar to the other. Thus taking a comprehensive, total or synthetic view of all the limbs of the elephant, one will arrive at or to know of a complete or whole elephant. Like this illustration, the exposition of one of the characteristics of an object (Reality) is *ekānta*; and the exposition of all the characteristics of it is *anekānta*. And such theory or doctrine is *Anekāntavāda*—the Doctrine of Non-absolutism.

*Syādvāda* is another related doctrine which has emanated from *Anekāntavāda*.<sup>6</sup> The method or system of interpretation of the various

<sup>3</sup> In Jain Logic *naya* is a point of view. *Naya* primarily is of two kinds (1) *dravyarthika*—the point of view of substance and (2) *pariyarthika*—the point of view of modes. Each of these two are of three kinds, making six as the total number of *nayas*. With the help of all these six *nayas* one can investigate the whole Reality and know it. This theory is known as *Nayavada*, which is earlier and on which stands the system of *Syadvada*.

<sup>4</sup> V. No. 1801.

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 147.

<sup>6</sup> Some scholars think that *Anekantavada* and *Syadvada* are one and the same. Dr. Darbarilal Kothia rightly opposes this view for *Syadvada*, which is based on *Nayavada*, is just the systematizer of *Anekantavada*. Vide his *Jain Darsan aur Nyaya : Udbhav evam Vikas tatha Jain Darsan aur Jain Nyaya : Ek Parisilan*, Ahimsa Mandir, New Delhi, Vira Samvat 2513, pp. 61-62.

characteristics of an object (Reality) is called *Syādvāda*. In other words, it is the expositor or systematizer of *anekānta*, showing which one of those characteristics stands with which point of view. *Syāt* means perhaps, under certain condition etc., and it signifies assertion of probability ; and *Vāda* means theory or doctrine. With such assertion, *Syādvāda* justifiably interprets the *aneka-dharmātmaka* Reality in the form of Seven-fold Predication, known as *Saptabhāṅgi*—*bhāṅga* meaning predication. Of these seven predications, only three are fundamental : *asti*, *nāsti* and *avaktavyaṁ*—affirmation, negation and undescribability respectively. With this system of predication, *Syādvāda* shows that there are in all seven ways of interpreting an object, its attributes and modes. It also demonstrates to us that the same truth can be differently expressed without committing us to any kind of contradiction.

Many a time *Syādvāda* is used as a synonym of *Anekāntavāda*. Dr. M. L. Mehta supports such usage in the following statement<sup>7</sup> : The relativity of judgement (*Syādvāda*) is nothing but a relative judgement about an object that possesses indefinite aspects or characteristics. In other words, a relative judgement is not possible unless the object for which that judgement stands is *anekāntātmaka*. Moreover *Syādvāda*, which is a system of convincingly interpreting *Anekāntavāda*, an important doctrine in Jainism, is also frequently used as a synonym for *Jina-pravacana* the (entire) teachings of the Jina.<sup>8</sup> Prof. Jacobi points out, for example, the reputed Jaina work *Syādvāda-mañjarī* as the Exposition of Jaina Philosophy.<sup>9</sup> Perhaps on such grounds, Dr. Dayanand Bhargava remarks that *Syādvāda* has almost become a synonym for Jainism itself.<sup>10</sup> Further, *Syādvādā* is also used as a prominent characteristic of the *Jina-śāsana*—the (whole) Jaina Doctrine. For example, in Karnataka in almost all Jain inscriptions the opening verse forms the following invocation<sup>11</sup> :

*śrīmatparamagambhīra syādvādamogha lāñcchanam  
jīyāt trailokyanāthasya śāsanam jinaśāsanam*

May the Doctrine of the Jina be victorious—the Doctrine of the

7 *Outlines of Jaina Philosophy*, Jain Mission Society, Bangalore, 1954, p. 118.

8 *Vide Studies in Jainism*, Prof. Hermann Jacobi, Ahmedabad, 1945, p. 51.

9 *Ibid.*

10 *Jaina Ethics*, Varanasi, 1968, Preface, p. vii.

11 (i) Dr. B. A. Saletore projects this famous verse with all pride at the opening of his treatise *Medieval Jainism*, Karnatak Publishing House, Bombay, 1938.

(ii) Prof. S. R. Sharma finds this verse even on one of the Memorial Stones (*Veeragallu*) recording the death of a Jain Hero. *Vide his Jainism and Karnatak Culture*, Karnatak Historical Research Society, Dharwad, 1940, p. 55.

Lord of the three Worlds, the unfailing characteristic of which is the glorious and most profound *Syādvāda*.

All these examples, I think, indicate a historical fact that the usage of the term *Ānekāntavāda* (standing for one of the fundamental doctrines in Jainism) rather took a back-seat, while that of the term *Syādvāda* (standing as its resultant doctrine, *i.e.* emanating from *Anekāntavāda* itself), with its attractive method of the seven-fold predication and, thus, catching the imagination of scholars as well as laymen, took the front-seat in certain regions and times.

Whatsoever the nomenclature could have been in practice in certain regions and times, it is undoubtedly *Anekāntavāda* or *anekānta-dṛṣṭi* that stands as the basic or primary doctrine playing a significant role not only in philosophy, but also on the plane or realm of thought in man's life. *Anekānta-dṛṣṭi*—non-absolutistic attitude establishes a kind of propriety and harmony among different persons or bodies looking at an object, a problem, or a phenomenon from different points of view. It teaches us to show regard for or extend consideration to the other man's view or other side's stand, and to avoid further controversy, misunderstanding, mistrust and quarrel or confrontation. Such approach naturally inculcates constructive attitude and creates for us healthy and peaceful social atmosphere. It will not be wrong if I point out, in this context, a recent classical example of the importance and value of having regard, on the part of each contending person or party, for the other person or party. Had not President Reagan and President Gorbachev, Heads of two great world power-blocks, having different ideologies, met for summit-talks in their capitals and discussed issues extending regard and consideration for each other's views, the world would have heavily suffered from the catastrophe of heaps of the medium-range nuclear weapons by this time.

Pt. K. C. Shastri thinks<sup>12</sup> that *anekānta* was born to avoid *himsā*—violence or to hush up trouble of *himsā* on the plane of thought, deliberation or discussion. This amounts to saying that to develop *anekānta-dṛṣṭi*—non-absolutistic attitude, one has to develop *ahimsaka-dṛṣṭi*—non-violent's attitude, which is based on *samatā*—equality. Perhaps on this ground the *Samāṇa-suttam* states<sup>13</sup>: In the world of thought the visible form of *ahimsā* is *anekānta*. One who is not violent, would also be non-absolutistic; and one who possesses non-absolutistic attitude, would also be non-violent.

12 Vide *Op. cit.*, p. 151.

13 *Samānasuttam*, Varanasi, 1975, Preface, p. 15.



The significance and efficacy of all such reflections, views and opinions regarding the doctrine of *anekānta* have stood the crucial test, even in modern days, at the hands of great thinkers like Gandhiji. To elucidate this point, I would just reproduce here my own observations presented elsewhere in a similar context<sup>14</sup> :

Gandhiji's experiments with non-violence and truth, also comprised the application of non-absolutistic view (*anekāntadṛṣṭi*), for without it, it is hardly possible to reach truth, which is always non-absolute and many-sided. He did apply it to situations in relevant contexts : He often accepted offers of dialogues and deliberations with the authorities of the British regime with the purpose of knowing their own points of view and with that of giving them chances to reconsider his own earlier assertions on particular issues. He had the same attitude towards his colleagues and leaders of other political organizations in India. On reasonable occasions even he did not hesitate to step back a little and strike a compromise with the opposite person or group on certain questions. We get such examples of his broad-sighted or non-absolutistic view having been displayed in some of his dealings with the British regime and the Muslim League on certain issues. Lastly, I may point out that Gandhiji's favourite and well-known multi-religious prayer is a unique symbol of his non-absolutistic attitude being put into practice, which has remained for us now as a source of eternal spirituality, fostering universal outlook and cherishing universal good.

Like Gandhiji if each one of us develop, in our own humble way, *anekānta-dṛṣṭi* and practise it, not only our family life and social life will be smooth, happy and peaceful, it would also show its effect on national and international levels in due course. This kind of noble hope is lucidly reflected in the significant words of the great logician Ācārya Siddhasena Divākara, which are worth-meditating upon daily by us all :

*jeṇa biṇā logassa vi vavahāro savvahā ṇa ṇivvahai  
tassa bhuvaneṅka guruṇo ṇamo aṇekanta vāyassa*<sup>15</sup>

Salutations to the Supreme Preceptor of the World, the Doctrine of *Anekānta*, without which the daily business or practical life of its people cannot be carried on at all.

<sup>14</sup> From my proposed *Special Lectures*, under R. K. Jain Memorial Lecture Series, at the University of Delhi, on *Sravakacara—Jaina Code of Conduct for Household, Its Significance and Its Relevance to the Present Times*, Lecture III-3.

<sup>15</sup> *Nyayavartana*, v.

# Influence of Prakrit on Kannada Language and Literature

Hampa Nagarajaiah

It is not an exaggeration to say that the history of Kannada language and literature would be complete and meaningful only with reference to Prakrit. It has played such an important role in the development of Kannada literature which can be explained and analysed on four levels :

1. On Kannada language : A linguistic analysis on historical lines will clearly exhibit the depth and dimension of this influence. Early Kannada grammarians were also aware of this aspect. As a result of the contact of Prakrit, certain phonetic and semantic changes have also taken place in this language.
2. On Kannada literature : First stratum of Prakrit on Kannada literature is the subject of this paper.
3. On Kannada metre : A detailed and analytical study of Kannada prosodical principles reveals the tone and colour of Prakrit metres. In particular three forms of Kannada metre (*ragale*, *kanda* and *sāṅgatyā*) bear the stamp of Prakrit. Early Kannada poets are influenced by Apabhramsa *kaḍavakas*. The very conception of *ādirāsa* and *antyapāsa* in Kannada verses, owes its allegiance to Prakrit *kāvya*s. Kannada poets have used the words *paddati*, *paddaḷi* as synonyms to *ragale* a kind of Kannada metre, which reiterates Prakrit influence. Prakrit *paddaḍia* and other variants *paddika*, *pajjhaḍika*, *padditika*, *pajjihaḍia* can be compared with Kannada forms, which attributes to a common source. *Kanda*, another Kannada metre, has evolved on the model of Prakrit *skandaka* (a Sanskritised form of Prakrit *khandaa*) and Apabhramsa *khandaya*/*khandā*. Similarly *sāṅgatyā*, a Kannada metre, is said to have derived from Prakrit *sanghatta* metre.

4. On religion in Karnataka : Jainism, according to the traditional belief, is said to have come from north, the region of Prakrit. Every house holder respectfully recites Prakrit *cattāri maṅgalam* and *pañcaṇamokāra mantram*. A critico-historical study of Kannada literature, beginning with the early proto-Kannada and the later *kāvya*s, go to prove the solid influence of Prakrit. It is said wisely and appropriately, that Kannada literature minus Jain literature is almost zero. This figurative expression can further be extended and said that the Jain literature in Kannada minus Prakrit influence is a big cipher.

Both Prakrit and Kannada flourished in a friendly atmosphere under similar circumstances. Prakrit influence started moderately in the last centuries of B.C. and it assumed a massive magnitude by 4th century A.D. Asokan Inscriptions, six edicts of 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D. are all in Prakrit and the date of the first inscription of Kannada is 450 A.D. By the time a Kannada inscription appeared there were a dozen Prakrit edicts, of several centuries before that date. Totally there are 24 Prakrit inscriptions in Karnataka, which give information about Maurya, Cuṭu, Śatavāhana, Pallava and Kadamba kings.

Śatavāhanas, the earliest to rule Karnataka had Prakrit as their administrative language and it is said that they had permitted the people of the palace only to use Prakrit. Hālarāja, a king of this Śatavāhana dynasty wrote (rather compiled) his famous work *Gāhāsatta-sai* (3rd century A.D.) in which he described Prakrit language as a nectar '*amīam pāia kavvam*'. Later Gaṅgas who succeeded Śatavāhanas, also encouraged Prakrit by which time it had its roots deep in the soil of Karnataka.

Though the Tīrthaṅkaras are from the North, most of the Ācāryas are from the south in general and from Karnataka in particular. These preceptors bridged the gulf between north and south, using Prakrit as a link language. In Kannada *Kathākośa* (= Va) Śivakoṭi, Vaṭṭakera, Bhūtabali, Puṣpadanta, Vīrasena, Dharasena, Jinasena, Boppadeva, Pūjyapāda, Samautabhadra, Nemicaṇḍra and other preceptors are respectfully remembered in the pontifical geneology of Jaina Order. *Dhavalā*, *Jayadhavalā* and *Mahādhavalā* ultimately took its present shape in Karnataka.

A mixture of Prakrit and Sanskrit is found in *Cūrṇi* texts, e.g., Jinadāsa Mahattara (676) has employed such a style in his *Nandī Cūrṇi*.

In Karnataka also such a style evolved in the early centuries, of mixing Kannada instead of Sanskrit with Prakrit. Tumbalūrācārya (a 4C) wrote a Kannada commentary *Cūḍāmaṇi* on *Ubhayasiddhānta* and a *Pañcīkā*; In total about 91 thousand verses (87+7). One more *Cūḍāmaṇi* was written by Śrīvardhadeva (a 4C) a work of 96 thousand verses. Another Ācārya Śamakunda (a 4C) also wrote a commentary to *Chakkkhandāgama* and *Kaṣāyapāhuḍa* containing 12,000 verses, using Kannada, Prakrit and Sanskrit languages. All these three commentaries have disappeared leaving no traces.

Prakrit continued to exercise its grip and command over the learned, including kings. Durvinīta (555-605) of western Gaṅga dynasty, whose family religion was Jainism, is said to have written three works, one of them being *Vaḍḍakathā*, which is supposed to be a faithful version of Guṇaḍhya's *Brhatkathā* in Paisācī. Durvinīta's *Vaḍḍakathā* is only next earliest work on Guṇaḍhya's book after *VH* of Sanghadāsa (6th century). *Vaḍḍakathā* and a Tamil work *Perungathai* by a Jain author Konguvelir (9th century) represent southern recension of Guṇaḍhya's *Brhatkathā*. Durvinīta was a disciple of Pūjyapāda, a distinguished Jain Ācārya.

Like Durvinīta, another Gaṅga king Śivamāra II (about 800) was versatile in Kannada, Sanskrit and Prakrit. He has written a *Śivamaramata* or a *Gajāṣṭaka* and a *Setubandha kāvyā*. There is a Prakrit *Setubandha (rāvaṇa vaho)* attributed to Kālidāsa or Pravarasena (of Vākāṭakavamśa). But some scholars and historians have expressed emphatically that the author of Prakrit *Sethubanda* is none but this Śivamāra.

A study of Prakrit was a prerequisite to Jain writers, as some of the basic religious texts were in that language. Hence most of them were equally proficient in Prakrit as in Kannada. Some of the Kannada poets in their over enthusiasm to exhibit their knowledge of Prakrit have used *gāhās* in Kannada *kāvyas*. On account of this intimacy with Prakrit literature, Jain poets could open a new horizon to Kannada literature. So much was the influence of Prakrit that the author of *Kavirājamārga* (9th century) warns the Kannada poets to ward off the Prakrit temptation. It is possible that some of the Kannada works written earlier to *Kavirājamārga*, both in prose and in poetry, of which we have no access, might have borrowed or translated mainly Prakrit works.

Narrative stories such as *Dhanya* (Kumāra), *Kārtika* (ṛṣi), *Śālibhadra*, *Cilātaputra*, have entered the lore of Kannada literature descending from Prakrit *Anuttaropapātikadasā*. It is only with the source of Ardhamaḡadhi cannon, a scholar will be able to explain the origin and development of these stories. The main character of Śreṇika, perhaps modelled on Janmejaya of Mahābhārata, solely responsible for the Purāṇas and other stories, their births and rebirths, in Kannada literature is drawn from its counter part in Prakrit.

There are more *Neminātha Purāṇas*, more than half a dozen, in Kannada than on any other Tīrthaṅkara and the main reason and source is Prakrit Literature.

Divākaranandi (1064) wrote a Kannada Commentary on *Tattvārtha-sūtra*, the first commentary in Kannada on the famous Sanskrit work. It contains about 225 *gāhās* which clearly speaks of the author's proficiency in Prakrit. Śāntinātha's (1068) *Sukumāra carite*, a *campū kāvya* in Kannada has been influenced by Prakrit works on the same story. Durgasimha (1031) in his Karnataka *Pañcatantram* has narrated the previous births of Guṇaḡhya : "One Puṣpadanta in the Śivagaṇa, as a punishment for overhearing, was reborn in this mundane world as Guṇaḡhya. Later he rose to eminence as a poet of excellence and wrote *Bṛhatkathā* in Paiśācī, incorporating the stories told to Pārvaṭī by Hara. In due course Vasubhāgabhaṭṭa picked up only five diamond like stories from that ocean of stories (Guṇaḡhya's *Bṛhatkathā*), wrote it in Sanskrit and named it as *Pañcatantram*. This work was acclaimed and appreciated by kings and poet laureates. I (Durgasimha) am rendering afresh that Vasubhāgabhaṭṭa's *Pañcatantram* into Kannada." Thus this Kannada translation of Vasubhāgabhaṭṭa's *Pañcatantram* has a special significance of preserving a Jaina version of *Pañcatantra*, a parallel tradition to Viṣṇuśarmā's. This Kannada poet Durgasimha has praised Prakrit writer Guṇaḡhya like this : "When it is impossible even to Brahmā (the creator) to flatter the delicate, melliflous and limpid poetic brilliance of the famous Guṇaḡhya, who on earth is there capable of doing it ?"

Vṛttavilāsa's (1360) Kannada *Dharmaparikṣe*, though directly indebted to Amitagati's (1014) Sanskrit work, has some stories in it which originate from Prakrit *Dhūrtākhyāna* (Haribhadra-Sūri ; 750), Harisena's (988) *Dharma-Parikṣā* in Apabhramsa and all of these works in turn ultimately points to *Niśīthacūrṇi* (677) of Jinadāsagaṇi.

A tradition of writing commentaries on Ārādhana (*Mūlārādhana*) existed in Karnataka from 8th century. Among the earliest are *Vijayodaya* in Sanskrit and *Ārādhana Karnāṭaṭīkā* in Kannada, respectively written by Aparājita Sūri and Bhraṇṣṇu. Though the date, place and identification of them is still debatable, it is possible that they were both from Karnataka and that they lived in 9th Century. Rāmacandra Mumukṣu has based his *Puṇyāsrava Kathākośa* on *Ārādhana Karnāṭaṭīkā* is a point for further consideration.

*Vaḍḍārādhane* (about 1075) a collection of 19 stories bears the stamp of Prakrit so much that if Prakrit elements are taken away from this text what remains then is a bare skeleton. Name of the author and the work, date, place and source were all in a state of nebulous. I had the pleasure and privilege of probing deep into these questions in my Ph.D. thesis on this subject, which has thrown fresh light on all these aspects. This Kannada *Kathākośa* has borrowed *gāhās* from *Bhagavati Ārādhana*, *Mūlācāra*, *Tiloyasāra*, *Paramātmā-prakāśa*, Śrīcandra's *Kathākośa*, *Jambūdivapaṇṇatti*, *Nayacakra*, *Darśana-pāhuḍa* and *Pratikramaṇasūtra*, all Prakrit works.

Cāmuṇḍarāya, an outstanding personality in Karnataka's history, has written some works and *TLP* is a significant Kannada prose work (978) as it is the first *Mahāpurāṇa* in Kannada. There are about 11 *gāhās* quoted in the *CRP*. Cāmuṇḍarāya is the main cause for the erection of Gommateśvara's monolith of 58 ft at Śravaṇabelagola and for Nemicaandra's *Gommaṭasāra*. Nāgacandra's (1080) *Rāmacandra-carita-purāṇam* narrates Jain version of *Rāmāyaṇa* and owes its gratitude to Vimala-sūri's (a 3C) *Pauma-cariya*, written in Jaina-Mahārāṣṭrī.

Nemicaandra (a 1180), a Caturbhāṣa Cakravartī, wrote two *campū-kāvya*s; *Lilāvati-prabandham* and *Nemināthapurāṇam*. Scholars have noted the influence of Prakrit *Lilāvatikāvya* of Kouhala (a. 800) and Sanskrit *Vāsavadattā* of Subandhu, (a 6C) on Nemicaandra's *Lilāvati kāvya*. I would like to focus the attention of scholars to another important reference not mentioned so far; One Jineśvara Sūri (1034) has written a Prakrit *kāvya* '*Lilāvati Kathā*,' which may be the direct source to Nemicaandra's Kannada classic-*Lilāvati-prabandham*.

In his another *kāvya*, poet Nemicaandra, in a state of ecstasy and out of sheer love and respect for Prakrit literature, has given a rare description. Let me quote the very words of the poet : (the situation under reference is that Vasudeva majestically enters the marriage hall)

“*prākṛta kāvyadante sahaja saubhāgya bhaṅgi bhāvālankārādīn alankṛtanāgi svayamvara maṇḍapaṁ*,” i.e., “Vasudeva entered the marriage hall attired with natural grace and charm like a Prakṛita kāvya”.

Here Nemicandra has given a glowing tribute to the glory of Prakṛit literature by making a casual but very effective statement at the appropriate time and place. This is just a spontaneous outburst of a poet’s unprejudiced attitude and appreciation towards another language and literature that has so much influenced him and his writing. I do not think that there can be a better compliment or testimonial to Prakṛit literature than this unique statement. It is interesting to note further more that Nemicandra has also composed four *gāhās* and used them in his two *kāvyas*.

Bandhuvarma (a. 1150) makes use of *bārasa anuvekkha* and some KK’s works in his *Jivasambodhane*. Nāgavarmā (a 990) has derived inspiration from Svayambhu *chandas* (a 9C) for his *Chandombudhi*. A number of *Vratākathās* in Kannada are highly indebted to Prakṛit sources. There are some independent *kāvyas* depicting the story of Nāgākumāra and the direct source is Mahākavi Puṣpadantas *Nāyakumāra carīu*. Āṇḍayya (a. 12C) has used good number of *tadbhava* forms and some of them are from Prakṛit. There are a number of Kannada commentaries on pro-canonical literature, *Bārāha-anuvekkha*, *Dasabhakti*, *Paramātma-prakāśa*, *Karma-prakṛti-prābhṛta*, *Kṣapaṇasāra*, *Gommaṭasāra*, *Rayasāra* etc. Keśavarṇi (1359), Bāhbaliśiddhānta Vratī (14c), Adhyātmī Bālacandra (1170), Bālacandra Paṇḍita (1273), Padmaprabha (1, 1300) Prabhācandra (a 1300) and other commentators have done their best to pass on Prakṛit works to Kannada literature. Poet Vijayaṇṇa’s (1448) *Dvādaśānuprekṣe* is again based on Prakṛit sources.

Till today the origin of *campū* remains an enigma, a *yakṣaprasna*; some scholars have attributed it to Prakṛit source. There is another form of prose writing in Kannada called ‘*bolli*’: *pañca-parameṣṭhigāḷa-bolli* (Bālacandra-Paṇḍita; 1273). This is borrowed from Prakṛit *bolli*. Māghanandī (1250), author of about four works, has used 647 *gāhās* in his *magnum opus Padārthasāra*. *Siribhūvalaya* of Kumudendu (a 15C), a unique work in any language, has mentioned the names of Prakṛit works and authors, in addition to *gāhās*.

Prakṛit enjoyed the royal patronage in Karnataka first under Śāta-vāhanas. Later Prakṛit found its patron in Gaṅgas and Rāṣṭrakūṭas. When Gaṅgas were vanquished and Rāṣṭrakūṭa capital city Mānyakheta (Mal-

khed) was burnt, not only Prakrit literature but also Kannada literature lost a great patron in them. Prakrit in particular has to flee from the palace to seek its shelter elsewhere in *gurukulas* and *maṭhas*, but the glory and pomp of creative literature was gone and what followed later was mainly some commentaries on pro-canonical literature.

The role of Prakrit literature in the development of Kannada is stupendous, both in quality and in quantity. Kannada assimilated some of the best qualities of Prakrit a process which started very early around 3rd c. and continued upto 14th c. Almost as a token of gratitude Karnataka also encouraged Prakrit writers. *Dhavaḷā* was safely preserved for the posterity, Mahākavi Puṣpadanta wrote his classics here. Virahāṅka, Svayāmbhu, Trivikrama, Nemicandra and a host of others, in addition to the galaxy of great Ācāryas like Vaṭṭakera, Śivakoṭi, Vīrasena, Jinasena all lived and wrote in Karnataka.

Among other variants of Prakrit it is Apabhramsa that has influenced Kannada more. Joindu's (a. 600) *Paramappayāsu*, Kaṇakāmara's *Karakaṇḍucariu*, Siricandra's *Kahākosu*, Hāla's *Gāhā-satta-sai*, and some other *kāvyas* such as *Sanat-kumāra cariyam*, *Bhavisatta-kahā* all belong to Apabhramsa group. There are Apabhramsa *gāhās* quoted in Kannada *Vaḍḍaradhane* and other works. Main works and *kāvyas* of Prakrit written in Karnataka also belong to Apabhramsa ; for example the works of Puṣpadanta.

The influence of Jaina Śaurasenī is almost on par with Apabhramsa. *Pavayaṇasāra*, *Pañcatīkāya*, *Chappāhūḍa*, *Mūlācāra*, *Kattigeṇānupekkhā* are some of the important works of Jaina Śaurasenī that has influenced Kannada literature. Next comes Jaina Mahārāṣṭrī of which the main works to influence Kannada are *Paumacariya* of Vimalasūri, commentary of *Uttarājjhayāna* of Devendra and *Samarāicchakahā* of Haribhadra (8c). The only work of Paisācī Prakrit to influence Kannada literature is, of course that great classic of universal importance Guṇaḍhya's *Bṛhatkathā*. Contribution of Yāpaniya writers is also worth pondering, though Digambar Jain literature dominated in Karnataka. Entire *Bhagavatī Āradhanā* and its commentaries are the total effort and contributions of Yāpaniya branch.

What remains now, towards the end of this paper is to find out whether Karnataka has also influenced Prakrit. It would be appropriate to consider this aspect of influence as mutual between Prakrit and Kannadā. There are some suggestions confirming the influence of Kannada on Prakrit.



One of the words occurring in an Asokan inscription at Brahmagiri in Karnataka is 'isila' (3rd c. B.C.). This word has been interpreted earlier as Prakrit 'r̥ṣi', but the derivation of which was doubtful. Later in 1958, Prof. D. L. N. in his lecture on the oldest datable word in Kannada has pointed out 'isila' as a Prakritised Kannada word. It is derived from Kannada *esil* (a fort); *eyil* is a cognate word in Tamil. Kannada *esil*, Tamil *eyil* both come from a common Dravidian verbal base *ec-eccu* (to shoot an arrow); *eecu*, *ese*, *esu* are the variant forms of the same meaning. Therefore the Prakrit word 'isila' from Kannada language, signifies only as a place for shooting (arrows); i.e., a fort from where arrows were shot; other scholars have also endorsed this suggestion.

Scholars have discussed about some Kannada word used in *Gāhāsatta-sai* of Hāla, who has styled himself as a Chief of the People of Karanataka (Kuntalajanapadeśvara). Kannada nouns such as *poṭṭa* (stomach), *tuppa* (ghee); and verbs like *peṭṭa* (to strike), *tir* (to become possible) are freely used in this Prakrit work.

Dr. A. N. Upadhye's paper 'Kanarese Words in Deśī Lexicons' exclusively deals with this aspect, where he has very positively affirmed Kannada influence. It is but expected that Kannada must have influenced Prakrit because of the closer contacts of those two languages for nearly ten centuries. Apart from linguistic findings, a study on literary impact of Kannada literature on Prakrit is still a desideratum. All said and done, it should not be forgotten that there are matters which still await critical investigation.

# Sramana Sanskriti

H. C. Golchha

Śramaṇa Sanskriti is the oldest culture of human race and civilisation. Bhagavān Rṣabha Deva who taught human beings the Science of Living, is the proud propounder of this Sanskriti as well. At the back drop of Śramaṇa Sanskriti, the main philosophy lies not only in the emancipation of one's own soul but also to help co-human beings to improve the lot of their present and future lives. This reminds one of the principle of *Tiṇṇāṇam Tārayāṇam*.

The 24th and most popularly known Tīrthaṅkara Lord Mahāvīra, was the great victor not of the mundane battles but the inward battle with the *karmas* by a steady process of austerity, *tapah* and self-purification. Perpetuated by his *kaivalya*, he established the five *mahāvratas* which are the cornerstone of the Jaina Philosophy and Sramaṇa Sanskriti. The Lord did not create or form any sect or *sampradāya*. His sermons did not carry any framework for Digambara or Śvetāmbara as such but were for the humanity in general. His believers and followers came to be known as Jainas. The upcoming of sub-sects was a progressive development of later generations for the running of the Dharma Sangha. Perfect understanding and amity should also have existed among the Ācāryas of the Jaina Dharma because the Dharma teaches us tolerance and forgiveness and not the ego which can create indifference towards each other. *Ahimsā* is *ahimsā* for all and it can not be demarcated between one race and another, neither can it be bifurcated between the followers of one religion or sect and another. It is like the sun which emits its rays on all objects without any discrimination. No religion or *sampradāya* can claim its monopoly over *Ahimsā*, *Satya*, *Aparigraha*, *Asteya* and *Brahmacarya*.

It is well known to everybody that there are four main sects in Jainism namely Digambara, Śvetāmbara, Terāpanth and Sthānakavāsī. All propagate the teachings of the Tīrthaṅkaras. Still, they are not able to come to a consensus on certain trifle matters thus jeopardising the unity of the religion. The 2500 anniversary of Lord Mahāvīra's *nirvāṇa* was indeed a very good occasion where many distinguished Ācāryas assembled together to arrive at a consensus and narrow down the differences. But because of prejudice towards the dogmatic rituals nothing tangible has been achieved.

Therefore to rejuvenate the Śramaṇa Sanskr̥ti, we must foster for unity and amity among the sects.

The existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons that can extirpate the world is not unknown to us. The increasing acts of violence and vandalism is leading man towards the brink of destruction. In such an atmosphere, it is indispensable for Jainism to unleash its gospel of peace, *ahimsā* and harmony and unfold its precious preachings and disseminate them among the peoples of the world. It has to serve as panacea to the bickerings and dissensions confronting the world today and create an atmosphere for the continued peaceful existence of human race.

Man has mastered the tallest of mountains, conquered the deepest and largest of oceans, pierced the unfathomable skies, blasted the smallest of atoms, walked on the moon and soon may be colonising the celestial bodies—the planets and other galaxies. In spite of the blessings of mammon worship and technological advancement, the ever increasing crimes of rape and murder in the civilised developed societies is indicative of the degradation in social values and ethics. Although man has reached the pinnacle of material development in this cosmic whirl, he is still obsessed with the ills prevalent in this materialistic society and is longing for mental solace and peace. Amid such a raging conflagration, Jaina thinkers have to relinquish their attachment towards their sectoral narrowness and shoulder the onerous responsibility of eliminating human ills, social crimes and foster peace, harmony, psychological unity and spiritual coherence.

In spite of being the oldest religion with its inherent practical merits, it is very sad to find that Jainism is not wide-spread and widely known. Now, appropriate time has come to delve deep into the causes of its present dormant state. Is it the reluctance of the people to the severity of its practices and to its more emphasis on spiritualisation? Is it because we are lagging behind in preaching the Science of Living and introduce things in social and developing context? Or is it lack of rigorous attempts to project it effectively? These are only a few questions that struck me at this moment. This is, undoubtedly, a proper occasion to ponder over the matter seriously and come to a consensus and evolve ways and means to rejuvenate and propagate the sacrosanct principles of Jainism throughout the world, as immense volume of knowledge was bestowed upon us by the Lord.

Extract from inaugural speech delivered at Sramana Sanskr̥ti Sammelan held at Moodbhidri on March 30, 1991.

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# Gleanings

## A God descended from Heaven

J. J. Rawal

Some 100 kilometres away from the district headquarters of Buldhana in interior Maharashtra, lies a village called Lonar. It's like any other village nearby if one considers the lifestyles of the inhabitants. But the village is different in that it had played host to an astronomical visitor in the not too distant past—in geological terms of course. And the visitor has left a wonderful imprint in the form of a near perfect circular crater now turned into a lake. About two kilometres in diameter, the Lonar lake is about 250 metres deep. To walk around its craggy edges could take the uninitiated a full day but the hectic trek is worthwhile.

Legend has it the second of the Pāṇḍava brothers, Bhīma, had a bath in this steep walled lake which was believed to be the skull top of the demon Kumbhakarṇa, Rāvaṇa's sleepy brother. According to another story, the demon Lavaṇāsura (from whose name the village and lake get their name) hid inside the lake to escape the wrath of Lord Viṣṇu. The god Viṣṇu, as in most mythological tales, outwitted the wicked demon, killed him and helped restore peace on earth. The lake also finds mention in the *Skanda Purāṇa* and the *Padma Purāṇa*. Lonar is just 800 km by road from Bombay.

The Lonar lake, the only one of its kind in India lies in an ancient meteoritic impact crater. Craters are basically of two kinds : volcanic craters and impact craters. And then of course there are craters caused by man made agents like say, an explosion.

Impact craters caused by strikes of astronomical objects big and small are almost universal. The surfaces of all planets and moons that we have been able to see have such craters. And when scientists spot an object without such craters they have to look for reasons that could

explain their absence. Even tiny asteroids have craters. Why, even spacecraft develop small craters when they encounter dust particles! It is the high velocity of the particle that makes the indent.

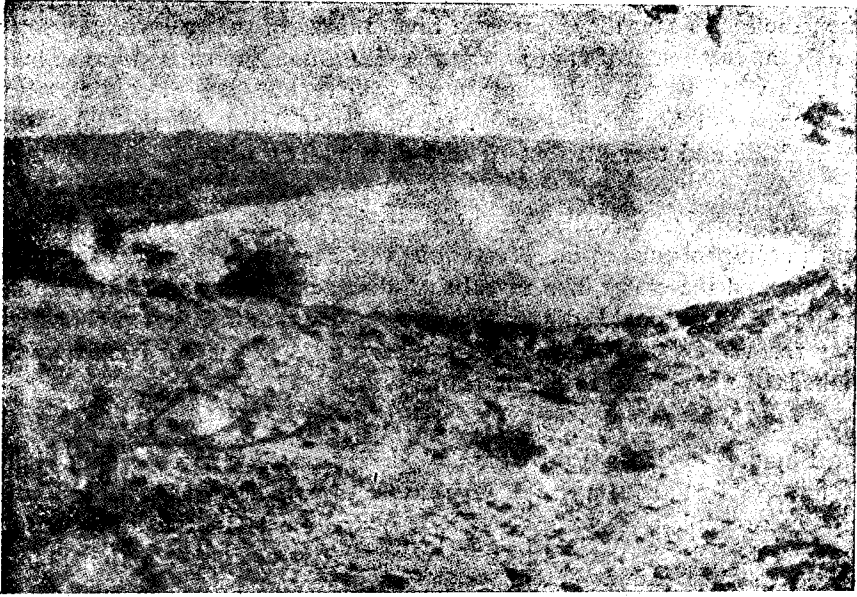
Volcanic craters too have been found on other planets.

Space abounds in dust, comets and their debris and their nuclei, and asteroids—the leftovers of stellar systems evolution—that keep wandering about bound by nothing except Newton's first law of motion. When they get near a heavier body heavier than themselves, they are trapped and dragged by the captor's gravitational force. And if they (the wanderers) manage to reach the surface, as they usually do in atmosphereless objects, they hit hard splashing about material and create a crater. The impact meteor that formed the Lonar crater must have measured between 50 and 100 metres. Had it been large, say 1000 m or more, it would have formed a complex crater with a peak rising in the centre; several such craters have been found on the Moon and Mars. The dense atmosphere of the earth offers stiff frictional resistance to any incoming body melting and dwindling its size. Usually the body burns up before reaching the earth's surface, only very large objects survive to hit the ground.

The east side of the Lonar crater slopes comparatively gently towards the centre. The west has erect steep walls. This, to a scientist implies the path of the impacting meteor. It probably came in an acute angle from the east not perpendicularly. It was formed according to rough estimates about a 50000 years ago. Modern man was yet to make the scene then.

...One can enter the crater from the eastern slope though the walk is quite a tough one. Several little temples and shrine, each backed by a legend, dot the downward path. Entering the crater, one sees the wall rising around him in all directions. To a layman it gives a feeling of walking into the very depths of a black hole; when night sets in inside the enclosed environs of the crater the black hole feeling is even more enhanced. Getting out of the crater after nightfall is almost next to impossible; the task is trying even during day.

At any time of the day, the lake has the shadow of one of its great steep walls falling on the still waters, still because the surrounding high walls prevent any sort of wind currents...



*Lonar crater lake as seen from East*

The impact of the meteor which has given rise to the high crater walls has resulted a perennial spring which has been named *Dhār*. The pressure of the mountainous crater walls is said to have given rise to the spring. The meteor might just sink into the bottom of the crater. Sometimes on hitting the surface, the meteor might bounce up and fall back creating one more crater within the original crater. Whether any such crater exists in Lonar we cannot say as crater has always been covered with the lake. It is also likely that if such a crater did exist the erosion caused by the lake waters has obliterated it.

The impactor itself may break to smithereens. Result : a cluster of craters around the main crater. Just to the east of the Lonar crater lies a smaller secondary crater. Perhaps a broken part of the impactor is responsible for this one. The crater too has been cleverly woven into the Lavaṇāsura story.

About half the people in Buldhana have some idea of how the lake crater was formed. For the other half, mythological beliefs are sacred truths. However, they are all agreed on one thing and that is clothes washed in the lake waters wash very clean and that too quite easily.



The lake rarely dries but it did only once, three years ago. And then the locals say, they noticed a Śiva Liṅga in the centre. Perhaps that's a remnant of the impactor. The other report is that the lake bottom was covered with glassy chips which were salty or acidic taste. The people of Lonar village say that the water level of the lake has been rising and they attribute it to a dam built nearby.

The place where the lake lies was probably an elevated plateau and the impact pushed in. Tests on the basaltic rock pieces found in and around the crater lake reveal that the rocks are magnetic around Lonar. If we could dig up the crater a few hundred feet perhaps we may recover broken fragments of the meteor. The meteor itself may be embedded under a 30 to 50 metres of soil.

Some years ago a Tata Company drilled in the centre of the lake from a platform set up in it. The samples withdrawn from bore hole closely resembled lunar soil. The Lonar crater is the only basalt crater on earth, there are several such basaltic craters on the moon. The Geological Survey of India which conducted its own studies also concluded it was a basaltic lake and that the meteor which caused it must have been 50 to 60 metres across.

But we do not have definite clues. How big and heavy was the meteor? At which angle did it strike? What was its velocity? How much energy did it release on impact? Also the water and soil of the crater and lake need to be analysed chemically and physically in greater detail.

Geologically, Lonar is a young crater. Physical and Chemical analyses will help determine its age accurately. About 100 million years a major meteor event is said to have occurred in the vicinity of the earth and this led to the formation of several craters on the moon, the moon craters are obviously that old. There are some fifty impact craters on earth of which Lonar is one.

Several homes around Lonar are built from magnetic rocks obtained from the crater and in a Jain temple closely, the icon of Lord Pārśva-nātha has been carved out of a huge chunk. Any way the question is: Is the Jain figurine from the original meteorite? Truly, a god descended from heaven.

from *Indian Express*, March 5, 1991

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