

*Hemant Shah*

ISSN 0021-4043

A QUARTERLY  
ON  
JAINOLOGY

VOL. XXXII

No. 1 JULY

1997

# Jain Journal



॥जैन भवन॥

*a quarterly on Jainology*

JAIN  
JOURNAL



॥ जैन भवन ॥

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JAIN BHAWAN  
CALCUTTA

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Vol. XXXII

No.1 July

1997

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**Rupees Fifteen**

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Jain Bhawan, P-25 Kalakar Street, Calcutta-700 007. Subscription  
for one year : Rs. 60.00, US \$ 20.00 : for three years : Rs. 180.00, US \$ 60.00  
Life membership : India : Rs 2000.00  
Foreign : US \$ 160.00*

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*Published by Satya Ranjan Banerjee on behalf of Jain Bhawan  
from P-25 Kalakar Street, Calcutta-700 007 and printed by him at  
Arunima Printing Works, 81 Simla Street, Calcutta-700 006*

**Editor : Satya Ranjan Banerjee**

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## KARNATAKA-TAMIL NADU JAINA RELATIONS THROUGH THE AGES—HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

DR VASANTHA KUMARI

Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are two important component regions of South India, and nearly one-fourth of the Karnataka border is adjacent to Tamil Nadu. This border, though short, has significantly influenced the cultural developments on either side of it in general and the Jaina culture in particular. The Jains of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu have had many intimate contacts during the course of several centuries, and this intimacy has produced many fruitful results.

It is a well-known fact that Jainism was a powerful force in history, and that is exerted a profound influence on the life and culture of the people of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka over a period of several centuries. The Jaina religion remained prominent in the Tamil Nadu at least until the end of 7th century A.D. Despite this, it is curious that, during the subsequent periods of the Jaina era, only a few adherents of the Jaina faith appear to have adorned the royal courts and shouldered political responsibilities—either as ministers, or generals, or feudatory chieftains. In contrast, the Jains in Karnataka continued to hold sway in the royal courts and they have left behind a proud record of their political role and fortunes during the subsequent era of Jaina prominence, which is believed to have lasted until the early years of the 11th century A.D.

It is evident that, the Jains of these regions did not have a smooth career. Many stories of persecution are recorded in the literary tradition of these lands, and the extent to which Jains in the Tamil Nadu were subjected to persecution, cultural attack and abuse from a very early time, is noteworthy.

This paper is an attempt to trace out the Jaina inter-state relations between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, their significance, and impact through the ages.

The Jaina tradition, especially of Karnataka, asserts that Jainism spread into the Tamil Nadu, by and large through Canarese territory.<sup>1</sup> Viṣakācārya, an accredited disciple of Śrutakevalī Bhadrabāhu is believed to have travelled in the Chola and Pandya lands of the Tamil country, spreading the Jaina Dharma in about the 3rd century B.C. A

number of Brahmi inscriptions found in various parts of Tamil Nadu record the activities of Jaina ācāryas as early as 3rd century B.C. Evidently, these records are of much help in establishing the activity of the Jaina missions to Tamil Nadu in that early age.<sup>2</sup>

However, from the very beginning, there has been a tendency among scholars dealing with the South Indian Jainism to trace its antiquity to a much earlier pre-Bhadrabāhu period. Nevertheless, it is important to note that their presumption is based on the events reported in, and passages quoted from literary works like the *Harivamśapurāṇa*, *Silappadi Karum*, *Tolkapiam* etc, and that they have failed to substantiate their stand beyond doubt.\*

### Political Relations

*Tamil Nadu and the Gangas of Talakad* : The political and cultural relations between the Jains of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu must have existed from the earliest times, probably even before the days of the Pallavas and Pandyas. It is unfortunate that the tracing of these

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This is the gist of points and events quoted by the scholars in support of their arguments :

- 1) Jaina literature like *Harivamśapurāṇa* is full of materials concerning South India long before ācārya Bhadrabāhu. This work also refers to the ancient towns and cities like Dakshina Madurai, Podanapura, Polasapura etc. According to them, the city of Dakshina Mathura (the present Madurai) was founded by the Pandava brothers who reached that spot when in exile. It so happened that, when the Pandavas were staying at Dakshina Madurai, Dwaraka was destroyed in a conflagration, and Krishna-Vasudeva with his brother Balarama, left it for Dakshina Madurai. While they were on their way, Krishna was struck dead by the fatal arrow of Jarat Kumara in the Kousambi forest. Tīrthaṅkara Arīṣṭānemi also came to the Pallava country on his religious tour, and the Pandavas who attended his religious discourse, i.e., Samavasarana, adopted the vow of a Jina Muni. Along with them a few Dravidian kings also became Jaina monks. (*Harivamśapurāṇa*).
- 2) The ancient works of Tamil literature also bear testimony to the early existence of Jainism in Tamil Nadu. A careful study of the oldest Tamil grammar, Agathiyam, and of its successor, *Tolkappyam*, would show that Jainism was prevalent in South India at the time of their composition. *Tolkappyam* is considered to be a work of the fourth century B.C. and was composed by a Jaina. The Tamil Kāvyas *Manimekhalai* and *Shilappadikāram* which belong to the ancient Samgham period prove that Jainism was an established religion of long standing there. (Indian Culture. Vol. VI, 1937-38, 1-4, p. 512).

historical developments still remains a challenging task for the historians dealing with the South Indian Jainism.

The literary tradition of the Tamil Nadu strongly upholds the view that the early Pandyan rulers of Madurai and the Pallava rulers of Kāñci were staunch Jains<sup>3</sup> and great patrons of Jainism. The significant fact that claims our attention here is that their contemporaries viz., the early Ganga rulers of Karnataka—maintained their contacts with them from the very beginning. The epigraphical records reflect the development of such contacts and changes from time to time.

Turning to the inscriptions before the period of Pallava King Mahendra Varman-I, i.e., to 600 A.D., we find there are at least two, wherein a royal member of the dynasty of the Pallavas of Kāñci is associated with the Jaina religion and the ruling family of Karnataka, namely, the Gangas of Talakad. The first inscription is the one that was issued in the 6th year of Simha Varman-II, father of Simha Vishnu and grand-father of Mahendra Varman-I.<sup>4</sup> This inscription records the grant of a village called Śramaṇāśraya to the Jaina ācārya, Vajranandin of Nandi Samgha at Vardhamāna Darma Tīrtha, for conducting the worship of Lord Jina.<sup>5</sup> Simhavarman-II, who is mentioned in this inscription was the grand-father of Mahendra Varman-I the Pallava<sup>6</sup> king of Kāñci.

Another member of the early Pallavas appears not in the record of Tamil Nadu, but in a Kannada inscription discovered from Hoskote in Bangalore district of Karnataka.<sup>7</sup> The Hoskote inscription is of immense significance for it provides a clue to the close affinity that seems to have existed between the two royal families, namely, the Western Gangas of Talakad and the Pallavas of Kāñci. From the inscription we learn that a Devayatana, i.e. a Jaina *basadi* dedicated to Arhants was constructed by the mother of the Pallava lord, Simhavishnu, in the Korikunda division of the Ganga kingdom. We also learn from this record that this temple was meant for the use of the ascetics of Yāpanīya Samgha. The most crucial passage in the inscription is the one which states that the lady, i.e. the mother of Simhavishnu, constructed a Jaina temple with a view to enhance the glory of her husband's family—viz., the Pallavas—and to earn merit for herself.<sup>8</sup> From the above inscription it is obvious that the lady's husband was Simha Varman-II (436-460 A.D) and Simhavishnu's mother obviously hailed from the Ganga family. It is also evident that she was a Jaina by persuasion.<sup>9</sup> Records of Avinita also mention that King Avinita made a gift of land (495-555 A.D) over the Tank of the village Puliyur to a Jaina *basadi* on the advice of his preceptor Vijayakīrti.<sup>10</sup> It is important to note that, in this record, King Avinita is addressed as Kongandi Rāja.<sup>11</sup> However,

this record fails to disclose explicitly the exact relationship of the King with the Pallava queen mother, who is presumed to have belonged to the Royal family of the Western Gangas of Talakad.

Interesting evidence is available about the spontaneous liberality extended by the later Ganga ruler, Rachamalla-II (870-907 A.D.), to the Jaina centres in Tamil Nadu.<sup>12</sup> Rachamalla-II, who had a great disposition towards religious activities, bore the title Dharma Mahārājādhīrāja. He was a contemporary of Pallava King, Nandi Varman, of Kāñcī. Vallimalai and Siyamangalam, the two important Jaina centres in the North Arcot district of Tamil Nadu received benefactions from Rachamalla-II. From one of the four Kannada inscriptions engraved on Vallimalai, the ancient name of which was Vijayādri, we learn that the Jaina temple (cave) there was established by Rachamalla-II. He is also known in the inscription as Rañavikrama. On the basis of Rachamalla's inscriptions, P. Venkatesan has even suggested that the Gangas held sway over the North Arcot region.<sup>12</sup> However, it is also likely that Rachamalla-II built a Jaina temple on Vijayādri; and such a presumption would be compatible with the antiquity and sanctity of this Jaina centre.<sup>13</sup>

Siyamangalam, in the North Arcot district, was another important Jaina centre of antiquity, and it received the special attention of the Gangas of Talakad. Though we have not come across any explicit reference to the exact connection of the Ganga rulers to this centre, the reference to the King Ranchamalla-II, made in a record,<sup>14</sup> points to such an affiliation.

Keeping in view the sanctity of the natural Rocks over which the Jaina caves have been hewn out, Vajranandi Yogindar, belonging to the Dravida Saṅgha, built flights of steps. This is known from an inscription of 10th century A.D., engraved on a rock at the foot of the hill.<sup>15</sup>

Whether Vajranandi Yogindar, mentioned in the record, was the same person as Vajranandi ācārya who founded the Dravida Saṅgha at Madurai in about 5th century A.D. is uncertain. Nevertheless, the former also belonged to the same line of ācāryas of Dravida Samgha. From the same record we also come to know that Vajranandi Yogindar was a lion among disputants and the Maṇḍalācārya of Śri Arunkalanvaya, a popular branch of Dravida Saṅgha, the details of which will be discussed hereafter. However, this event may be taken as an illustration of the religious zeal of the ācāryas of Arunkalanvaya, who evidently must have helped to organise the Jaina community of the North Arcot region of Tamil Nadu.<sup>16</sup>

It is of significance to note here that Kaṇakasena Bhaṭṭāraka, of the Dravida Saṅgha of Arunkalanvaya, was the preceptor of the Ganga King, Rachamalla IV (974-985 A.D.) and that this ācārya was held in high esteem also in the Western Chalukyan Court of Jayasimha II (1015-1042 A.D.)<sup>17</sup>

Unfortunately, while Jainism was moving ahead in Karnataka, under the liberal patronage of the Ganga rulers, it was facing severe ordeal in the neighbouring Tamil territory.

From the available sources it is evident that the Jaina faith was quite popular in the Tamil territory upto the middle of 7th century A.D. This was, no doubt, due to the exertions of Jaina ascetics and the royal patronage that was extended to them. It is also well-known that, under the monarchical set up, the development of any one particular religion to its utmost strength and popularity depends, to a large extent, on the royal patronage.

The religious controversy, it appears, was raging supreme in Tamil Nadu in the 7th century A.D. The prolific Saiva saints, namely, Saint Appar and Saint Tirujnana Sambandar evolved wide and varied means to instil the superiority of the Saiva faith deeply in the minds of the people. At the first instance, they effected the conversion of the Jaina rulers to their faith. The service rendered by these saints with a sense of supreme devotion and dedication to the cause of Saivism is, no doubt, a very significant factor in the religious history of Tamil Nadu. Their main achievement, in this respect, was the conversion of two powerful Jaina rulers of their time, namely, Mahendravarman the Pallava, and Kun Pandya. This event naturally marked the commencement of the period during which Saivism flourished. The decline of Jainism became inevitable when the destructive and violent methods were adopted against their shrines and ācāryas who were impaled at the instance of the rulers and the people.<sup>18\*</sup>

The religious persecution of the Jains in Tamil Nadu and its

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\* King Mahendravarman is believed to have been an avowed Jaina. His love for Jaina *dharma* flowed copiously, as it were, in his blood. But soon after his conversion, the King became an anti-Jaina. He is alleged to have destroyed many Jaina temples and built a Saiva temple, namely Gunadara Viccuram using the same materials. Gunadara is a synonymous with Gunadharma which is known to have been a surname of Mahendravarman-I. However, scholars have also noticed in the Tiruchirapalli inscription, an indirect reference to this ruler's conversion to the Saivite creed. (*Madras District Gazetteers, South Arcot*, p. 32).

consequent development is referred to in the work of Kannada writers, particularly of Devachandra of 18-19th centuries A.D. Devachandra's *Rājāvalikathāsāra* also provides more curious information about the Pandyan queen's relation with Karnataka, along with impaling of Jaina ācāryas. About Kun Pandya, he says that he destroyed about 985 *basadis* in the Pandya country, and fifty in Madurai alone. In respect of a Jaina *basadi* at Madurai, he provides the curious information that Neminātha, the family god of the Pandyas, was hidden away, and Kusumandini was renamed Mināksī. Regarding the persecution of the ascetics, he says the Andis there persecuted the Jains and celebrated the festival of Pikas that is the Sramana Sulada Habba, impaling of Jaina ascetics during the festive occasions in the Saiva temples of Tamil Nadu.<sup>19</sup> The Impaling ceremony of Jaina ascetics in the Saiva temples of Tamil Nadu has been discussed separately in this paper.

Further, he also states that, Acalā the Jaina wife of Kun Pandya

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Tamil literary tradition indicates that the conversion of the King took place only after witnessing miracles performed by Saint Appar. They were chiefly four :

1. Saint Appar was not killed, though he was shut up in a lime kiln for seven days.
2. He did not die though he ate milk and rice mixed with poison.
3. The elephant which was urged to kill Saint Appar left him free, and killed two Jains.
4. He was not drowned when thrown into the sea tied to a huge stone. In the last instance, the stone became a float for him and it took him to the temple of Tiruppadiripaliyar, i.e., Cuddalore in the South Arcot District.

*Periyapurana* refers to the existence of an ancient Jaina monastry or college at Pataliputra, the old name for old Tirupuliyur. The remains of Jain images and sculptures are comparatively common in this area of South Arcot District. It also says that, Appar was a student of the Jaina College at Pataliputra, but was converted to Saivism by his sister who was a Saiva. Mahendravarman, after his conversion, turned the Pataliputra monastry into a temple of Siva, and ordered the extermination of all the Jains. (*Madras District Gazetteers*, South Arcot, p. 76 oft. 1906)

In relation to the circumstances that provoked the interest of the Pandyan king of Madure to give up Jainism and the influence rendered on the King by another Saiva Saint Tirujnana Sambandhi Pille has been narrated in detail in the literary tradition of Tamil Nadu. The content runs as follows :

Tirujnana Sambandhi Pille was a Saiva Saint who was considered to be even an Avatar of Siva. This saint cured Kubja Pandya of Madure of a fever which the Jains had failed to cure. We also learn that the king

when pregnant was sent to Karnataka and later her son Sala ruled Dvārasamudra. Thus, the author of *Rājāvalikathā* arouses curiosity and throws a new light on the relationship that must have prevailed between the royal houses of Karnataka, and the early Pandya rulers of Madurai. However, it is not known from which source Devacandra has borrowed the above information. Nevertheless, it is also obvious that this story is not a mere figment of the author's imagination. The problem that now arises is whether we should regard the above details as being merely an apocryphal, or whether we should attach any credence to them.

In this context it is important also to note that many scholars of Tamil Nadu have composed purāṇas and stotras dealing with Lord Neminātha. Dr. Ekambaranathan has brought to light a number of stotras, or songs, composed in honour of Tirthāṅkara Neminātha in Tamil.<sup>20</sup> From this it is obvious that Tirthāṅkara Neminātha must have highly adored because he was the tutelary God of the royal house of the Pandyas of Tamil Nadu.

### **Hoysalas of Dvārasamudra and Tamil Nadu**

Moving on to the Hoysala period of Karnataka history, one finds a few traces of Tamil and Karnataka Jaina relations in the inscriptions. The Chola supremacy over Gangavadi was established in 1006 A.D., when the Chola general Apprameya crushed the Karnataka Army in the Kaliyur battle.<sup>21</sup> The Cholas sway over Gangavadi lasted until 1117 A.D. The Jaina inhabitants of the Mysore region were naturally unhappy over this political change as their cherished monuments

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allowed the Jains and Sambandhas to demonstrate the superiority of their respective religions. Saint Sambandhar expressed his view stating that he was not inferior in strength to the Jainas who had settled themselves in Annamalai and other places round about. At the instigation of Saint Sambandhar, Jaina ācāryas like Jinasena and others attempted to cure Kun Pandya by making use of Jaina chorus and spells, but failed in their attempts. Jinasenācārya mentioned here was the Jinasena of Punatta Samgha and the author of *Bṛhad Hariśapurāṇa* (Tevaram Dorai Rangaswamy, p. 997 off.) The Punatta Samgha is believed to have had its origin in Karnataka. The King Kun Pandya is believed to be Arikesari Mara Varman, who commenced his reign about middle of the 7th century A.D. Conversion of Mahendravarman and Kun Pandya may be regarded as a turning point in the history of Saivism in South India, as it meant the elimination of Jainism as an effective rival. 8000 Jains are stated to have been put to death at Madure at the instigation of Saint Sambandhar.

became the object of Chola attacks. The Chola hegemony in the Mysore country ended when Adigaiman, their Governor at Talakad was driven off across the river Kaveri by Gangarāja, a Jaina General of King Viṣṇuvardhana in 1117 A.D.<sup>22</sup> This is corroborated by epigraphical sources.

The inscriptions describing the conditions of the Jaina shrines then existing at Gangavadi state as follows : 'The land of the Gangas was filled with Jaina shrines all over, but they were destroyed by the Chola army during their occupation of Gangavadi.'

The destruction of the Jaina shrines must have embittered the relations between the two powers. It was Jaina general Gangarāja who expelled the Cholas from Gangavadi. He won the battle against them on behalf of his master Viṣṇuvardhana. Gangarāja was an ardent Jaina and his devotion to Jainism is affirmed in a number of inscriptions which record the benefactions he made to restore many dilapidated Jaina monuments. In an inscription of Sravanabelgola, his acts of generosity and endowments for the maintenance of the Jaina shrines are reported as follows : 'Wherever he marched, wherever he was encamped, wherever his mind was attached, there he had rich Jaina temples made. Thus, the country was everywhere restored by Gangarāja to the condition in which it had been in the days of yore.'<sup>23</sup>

It is unfortunate that the Tamil Nadu failed to produce any personalities of such high calibre as the illustrious Gangarāja who could have championed the cause of Jainism at crucial times. It is important to note here that the mind of this Hoysala General was favourably inclined towards Tamil Nadu also. He built the Pārśvanātha *basadi* at Hosur in the Dharmapuri area in 1127 A.D. to commemorate the Hoysala victory against the Cholas.<sup>24</sup> It is well-known that the Hoysala rulers exerted influence over the Kongu region of Tamil Nadu. Recognising the significance of this *basadi*, King Viṣṇuvardhana made land grants and entrusted the same to one Vāsapūjya Pandita the Stanapati of that *basadi*. This record is significant as it reveals the importance of Hosur—then called Sevidarpadi, a Jaina centre in medieval times.<sup>25</sup>

Ruins of Jaina monuments are abundantly scattered in the heart of Konga Nadu, especially in the places like Erode, Trimurti Hill, Bastipuram. They throw light on the position of Jainism which, at that time, had evidently made inroads into the Kongu region of Tamil Nadu. Nevertheless, Jainism failed to leave any permanent mark on the affairs of the Kongu people.<sup>26</sup>

As stated above, Adigaiman, the Chola Governor of Talakad, is condemned in the Kannada inscriptions for his anti-Jaina activities. But the Tamil inscription of Tirumalai of the 11th century A.D. records the tolerant spirit of Adigaiman's family members. The inscription records that Sravanajjvala, or Vidukada Lagiya Perumal, son of Rājā Raja Adigaiman renovated a Jaina *basadi*, and set up the images of Yakṣa and Yakṣī. From the same record, we also learn that the images of Yakṣa and Yakṣī were set up by his ancestors Adigaiman Elani at Tirumalai. The question that needs to be answered here is, whether Rājā Raja Adigaiman referred to in the above inscription is the same Adigaiman who was functioning as the Governor of Talakad.<sup>27</sup>

### **Rāṣṭrakūṭas and Tamil Relations**

The vestiges of the ancient Jaina tradition which had managed to survive at Tirumalai, in the North Arcot region, received special attention from the Rastrakuta rulers of Karnataka. The Tirumalai Hill, which contains ancient Jaina caves, was hailed as being sacred to the Jains. The footprints found on the hill are believed to have been those of Jaina munis who had came to this place along with Bhadrabāhu ācārya who led a Jaina migration to South India<sup>28</sup> and who had remained there for a long period. Though not many Jaina inscriptions of the Rastrakutas of Karnataka are found in this region, an inscription belonging to the period of Krishna III (957-958) provides a clue to the Rastrakuta's connection with this centre. The inscription provides the following information "A servant of the queen of Krishna III by name Gangā Mahādevī, provided lamp for the Yakṣas on the Tirumalai at Vaiyavur."<sup>29</sup> On the basis of this, the scholars have presumed that Gangā Mahādevī, the queen of Krishna III, must have hailed from Tirumalai region, and was evidently a Jaina adherent.

### **The Western Chalukyas of Kalyana and the Cholas**

The Western Chalukyas of Kalyana were a great power in the medieval Deccan and their history is full of Chola-Chalukya rivalries. The Gavarawada inscription of Someśvara-II, dated 1071-72 A.D., provides an insight into the existing situation relevant to the context of our present study. The Chalukyan period in Karnataka witnessed the development of Kalamukha sect of Saivism on the one side and Virasaivism of Basavanna on the other. These religious groups were making their advance in the northern part of Karnataka. However, it is also true that the importance of Jainism had not diminished very much, for it continued to flourish under royal patronage and contributed its share to the development of Karnataka culture. This is

evident from a number of Jaina inscriptions of this period. As far as the Chola rulers are concerned, they are held in comparatively high esteem in Tamil Nadu for the solicitude they evinced in the preservation and promotion of Jaina monuments. However, such instances are not many. The Cholas' spirit of tolerance, slight though it may have been, did not allow them to pursue a vigorous anti-Jaina policy, and they refrained from destroying Jaina religious monuments in Tamil Nadu.

In sharp contrast to such a policy of toleration, one finds in the Gawarawada inscription full details of the apprehensions caused by the Cholas in the region of Belvala, a notable Chalukyan administrative division. It is noteworthy that Belvala which constituted an important strong hold of the Jains had been ruled over by a number of Jaina generals. Anniga, son of Attimobbe an illustrious Jaina woman of Karnataka, also had administered Masavadi a subdivision over this province. Attimobbe was a contemporary of the Chalukyan King Someśvara I (1042-1068 A.D.).<sup>30</sup> The inscription records the invasion of Belvala by the Chola King Ko-Parakesari Rajendradeva. This province was ruled over by Ganga Permadī at that time. From the details recorded in the inscription we also learn that Ko-Parakesari burnt many Jaina *basadis* and defiled and damaged the Jaina sanctuaries erected by Ganga Permadideva. However, Koparakesari was slain by Trailokyamalla Someśvara I (1042-1068 A.D.). The event is narrated as follows :

The wicked Chola, i.e., Rājādhīrāja, who had abandoned the religious observances of his family, penetrated into the Belvala country and burnt the Jaina temples erected there by the Ganga king, Ganga Permadī. But eventually he had to yield his head to Someśvara Ahavamalla in the battle, and forfeited his life.<sup>31</sup>

### **Karnataka/Tamil Jaina Relations under Vijayanagar Rulers**

The political situation of South India completely changed with the establishment of the Vijayanagar kingdom in the year 1336 A.D. Tamil Nadu virtually came under the control of the Vijayanagar kings. While assessing the position of the Jains in the royal court during this period, it is important to note that throughout their history, the Jains of Karnataka had retained their key positions in the royal courts. They had occupied important positions—ministers, generals, statesmen. Likewise, the Jains had always the upper hand during the dynastic changes that took place in Karnataka. In other words, Jaina influence prevailed upon constantly, whether directly or indirectly, whenever a new dynasty came to power. One Baica Dañḍanāyaka belonging to the

service of Pratāparudradeva of Warrangal is believed to have supported the foundation of the Vijayanagar kingdom in 1336.<sup>32</sup>

Iraguppa Dañḍanāyaka belonging to the family line of Baica Dañḍanāyaka, mentioned above, was an influential statesman and generalissimo under Harihara (1377-1404 A.D.) and Bakka Raya II (1405-1406 A.D.). This minister, endowed with great ability and diverse interests is believed to have been put in charge of the state's services in the Chingelpet region of Tamil Nadu by Harihara II. His name appears in an inscription dated 1352, at Tirupparuttikunrum, Tirupparuttikunrum is known popularly to the Jains by the name Jinakāñcipura. Iruguppa Dañḍanāyaka, at the instance of his preceptor Pushpa Sena, built the Sangita Mandapa in 1387-88 and also paved the flooring around with grants in the complex of the Vardhamāna *Basadi* at Tirupparuttikunrum.<sup>33</sup> He also made a gift of the village of Mahendra mangalam in the division of Mavandur for the merit of his suzerain Bukka Raya II.<sup>34</sup> The Sravana Belgola inscription which records the manifold abilities of Iruguppa Dañḍanāyaka also eulogises his liberally attitude towards Jaina Dharma. He was an ardent Jaina, who is credited with having built *basadis* and enriched them with munificent gifts, wherever he was encamped, while on State Service.<sup>35</sup> It is needless to say that, these meritorious deeds were undertaken in an open display of his spirit of tolerance. Iruguppa Dañḍanāyaka appears to have been a notable Jaina leader of the Vijayanagar period who served the cause of Jainism in Tamil Nadu also.

Another point which deserves special notice is the existence of inscriptions in the Canarese language and script, in the Jaina *basadi* at Tirupparuttikunrum. These inscriptions are clear evidence of the contact that might have existed between Karnataka Jains with the Jaina adherents of Tamil Nadu; they bear testimony to the goodwill that prevailed between the Jains of these two regions. This spirit of goodwill is also manifested in the socio-religious practices of this *basadi*, where a few stotras are recited in the Canarese language,<sup>36</sup> while conducting *pūjās*.

### **Jaina immigration from Tamil land**

Devacandra in Rājāvalikathāsāra refers to the migration of a set of Jains of Depangudi of Tamil Nadu to the Mysore region in Karnataka. This immigration, according to him, was led by Hastimalli Senācārya. The following details are given in his account : Hastimalli Senācārya, with his disciples Pārśva-Paṇḍita, Lokapālācārya etc. and Jaina Brahmanas of nine gotras, came from the Pandya country and stayed

at Arikutara. A few of them also entered into service under the Hoysala King, Ballala. Arikutara is an ancient town of historical significance near Mysore. It was renamed Chamarajanagar by Mummadī Krishnaraja (1799-1831 A.D) Wodeyar in memory of his father Chamarajawodeyar (1776-96 A.D.). This was a town having considerable Jaina influence. Hastimalla is generally believed to have flourished in the 13th century A.D.

We also learn that the title Hastimalla was conferred on this famous ācārya for having combated single-handed against an elephant, thereby saving the life of the Pandya king under whom he was serving as a minister.<sup>37</sup> The Pandya King, however, remains unidentified. But being unwilling to oblige his master, who wanted him to embrace the Saiva faith, Hastimalli Senācārya, accompanied by his son Pārśva Pañḍita and others, is reported to have migrated to the Mysore region and settled at different parts of it. Brahmasuri' Pratista Tilaka also corroborates the details referred to in the Rājāvalikathāsāra. Brahmasuri Pañḍita was a reputed scholar of his time, belonging to the family of Hastimalli Senācārya. These immigrants from the Tamil Nadu led by Hastimalli Senācārya, formed, in course of time, a separate group of their own,<sup>38</sup> when their number increased; subsequently, they established themselves around Mysore. This group eventually emerged very strong in the royal court of the Wodeyar of Mysore, under whom they served in various capacities. A member of this group Vishalaksha Pañḍita even served the great Chikkadevaraja Wodeyar as Prime Minister in the 17th century A.D.<sup>39</sup>

### **Jaina Mathas of Karnataka and Jurisdiction over the Jaina Centres in Tamil Nadu**

#### *Singanagadde Jaina Matha*

A copper plate record of Belluru in the Nagamangala Taluk of Mandya District in southern Karnataka throws light on the prasasti of the pontiff Lakṣmīṣena Bhaṭṭāraka of Singanagadde Jaina Matha. The pontiff of this Matha was regarded as the head of the Penugonda, Delhi, Kolhapur and Jinakāñci, i.e., Tirupparuttikunrum, referred to above. Singanagadde Matha, according to the existing tradition, is believed to have been a branch of Penugonda Jaina Matha of Andhra Pradesh. But we do not have any source, throwing light as to how the pontiff of this Matha of Karnataka exercised his jurisdiction over the Jaina shrines and adherents of Tamil Nadu.<sup>40</sup>

The pontifical name, Lakṣmīṣena Bhaṭṭāraka of Singanagadde Matha of Karnataka has been born by the pontiffs of Jina Kāñci Matha.

This is evident in a latest Tamil record of 1951 engraved in the Pārśvanātha *Basadi* at Chittamur.<sup>40a</sup> The pontiff of Jinakāñci Matha functions from Chittamur where the pontifical seat or the Matha is situated.

### **Sravana Belgola Jaina Matha and Chittamur Matha**

A large scale persecution of the adherents of Jaina faith is reported by Mackenzie, which finds support in the existing tradition.<sup>41</sup>

This large scale persecution is believed to have taken place in the 15th century during the time of one Venkatampatti, the head of the Gingee region. Consequently many Jains were forced to become saintites to escape death and those who refrained their faith were forced to practice their rites secretly.<sup>42</sup>

In Karnataka also Jaina tradition speaks of the occurrence of similar situation perhaps during the period of Vijayanagar rulers. The outcome of such a persecution was an emergence of a new sect in the Jaina community of Karnataka, namely, Jaina Sādhus who are more or less saivas in practice, but still consider themselves Jains.<sup>43</sup>

It is also believed that one Virasenācārya sobered by his narrow escape from death resolved to become an ascetic, and is believed to have come down to Sravana Belgola to study the holy books. However, this Virasenācārya along with one Gangayya started Jaina revival movement in the Gingee region.\*

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In 1478 A.D. the ruler of Gingee was one Venkatampattai who belonged to the comparatively low caste of the Kavarais. He asked the local Brahmanas to give him one of their daughters as wife. They said that if the Jains of world did so, they would follow suit. Venkatapatti told the Jains of this answer and asked for one of their girls as a bride. They took counsel among themselves how they might avoid the disgrace of connecting themselves by marriage with a man of such a caste and at last pretended to agree to the king's proposal and said that the daughter of a certain prominent Jain would be given to him. On the day fixed for the marriage, Venkatapatti went in state to the girl's house for the ceremony, but found it deserted and empty except for a bitch tied to one of the posts of verandah. Furious at the insult, he issued orders to behead all the Jains. Some of the faith were, accordingly, decapitated, others fled, others again were forced to practise their rites secretly and yet others became Saivite to escape death.

Not long after the event mentioned above, in the province of Gengee, some of the kings' officers saw a Jain named Virasenācārya performing the Jaina rites in a well in Velur near Tindivanam and haled him before

This tradition revolves round the establishment of the Jaina Matha at Chittamur by Virasenācārya between 15th and 16th centuries. This tradition is further supported from paintings that exist in the Jaina *basadi* at Perumandur near Tinchivanam. The theme of the paintings depict the establishment of a Jaina Matha at Chittamur—and Virasenācārya addressing the Jaina community gathered encircled around him. The paintings are stated to have been executed in about 18th century A.D. But it appears that, after the renovation of this *basadi* the paintings are now scarcely visible.

### **Sravana Belgola attracts pilgrims from Tamil Nadu**

In the middle of the 19th century A.D. a disciple of Sri Charukirti Bhaṭṭāraka of Sravana Belgola Sanmati Sagara Varni exerted striking influence on the Jains of Tamil Nadu. They came to Sravana Belgola in groups and made gifts of Tīrthaṅkara images, attended the holy festivals and ceremonies celebrated at the Kshetra to fulfil the desire of their guru Sri Sanmati Sagara Varni. The unusual influx of Jaina pilgrims from Tamil Nadu during this period is detailed in a number of inscriptions, mostly in Sanskrit or Tamil engraved in the Grantha characters.<sup>44</sup>

The images donated by these pilgrims include those of the Tīrthaṅkaras, Navadevata, Pañcaparameśthins, Gaṇadharas, etc. The

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their master. The latter, however, had just had a child born to him, was in good temper and let the accused go free; and Virasenācārya sobered by his narrow escape from death, resolved to become an ascetic, went to Sravana Belgola, the great Jain centre in Mysore District, and thus studied the holy books of that religion. Meanwhile, another Jain of the Gingee country, Gangayya Udaiyar of Tayanna in the Jindivanam Taluk had fled to the protection of the Zamindar of Udaiyarpalaiyam in Trichinopoly, who befriended him and gave him some land. Thus assured of protection, he went to Sravana Belgola, fetched back Virasenācārya and with him made a tour through the Gingee country to call upon the Jains who remained there to return to their ancient faith. These people had mostly become saints, taken off their sacred threads and put holy ashes on their foreheads, and the name Nirpusi Vellalas or the Vellalas who put on holy ash is still retained. The mission was successful and Jainism revived. Virasenācārya eventually died at Velur and there, it is said, is kept in the temple a metal image of Pārśvanātha, which he brought from Sravana Belgola. The descendants of Gangayya Udaiyar still live at Tayanar; and in memory of the services of their ancestors to the Jaina cause, they are given the gift betel and leaf on festive occasions and have a leading voice in the election of the high priest at Chittamur in the Jindivanam Taluk. (*Madras Gazetteer, South Arcot, pp. 77-78, 1906.*)

chief donors are Sattanna, Sresthi of Kumbhakonam, Appasami of Senniyambakkam in Tamil Nadu; Gopala and Adinatha of Tanjore, Perumal Sravaka of Tanjore, Padmavatiyamma wife of Sinnu Mudaliyar of Mannar Kovil, Sittiram Appauu and the Sravakas of Tanjore etc.<sup>45</sup>

The Chittamur Jaina Matha is stated to have been a branch of Sravana Belgola Matha. Reference is also made in a record dated 1865 A.D. to one Abhinava Ādisena Bhāṭṭāraka of Chittamur Matha.<sup>46</sup> However, it is noteworthy that most of the pontiffs of Sri Jaina Matha of Sravana Belgola hailed from Tamil Nadu.<sup>47</sup>

### **Ascetic Relations**

*Jaina ācāryas who upheld the tenents of Jainism in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu*

**Kundakundācārya** : The most prolific Jaina ācārya whose importance is recognised by the Jaina community of India, irrespective of Śvetāmbara and Digambara division is Kundakundācārya. His importance was so great that different regions of the south claim his nativity. However, the tradition that he belonged to the Kannada country is persistent and strong. Moreover, his activity appears to have been extended to Tamil Nadu also. Dr. A.N. Upadhye after a careful examination of all available evidence has come to the conclusion that Kundakundācārya lived in the beginning of the Christian era.

Kundakunda was a prolific writer. He fulfilled the need to prepare the reliable works on Jaina religion and philosophy. This was a great achievement that marked the beginning of the intense literary activity of Jaina teachers in South India.<sup>48</sup> It is also significant that Kundakunda's name is associated with the organisation of a South Indian community, Dravida Samgha which later on was revived by Vajranandi ācārya in the middle of 5th century A.D.<sup>49\*</sup>

### **Samanta Bhadrācārya**

A legend current in the Karnataka holds that Samanta Bhadrācārya was a native of a village called Utkalika, and he performed austerities in Manuvakahalli.<sup>50</sup> From the epigraphical sources we find his name connected with the Pallava Principality of Kāñcī. Different stories have come down to us about Samanta Bhadra's visit to Kāñcīpura and the events that followed thereafter.<sup>51</sup>

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Kundakunda is also known by other aliases like, Vaṭṭakerācārya, Elācārya, Vakragriva, and Gridhapinccha.

Samanta Bhadrācārya is believed to have spread the tenets of Jainism to Kāñcī in the 2nd century A.D. The epigraphs of Karnataka also assert that Samanta Bhadra visited Kāñcī and Pataliputra was an ancient Jaina centre in Tamil Nadu and this is identified at present with the town of Cuddalore the headquarters of the South Arcot District. It is also believed that ācārya Samanta Bhadra had taken ascetic *Dikṣā* at Pataliputra. Samanta Bhadra was a great missionary who tried to spread Jainism far and wide.<sup>52\*</sup>

### Vajranandi

Among the Jaina ācāryas of South India, Vajranandi is highly extolled and he occupies an unique place for upholding the sanctity and dignity of Jainism in Tamil Nadu. Karnataka Jaina tradition offers obeisance to this eminent ācārya who is believed to have been the pupil of Devanandi, familiarly known as Puṣyapāda ācārya. Vajranandi

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The author of Ārādhānākōṣa, Prabhācandrācārya makes Samanta Bhadra a victim of Bhasmaka disease (Morbid appetite) who himself was skilful in reducing to ashes the said disease Bhasmaka. He is also stated to have roamed from Kāñcī to Poudanapura and Banaras where he performed the miracle of bringing out the image of Pārśvanātha from an image of Siva and converted King Sivakoti into Jainism. (Upadhye Papers).

But, Karnataka tradition as recorded by Devacandra in his Rājāvalikathāsāra has a different version : Unable to get himself cured of the Bhasmaka disease, Samanta Bhadrācārya approached his guru (not given) with a request to permit him to end his life by Sallekhana. But the guru foreseeing that Samanta Bhadra was destined to become a great promoter of the faith, refused to give him permission, but directed him to go to any place where he might appease his hunger and take Dikṣā again. Then Samanta Bhadra went to Kāñcī where lived the King Sivakoti, whose devotion consisted among other things of daily distributing twelve khandagas of rice to the temple of Bhimalinga.

Samantabhadra assured the King that he would make the Linga to eat the food. One day, when he was alone in the temple, ate up all the twelve khandagas of cooked rice at the temple of Bhimalinga. The King Sivakoti was astonished when he noticed that the entire cooked rice disappeared! The next day Samanta Bhadra left the quarter, and on the following day half of the food, explaining that God had granted it for *prasāda*. The King who became suspicious, ordered his servants to burst open the door of the temple. Samanta Bhadra who became frightened began to pray to the Tirthārikara. Whereupon, the image of Tirthārikara became visible in full glory in place of Bhimalinga. King Sivakoti who became bewildered, fell on Samanta Bhadra's feet and shortly after he abdicated the throne in favour of his son and became an ascetic. Later he became famous as Sivakoti ācārya. (Rājāvalikathāsāra).

founded a Jaina Samgam at Madurai with a view to establishing the glory of Jainism in that country. This Samgam is believed to have been established to train the Jaina ascetics and scholars engaged in religious propaganda. According to Digambara Darsana, the Jaina Samgam was formed in about 470 A.D.<sup>53</sup> Interesting evidence to this effect is available in Periyapurana which refers to a host of Karnataka Jains pouring into Madurai like cloud burst. This event must have preceded the foundation of the Jaina Samgha at Madurai.<sup>54</sup>

Keeping in view, the existing situation in Tamil Nadu where the religious disputations were held frequently at the instance of the rulers, the Jaina ascetics must have felt the necessity of adding dignity to their literature. With that intention it is believed that Vajranandi ācārya established the Jaina Samgham at Madurai.<sup>55</sup> This great event must have taken place prior to the period of great Nayanar Saints, Appar and Tirujnana Sambandhar. It was at this time that Jaina ascetics moved through out Tamil Nadu and lived side by side with the other religious groups.<sup>56</sup>

Devasena, the author of *Darśanasāra*, throws light on the hardships undertaken by the monks of Dravida Samgha, i.e. the Tamil Samgham led by Vajranandi to mobilise the economic and spiritual strength of the Jains and of Jaina institution in Tamil Nadu and to safeguard their interests.<sup>57</sup> Devasena has also remarked that Vajranandi ācārya, the founder of the Dravida Samgha, gained great demerits by cultivating the land and carrying on mercantile activities to earn livelihood.<sup>58</sup> It appears that ascetics belonging to this Samgha carried the holy mission of Jainism far and wide.

Ascetics of Dravida Samgha and Arunkalanvaya appear to have centralised their activities in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh.<sup>59</sup> The inscriptions having reference to this monastic order mostly come from these areas. The contents of the records emphasise enormous influence exerted by them specially in the royal families and the elite class. The inscriptions inform us in very clear terms of their multifarious activities like generosity, proficiency in śāstras, efficiency in capturing public mind.\* The ascetics belonging to the various sub-branches of this main order were influential until the

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Two inscriptions discovered at Mullur in Somavarpet Taluk of Karnataka refer to Guṇasena Paṇḍita of the Dravida Sangha of the Arunkalanvaya. He was the preceptor of Pocabbarasi, the mother of Kongalva ruler Rajendra. One of the above inscriptions also lauds his proficiency in Grammar, Agama and Logic. The King Rajendra Kongalva and his mother Pocabbarasi are stated to have renovated the Pārśvanātha *basadi* at

beginning of 13th century A.D. in Karnataka. The ācāryas of this order would always find a high and respectable place in history for their services to Jainism.

### **Ascetics of Tamil Nadu observe ritual of death on the Sepulchral hill.**

A noteworthy factor of the monastic order in the Tamil Nadu is the active and prosperous institute of the nuns, and the wide circle of female disciples. Such a monastic order in Karnataka, exclusively of nuns, hardly existed, for we are unable to find even one order of the type that existed in the Tamil nadu. In other words, the wide circle of female disciples referred to in the inscription of Tamil Nadu are indeed missing in Karnataka. Vedal Monastery was famous and it was a monastery exclusively of nuns. The lady teachers are generally referred to in Tamil inscriptions as Kurattiyar or Kuratti Adigal meaning preceptors or *gurus*. They commanded a large number of lay disciples and held high position as heads of monasteries.

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Mulluru under the spiritual guidance of Guṇasena Paṇḍitācārya. (E.C. I. Nos. 68, 72.) The records also mention the munificent grants made by the King to the *basadi*. These records are dated 1059 and 1064 A.D. (E.C. I. Nos. 68,72).

Yet another inscription discovered in the same place dated 1125 A.D. refers to ācārya Mallisenadeva, a disciple of Sripala Traividyaadeva of Arunkalanvaya in the illustrious Dravida Samgha. The inscription specially eulogises him for having been proficient in all śāstras. Mallisenadeva got the Pārśvanātha *basadi* rebuilt at Mullur. (E.C. I. No.77).

Sripala Traividyaadeva of Arunkalanvaya of the Dravida Samgha and his disciple Vasupūjya Vrati of Arunkalanvaya of Nandi Samgha were influential in the Hoysala Court during the reign of Ballala II. (1173-1220). M.A.R. 1923; *Medieval Jainism*. p.66. Vasupūjya Vrati was the spiritual guru of Ballala II and of his Jaina Minister Buchi Rāja. Buchi Rāja who was Minister of war and peace under Ballala II, was also proficient both in Kannada and Sanskrit, capable of composing poems in both the languages. In commemoration of the coronation ceremony of his master, he built Trikuta Jinālaya at Markali in the Hassan district, under the spiritual guidance of Vasupūjya Vrati. (E.C. No. VIII. 15 (Hn.)

Another inscription also refers to Vadirājan's disciple Vardhamānadeva, a descendant in the line of Santamuni who belonged to the Dravida Samgha and Arunkalanvaya. It is mentioned in the inscription that Vardhamānadeva took a prominent part in the Hoysal's administration. Vardhamānadeva died by Sanyasana and his memorial was erected by his disciple Kamaladeva. (M.A.R. 1929; *Medieval Jainism*. p. 66).

Candraprabha Muni belonging to the Dravida Samgha of the Arunkalanvaya is mentioned in an inscription dated 1183 A.D. found at

Katavapra in Karnataka inspired the ascetics and lay followers from Tamil nadu also. A host of ascetics from Tamil Nadu poured into Sravana Belgola, specially during 7th and 8th centuries to observe the ritual of death on the Sepulchral hill. It is important that a good number among them were nuns. Mostly they hailed from Adiyara Rastra. Adeyara Rastra is identified by the scholars with the regions around Udayendaram near Vellore in the North Arcot District, an important habitat of the Jains.<sup>60</sup>

The large scale persecution of Jaina ascetics during 7th and 8th centuries in Tamil Nadu and subsequent unfavourable developments must have encouraged the ascetics of this area to choose Katavapra in Karnataka, a peaceful abode of death to observe the vow of *sallekhana* than on the natural cavalrons of Tamil Nadu.

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T. Narasipur near Mysore. This inscription records the death of Candraprabha Muni by Sallekhana. (*Pursuing Death*, p. 241) Settar has also noticed references to various ritual terms in the inscription.

The ascetics of Dravida Samgha appear to have been influential in the Western Chalukyan Court. This is reported in a number of records ranging from 10th to 11th centuries A.D. They, by and large, suggest the Jaina leaning of the Western Chalukyan rulers.

King Tailapadeva, son of Satyasraya Irava Bedenga ruled from 997-1009 A.D. His Jaina preceptor was Vimala Candra Pāṇḍitadeva, who himself was the disciple of Traikalamuni Bhaṭṭāraka of the Dravida Samgha of the Pustakagachcha. *Medieval Jainism*, pp. 42-43.

During the reign of Jayasimha III (1018-1042) there lived a galaxy of Jaina ascetics of high repute. The most prolific among them was Vādirāja and he belonged to the Dravida Samgha, Nandi Samgha of the Arunkalanvaya. (*Ibid.*)

One Vādibha Simha Ajita Sena Pāṇḍita belonging to the Dravida Samgha of the Arunkalanvaya is referred to the Tirthahalli inscription in Shimoga District. (E.C.No. VIII. 192. (T)).

The Ingali inscription dated 1094 A.D. in the Gulbarga District refers to Indrasena Bhaṭṭāraka of the Dravida Samgha. His Guru was Mallisena Bhaṭṭāraka of Malanura lineage of the Dravida Samgha. It is important to note that the ascetics of this monastic order are mentioned as the hereditary gurus of Jakkaladevi's family. Jakkaladevi was the queen of the Chalukyan King Vikramāditya VI. Indrasena Bhaṭṭāraka is mentioned as her preceptor. *Jainism in South India*, pp. 229-20.

The nagar inscription speaks about Srivijaya Bhaṭṭāraka also known as Pāṇḍita Pārijāta, who was proficient in all the sāstras and Agamas. He is said to have belonged to the Nandi Gaṇa of the Arunkalanvaya of the Nidambare Tīrtha of the Tiyangudi. He was also the preceptor of Rakkasa Ganga, the grand father of Chattaladevi and of Biradeva and Nanni

### **Patra Kesari**

“By his devotion Guru Patra Kesari made yakṣī Padmāvatī to become his helpmate when he successfully refuted the Trilokshana theory.” Thus Patra Kesari is introduced in the Mallisena Prasasti inscription of Sravana Belgola dated 1050 A.D.<sup>61</sup> His name also appears in the Belur inscriptions dated 1136 A.D.<sup>62</sup> This inscription which provides the list of the ācāryas of Dravida Samgha places him prior to Vajranandi ācārya who is presumed to have been the founder of Dravida Samgha at Madurai, setting aside the controversies, it is evident from the above sources that Patra Kesari was a prominent ascetic of Karnataka who was actively involved in the proselytising activity in Tamil Nadu also.<sup>63</sup> K. Bujabala Sastri places him to 7th century A.D. It is generally believed that he entered the Jaina monastic order influenced by the Devayana Stotra of Samanta Bhadrācārya.

### **Jinasenācārya**

Jinasenācārya the author of *Harivamśa Purāṇa* is prolific among the ācāryas of the Panatra Samgha.<sup>64</sup> Panatra was an ancient kingdom of Karnataka comprising South-Western part of Mysore. Kittur or Kirtipura was its capital. Kirtipura is identified with a village bearing the name Kittur in Heggadadevana Kote Taluk of Mysore District.<sup>65</sup> Combattore region of Tamil Nadu is believed to have been included in the Panatra Vishaya.<sup>66</sup>

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Santara, the Santara kings of Humcha. It is relevant here to state that Chattaladevi was the queen of the Pallaba King Kaduvatti of Tamil Nadu. Having lost her husband and son Goggi, she attached herself to the four sons of her younger sister who was married to the Santara King who also had died. E.C. Vol. VIII Nos : 35, 40 (nagar).

Srivijaya also known as Vādibhasimha alias Odeya-deva alias Muñjarāya was also the preceptor of the Ganga ruler Mārasimha III (963-974) and was very influential in the court of Rastrakuta King Krishna III. It is stated that his knowledge of politics was highly respected by Krishna III who earned fame for his conquests by following the principles taught by his great teacher Muñjarāya. *History of the Western Gangas*. p. 289.

In addition to the above, two more inscriptions at Siyamangalam in the North Arcot region of Tamil Nadu contain reference to Arunkalanvaya of Dravida Samgha. Of the two, one is dated 892 A.D. and the other in the character of 10th century A.D. It is significant that the latter begins with an exaltation to the Arunkalanvaya of the Dravida Samgha and Nandi Samgha. This record also pays obeisance to one Vajranandi Yogindar the Mandalācārya of Dravida Samgha of Arunkalanvaya, who is said to have built flights of steps. J.I.T.No. 319-320.

However, this monastic order hardly finds any reference either in the inscriptions of Tamil Nadu or in Karnataka. But it finds reference as noticed by Dr. A.N. Upadhye in the records of Gujarat and Kathiawar implying ascetics' migration from Karnataka to Gujarat and adjoining territory around by the beginning of the 8th century A.D.<sup>67</sup> Jinasenācārya who might have led this migration is believed to have established there at Vardhamānapura, where he composed his famous *Harivamśapurāṇa*.<sup>68</sup> Jinasenācārya appeared to have maintained closer contact in Tamil Nadu also. On the basis of the Tamil literary works, scholars have suggested that Jinasenācārya attempted to cure Kun Pandya of his disease by making charms and spells, but failed.

It is also evident that Saint Appar and Tirugnana Sambandhar and Mahendra Varman-I, the Pallava king of Kāñcī and Kunpandya of Madurai were all his contemporaries.<sup>69</sup> The anti-Jaina movement launched by these highly venerated Saiva Saints and betrayal of Jainism by the latter, no doubt, signalled the beginning of decline of Jaina influence in Tamil Nadu. Having noticed the gravity of the aggravated situation against Jainism, it is apparent that Jinasenācārya must have associated himself along with many others in proselytising activities in Tamil Nadu. This event must have taken place in the early years of his monastic life around the second half of the 7th century A.D. Tamil tradition also asserts that Jinasenācārya disputed with Saint Appar on the merits of Jainism.<sup>70</sup>

Dorai Rangaswamy in his extensive study on Tevaram hymns has noticed a big list of Jaina ācāryas referred to in the hymns of Saint Tirugnana Sambandhar and Saint Appar. Among them the important names are :

Sādhu Sena  
 Indu Sena  
 Dharma Sena  
 Kuntu Sena  
 Kaṇaka Nandi  
 Puṣpa Nandi  
 Pava Nandi  
 Guṇa Nandi, etc.

We also learn that at the instigation of Sambandhar, Jinasena, Nāgasena, Śrutakirti, Vishana Kirti, Buddha Chandra and Suvrata Kirti attempted to cure Kun Pandya by making charms and spells, but failed in their attempts.<sup>71</sup> It should be noted here that Jinasena mentioned here was Jinasena of the Panatra Samgha and the author of *Harivamśapurāṇa*.

There is also an account in the Periyapurana of a host of Karnataka Jains pouring into Madurai. This apparently leads us to presume about the influx of Jaina ācāryas of Karnataka Jaina centres into Tamil Nadu. Evidently they must have travelled to Tamil Nadu on a peace mission to console the horror stricken Jaina abhernets of that land.<sup>72</sup>

### **Akalaṅkadeva**

The most important figure after Samanta Bhadrācārya is Akalaṅkadeva. According to SrabanaBelgola inscription, Akalaṅka, designated also Devakalaṅka Paṇḍita, defeated the Buddhists in public disputation at Kāñci in the 8th century A.D. He was patronised by Sahasatunga, a Rastrakuta ruler of Manyakheta. His victory in the religious disputation held in the court of Himasitala, the last Buddhists of Ceylon. Wilson in his Introduction to the Mackenzie's Collection informs us that Himasitala was the last Buddha Prince at Kāñci, since he was converted to the Jaina faith by the acknowledged ability of Akalaṅka.<sup>73</sup> \*

Akalaṅka's defeat of the Buddhist at Kāñci in a great disputation is also recorded in the Rājāvalikathāsāra.

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\* With a view to put an end once for all to the Jainas, the Buddhists in Kāñci induced their king Himasitala to send for Akalaṅka to argue with them, the compact being that whichever, all the members of the defeated party should be ground in oil mills. The preparations for this great controversy on the part of the Buddhists were somewhat peculiar. They placed an earthen pot of toddy behind a curtain and having summoned into it their goddess Tara, made her to reply (seriatim) to all the arguments of Akalaṅka. This went on for several days during which Akalaṅka gained no advantage. He now began to feel anxiety as to the result, when Kusumanadini appeared to him in a dream and told him that if he put his questions in a different order, he would be victorious. This direction was followed the next day, when the Goddess in the pot was unable to answer, and victory was declared for the Jains. Akalaṅka then tore away the curtain, kicked over the pot with his left foot and smashed it. The king was disgusted at finding out the tricks played by the Buddhists and ordered all of them to be ground in oil mills. But at the intercession of Akalaṅka, instead of putting them to death, he consented to banish them to a distant country, and so, they were all transported to Kandy in Ceylon.

A few details have come down to us about Akalaṅkadeva's early life. Akalaṅkadeva was the son of a Brahmana named Purushottama, who was a minister of the King Sabhatunga of Manyakheta. But Akalaṅka himself tells us that he was the son of a King called Raghu Havya. This is mentioned in his *Rājavārtika*.

The above details, more or less, corroborate to the Tamil tradition. The following is an abridged account of the elaborate details available in the Tamil Nadu about Akalaṅka :

A Buddhist colony called Alividaitangi situated between Kāñcipuram and North Arcot of Tamil Nadu was presided over by reputed monks. Once, two of the students Akalaṅka and Niskalaṅka quarrelled with their teachers and left the monastery. Akalaṅka went to Sravanabelgola, studied Jaina Agama and became a devout monk and thereafter he returned to the South and defeated the Buddhist in a polemical discussion at the Court of King Himasitala. Akalaṅka became the pontiff of the Jaina Math at Kāñcipuram.<sup>74</sup>

Legend also connects the great ācārya Akalaṅka with the Kuntalanātha *basadi* at Karantai situated about 15 Kilometers South-West of Kāñcipuram. This *basadi* also contains a miniature sculpture of a monk which is believed to be that of Akalaṅka ācārya. Apart from this, on the wall of the prakara near yakṣi shrine an image of a monk has been carved along with *pinche* i.e., a bunch of peacock feathers, book-stand, *kamandala* and *paduke* on the sides. This image is believed to be that of Akalaṅkadeva.<sup>75</sup>

In an inscription of SravanaBelgola dated 1129 A.D. Akalaṅkācārya is glorified for his abilities—peerless poet, a pre-eminent disputant orator and an expert research scholar in various branches of knowledge. Akalaṅkadeva was chiefly associated with Kanakagiri Kshetra a strong-hold of Jainism near Mysore during the ancient period. The tradition also relates that the pontiffs of Kanakagiri Jaina Matha bore the religious title Akalaṅkadeva. However, not much information is forthcoming regarding the functioning of this Jaina Matha which during the later years appears to have became subordinate to the SravanaBelgola Sri Matha. Akalaṅkadeva is believed to have lived in the 8th century A.D.

### **Helācārya**

In the Jaina religious history of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, Helācārya appears to be very prominent. P.D. Desai places him between 8th and 9th centuries. Having belonged to Dravida Gaṇa, he appears to have centralised his activities around Hemagrāma, the present Ponnur in the North Arcot region of Tamil Nadu.<sup>76</sup>

The Jvalini Kalpa composed by Indranandi the fifth Jaina ascetic who succeeded Helācārya, says that Helācārya of the famous Dravida Samgha first started Jvalini Worship on the Summit of the Nilgiri hills

near Hemagrāma in order to remove the bad influence of an evil spirit known as Brahmarāksasa who had empowered his lady disciple Kamalasri.<sup>77</sup> Ponnur hill is considered to be the habitat of the Goddess Jvalamalini who is stated to have bestowed grace on Helācārya. Jvalinin cult became popular in the Ponnur area, hence this Yakṣī occupies a prominent position in the Adinatha *basadi* at that place. Practice of conducting weekly worship of the footprints of Helācārya appears to have prevailed until the 18th century or even later. This is evident from an inscription of 1733 A.D.<sup>78</sup> It states that, in the year 1733 A.D. the residents of Svarṇapura made arrangements to take out the images of Pārśvanātha and Jvalamalini Yakṣī in a procession from Adinātha *basadi* to Nilagiri parvata at the time of the weekly worship of Helācārya on every sunday.<sup>79</sup>

Helācārya is believed to have attained liberation at Nilagiri Parvata.

### **Miscellaneous**

It may be noted that on the Samanarmalai hill near Kilkuyil Kudi (Kilakkudi) in Madurai District, a Kannada record of the 12th century A.D. is found. It mentions the Jaina ascetics Āryadeva and Bālacandradeva belonging to the Mula Samgha of Sravana Belgola. It also refers to Nemideva, Ajitasenadeva and Govardhanadeva. Bālacandradeva is referred to in many records of Sravana Belgola. In one record, he is mentioned as well-versed in all kinds of arts and a lion among disputants. It appears that ascetics of Karnataka maintained their contacts with ancient Jaina centres of Tamil Nadu.

### **Impalement of Eight Thousand Jaina Monks at Madurai in 7th century A.D. and its Historical Validity.**

Among the historians of the South Indian religious history, there has always been a tendency to look down upon the validity of the records dealing with the events of religious conflicts and their consequences.

It is very much so with regard to the persecution of the Jaina ascetics believed to have occurred in South India. Some of them even have made strong remarks like : Stories concocted by the hegiologist to enhance to glory of their own religion. However, Vincent Smith who gives credence to such descriptions also accepts them as historical incident, an incident of persecution for religion.

Kun Pandya's conversion to Saivism resulted in the impalement of 8000 Jaina monks. The historicity of this event cannot be turned down

ignoring it as merely an episode, for, this major event was a turning point in the history of both Saivism and Jainism in Tamil Nadu. Jainism started declining thereafter as the anti-Jaina struggle reached its peak in the 7th century A.D. and continued constantly.

The direct reference to the impalement of Jaina ascetics is found in Periyapuram. Jaina ascetics from eight hills in the Pandya Kingdom, viz., Annamalai, Nagamalai, Sunangamalai, Tirupparankundram, Irunkunram, Pasumalai, Sidderrrmali and Samanamalai were mercilessly impaled.

M. Valliammal in an article entitled : "Studies in Communal Conflict in Early Tamil history -A case Study of the Impalement of 8000 Jain monks in Madurai in 7th century A.D." has quoted in detail the Tamil works describing impalement. According to her, Tevaram of Saint Tirujnana Sambandhar also makes reference implicitly to the impalement of Jaina ascetics, for 10th song of 95th, 98th and 99th padigams and the first song of the 108th padigam express impalement events. Here, I undertake to reproduce more or less in the same form the observations noted by the author of the above mentioned article regarding the various interpretations of Kazhu and Kazhukkal. These terms signifying a traditional festival known as Kazhu Vettiya Tirunal-an impalement festival celebrated in the famous Siva temples in and around Madurai including the renown Meenakshiamman Temple.<sup>80</sup>

As noted above, Devacandra, a Kannada writer of the 19th century A.D., also makes references to the impalement of the Jaina ascetics in his Rājāvalikathāsāra.<sup>81</sup>

The Jains in the padigam of the Saint Tirujnana Sambandhar have been referred to as Kazhukkal. The term Kazhu is differently interpreted like :

1. The Jains deserved the impalement for their sins, so they were called Kazhukkal.
2. They had sharpened stake in their hands, because it was the custom of the Jains to get themselves impaled when their religion was disgraced and they were defeated by the followers of other religions.
3. They were known as Kazhukkal as their hairs were plucked.<sup>82</sup>

The term Kazhu is synonymous with impalement and evidently Saint Tirujnana Sambandhar was involved in that event of violence. Here it is important to note that Saint Tirujnana Sambandhar praises Lord Siva for the destruction of the Jains. In this padigam Siva is described as 'the warrior who vanquished the Jains'.<sup>83</sup>

The impalement as a punishment for felony also finds reference to Tamil inscriptions, art and socio-religious practices of the Saiva temples during the annual traditional festivals.

### **Impalement Scenes in Art**

Impalement scenes appear in colours on the eastern side of the Golden Lotus Tank in the Meenakshiammal Temple, Madurai.

The Saiva Temple at Tiruvottur also contains miniature sculptures depicting the impaling of the Jains. These sculptures are assigned to medieval period and they illustrate the culmination of sectarian animosity of the Saivas towards the Jains.<sup>84</sup>

### **Impalement in Socio-Religious Practices**

Symbolic enactment of the impalement of the Jaina ascetics formed an important part of the Markali Utsaba magnificient festival conducted in the perumal Temple at Sucindram. This is a grand festival conducted for 10 days and on the 6th day the impalement event is also celebrated symbolically. On that day, Vairavi Anvaal plays the role of the executioner. After the supposed executions Vairabais are expected to show to the authorities the blood stained trident filled to the stakes. After the celebration of the impalement event, *pūjā* is offered to the Triumphant Saint Tirujnana Sambandhar along with the other deities.<sup>85</sup>

Kazuvettiya Tirunal festival celebrated in the Meenakshiammal Temple, Madurai, is almost similar to the Markali Utsav celebrated in the Perumal Temple at Sucindram – a person would enact the role of Saint Tirujnana Sambandhar. He and the Jains would have debate. Finally the dolls representing Jaina monks symbolically would be impaled. This festival is a popular festival, celebrated also in other Saiva temples that have been situated in the adjacent villages of Madurai like Tiruppuvanam, Tirumangalam, Tiruvadagam, Tiruchuzhi, Tirupparankundram, etc.<sup>86\*</sup>

However, the practice of impaling the dolls is believed to have been given up in 1967 and even the festival was given a new name called Saiva Samaya Sthabitha Leelai. This was owing to the effort made by

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It is believed that in 1954, the actors of the Kazhuvettiya Tirunal who played the role of Jaina Saints and Saint Tirujnana Sambandhar refused to play the role as the aid given to them by the Zamindars was stopped. It was because of the land reform acts of the Government of India.

His Holiness Tiru Kunrakkudi Adigalar, a Saiva religious head, he expressed his opinion in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Council in 1967 that impaling practice in the temples should be abolished, as it was against Ahimsā Dharma and violates the principle of secularism of the Indian Constitution.<sup>87</sup>

It is also important to note in this context that the Jaina sect is ridiculed in the concluding imprecatory part of a few Tamil records. One such record belongs to the reign of Kulattunga Chola III. This inscription mainly throws light on certain Tax concessions made in favour of Tiruvannamalai Siva Temple. The concluding imprecatory part states that men who misappropriate that tax revenue would be branded as bearers of the Kundika that is Kamandala.

Another inscription belonged to the period of Harihara states that the residents of Tenkarainadu should bear the expenses for the conduct of worship in the Siva Temple at Maravapalayam, otherwise they would incur the sin of killing seven and eight thousand Jains even in their next birth.<sup>88</sup>

The above illustrations obviously throw light on the general discontentment shown towards the Jains in Tamil Nadu.

### **Influence of Karnataka on the Tamil Jaina Art**

Karnataka has also left its indelible mark on the Tamil Jaina art. This has been well-noticed by the Art historians dealing with the Tamil Jaina art and architecture. One such centre where this kind of impact is seen is the famous Vallimalai, where the Jaina caves exist. One of the shrines on Vallimalai was made by the western Ganga ruler Rachamalla II. The Jaina sculptures engraved here, according to an art observer, are more of Ganga than the Pallava affinities.

Similarly, Tirakkol in North Arcot District contains an interesting boulder with Jaina sculptures. Annamalai in the same district contains fragments of Jaina sculptures and evidences of structural additions inside its cavern. The sculptures on the rocks specially suggests more Rastrakuta Ganga affinities than the Pallava.<sup>89</sup>

### **Other Aspects**

#### **Literary Influence**

The interaction of style and theme of the Kannada Jaina literature on the Tamil literature was significant. Sripurana and Jivasubhodana are the two important Tamil literary works belonging to this category.

Śrīpurāṇa is a notable work held in great reverence by the Tamil Jains. It is generally believed that the author of Sripurana went of Srabanabelgola from his native place Perumandur and wrote Sripurana following the example of the Chamundaraya Purana (997 A.D.). The authorship of Sripurana is yet to be decided. Nevertheless, it is attributed by most of the scholars to Mandalapurusha of the 12th century A.D., the author of Niganthu. But this has been denouced by scholars who assign the work to 14th-15th centuries A.D.<sup>90</sup>

Devendra Mahamuni, the author of *Jivasambhodane*, composed in Maniprabāla style is believed to have followed the example of Bandhuvarman who has also composed *Jivasambhodane* in Canarese. Bandhuvarma is assigned to 1200 A.D.<sup>91</sup>

### **Madurai-Dakshina madurai reference made by the Kannada Jaina Writer**

Jaina predominance that prevailed during the ancient period at Maduri finds exposition in the writings of the Modern Jaina Kannada poets and scholars. Padmanābha Kavi in *Jinadattarāyacarite* (17th century A.D.), Anantakavi in Belgolada *Gommatteśvaracarite* (1780), Devacandra in *Rājāvalikathāsāra* (1840), and *Stalapurana* of Srabanabelgola (1820) have afforded some matters of historical interest.

#### **Jinadattarāyacarite**

Prince Jinadatta is described as the son of the King Sahakara of Uttara Madurai, who marrying a new wife, develops an aversion to his son who becomes a voluntary exile. During his wanderings he founded the city of Pomburchcha or Humcha in Karnataka where he establishes a kingdom by the grace of Goddess Yaksī Padmāvatī. Reference to this is also made in the inscriptions.

As King Pandya and Vira Pandya of Dakshina Madurai were his maternal uncles, Jinadattarāya later marries their daughters. When his father king Sahakara dies, Jinadatta establishes an United Kingdom of Pomburchcha and Madurai and rules happily upholding the Jaina faith.<sup>92</sup>

The story of Jinadatta and his relations with Dakshina Madurai also finds a reference in Devacandra's *Rājābalikathāsāra*.<sup>93</sup>

Anantakavi while describing the magnificent city of Dakshina Madurai that was flourishing in the Jaina atmosphere also states that the King Rachamalla and his minister Chamundaraya were ruling over Dakshina Madurai protecting Jina Dharmā.<sup>94</sup>

The *Stalapurana* of Srabanabelgola describes Chamundarāya to have belonged to the lineage of the Pandya rular of Madurai.<sup>95</sup>

Whether or not the Jaina royal families of Karnataka owe their origin to Dakshina Maduria is not a point that needs to be assessed here in the light of the above sources. However, it is obvious that Jaina royal families of Karnataka had intimate relation with the ruling families of Tamil Nadu during the hey days of Jainism which appears to have lasted until 7th century A.D.

Jainism was neither the faith of the royal house nor did it receive any royal patronage in a big way thereafter. Liberal donors, merchant guilds and assemblies appear to have saved the Jaina monuments seeking the gracious approval of the rulers through the ages.

From the above accounts, it may rightly be surmised that the period covered by the post seventh century in South India was marked by wordy warfare and learned religious disputations among the Jains, Buddhist, Saivas and Vaishnavas. Each sect was anxious to preserve its tenets and spread them among the masses by taking the royal support.

The Jaina era, i.e, the period of Jaina predominance in Tamil Nadu, appears to have lasted only until 7th century A.D. In Karnataka, it moved ahead until 11th century A.D. It is signigicant that the Jaina influence did not end abruptly in Karnataka though their strength decreased the influence continued to survive for centuries to come.

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5. *Ibid.*
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44. E.C. II (SB) No.8, 355, 361, 480, 482.
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47. *Ibid.*
48. S.K. Ramachandra Rao, Jainism in South India, pp. 17-21; K. Bhujabala Sastri, *Op. cit.*
49. (a) Nearly 84 *Pāhudas* are ascribed to him, but unfortunately they are lost. His triad consist of : (b) Pañcāstikāya, Pravacanasāra and Samayasāra. (c) Daśabhakti Kulācāra, Rayanasāra, Niyamasāra are other works attributed to him.
50. 'Utkalika' - situated between rivers Bhimarati and Krishnā.
51. Rājāvalikathāsāra, pp. 125, 135-139; 151, 276, 314.
52. E.C. II. No. 40 (SB)
53. *Studies in South Indian Jainism*, p. 52.
54. *Ibid.*
55. *Medieval Jainism*. p. 238.
56. Ramaswami Iyengar, p. 55.
57. *Jainism in Early Medieval Karnataka*, p. 117.
58. *Ibid.*, 117.
59. KIAP. Mn, : 58.
60. Akṣaya Kirti of South Mathura, Visoka Batara and Perggorva of Kolattur, Magamati Kanti of Chittor, Mellagavara Gurava of Inunguru, Baladeva of Kitturu, Ugrasena of Malanur, Maniguravadigal of Chittoor, Sri Bhaṭṭāraka of Chittore, etc. E.C. Vol. II, 23, 24,25,104,31.
61. *Ibid.*, No. 77.
62. E.C. Vol. X, No. 106.
63. Upadhye Papers, pp. 50, 80, 173; K. Bhujabala Sastri, *op.cit.* pp. 44-48.
64. *Ibid.*
65. B.L. Rice, *Mysore and Coorg from Inscriptions*.
66. K. Bhujabala Sastri, *op. cit.*
67. Upadhye Papers.
68. *Ibid.*
69. Dorai Rangaswamy, *Op. cit.* 121.
70. *Ibid.*
71. *Ibid.*, p. 997.
72. *Ibid.*
73. E.C. Vol. II (1923). Intro. p. 84. K. Bhujabala Sastri, *op.cit.*

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77. J.I.T. NO. 246.
78. *Ibid.* No. 313.
79. *Ibid.* No. 246.
80. Proceedings Volume of the South Indian History Congress, 9-11 No. 1991.
81. *Rājāvalikathāsāra*. p. 163.
82. This portion is more or less the reproduction of the article entitled : *Studies in Communal Conflict in Early Tamil History* -A Case Study of the Impalement of 8000 Jaina Monks in Madurai in 7th century a.D.  
Also see for further details : *Saivism in South India*.
83. *Saivism in South India*, pp. 332, 333.
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10. Mysore Archaeological Reports [M.A.R]

## Book Review

Dulichand Jain—*Pearls of Jaina Wisdom*, a Selection of Inspiring Aphorisms from the Jaina Scriptures, with a Foreword by Satya Ranjan Banerjee, Parshvanath Vidyapeeth, Varanasi, and Research Foundation for Jainology, Madras, 1997, price Rs. 120.00.

'Pearls of Jaina Wisdom' is a translation of inspiring Sūtras from various Jaina texts, meticulously compiled by Shri Dulichand Jain. The book is a result of an in depth study of the vast Jaina Agamic literature, it is a select collection of aphorisms from various Jaina texts, it is an invaluable compilation for laymen as well as research scholars.

In today's fast-paced world, we are at the brink of personal and social crisis, and such a book helps us to integrate ourselves in the complex dimension of life. Having run after material consumption, we have left behind the picture of the good life. We can't trust our social system, our present familial system offers us no feeling of well-being or security, we are disillusioned by our present economic and legal systems, we don't feel healthy despite all the medical advances, we are bewildered as changes creep upon us unawares.

The best and most effective way to cope with the changing trends is to create a personal change. Once a personal change is achieved, we can apply it much more effectively to all the areas of our life. To facilitate this change, the ancient seers have shown us a way of life which is ethical, honest and beneficial. Jainism is a religion which believes in the unique potentiality of each individual to find the divine within—the human becomes the divine. All the Tirthaṅkaras were human beings who attained the position of Godhood by tapping their own inner resources and they propounded some eternal truths which can be followed by anyone who is an aspirant. These truths are timeless, they adapt and fit into the changing and shifting framework of life.

It is the timelessness of these truths that inspires people like Mr. Jain to bring out a book that becomes a storehouse of wisdom for today's world. He believes that these aphorisms can be an answer to today's needs; and it is with this aim of creating an awareness and understanding of the basic tenets of Jainism as propounded by Lord Mahāvīra that this book is written.

The book is divided into two parts. In the first part the author writes about the life and teachings of Lord Mahāvira and introduces the readers to Jaina Agamic literature, thereby setting the background for the second part which is a collection of aphorisms from the sacred texts. The selection of 650 aphorisms and their divisions into 71 lessons clearly indicate the research work and the meticulous efforts of the author. The aphorisms selected are simple as well as reflective and thought-provoking. The 71 lessons are classified under the following 12 chapters : Precepts on the auspicious, Knowledge of the fundamentals, conquest of passions, mind, *karma*, learning, the path of liberation, the path of righteousness, reflections on the self and so on and so forth. In this compilation, we really find a glimpse of that sublime thought which shall inspire mankind to tread the path of righteousness at all times.

The translation is simple and lucid so that it is comprehensible at first reading; however, the wisdom underlying the ancient aphorisms is such that reading them regularly will show newer insights and greater application in life. These are truths about life—about birth and death, about happiness and sorrow, about success and failure, and most importantly, about our attitudes towards life. They show us how to prioritise in life and work towards happiness and contentment.

There is a need today to address the confusion between what one ought to do and what one would be inclined to do. A study of these aphorisms will not in itself make one a better person, it can certainly provide us with a guideline in aiding us with the solution of our practical problems. Such a study can serve to help us for better understanding and classify our own moral principles; most of all, it can help redefine, develop and sometimes change these principles. It can lead us from blind, irrational beliefs and dogmas to logical scrutiny and critical reflective morality of one's own understanding.

This book will also be found useful by the research scholars as the author has given an Index of all the Sūtras, a bibliography and a glossary of technical terms. The value of the publication is greatly enhanced by providing a reliable Roman transliteration. The writer's style is lucid, the impact provides a strong foundation about Jaina theories, capturing our minds by its detached and intellectual rendering.

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