

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF TAPA GACHCHA

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The Tapa Gachcha was founded by Jagat Chandra Suri who was a great scholar, preacher and an austere ascetic. He remained at Aghatpur (Udaipur) in Mewar and defeated some Digamber scholars also. Because of his practice of penance (he observed the vow of 'Ayamle' all his life) Maharawal Jaitra Singh of Mewar bestowed upon him the title of "Tapa" in V.E. 1285 at Aghat. It is interesting to note that this Gachcha was born in Mewar but grew in strength in Gujrat. Jagat Chandra Suri expired in V.E. 1327 and was succeeded by Devendra Suri I, Dharam Gosh Suri, Somprabh, Somtilak and Devendra Suri II one after the other. These Acharyas performed 'pratishtas', 'sangh yatras' and other multifold religious activities. Som Sunder Suri was an able, erudite and competent Acharya. Som Saubhagya Kavya, Guru Gun Ratnakar Kavya and many other works contain manifold details of his life as also of his journeys to Shatrunjay and other places<sup>1</sup>. These 'sangh yatras' were taken out by Shresthis-Govind of Ider, Gunraj of Chittor, Dharna Shah of Ranakpur and many others. It is believed that Som Sunder remained very influential and came to be known as Yug Pradhan. On account of multifarious activities and literary pursuits, his period is called Som Sunder Yuga in literature. He visited Mewar in V.E.1450. Maharana Lakha sent his son Chunda and his

Pradhan Ramdeva Nawalkha to receive him at Delawara. (Devkul Patak) Mewar was then a good centre of art and architecture. Delawara was very famous for various literary activities. It was the centre of Khartar Gachcha. But the visit of Som Sunder Suri brought many families into the fold of Tapa Gachcha. He became Acharya after the death of Devendra Suri II in V.E.1457. He travelled in Mewar, Godwar, Sirohi, Gujrat and M.P. His inscriptions and colophons mention manifold activities. He consecrated the temple of Jawar (Mewar)<sup>2</sup> in V.E. 1478. He was present at Delawara in V.E.1482, when MS Kalikacharya Katha was got copied by Shreshthi Laxmansingh<sup>3</sup> and others. The temple of Jirawla Paraswanath was extensively renovated and several 'sanghas' from various places from Rajasthan and Gujrat paid a visit there in the company of various Acharyas. We come to know of the Chaturmas of 4 Acharyas of different Gachchas, including Tapa Gachcha, being held there in V.E.1483<sup>4</sup>. The temple of Machind (Mewar), Chittor and Ranakpur were got renovated by Som Sunder Suri. Shreshthi Visal of Chittor and Delawara who was the brother of Govind of Ider, paid due reverence to Som Sunder Suri. He built the temples at Machind Fort (near Kumbhalgarh) and Chittor and got several copies of Kriya-Ratna-Samuchaya made<sup>5</sup>. The Mahavir Prasad Temple was got renovated by Shreshthi Gunraj and was consecrated by Som Sunder Suri at Chittor in V.E.1495. The famous temple of Ranakpur was constructed by Dharna Shah. In V.E.1498, its 'pratishtha' of the lower part was performed by Som Sunder Suri, who had become very old and subsequently expired at Ranakpur in V.E.1499. He composed several literary works named Bhasaya Traya Churni, Kalyanak Stava Ratna Kosh, Updesh Balavabodh, Yoga Shastra Balavabodh, Bhashya Traya Awachurni and other works. The Updesh Balavabodh is compilation of several instructions pertaining to etiquette and good behaviour. He used brief fables to clarify the incomprehensible, ambiguous and other religious subjects. The Yoga Shastra Balavabodh is another important work dealing with 'Yogic' philosophy in its pristine glory, five Mahavratas and many other items. He liked to compose his works in local dialects. His contribution in the field of literary pursuits is of great significance<sup>6</sup>. The detail of the 'pratishtha' performed at Ranakpur is recorded by poet Meha in his Ranigpur Stava V.E.1499. He mentions that when the first storey of the temple was completed, its consecration ceremony was got done through Som Sunder Suri. A large crowd assembled there to witness the functions.

The dramas and other religious activities were regularly organized there. Som Sunder also sat there. The people in large number came regularly there to pay homage to him. Soon after, when he expired in V.E.1499, he was cremated at Ranakpur.

Som Sunder Suri had a large number of pupils. We find the names of Jagchandra Suri, Somdeva Suri, Bhuvan Sunder Suri, Jin Sunder Suri and others. These Acharyas remained mostly in Mewar. It was the period of Maharana Kumbha, who was a very learned and able ruler. He got versified the Sangitaraj and built the famous Kirti Stambha, Kumbhalgarh fort and many temples at Chittor, Kumbhalgarh, Eklingji, Achaleshwar (Abu) and many other places. He venerated the Jain Monks. He gave the epithet of 'Kaviraj' to Somdev Suri. At the time of celebrations of Ranakpur temple, Somdev Suri received the title of 'Vachak'. The Som Saubhagya Kavya mentions that he always spoke in sweet tongue. In the religious discussion, no competitor could stand against him. On account of his sweet tongued oratory, the competitors always avoided rivalling him. The Som Saubhagya Kavya further mentions that Maharana Kumbha, who was famed an invincible conqueror, respected him very much. Some scholars compare Somdev with Siddhasen Diwakar, Bappa Bhatti and Hem Chandra. The Guru Guna Ratnakar Kavya mentions him as the vanquisher of rivals. It is also stated that Maharana Kumbha respected him due to his poetic excellence<sup>7</sup>.

Jayanand was another poet who flourished before V.E.1478. He was a great scholar. Due to his knowledge of Sanskrit and philosophy, he was known as Krishna Saraswati. He composed Pathyakhyan Vivarna Samuktava Kaumudi and Pratikraman Vidhi. Jin Harsh Gani was his pupil who composed Vastupal Charita V.E.1497, at Chittor. It was composed in Sanskrit and contains manifold details. Even after two hundred years of the death of Vastupal and Tejpal, such details appearing in the work required much time in compilation of matter. It was published in V.E.1998 by Kirti Muni from Shanti Suri Jain Granth Mala. The Rayan Sehari Kaha was composed in Prakrit. The author was a competent scholar who furnished much detail of architectural scenes, natural atmosphere, and others<sup>8</sup>.

The Tapagachcha Gurvavli was composed by Jin Vardhan Gani. It is an historical work having much detail of each Acharya. Visal Ratan Gani

compiled the Bhaktamar Avachuri on Posh Sudi I, V.E. 1482 at Delawara (Mewar). Jai Shekhar Suri copied the MS Gachchachar in V.E.1491 during the reign of Maharana Kumbha. At the end of the work, it has a colophon which mentions that the work was completed with the help of Humbad Shreshthi Singha, who spent Rs.2000/- on this work. Shrimall Shreshthi Jhanta styled as Rishishwar was also remembered in the colophon, perhaps due to his active assistance in the work<sup>9</sup>.

The Chittor inscription of V.E.1495 of Mahavir temple Chittor was composed by Charitra Ratna Gani of Tapagachcha. During the invasion of Akbar, the 'prashasti' was broken in pieces. Only a portion of it, having verses 89 to 104 in 13 lines was recently noticed by the author, who had published the text in the Varada Vol IX, part III, pp 7-9. It is now lying in the Neel Kanth temple of Chittor. A copy of the 'prashasti' executed by Charitra Ratan Gani in V.E.1508, with some improved text is available in the Deccan College, Pune. On comparing its text with the recently noticed inscription, some changes have come to light. It seems that the author has improved the text in the later work. It is edited and published by D.R. Bhandarkar in the Journal Bombay Branch Royal Asiatic Society Vol XXIII at page 41. This 'prashasti' is a good work of Sanskrit. It gives a geographical account of Mewar, dynastic history, details of Maharana Kumbha's reign, the family of Gunraj Shreshthi and Tapa Gachcha monks. The description of Chittor and other parts of Mewar given in it proves that Charitra Ratan Gani was a good poet of Sanskrit and an outstanding Scholar. He has used a good number of adjectives and seems to have a flair for orics<sup>10</sup>. He has also composed Vishanti Sthanak, Vicharamrita Sanghaha and Dan Pradeep. These works were composed at Chittor. The Dan Pradeep is a very long work completed in V.E.1499 having 6675 verses. Several stories have been used in it, which has increased the suitability of the work. It was published by Chatur Vijayji from Bhavnagar in V.E.1974. The Ranakpur inscription of V.E.1496 is an important epigraph having 47 lines. It was composed in good prose. The description given in lines 17 to 36 is full of good similes. The long sentences characterise this well-worded piece proving the author's good command over Sanskrit. Unfortunately, the name of the author has not been recorded in it. But he must have belonged to the Tapa Gachcha.

Ratna Mandir and Pratishtha Som were good Sanskrit scholars.

Pratishtha Som composed the Som Saubhagya Kavya wherein he has gives the details of the life history of Som Sunder Suri. He has also described the religious, social and cultural events. It has the detail of Jain monk life from his 'diksha' to his death. Account of Jain monks travelling with Jain Sanghas started by rich Shreshthis has been given. The details of the Sanghas started by Govind of Idar, Gunraj of Chittor and many others with consecration ceremonies performed at Delawara (Mewar), Ranakpur, Chittor and many other places have been given. He has used many 'deshi' words and described the functions with ample vividty. The 'pahirawani' (distribution of clothes on some auspicious occasions), preparation of sweets, distribution of cocoanut and many other social customs have been described. The author's painstaking efforts to narrate the detail of the celebrations made him quite popular. One more work Katha Mahodadhi was also compiled by him. One copy of this work is available in the collection of Oriental Research Institute, Jodhpur. Ratna Mandir was a famous author, who composed Updesh Tarangni. It has many details of social, religious, numismatic and other matters. It also has many old Rajasthani words. Another work of the author is Bhoj Prabandh, recently published by Bhartiya Jnanpeeth, Delhi<sup>12</sup>.

After Som Sunder, Muni Sunder, a most competent Sanskrit scholar, was made an Acharya. He survived for a few years. He composed several good Sanskrit works. The Vignapati patra sent to Dev Sunder Suri was composed by him. Its Gurvavli portion only is available now. The Adhyatma Kalpadrum is an important work composed by him. It is a famous work translated by Shri Lodha in Hindi. The Tridas Trangini, Updesh Ratnakar, Shantikar Stotra and many other works were his contribution. The Shantikar Stotra was definitely composed at Delawara (Mewar) as the name of the place occurs in the text. Zafar Khan of Khambat conferred upon him the title of 'Vadi Gokul Sakandha' and some South Indian Pandit gave him the title of Kali Saraswati. He was also present at Jawar in V.E.1478 when Som Sunder Suri performed the consecration ceremony<sup>13</sup>.

Ratan Shekhar Suri became the Acharya of the Tapa Gachcha. He was born in V.E.1457 and became a monk in V.E.1463. He was honoured at Delawara (Mewar) in V.E.1493. The works composed by him are Shradh Prakarna Vriti, Sharadh Vidhi Kaumdi, Achar Pradeep, Laghu Kashetra Sansa and others. Charitra Ratan Gani remained his associate, who

amended and corrected his works also. He widely travelled in Mewar, Godwar, Sirohi, Gujrat and Malwa<sup>14</sup>. The remaining 'pratishthas' of Ranakpur temple were done by him. Several known inscriptions from V.E.1503 to 1517 throw light about his various activities in Mewar and other areas. Manikya Sunder Gani composed Bhava Bhavna Balavbodh in V.E.1501 at Delawara (Mewar). This work was amended by Yati Siddhanta Nipuna. He remained alive for many years and actively served Ratan Shekhar Suri. Shubh Shila was another writer who remained alive upto V.E.1540 and also composed many works<sup>15</sup>.

Laxmi Sagar Suri succeeded Ratna Shekhar Suri. He consecrated several temples and icons. From V.E. 1517, he was appointed as the Acharya. We find his inscriptions on the bronzes of Godwar, now preserved in the Chintamani temple of Bikaner, dated V.E. 1517 to 1535<sup>16</sup>. A few icons of Achalgarh dated V.E. 1518, Bhim Vasahi of Abu dated V.E.1525 and others were consecrated by him. It seems that the festivities of Bhim Vasahi were arranged at a large scale<sup>17</sup>. Several Jain monks of Tapa Gachcha including Sudhanandan Suri, Sanjay Suri and others were also present. After Laxmi Sagar Suri, Sumati Badhu succeeded.

He arranged several consecration ceremonies. He died circa V.E.1552 and was succeeded by Hem Vimal Suri. He did hard labour to remove 'shithalachar' (loose discipline) among the Jain monks. Those monks who could not mould themselves according to his instructions, were removed from the Sangh. In Lalpura, he arranged the consecration ceremony of a Jain temple built by Shreshthi Dhanpal in V.E.1563. In V.E. 1570, he endowed the status of Acharya on Anand Vimal, who was a very erudite pundit. Hem Vimal remained much active in Gujrat. He criticised the 'Kaduva Panth' now known as 'Baies Sampardaya'. The style of his preaching was very effective. His descendants were learned pundits and composed several works. Among them the names of Jin Manakya and Harshkul Gani and others are noteworthy. Various branches of Tapa Gachcha known as 'Kutubpura', 'Kamal Kalasa', 'Palanpura' and 'Vimal Shakha' sprang up during this time.

Hem Vimal Suri's successor was Anand Vimal Suri. He travelled in Jaisalmer area and made the Kothari family his follower. He also went to Mewar, Marwar and Mewar to carry out propaganda against the 'Baies Sampardaya' or 'Kaduvās'. The renovation of Shatrunjay temple was

arranged by Karma Shah of Chittor in V.E. 1587. The detail of this event is recorded in the Shatrunjay Tirthoddhar Prabandh and in three inscriptions of V.E. 1587.<sup>18</sup> It is mentioned that when Bahadur Shah was in exile at Chittor during the reign of Maharana Sangha, Karma Shah's family gave him a loan of Rupees One Lakh on the condition that whenever he might be the ruler of Gujrat, necessary permission to renovate the above temple be given to him. Accordingly, the monks of Tapa Gachcha Lavanya Samudra and others accompanied Karma Shah and went to Ahmedabad from where a 'firman' was obtained from the Sultan Bahadur Shah to renovate the temple. It seems that several 'sutradhars' named Tila, Poma, Ganga, Gaura, Tala, Deva and others were taken from Chittor to undertake the work of renovation. The work was soon completed and several Jain sanghas from Mewar, Ahmedabad and other parts of the country attended it. Anand Vimal worked hard to improve the Jain monks of Tapa Gachcha.

Vijaydan Suri succeeded Anand Vimal Suri. He remained much busy in Gujrat and died in V.E. 1622 at Badali. He was succeeded by Hir Vijay Suri. Akbar invited him to visit his court. He was then living in the Gandhar island. Akbar sent a 'firman' in 1582 A.D. to Sihabuddin Ahmed Khan, the Subedar of Gujrat, to ask Suriji to visit his court. On receipt of the 'firman', Suriji went to Ahmedabad. The Subedar asked to arrange the means of transport to which Suriji refused and went on foot to Agra, where he reached on June 7, 1582 A.D. He first met Abul Fazal, who took Suriji to the palace. Abul Fazal tried to discuss various points with Suriji but Suriji plainly told that agony and happiness are derived in one's life according to one's own actions. Abul Fazal was much impressed by the short and plain reply heard from Suriji. On 18th June, 1582 A.D., Suriji met Akbar. When it was made known to Akbar that Suriji, following the traditions of his sect, came on foot, he was much pleased. Akbar enquired from him 'what was religion'. Suriji told that any act based on kindness, was the religion. Akbar, who was much interested in the hunting excursions, was much impressed on hearing the reply. He gave the collections of Jain MSS available in his palace. These were taken from the collection of Padam Suriji by Akbar. He was also interested in giving gold and silver and other valuables, but Suriji refused. Akbar also issued a 'firman', according to which a ban was imposed on the slaughter of animals during 'Paryushans' and four other days. Further, on the advice of Suriji, Akbar also issued orders to have a complete ban on fishing in the tank of Fatehpur Sikari.<sup>19</sup> In 1584 A.D. the

title of 'Jagad Guru' was bestowed upon the Acharya. The title of 'Upadhya' was bestowed upon Shanti Chandra. Suriji remained at Agra, Ibrahimabad and Fatehpur Sikari and returned to Gujrat in 1586 A.D. During his return journey, he came to Nagaur and passed a rainy season there. From there he came to Pipad where some persons from Bairat came and requested him to consecrate the newly built Jain temple there. He thus moved there and completed the function in V.E. 1645. A Jain family of Usmanabad also insisted upon him to attend the function of renovation done at Ranakpur in V.E. 1647.

Shanti Chandra Upadhya composed 'Kripa Rasa Kosh'. It is said that he composed some verses in the presence of Akbar who always held high opinion about him. When he started for Gujrat in 1587 A.D., the Emperor again ordered to issue 'firman' prohibiting the slaughter of animals and proclaiming the abolition of Jaziya tax, which was already abolished by Akbar much earlier. Thus for a period of 6 months, the slaughter of animals was prohibited. The order was followed strictly as both Badaoni and Abul Fazal have mentioned in their books.

Kalyan Vijay Gani was the pupil of Hir Vijay Suri. He had studied Veda, Puran and many other subjects. Hir Vijay Suri appointed him Upadhya in V.E. 1624 at Patan. He also travelled in Marwar, Godwad, and Bairat. His descendant Upadhya Yashovijay became a famous monk of the time.

Vijaysena was invited by Akbar to Lahore. An attempt in this respect was made by Durjanpal Jadia. A copy of the order was given to Bhanachandra Gani, who arranged to deliver the same to Suriji. Vijaysen reached Lahore on 31.5.1593 A.D. He was given great respect by Akbar. At that time, Nandi Vijay did 'Avadhana'. The Emperor got much pleased and endowed upon him the title of 'Khush Faham'. At that time, Ramdas Kachhawa, a leader of the Hindus, made a complaint that the Jains did not believe in Vedas and God. At the instance of Abul Fazal, a religious debate was arranged between Jains and Brahmins. Vijaysena rejected the objections raised by the Brahmins and replied all their questions cleverly. Akbar became much pleased and gave him the title of 'Vardhaman Vidhya'. He sent Abul Fazal to arrange Nandi Mahotsava. However, on hearing the illness of Heer Vijay Suri, Vijay Sen returned. But Siddhi Chandra and Bhanu Chandra continued with Akbar. Once Akbar got hurt



while doing the hunting excursion. He was kept inside the palace where only Abul Fazal and Bhanu Chandra were allowed to visit.<sup>20</sup>

Bhanu Chandra and Siddhi Chandra continued to stay at the court during the reign of Akbar and Jehangir. When Akbar was ruling, Bhanu Chandra requested him to abolish the tax levied on the Jain pilgrims going to Mount Shatrunjaya. Siddhi Chandra was a very handsome youth. He had a marvellous feat of memory and did 108 'Avadhans'. The Emperor Akbar granted him the title of 'Khush Faham' (sharp intelligence). During the reign of Jehangir, misfortune fell upon the Jains. Jehangir was much impressed with Siddhi Chandra and wanted him to give up monkhood to which Siddhi Chandra plainly refused. On hearing the answer, Jehangir got highly displeased and ordered the banishment of Jain monks from Agra.<sup>21</sup> Siddhi Chandra and Bhanu Chandra went to Malpura where they arranged to construct the temple of Chandraprabhu in V.E.1672. It seems that the order of banishment was given in V.E.1670. At present, the icon of Malpura temple has been re-placed, but it seems that it remained in worship, as stated in various Tirth-Malas<sup>22</sup>. Both Siddhi Chandra and Bhanu Chandra later went to Jalore, where they passed a few months. When they were staying at Jalore, Mubarak Khan, the newly appointed Governor of Gujrat (1616-1618 A.D.) met Siddhi Chandra and asked him to accompany him to Ahmedabad. After the death of Vijay Sena Suri, Vijay Deva Suri succeeded. According to the Tapa Gachcha sources, a debate was arranged with the Khartara Gachcha monks, in which the latter were badly defeated<sup>23</sup>. It is to be noted that Vijay Deva Suri slanted in favour of 'Sagar paksha', a group of Tapa Gachcha. It is recorded that some senior scholars, pundits and others tried to persuade Vijay Deva Suri to abandon his support to the 'Sagar paksha' but it proved of no avail. The anti-group appointed Vijay Tilak Suri as successor of Vijay Sena Suri. In this way, two branches of Tapa Gachcha sprang up. Another struggle between the members of Tapa Gachcha was going on from the time of Hir Vijay Suri. Dharam Sagar Upadhyaya wrote a book named Kumati Kudal which contained several glaring objections and facts against Jainism. Objections were raised by several scholars and monks against the above book. According to Khartara Gachcha sources, Jin Chandra Suri held religious discussion about the book Kumati Kudal and defeated Dharam Sagar. Vijay Deva Suri of Tapa Gachcha had the book thrown into water but the struggle continued and Dharam Sagar drafted another book also.

The Moghul Emperor Jehangir, on hearing the dispute between the Jains of Tapa Gachcha, invited them to Mandu, where he was staying. He also tried to settle their dispute. He gave the title of 'Maha Tapa' to Vijay Deva Suri<sup>24</sup>. He also respected the other group. The titles of 'Khush Faham', 'Nadira-Zamana', and 'Jehangir Pasand' were given to Siddhi Chandra. On account of the respects given to Vijay Deva, his group became more powerful. He seems to have reconciled with some followers of the other group. He invited Siddhi Chandra when he was going with Mubarak Khan to Ahmedabad, but he refused to join him. Bhanu Chandra died before V.E.1690, when Mehajala, a Sanghpati of Sirohi, led a Sangh to Shatrunjay. Vijayanand, the successor of Vijay Tilak Suri, Siddhi Chandra and others joined it. But Bhanu Chandra was absent. The monks of Vijayanand group did active propaganda against Sagar Paksha in Mewar, Godwar and other parts where it could not develop.

Vijay Deva Suri of the main branch remained quite active after the grant of epithet of 'Maha Tapa' to him. He had a good physique and lived upto V.E.1709, as his foot prints were installed at Patan in that year. He widely travelled in Rajasthan and consecrated several icons at Jalore, Pali, Medata, Kishkinda, Udaipur, Barkana and other places, as is evident from inscriptions, an account of which is given below.

The Malpura Jain temple contains inscriptions of V.E.1672,1678,1690 and 1691. The inscription of V.E.1672 mentions the name of Chandra Prabhu Jain temple built there by Jain Sangha at the instance of Siddhi Chandra and Bhanu Chandra. It also has the name of Vijay Deva Suri as the Bhattarak. The name of Chandra Prabhu remained, as is apparant from the inscription of V.E.1678. But it seems that later on, change was made in V.E.1691, and icon of Muni Suvarat was installed in place of Chandra Prabhu. All the inscriptions bear the name of Vijay Deva Suri as the Bhattarka. One epigraph of V.E.1672 of Vijay Gachcha also has the name of Vijay Deva Suri<sup>25</sup>.

Maharana Jagat Singh I of Mewar respected Vijay Deva Suri very much. As per his instructions, the following items were prohibited<sup>26</sup>.

- (1) Not to slaughter any animal on the day of the coronation of Maharana Jagat Singh I.
- (2) Not to kill any animal in the month of Bhadwa, this being the month of his birth.
- (3) Fishing is forbidden in the Pichhola Lake.

- (4) The forts of Kumbhalgarh and Machind, having various Jain temples, be renovated.

The Tapa Gachcha sources mention that the respect given by the Maharana to Vijay Deva Suri was equal to the veneration given by Kumarpal to Hem Chandra. Several inscriptions upto V.E.1709 are found installed. The Barkana inscription of V.E.1686 edited by the author in Sambodhi (Ahmedabad) contains the details of the concessions given by the Maharana of Udaipur during the fair held in the temple of Paraswa Nath. They were given at the instance of Vijay Deva Suri. The old temples of Jalore were likewise renovated in V.E.1681, 1683 and 1684. All the temples have the name of Vijay Deva Suri as the Bhattarka. The inscriptions of V.E.1681 and 1683 were installed by Jaimal Mauhnnot, the father of Nainsi. The inscription of V.E.1684 was installed by Pamecha Oswal of Medata. It seems that Jai Sagar, a Jain monk lent active support in the above construction work. The 'Sutradhars Tola, Issar, Taha, Duha and Hara also constructed a separate Jain temple which has an icon consecrated by Vijay Deva Suri. Nadol, the old capital of Chauhans, contains beautiful Jain temple. It was renovated in V.E.1686 and the icons were installed by Vijay Deva Suri and his disciple Vijay Singh Suri<sup>28</sup>. The Kekind Jain temple also contains the name of Vijay Deva Suri, as the successor of Vijay Sena Suri. Nadlai is an important Jain Tirtha, where also the icons were installed in V.E.1674, 1686 and other time<sup>29</sup>. These were got installed by Vijay Deva Suri. From Pali, three inscriptions of V.E.1686 were noticed. These were installed by some Jain families of Medata, Pali and others. Similar inscriptions have also come to notice from Ghanghani and many other places of Gujrat, Malwa bearing the name of Vijay Deva Suri. Vijay Singh Suri was appointed the successor of Vijay Deva Suri but he pre-deceased him.

According to Tapa Gachcha sources, Vijay Singh Suri was the 61st in succession from Mahavira. His disciple was Satya Vijay Gani who was succeeded by Kapur Vijay, Kashma Vijay, Jin Vijay, Uttam Vijay, Padam Vijay, Rup Vijay, Kirti Vijay, Kastur Vijay, Mani Vijay and Buddhi Vijay one after the other, but none of them was given the status of Acharya. Buddhi Vijay's disciple was Atmaram, or Anand Vijay, who became Acharya in S.E.1943 at Palitana, and came to be known as Vijayanand (whose passing away centenary is being celebrated). Vijayanand was a great saint and scholar who wrote at least 12 books in prose, outstanding being Tattva

Nirnay Prasad, Ajnan Timir Bhasker, Jain Tattwadarsh. He was also a poet of distinction and composed seven books of poetry dealing with worship in temples. He was an outstanding scholar of Sanskrit, Prakrit and other languages and credit for spread of Tapa Gachcha in Punjab entirely goes to him. He was invited to attend the Parliament of Religions held at Chicago in the S.E. 1949 as the sole representative of Jainism. Although he himself could not attend it, he sent his representative Vir Chand R Gandhi. He consecrated many temples in Punjab and other places. He was widely travelled person, as is evident from the rainy season stays at different places. Many educational institutions are named after him. He was succeeded by Vijay Vallabh Suri who carried on the work of spread of enlightenment among the Jains. He was succeeded by Vijay Samudra Suri and Vijay Inderdinn Suri.

Another group appointed Vijay Tilak Suri who expired in V.E.1676 and nominated Vijaynand Suri as his successor. The Jains of Sirohi remained much active and brought out a Sangh Yatra in V.E.1690 to Shatrunjay in which Vijayanand joined. His inscriptions from Sirohi area are found having the dates of V.E.1695 and 1698. After his death, Vijay Raj Suri succeeded and consecrated the Jain icon of Kolar (Sirohi) dated V.E.1721. He was succeeded by Vijay Ratna, Heer Ratna, Jay Ratna, Bhava Ratna Suri one after the other. Bhava Ratna remained active in the last quarter of 18th century A.D.

Another branch of Tapa Gachcha developed under Vijay Prabha Suri who succeeded Vijay Dev Suri. Under his instructions, the temple of Girnar was renovated in V.E.1710. The Adinath temple of Sirohi contains more than 40 inscriptions of V.E.1721. He remained active in Gujrat, Mewar, Godwar, Sirohi, Jalore and other areas. He died in V.E.1773.

The Tapa Gachcha monks carried on their work of religious propagation. One comes across the names of Vijay Kashma Murti, Vijay Daya Murti, Vijay Dharammurti, Jinendra Suri, Devendra Suri, Dharnendra Vijay, Rajendra Suri and many others succeeding one after the other in several branches of Tapa Gachcha known as Brihad Poshal, Leghu Poshal, Sagar Gachcha, Kutubpuria Gachcha, Brahmi Tapa Gachcha, Agmiya Shakha, Tapa Shakha, Ratnakar Gachcha, Vimal Shakha, Sodharma Brihad Tapa of Rajendra Suri.

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