

# JAINISM IN TAMILNAD

S. Gajpathi Thiruppahamoor,

## ON THE AGE OF JAINISM IN TAMILNAD

*Dhammo vatthusahavo khamadi bhavo ya dasaviho dhammo  
Rayanattyam ca dhammo jivanam rakkhanam Dhammo*

*Dharma* means nature of substance and that is same as the ten virtues (supreme forbearance, modesty, etc.) the three gems (right belief, right knowledge and right conduct) and non-violence.

These are the true characteristics of the pure self. Thus the term *Dharma* particularly refers to the nature of the soul substance. It is because that the selves only possess knowledge and in the absence of knowledge the whole universe will remain unknown and that state of the universe is as good as its non-existence.

Whether, Jainism the science of nature, was taught in the land of the Tamils by the omniscient *Jinas* personally or the Jaina ascetics, the torch bearers is the question.

Tradition claims the Lord Rishabha, the first *Thirthankara* (provider of the vessel to cross the ocean of *Samsara* or the cycle of births and deaths) also known as *Adi Bhagwan*, *Adinatha* etc., propounded *Dharma* all over Bharat and princes from the Tamil country too were stated to be present in his *Samavasarana* (preaching hall). Jaina *Harivamsa Purana* written by Jinasenacharya I mentions Lord Neminatha, a cousin of Lord Krishna, visited Southern Madhura and that only there that the Pandvas took up to asceticism under him.

Sri Mylai Seeni Venkatasami in his book "*Samanarum Tamilum* (Jainism and Tamil literature) writes that Lord Krishna sent 18 velirs to the Tamil country and that they established Jainism in South India. He has also mentioned that from the *Buddhist* work *Mahavamsa* it is learnt that Jainism was a prominent religion in Ceylon before the 4th century B.C. It also adds that Pandukabayau who ruled over Ceylon from 377 to 307 B.C. arranged for the construction of monasteries for Jain monks at Anuradhapuram.

Sri S. Padmanabhan in his book '*The Forgotten History of The Land's End*' writes that presumably the Jaina monks who were in Ceylon migrated from India through Kanyakumari, to the south of which was a large mass of land. subsequently swallowed by sea. The facts that the Jaina doctrines do not allow the monks to cross the sea must be remembered here.

All these are quite probable because that without existence of a stronghold of Jainism in Tamil Nad, and that it takes a long time for a place to become a stronghold of any one faith, Srutakevali Bhadrabahu would not have ventured to send the *Sangha* of 1200 monks under Visakacharya to the Pandya kingdom in near about 300 B.C. This event of-course is admitted as an historical fact.

Jainism being the science of natural, mathematics, physics, astronomy etc. are its allied subjects. As Jainism needs a good vocabulary for the precise expression of all these subjects, perfection of literature, lexicon and grammar are inevitable. Jaina ascetics did rise to the occasion. Major works on Tamil literature, lexicons and grammar are the contributions of the Jains. These will be detailed later on.

### **Jaina Doctrine of Non-Violence Deep Rooted in Tamil Culture**

Nature is beginningless and endless. As nature is inherent in the substance, souls and other substances are self-existent, self-sufficient, unalterable and indivisible.

Like the beginninglessness of souls and sub particles of matter their bondage too is beginningless. But not endless because like milk and water the bondage is a mixture and hence separable. Therefore all the souls are heading towards attaining their pristine purity, the natural state termed as God. In other words it is the effort of *Jivatma* to become *Parmatma*. Merging with God is not different from becoming God in sense. Nature may differ in different substances, but not among the individuals of a class substance like souls and sub-particles of matter. Hence Godhood is attainable by every self. Therefore Jainism accords great sanctity to every form of life. Non-violence to himself and to every other living being its main theme of ethics or right conduct and the perfect observance of it leads to the goal of life.

The triple defects delusion, desire and aversion cause violence to the very self having them by way of renewing the *Karmas* and perpetuating the cycle of births and deaths and it is only that passionate self who behaves violently with others. Observance of non-violence on other living beings is curbing of desire and aversion and that is same as observing non-violence on himself to a limited extent. Conquering of delusion or becoming enlightened of the reality and the elimination of desire and aversion is observance of perfect non-violence on himself and other living beings.

Irrespective that Jainism lost its vast majority of direct adherents; its main theme, the principle of non-violence is deep rooted in almost every one in Tamil Nad. Nowhere in India excepting in Tamil Nad that the Brahmins are vegetarians and lose not the observance of this sacred principle wherever they go and live. All the higher communities in Tamil Nad are

vegetarians. Vegetarian food is known as *Saiva* food in Tamil Nad. *Saivism* and *Vaisnavism* of the Tamil country, the off shoots of Jainism observe strict vegetarianism and non-violence. The *Saivaites* proclaim '*Anbe Sivam*' meaning love is God.

Mr. S. Padmanabhan writes (page 44 '*Forgotten History of The Land's End*') "They have adopted many doctrines of Jainism especially vegetarianism and concentrated on temple worship in place of *Yogas* to attract people. Thus the Hindu religion swallowed Jainism by absorbing all its doctrines."

It is not the *Saiva Siddhanta* and *Visistadvaita* that in any way affected Jainism but the *Bhakti* Cult. munis their thoughts insisted on good conduct in addition. As an example Peria Puranam states *Silam Ilare Eninum Tiruniru Cerndarajnalum Pugalum* i. e. even if the person is absolutely devoid of good conduct just if he applies the ash cover his forehead and body that forms the sign of his devotion to Siva) it is enough that the world praise him.

Jainism too insists on *Bhakti* or devotion to the path finder *Jina*. It is one step in the ladder of self-realisation but not all in all as in the *Bhakti* cults. Appreciation of the qualities of the realized self that is same as God is devotion in Jainism. It is worship of the ideal and not the idol. Godhood is attained by the destruction of delusion, desire and aversion. Devotion to God also is desire as it concerns an external object. It is desirelessness that leads to self-realization (*Ava Nippin Annilaiya Pera Ivarkai Tarumtirukkural-370*)

Sri Puliyur Kesigan in his preface to his book *A Clear Commentary on Naladiyar* writes that in the fertile and prosperous land of the Tamils in ancient times prevailed drinking, gambling, meat eating and prostitution. The Jaina monks writing many ethical works in Tamil have sown the seed of culture. Even though the Jains have disappeared in Tamil Nad their culture has become one with the Tamils.

### **Jain Contribution to Tamil Literature :**

We are able to understand from the verses quoted by the commentators in their commentaries that many Jaina Tamil works are lost to the world. Major ones are *Valayapati*, *Naradar Caridam*, *Santi Puranam*, *Rama Khadai*, *Purana Sagaram*, *Mallinatha Puranam*, *Vardhamanam* and many other works on grammar, music, drama, mathematics and astrology. The list is long.

**Peragattiyam** : the great grammatical work of Agastya is available in fragments. The publisher

Sri Bhavanandam Pillai has given the original prayer verse. The substance of it is "Worshipping the feet of the Lord (*Jina*) of the eight supreme qualities infinite knowledge, infinite perception etc. I shall explain the (rules of) grammar." This proves that it is a Jaina work.

The phrase *Ella Nattilum Iyaluadu Pakatam* appears in this work. Commenting on it Prof. A. Chakravarti writes in his book '*Jaina Literature in Tamil*' on page 18 as follows :—

"A reference to this in Tamil grammar as a language spoken all over the land is a very significant fact in as much as it would imply the early introduction of *Prakrit* literature and the migration of *Prakrit*-speaking people into the Tamil land. Another relevant fact is the description of *Vadakkiruttal* or *Sallekhana* found in some of the so called *Sungam* collections. This *Vadakkiruttal* is said to be practiced by some kings who were followed by their friends. An important religious practice associated with the Jains is known as *Sallekhana*."

**Tolkappiyam** : This is the earliest authoritative work on Tamil grammar now available in full and it is the oldest of all the Tamil works now available.

The author is praised as '*Padimaiyon*' and this term refers to *Pratima Yoga* of Jainism. This work classifies the living beings according to the number of sense organs possessed by them as the one sensed, the two sensed, etc. and the examples given are same as what are mentioned in *Tattavartha Sutra*, the Jaina bible. Such classification of the living beings is particularly Jaina. The definition given for the first work (original work) in this book is *Vinaiyiningi Vilangiyavarivin Munaiyan Kandadu Mudanulagum* (*Tolkappiyam Sutra* 649) conveying that the basic or first work is what is revealed by the Lord of *Jnana* obtained after liberation from (obstructive) *Karmas* i. e. knowledge received by the *Sarvajna* after *Karmaksaya*. It is a well known fact that every Jaina writer traces the first source of his information to the *Tirthankara* himself and the above passage also points to the same. The term '*Kandazi*' appearing in the work has been explained by the commentators as the one who reached the highest spiritual stage after destroying the *Karmas*.

All the above information reveal that the author of *Tolkappiyam* is a Jain. The persons who reject this suggestion have cited no serious arguments in support of their view. This work is assigned to the 3rd Century B. C.

Prof. Chakravarti writes in '*Jain literature in Tamil*' on page 24 "This grammatical treatise consists of three great chapters *Eluttu*, *Sol* and *Porul*-letters, words and meaning respectively. Each chapter consists of nine *Iyals* or sections. On the whole it contains 1612 *Sutras*. This forms the foundation of the later grammatical works in the *Tamil* language. Unlike the Sanskrit grammar or *Vyakarana* which has the first and second alone this contains three chapters, the third being *Porul*. This 3rd chapter contains a lot of extra-grammatical matter dealing with love and war, and thus offers many useful suggestions for reconstructing the history of the early Dravidians."

**Naladiyar and Tirukkural** : These are ethical works. From these quoted in all the *Kavyas*. Hence their antiquity is established.

In connection with the work *Naladiyar* it is stated that 8000 Jaina monks who came and settled in the Pandya kingdom on account of the famine in North India while leaving the place one night, each recording a stanza on a palm leaf and left behind. Four hundred out of the collection of these stanzas constitute this book. This may be taken to refer to the *Sanga* of monks who visited Pandya kingdom under the leadership of *Visakacharya* in near about 300 B. C. On this count this work can be placed prior to *Tirukkural*, the work of *Kundakundacharya* the leader of the *Dravida Sanga* during the 1st century A. D.

The verses of *Naladiyar* are quatrains. Hence it is named as *Naladiyar* (Four lines verse). Rev. G.V. Pope translated into English both *Naladiyar* and *Tirukkural*. He writes as follows :—

I have felt sometimes as if these must be a blessing in store for a people that delight so utterly in composition, thus remarkably expressive of a hunger and thirst after righteousness. They are the foremost among the people of India, and the *Kural* and *Naladi* have helped to make them so."

The above two works *Tirukkural* and *Naladiyar* come under the collection of eighteen minor poems *Padinen Kilkanakku*.

Sri A. V. Subramania Iyer in his book '*Tamil Studies*' (1st series page 64) writes "The authors of the more important of the class of 18 poems known as *Pathinen Kilkanakku* have been Jains. The top work of this class is *Tiruvalluvar's Tirukkural* which has high place among the world's best books. Two other important works of this group of which the authors were Jains are *Naladiyar* and *Pazamozhi* by *Munrurai Araianar*."

To convey some idea of the beauty of the work *Naladiyar* the substance of some of the verses are given below:

**Verse 61.** On keeping patience:

Good people give respect to every one. But the bad ones show disrespect even to the worthy people. In the same manner that we disregard the dirty insect fly treading with its feet on our head, we should disregard and not get angry with those who despise us, as anger begets sorrow to himself and the other.

**Verse 65.** On Supreme forbearance.

Control of the five senses in youth is real sense control; the charity of the person of limited means the real charity and the forbearance of the monk who attained miraculous power or great *Tapo-Bala* is real forbearance.

**Verse 68.** On the subsidence of anger.

Even after lapse of long long time the low born's anger only inflames while the great one's anger, like the water made hot that by itself gets cold, vanishes by itself in no time.

**Verse 36.** Advice to practice *Dharma* without delay.

Leave doubting whether death will come while young or while old or in the middle age but know that it is standing just behind you and avoid vice and follow virtue.

**Verse 135.** Concentrate on the study of works that reveal the truth or reality.

There is no end to learning but our life is short. If examined even in that short life diseases often intervene and give trouble. Therefore like the *Hamsa* bird that leaves water and drinks milk alone, concentrate on the study of works that reveal the truth or reality.

**Verse 119.** The truth.

A critical examination will reveal that there none who is free from despise. that there is none who do not live by trick, that there is none who has not suffered in his whole life and that there is none who enjoyed his whole wealth.

In verse 24 the transient life is pitied in the phrase *Cettari Cavar Cumandu* i. e. those who are going to die carry the dead.

**TIRUKKURAL :** According to the Jaina tradition this is the work of Kunda Kundacharya of the 1st Century A. D. Samaya. Divakara Vamana

Muni the commentator of the work *Neela Kesi* freely quotes from KURAL and states as is mentioned in our scripture (*emmottu*) and claims it as a Jaina work.

**Kural Verse 1.** Worship of *Adi Bhagawan* (Lord Rishabha). All the letters of the alphabet have the letter 'a' as the beginning. Similarly the world has its beginning the first Lord, the all-knower - *Adi Bhagvan*.

**Bhagavan :** The Sanskrit word - means the all-knower. It does not refer to a creator. *Adi Bhagavan* the first *Sarvajna* is fitting with the Jaina tradition which speaks of Lord Rishabha as the first *Tirthankara*. The Tamil term *ulagu* means human society especially the cultured. The first *tirthankara* Lord Rishabha who is spoken of as *Adi Bhagavan*, according to *Maha Purana*, is responsible for the socio-political organisation of society and also for revealing the religious path for salvation. No wonder therefore that he is spoken of as the beginning of the world secular and religious. (Extract from *Tirukkural* English commentary by Prof. A. Chakravarti).

**Kural 2 :**

Of what avail is their learning if they do not adore the benevolent feet of the Lord, the All-knower par-excellence.

Jains' devotion to the omniscient *Jina* is in gratitude for the Lord who revealed the path to self-realization. Next is admiration of his supreme qualities, that is same as the liking to acquire them for themselves. Lastly as a means of eliminating bad thoughts and acquiring good thoughts. These benefits will not accrue if not devoted to the Omniscient Lord is emphasized here.

**Kural 6.**

Those who walk the faultless path of righteousness ordained by the Lord who conquered the five senses will live for ever in happiness.

*Jina*, the victor over passions is also called as *Jitendriya*, the one who conquered the senses. the observance of the code of conduct prescribed by *Jitendriya* for the house-holder and the homeless monk leads to eternal happiness. In addition to worshipping the *Jinas* the necessity of the observance of right conduct is emphasized here. Right conduct is the final step, especially the internal one that is elimination of delusion, desire and aversion achieved through self-meditation. *Bhakti* alone will do is refuted.

*Tirukkural* defines the liberated state as the immutable natural state of the self (*Peraviyarkai*) in the abode of the liberated that is over the world of the celestials (*Vanorkuyarnda Ulagam*).

The way of attainment of liberation is stated as complete desirelessness (*Ava Nippinannilaiye Peraviyarkai Tarum*). The nature of the pure-self is desirelessness. This will occur if affection is shown to the pure nature of the self or reality (*Vaimai Vanda Varum*) ( *Kural* 364 ).

*Jivatma* the empirical self becomes *Parmatama* or God by realizing his pure self and that self all others worship, is stated in *Kural* 268. It is as follows :

Who attains his pure and perfect self, him all the other persons worship in adoration.

These views are purely Jaina. Tamil scholars with philosophical knowledge understand these and accept Jaina authorship of *Tirukkural*.

*Jainas* and the Jaina ascetics are teachers of humanity. Unless the author of *Tirukkural* is understood as a Jain, its true meaning cannot be grasped. This is the Tamil Jains plea to the Tamil scholars.

Attaining liberation from the cycle of births and deaths is the aim of Jainism (*Piravamai Vendum-Kural* 362). Without the practice of penance liberation cannot be attained. Without the help of the householder to provide the homeless monks with food and drink, they cannot be penance. Without the teaching of the monks the householder cannot learn the truth or reality. Hence their help is mutual in treading the path of liberation. This fact is made evident in *Kural* 263.

Probably in the eagerness to feed and help the ascetics some of the good house-holders forgot to help themselves this course of discipline and penance.

The home life is composed of the husband and wife. Their affection should make them one in mind to discharge their duty to the homeless monks and keep living the path way to liberation that they themselves have to tread one day. This is the subject matter of the third section of *Tirukkural-Kamattuppal* (love).

Home life needs earning through some occupation as well as saving and possession of property. Their stability rests on a good Government. In the middle section *Porutpal* is described the state craft. Thus the three sections are inter-connected with one another.

*Tirukkural* verses are couplets of seven words each with four in the first line and three in the second.

*Aranericcaram* : The essence of the way of virtue is the work of Tirumunaippadiar. The verses are quatrains.

Mutual help between the Jaina ascetic and the householder that sustain both the *Dharmas* is explained in verse 15.

In the same manner that the wooden pillar and the wooden frame support each other, the (Jaina) ascetic support the householder (by enlightening him on *Dharma*) and the householder in turn supports the ascetic (by providing him with food, drink, shelter and books). Thus jointly they sustain both the *Dharmas* in this world surrounded by oceans.

On the impermanence of body and wealth (verse 20).

Those living to-day may die this very day and their properties will belong to others the same day. Thus oh ! brother ! you are living in the clutches of cruel death, beware ! and observe *Dharma*.

*Dharma* cannot enter the bad man's heart (verse 30).

Even if stone remains in water daily it cannot become soft. Similarly the bad person even if he hears *Dharma* daily his heart will remain harder than the stone.

#### Verse 189.

What is to be destroyed is vice, what is to be shown is kindness, what is to be eaten often is right knowledge and what is to be constantly thought of is liberation.

The very person is the cause of his progress and downfall (Verse 151).

Oneself is his own enemy and friend; oneself earns his happiness here and in his next birth; oneself reaps his own *Karmas* and one self the witness of his own *Karmas*.

#### *Palamoli* or Proverbs :

Prof. Chakravarti writes in his book '*Jaina Literature in Tamil*' page 45, "The author is a Jaina by name Munruraiaraianar. It contains 400 quatrains of *Venba* metre like *Naladiyar*. It consists of valuable old sayings containing not merely principles of conduct, but also a good deal of worldly wisdom.

It is assigned a third place in the enumeration of the eighteen didactic works which begins with the *Kural* and *Naladiyar*".

#### Verse 41.

After making prosperous all friends and after suppressing all the enemies and living the homely conjugal happy life for a long time, if one does not renounce then for what use is of his body.

#### Verse 377.

Oh! good dweller of the fertile hilly region with streams wetting the corn field! What do you think of that person's attitude who renounced all his kith and kin and all his earned property still evincing attachment to his body? This is exactly what is meant by that good old saying (the bulky body of the elephant itself went through but its tail cannot go through. (*Yanri Poi Val Pogavaru*).

*Triukadukam* : In this work each verse contains three good thoughts or advices that cure mental ills like the medicine of the combination of dry ginger, pepper, and long pepper that cure ailments. The medicine of these three ingredients is known as *Trikadukam* and the work too. One example is given below :

Married life with a chaste woman, company with a good person of good lineage and friendship with the learned person of corrective words, these three from the medicine, like *Trikadukam*.

*Sirupancamulam* : There are give medicinal herbs that cure several diseases. Five good things are described in each verse that are cures for mental worries like the herbs.

Having compassion is the beauty of the eyes, not walking the path of vice is the beauty of the legs, giving the correct figure is the beauty of the science of mathematics, appreciation from the listeners the beauty of music and not harming the subjects is the monarch's beauty.

*Eladi* : This is also a medicine of six ingredients. In each verse of this work six truths are explained.

The nature of the state of liberation is explained in one verse.

The nature of the liberated state of the self is all pure, calm, indescribable, immutable, free from down fall and ever blissful. This is the verdict of the faithful, enlightened in the truth or reality.

Dr. Devadatta writes in *Daiva Tamizh that Inna Narpadu Iniyavai Narpadu, Nanmanikkadigai, Acara-kovai*, etc. are also Jaina works. Some differ here.

Even granting that is so all these works emphasize only the Jaina principles is quite evident.

Now let us look into the *Kavya* literature.

There are five major *Kavyas* and five minor *Kavyas* *Cintamai, Silappadikaram, Manimekalai, Valaiyapati* and *Kundalakesi* are the five major *Kavyas* *Cintamani* is the greatest of all the *Kavyas* while *Silappadikaram* is the oldest. These two and *Valaiyapati* are Jaina works. The rest two belongs to the Buddhists. *Valaiyapati* and *Kundalakesi* are lost to the world.

Dr. U. V. Swaminatha Iyer records in his autobiography that he saw the palm leaf manuscript of *Valaiyapati* in the library of *Tiruvaduturai Mutt*. But later it is missing.

*Silappadikaram* : It is a very important Tamil classic. Its author is the *Chera* prince, who became a Jaina ascetic, by name *Ilangovadigal*.

One day when this ascetic prince was in the temple of Jina situated at Vanji, the *Chera* capital, some members of the hill tribe came and narrated to him the strange vision they had witnessed relating to the heroine *Kannagi*. How *Indra* appeared before her, how her husband *Kovalau* was introduced as a *Deva*, and how finally *Indra* carried both of them in a divine charriot.

*Kulavanigam Sattan* the renowned author of *Manimekalai* who was with *Ilangovadigal* then narrated the full story of the hero and heroine. The story contained three valuable truths in which the royal ascetic took great interest. First if a king deviates from the path of righteousness, even to a slight extent, he will bring down upon himself and his kingdom a catastrophe as a proof of his inequity; secondly a woman walking the path of chastity is deserving adoration and worship not only by human beings but also by *Deva* and *Munis*. and thirdly the working of *Karma* is such that there is an inevitable fatality from which no one can escape, and the fruits of one's previous *Karmas* must necessarily be experienced in a later period. In order to illustrate these three eternal truths the royal prince undertook the task of composing this story for the benefit of mankind. The story is associated with the great mercantile family of *Puhar*, the capital of *Cola* empire. (Extract from Jaina literature in Tamil by Prof. Chakravarti).

Sri A. V. Subramania Iyer writes in his book "*Tamil Studies*." The author of *Silappadikaram* another ancient Tamil masterpiece the first of the five great epics. "*Elango Adigal* is claimed to be a Jain, with some degree of probability though not a certainty."

I would like to add here that the publication of almost all the Tamil works are by the non-jains. The whole quarrel as to the authorship whether Jaina or non-Jaina is amongst them. The impartial scholars admitted Jaina authorship of the Jaina works published by them while the interested ones raised doubts. It is only of late Prof. A. Chakravarti and Sri Jeevabandu T. S. Sripal presented conspicuous points that support Jaina authorship of *Tirukkural* and *Silappadikaram* respectively.

*Silappadikaram* was written in the 2nd century A. D.

**Cintamani :** The author of this *Maha Kavya* was Thiruthakka Devar. Devar is the honorific title of Jaina Munis of Tamil Nad. *Devar* singly refers to the author of *Tirukkural* and no one else.

Father Beschi writes “Thiruthakka Devar is a prince among poets.

The story of *Cintamani* is found in the *Maha Purana* also known as *Trisasti Salaka Purusa Carita*. The hero's name is *Jivendra* there and the Tamilized name is *Jivakan*. Many Sanskrit *Kavyas* *Ksatra Cudamani Gadya Cintamani* and *Jivendra Campu* etc. depict this story.

Jivakan's father engrossed in the beauty of his wife leaves his duties with his minister, who kills him later. The pregnant queen escapes in a mechanical flying machine made in the form of a peacock and in the city's burial ground gave birth to a son. Luckily the merchant-king of that city who was returning after burying his dead child takes this new born child, left alone by his mother for that purpose. He brings up the boy in all kingly ways.

Later the boy Jivakan well versed in all the different arts marries many kings and merchants daughters. Taking their and his uncle's help Jivakan defeats the minister and regains his kingdom. He married eight wives and all are romantic marriages. Finally Jivakan crowns his eldest son, takes up asceticism under Lord Mahavira and attains liberation.

The king's (*Jivakan's* father) advice to his wife at his critical moment is applicable to all of us.

Birth and death are caused by *Karmas*. Origination and disappearance the nature of substance. Feeling of affection and sorrow for these exhibit ignorance of the truth.

Sri A. V. Subramania Iyer writes in his book '*Tamil Studies*' (Page 22). “But no Tamil scholar can

under rate Kamban's indebtedness to the *Jivaka Cintamani* for his poetry.

In spite of these, the poem is a great one. Its poetry is its chief merit. The metrical skill of the poet and the exquisite music of the language constitute a marvel of poetic achievement. The simplicity and sweetness of the flowing stanzas are unfailing in their appeal to lovers of Tamil poetry. The work contains a considerable quantity of love poetry which though written accordance with conventions laid down by the ancient grammarians has not lost its power of appeal or beauty. For the first time in Tamil literature, poetry attains, in this book, a level of finish, form and melody which it had not reached before.”

*Siddha Stuti* the first prayer verse of *Cintamani* is pregnant with meaning. The substance is given below:

I worship the holy feet of the *Siddha*, the God of Gods, adored by the celestials and men of the three worlds that are beginningless and endless and who is immersed in infinite bliss springing from himself or inherent (like the brightness of gems and the smell of flowers) and possessed of incomparable eternal qualities.

In this one verse Thiruthakka Devar has given the basic principles of Jainism. The three first words of the verse *Muva Mudala Ulagam* points to the beginninglessness and endlessness of the universe. This clears off the supposition of the creator God and his creation theory. This establishes that the substances composing the universe are eternal, self-existent, self-sufficient, unalterable and fixed in number. Mentioning of the celestials and men of the three worlds points to the cycle of births and deaths of the empirical selves. The adoration of the *Siddha* points to the truth of liberation. *Siddhas'* inherent bliss pictures the state of the liberated self is not merely freedom from sorrow but full of bliss.

Prof. Chakravarti writes “In grandeur of conception, in elegance of literary diction and in beauty of description of nature it remains unrivalled in Tamil literature.....”

Kamban characteristic of intellectual courage and honesty, acknowledged his debt with the following words “Yes I have sipped a spoonful of the nectar from *Cintamani*.”

Kamban the great poet is the author of *Ramayana* in Tamil. Dr. Krishnaswamy Iyengar in *Beginning of South Indian History* writes “The interval between the composition of *Silappadikaram* and *Cintamani* was only about 60 or 70 years.”

It means that it is a 3rd century A. D. work. But some place it between the 5th to the 9th century A. D.

#### Five Minor Kavyas :

**Yasodara Kavya.** The author except that he is a Jaina ascetic, nothing else is known. The story is what is found in the *Maha Kavya Yasastilaka* of Somadeva in Sanskrit.

Prof. Chakravarti writes in '*Jaina Tamil Literature*' "The moral value of conduct depends upon the harmony between thought, word and deed. In this particular form of ritualism, though the actual deed is avoided, there is still lacking the harmony and co-operation of the other two. The desire to sacrifice an animal and to pronounce the necessary *Mantras* being there, the substitution of a mock-animal would not relieve an agent of any of his responsibility for animal sacrifice. This seems to be the main theme of this story in which incidentally many of the doctrines relating to Jaina religion are introduced (Page 84 and 85).

The description of *Canda Mari* in it.

(Maridatta the King of Rajapura) arrived the place of that terribly wicked and furiously angry Goddess *Canda Mari*, worshipped only by the ignorant disciples who never heard of the truth or reality.

Substance of another verse :

What is to be accumulated is virtue.

What is to be destroyed is anger.

What is to be attended to is knowledge of the truth.

What is to be guarded is the vows.

This work is born to uphold the supreme virtue i.e. non-injury to other living beings. The idea that fine art kindles sexual love is evident from this work.

**Culamani :** This stands foremost among the five minor *Kavyas*. According to Tandi Asirinyar this work has all the worth of a major *Kavya*. The author is known as *Tolamoli Devar*.

This also takes its story from *Mahapurana*. It concerns one of the past lives of Lord Mahavira as *Triprista Vasu Deva*. This *Kavya* has all the beauties of *Cintamani*.

Infinite bliss of the liberated self is self-springing is explained with examples (Verse 2075).

The infinite bliss enjoyed by the liberated self enamates from himself like the brightness of the gems; the sweet smell of the cut piece of the sandal wood and the fragrance of a blossomed flower.

**Neelakesi:** We know nothing of this author, a Jaina philosopher poet. This is a logical work than a *Kavya*. Its logical theories are same as found in *Prameyakamala Martanda* and *Syadvada Manjari*. This work is a refutation of the Buddhist work *Kundalakesi* that is lost.

Plants have life or souls have been proved scientifically here. Several theories of physical science too are found in it. The book properly is a refutation of absolutism and establishment of non-absolutism. There are discussions of every philosophy of the *Upanisads* but not *Advaita Saiva Siddhanta* etc. Thus it is a work written before their origin or growth.

While discussing the theory of Indian materialism known as *Carvaka* philosophy it brings in the theory of cause and effect and established the truth of souls. *Neela Kesi* questions the *Bhuta Vadi* whether the five *Bhutas* are substantial cause or instrumental cause.

If these are substantial causes, in the absence of instrumental cause there will result no effect. If these are the instrumental causes necessarily that he has to posit souls as substantial cause.

It is Prof. Chakravarti who published this work alongwith the famous commentary of *Samaya Divakara Vamana Muni*.

As explained above *Neelakesi* indicates the reality of the soul against materialism. The work advocates the nobility of *Ahimsa* against *Vedic* ritualism and the dietic purity of vegetarianism against the Buddhists addiction to meat eating.

The other two minor *Kavyas* are ordinary ones.

**Perungathai :** The author of this great work that is available only in parts was Kongu Velir the king of *Kongu Nadu*, modern *Vijayamangal-Am*. *Pulavar Somasundaranaar* considers this *Kavya* as older to *Silappadikaram*.

The story of this work concerns Prince Udayanan the son of king Satanika of Kosambi and Queen Mrugavati. Mrugavati is the younger sister of Trisala Devi, mother of Lord Mahavira. *Gunadya's Brihat Katha* is states as the original source for its story.

Udayanan talented in *Vina* music and other fine arts and war marries four wives. After ruling for a long time he crowns his eldest son Narayanadatta and takes up to aceticism and attains liberation.



Udayanan's minister and friend is *Yugi*. His talent and faithfulness make him par with the hero. An advice to women folk from it is given below :

Even if their loving husbands give the worst of troubles forbearance is praiseworthy for those born as women.

**Merumandira Puranam** : The author of this important classic of the Tamil language is Vamana Muni. He was a contemporary of Bhukkarayd's minister Hirugappa of the 14th century. The source of this story too is *Mahapurana*. Meru and Mandira are the *Ganadaras* of Lord Vimalanatha the 13th *Tirthankara*.

The story is used a frame work for expounding A to Z of the philosophical doctrines relating to Jainism.

This work was also published by Prof. Chakravarti in the year 1923. It consists of 1405 stanzas on the whole.

No other Jaina philosophical work impresses on the importance and adduces proof of the truth of the existence of the medium of motion and the medium of rest known as *Dharma Dravya* and *Adharma-Dravya* respectively as in this work.

If there exists not a substance of limited dimension allowing motion of the moving bodies (*Dharma Dravya* of innumerable space points unlike space substance of infinite dimension) then the souls and sub-particles of matter will disperse into the infinity of space. Thus there will be neither bondage nor liberation and no universe will exist (Verse 89).

If there is no medium of rest or *Adharma-Dravya* the sixty three heavenly regions, the seven internal earths the mountain *Meru* and earth will not remain stable. (V. 91).

Clue to self-meditation (Verse 412)

I or self is the soul free from eight *Karmas* and possessed of the four infinities (infinite knowledge, infinite perception, infinite bliss and infinite energy). (As the substance and its qualities are inseparable) taking the self and the four infinities as inseparable whole and meditating that I am the Self and the four infinities are mine will lead to liberation from *Karmas*. On the contrary if it is thought that my body is the Self and the relatives and all properties are mine then the eight *Karmas* will continue.

**Sri Puranam** : It is a translation of *Maha Purana* in an enchanting prose style in mixed Tamil and Sanskrit (*Mani Pravala*).

*Vapparun Gala Karikai* and *Yapparungala Vritti*: These two works are on Tamil prosody. The author is Anirthasagara.

**Neminatham** : A short work on Tamil grammar by Gunavira Pandithar. This work is available with a good commentary.

**Nannul** : This is the most popular grammar of the Tamil language. The author Bhavanandi Muni is well versed in Sanskrit and Tamil. This book is prescribed as text in Colleges and Schools. This work belongs to the 12th century A D.

**Agapporul Vilakkam** : The author's name is Narkaviraya Nambi. The work is based on the *Porul Ilakkanam* in *Tolkappiyam*. It is an exposition of the psychological emotion of love and valued experiences.

**Nighantus** : Lexographical works. There are three works *Divakara Nighantu*, *Pingala Nighantu* and *Cudamani Nighantu*. The first is lost to the world. The last is most popular and its author is Mandala Purusa.

After advent of the Westerners and the compiling of dictionaries in alphabetical order the usage of the *Nighantu* became obsolete.

**Kalingattuparani** : The author is Jayankondar. It is written to celebrate the *Kalinga* victory of the *Cola* general Karunakara Tondaiman of Kulothunga I at the beginning of the 12th century A.D.

There are few minor Tamil works. The important ones are *Tirunurrantadi* and *Thirukkalambagam*.

**Tirunurrantadi** : Contains 100 poems. It is a devotional work addressed to God Neminatha of Mylapore Jain temple, swallowed by the sea some 400 years ago. Hence the work was written 400 years before by *Avirodhi Nathar*. These devotional songs are as exquisite as *Bhaktamara Stotra*.

**Verse 36 :**

Oh ! My Lord 'Knower of the three worlds' I do not beg thee my Lord to give me gold, gems and clothing etc. but to regain my eight inherent qualities (infinite knowledge, infinite perception etc.) that I beg these my lord.

**Verse 70 :**

Those wearing number of garlands, holding weapons and with ladies seated on the right and the left are the Gods of the ignorants. But our Gods are the ascetics having as their three eyes, the three gems (right belief, right knowledge and right conduct) revealed by the *Jina*.

### Verse 85 :

Oh good mind ! Just think of (*Jina*) the God under the *Asoka* tree, praise him and practice a little of right conduct (prescribed by him) and these are quite enough. *Jina* lifts all of those who reach him to his own status that needs no more worship of *Jina* too and hence he will make you like him in no time or shortly.

**Thirukkalambagam** : is another devotional work by *Udisi Devar* the Jaina ruler of *Arpaga* : in Vellore Taluk. This is composed of verses of different metres. Hence known as *Kalambagam*.

### Verse 2 :

If I decorate the holy feet of the Lord seated over the golden lotus with the garland of my verses strung of mean words in affection, can it stand worth before the praises of the 100 *Indras* each with their 1000 *Vikriya* mouths ?

### Temples and Caves of Tamil Nad :

Arungulam (*Tiruttani Taluk*) contains an ancient and big temple dedicated to the 15th *Tirthankara* *Dharmanatha*.

Even though history records existence of over 100 Jain temples in the 5th century A.D. in the Pallava capital Kanchipuram, now there is only one temple at Jina-Kanchi dedicated to Lord Vardhamana honorific name *Trilokyanatha*. The place is also known as *Thirupparuttikunram*. Here are inscriptions and foot prints and paintings on the ceilings. Dr. Ramchandran, the Director of Archaeology, brought out some fifty years ago the book the *Thirupparuttikunram Temple Paintings*. He has explained that the paintings depict episodes of Lord Mahavira's birth, his anointing ceremony, Indra's dance etc. The Lokantika Devas extolling Lord Rishbha's decision to renounce. Nami and Vinami demanding kingdom from the ascetic Rishabha and Dharmendra crowning them kings at Vijayarta. Also episodes from Lord Neminatha and Lord Krishna's Bala Lila.

**Arpakkam** : About five miles from Kanchipuram at Arpakkam, there is an old temple dedicated to Lord Rishabha Deva.

**Karandai Munigiri Temples** : Twelve miles from Kanchipuram are the *Karandai-Tiruppanamoor* villages. There is a very old temple dedicated to Lord Kunthu *Tirthankara*. In the same temple exists the *Samavasarana* type temple dedicated to Lord Vardhamana Mahavira. In both the *Garba Grah*as there are large mortar built images of Lord

Kunthunatha and Lord Mahavira respectively. On the walls surrounding it are the figures of Indra and Devas etc. Even though they are over a thousand years old yet they look fresh. The *Samavasarana* temple has 27 steps.

**Ponnur Hills** : Next in importance is this place situated five miles from Wandiwash town. There are at the foot of the hills *Dharmasala* and temple. On the hill top exists the old foot prints of Kunda-kundacharya.

**Cittamur** : This is the seat of the pontiff Lakshmi Sena Bhattaraka Bhattacharya Varya Swamigal of *Jina-Kanchi Cittamur Mutt*. There is a very big and old temple here. It is a temple dedicated to Lord *Neminatha*.

**Vallimalai Cave Temple** : Vallimalai is in North Arcot district. Inside the cave are rock cut images of Lord Mahavira, Lord Parswanatha etc.

**Panca Pandavar Malai** : This is near Arcot town. Here are also rock cut images and inscriptions.

**Ennayiram** : This is near Tindivanam. In the caves are foot prints.

**Tirumala** : Tirumalai hills and the temple is four miles from Vadamadi Mangalam Railway station. On the top of the hill stands the rock cut images of Lord Neminatha of 16 ft. high. In the temple down below exists a cave and paintings. Kundavi Devi a *Cola* prince took interest in the development of this temple. It is known from the inscriptions.

There is a rock cut image of Lord Parsvanatha on the hill near *Tirakkoil* near Wandiwash town.

**Thrunarungondai** : This is most famous in Tamil Nad. This is also a hill temple with cave and old inscriptions. The deity is Lord Parsvanatha. It is near Villuppuram in South Arcot District.

**Vijayamangalam** : This is near Erode. There is an old temple here. Excepting the priest there are no Jains.

There are several hills surrounding southern Madhura. They are *Samanar Malai*, *Alagar Malai*, *Anai Malai*, *Thirupparangunram* etc. There are caves with beds of stone for the Jaina ascetics. Rock cut images and inscriptions are abundant.

Rock cut images are in *Uttama Palayam* also.

### Tiruccaranam Hills :

Sri N.P. Hariharan in the Swadesa Mitran weekly dated 14-12-1958 has written that there existed a Jain University at *Tiruccaranam (Citral)*. There are lot of rock cut beautiful Jaina images.

According to Sri Padmanabhan at the bottom of the hanging rock there is a hall, veranda and a temple. The temple is of three parts. In one cell there is Lord Mahavira's idol. In another Lord Par-swatha's idol exists. In the third should have existed Padmavati's idol. It was removed and Bhagavati was installed in 1913.

**Kalugumalai :** This is in *Tirunelveli*. It has many rock cut beautiful images of *Tirthankaras* and *Yaksis*. The inscriptions here and at *Tiruccaranam* are of the same period.

During this *Caturmas* (rainy season 1977) the *Nirgranta Acharya Nirmal Sagar's* Sangh is staying in *Kalugumalai*. This is an historical event.

**Siddhannavasal :** This is in Pudukottah state and near Tiruchirappali. The excavation of the cave temples and the paintings here are done by Mahendra Pallava in the 7th century A.D. The paintings equal that of the *Ajanta* caves.

There are stray *Tirthankara* images on the banks of tanks, street corners, fields etc. in several places all over Tamil Nad. It proves that there existed a number of temples in Tamil Nad once. Some collections are in the Madras Museum.

Mr. Padmanabhan writes in his book "The Forgotten History of the Land's End" But it is astonishing to note that the sacred place *Kanya Kumari* was once a centre of Jain pilgrimage. One of the twin rocks now named after Swami Vivekananda has been held in veneration from very ancient times. Apart from its having assumed the Swamy's name latterly the rock has been traditionally known as 'Sripaadapaarai'. Sripaada means sacred feet and paarai is rock. In all probability we can say that the Jain monks on the way to Ceylon consecrated a shrine of Sripaada on the rock which was part of the main land.

In the same book is mentioned that the serpent shrine of Nagarcoil, which is considered to be a Hindu temple was originally a Jain one. Evidence of the Jain origin of the temple is seen in the inscriptions and sculptural images found in it.

**Mahabalipuram :** This is a sea shore 30 miles south of Madras where there are the famous rock cut temples of Mahendra Pallava.

On the side of a low rock there are carvings. It is the genius of Sri Mylai Soeni Venkatasami for having identified the carvings as Jaina, an episode of Bhagiratha son of Chakravarti Sagara of Lord

Ajita *Tirthankara's* time. It agrees with the story found in the *Trisasti Salaka Purusa Caritra* (Translated into English by Mrs. Helen, M. Johnson).

In order to protect the Jaina temples at *Kailas* built by the first Chakravarti Bharata the sons of emperor Sagara with the help of the *Danda Ratna* dug a very deep mote or ditch around the temples and diverted the water of the river *Ganga* to fill them with water. The result was that the water submerged the under world of the *Nagakumara Devas*. There Indra Jivalanaprabha was enraged and he comes with his Naga Kumara Devas and with their fire emitting eyes burnt to ashes the 60000 sons of the Emperor Sagara. The news made the emperor sorrowful. In the meantime *Ganga* water filling up the ditch overflowed and submerged the surrounding villages. People of those areas came and complained this to the Emperor who ordered his youngest son Bhagiratha to divert the *Ganga* water to the ocean. Accordingly he with the help of *Danda Ratna* carries out the order. It is this story carved on the rock.

When actually any one goes through the full explanation of the Jaina carving given by Mylai Soeni Venkatasami in his illustrated Tamil book 'Jaina Carving at Mahabalipuram' he will be wonder struck with the genius and the efforts of the author.

Let us now turn our attention to the present conditions. In all there are about 20000 Tamil Jains now. They are spread in several villages of the two District North Arcot and South Arcot. Those in twons and cities are emigrants from the villages.

Since last 250 years traders both Jains and non-Jains came from Rajasthan and Gujarat and settled in Tamil Nad. The major bulk of the wholesale trade is in their hands.

The North Indian Jains are now spread in all the cities and towns of Tamil Nad. They have built new temples at Madras and some other towns.

Their settlement enabled several Suriiji Maharaj visit Tamil Nad and propogate Jainism here. By the effort of Suriiji (Shri Gambira Vijayjee Maharaj, if I remember correct) in near about 1926, 'The South Indian Humanitarian League' was established to propogate and stop animal sacrifice before the temple altars. The organisation had in one Sri T.S. Sripal the necessary genius for this magnificent task, who was the propogandist of the league.

Shri T.S. Sripal by his tireless effort and oratory skill succeeded in stopping animal sacrifice in area

after area, year after year and completely eradicated it all over Tamil Nad. By his effort the Government of Tamil Nad enacted laws prohibiting animal sacrifice in the temples of Tamil Nad.

In recognition of the humane services of Sri T.S. Sripal the Tamil public honoured him with the title *Jeeva Bandu*. This was followed by the title *Jaina Samaya Kavalar* (Protector of Jainism) conferred upon him by the Tamil Nad Jains in recognition of his services to the community. Few years back the *Delhi Jains* conferred on him the honour *Samaja Ratna*. Finally the President of Indian Union awarded him the title '*Prani Mitra*'.

The visit of the great *Acharya Tulsi Maharaj* few years ago is a land mark in the history of Tamil Nad.

The credit goes to Shri Rikhabdassji lovingly called as Swami to have developed the ancient Jain temple at Red Hills ten miles from Madras city. It is the very same gentleman who brought about close tie between the Tamil Nad Jains and the North Indian Jains.

Of late there are cases of taking and giving their girls in marriage among these two.

Sri Rikhabdossji is no more and it is difficult to replace him. In spite of it let the tie between these two grow stronger.

I offer my humble homage to the revered Shri Rajendra Suri Maharaj.

□

(Jainism in South India : Contd. from page 11)

and architecture; there are statues which have thrilled and inspired the society by their artistical grandeur and religious composure; there are numerous inscriptions unfolding the history of the land and glorifying the saints who instilled humanitarian values into the society and those great men lived for the benefit of others; above all, the Jainas enriched the languages of the people with literary compositions replete with great moral lessons for the erring humanity...." Dr. A.N. Upadhye.

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#### DETACHMENT

*Deeds, good and sinful, are chains of gold and iron, Both are hindrances to seeking salvation. The wise man learns to detach himself from both through experience.*

#### COMPASSION

*To make other creatures happy is greatest happiness; but to give them pain, or to remain callously indifferent to their suffering is the greatest misery.*

—Rajendra Suri