

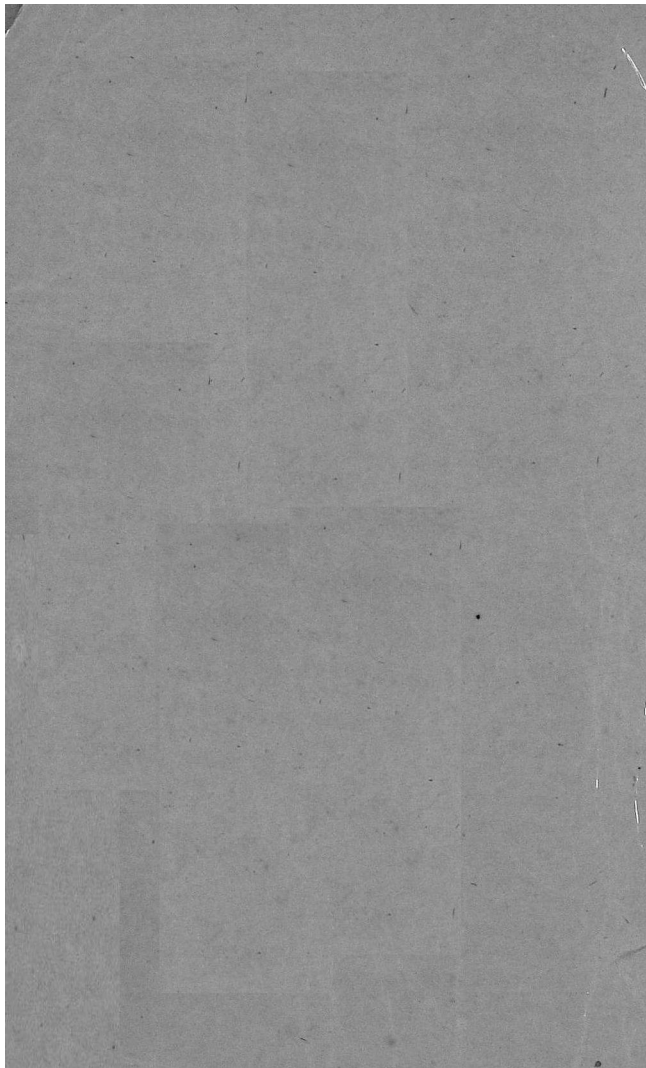
Jain Monasticism In The Tamil Country

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SECTION I - THE JAIN MONASTIC ORGANIZATION AND DISCIPLINE

1. THE TWO MAIN SECTS

The Jain monastic organization was common to every part of the country, as the basic texts followed were the same everywhere. As in Buddhism, even the minutest details of monastic life came in for careful attention at the hands of the writers on Jain monastic discipline. The principles had been evolved from the days of Mahavira, the twenty fourth Tirtankara; but it took some time for these to be codified.¹ Before the codification, monasteries functioned most probably on the basis of the teachings of Mahavira, transmitted from generation to generation.² Like the *Vinaya Pitaka*, which is the main code of the Buddhist Monastic Order, the *Pravacanasara* of Kundakundacarya, constitutes the main basis of the whole Jain monastic philosophy.³ No doubt there are other works like *Mulacara* by Saint Vattakeri, which also constitute the references to Jain monasticism.⁴ But Kundakundacarya's works had wide currency in the South. As Sri P. Upadhye says, "to trace their spiritual lineage from Kundakunda has been looked upon as a proud privilege by Jaina monks of the Digambara section; and as a clear proof of this, we have Kundakundavyaya for three of the four Jaina Sangas of the Digambara ascetic community in the South".⁵

The texts do not seem to have been translated into any of the Southern languages, possibly for the reason that Prakrit which the Jains used as a medium of expression in North India had to be mastered by Jain monks in the other parts of the country also.⁶ The Karnataka region, where Jainism had its earliest start in the South, with the arrival of Candragupta Maurya and his preceptor Bhadrabahu, became the centre of Southern Jainism for a long time. The inspiration for Tamil Jainism was furnished by the Karnataka organization.⁷

According to Ramaswami Iyengar, the division of Jainism into the Svetambara and the Digambara denominations had its origin even by the 3rd century B. C. when the Pataliputra Council tried to reorganize Jainism after the long spell of famine that had led to the abdication of Candragupta Maurya and his exodus with his preceptor to the South.⁸ On account of the famine, the regulations in regard to dress were not strictly adhered to, and when the Reunion was attempted in the Pataliputra Council, two groups had definitely emerged, one adopting the white dress, and the other preferring to remain without any dress.⁹

The division was not merely a matter of dress. Certain theological and philosophical differences also developed, widening the gulf between the two sects. These have been summarised by Ramaswami Iyengar in the following manner:¹⁰

- 1) According to the Digambaras, Kevalins such as the Tirtankaras who live without food are perfect saints.

2) The embryo of Mahavira was not removed from the womb of Devananda to that of Trisala as the Svetambaras contended.

3) The Digambaras believe that a monk who owns any property (i. e., wears clothes) cannot attain Nirvana.

4) No woman can attain Nirvana.

5) The Digambaras disowned the canonical books of the Svetambaras.

Each of the major divisions was further divided into sub-sects on some minor interpretations of the texts.¹¹ Further the Digambara Order was divided into four Sangas or monastic groups which were: 1. Nandi Sanga 2. Sena Sanga 3. Deva Sanga and 4. Simha Sanga.¹²

So far as the Tamil country was concerned, the Digambara sect dominated; and the history of South Indian Jainism may be considered mostly the story of the Digambara sect. Within the sect a number of religious cults developed; and some of the cults like the Yakshi cult sometimes attained pre-eminence over even the main religion.¹³

2. KUNDAKUNDA, THE FATHER OF TAMIL JAIN MONASTICISM

As we have observed earlier, Kundakundacarya may be regarded as the father of Jain monasticism in the South. Different scholars assign different dates between the 1st century B. C. and the 6th century A. D. to him.¹⁴ He is also identified by some scholars with Elacarya who, in turn, is

sometimes identified with Tiruvalluvar.¹⁵ Bypassing the controversy associated with this identification chain, we could concede the pre-eminence attached to Kundakundacarya who, it is clear, was not a Tamilian. It is likely that this great monastic organizer set the pattern for the monastic system of the Jains in the Tamil country.

3. DIFFERENT LEVELS OF STUDENTSHIP

We may now proceed to consider the broad aspects of the monastic system. This account is based on two works, the *Pravacanasara* by Kundakundacarya, and *Sanyasa Dharma* by C. R. Jain, in which three basic works on monastic discipline have been summarised.¹⁶

The initiation was a very simple process. The young aspirant to monkhood had to salute the five great dignitaries, Siddhas, Jinas, Acaryas, Upadhyayas and Sadhus. He had to take leave of his next of kin and go to a Ganin and make a formal request to admit him into the Order. He was immediately initiated as a sign of which he adopted for ever the form in which he was born (nudity). Not all persons were considered fit for monkhood. Both the Svetambaras and the Digambaras prescribed strict qualifications, mostly personal and intellectual.

Jain monasticism had a hierarchical pattern; and the novitiate had to pass through each stage. The first was that of the Sadhu, whose duty was to do service to elders and live a strict life. After some years as a Sadhu, the novitiate became a Stavira, i. e., a monk well-versed in the religion

and the monastic tradition, and was considered competent to advise on questions of morality. Upadhyaya was the status higher than that of Stavira, and it signified mastery of the twelve *Angas* as expounded by the Jina. The Upadhyaya was the instructor teaching the younger monks.

Higher than the Upadhyaya was the Acarya. He was highly respected and was looked upon as an exemplar in the monastic system. Acaryaship was the highest teaching post.

The Ganadhara, as the name itself signifies, must have been the leader of a group of monks, presumably with the Acarya status.

Other monastic positions like Suri and Pravartaka are also mentioned. But except that these were among the highest positions, details of the duties discharged by them are not available.

4. PERSONAL LIFE AND CONDUCT

The Jain Church was organized in different units based on numerical strength. The Gana was an organization of three monks under the headship of Ganadhara. The Gaccha consisted of seven monks under a Ganadhara. The Kula was a regular school run by a teacher, and consisted of the teacher and his disciples.

Strict and detailed rules are found in the *Mulacara* in regard to the personal life and conduct of monks. These covered such aspects as external relations, tours, period of stay in any particular place, possessions like the broom, the

water-pot and bedding, residence, begging, the mode of eating, fourteen impurities and a number of other apparently negligible items of daily life.

As regards the daily routine of the monks, they woke up at sunrise, and after paying homage to the five dignitaries, studied for some time. After this, each monk finished the morning physical routine like easing, washing etc. Each monk then went about begging after making sure that children in the community around had finished their morning meals. After eating the food given as alms by a householder, the monk went over to the temple for making the daily confession. He did not eat in the night; therefore, the rest of his waking hours were spent in study and meditation.

Along with these routine activities, the following six items required special attention:

- 1) the Samaika or mental equanimity;
- 2) Caturvimsatistava or the praise of the twenty four Jinas;
- 3) Vandana, or the salutation to the Arhats, Siddhas and the immediate Guru;
- 4) Pratikramana or inner disapproval of transgressions—mental, vocal and physical;
- 5) Pratyakyana or the determination to avoid sinful thoughts and activities, and
- 6) Gayathsakka or self-education about the body with a view to non-attachment to it.

5. RULES REGARDING STUDY

The study or the acquisition of knowledge (*Jinacara*) was eightfold depending on the Kala (proper time), Vinaya (mental and bodily purity), Upadhana (studying as a special vow undertaken), and Bohumana (the means of getting the respect of others).

The student was expected to study during the first half of the night or the second half of the day or two Ghatikas after midnight or early after sunrise. This would mean that most part of the day and night was suited to study. Usually the shadow of the sun guided the commencement and the conclusion of any unit of study. The monk was required to commence studies when the shadow representing the part of the body below the knee fell to a length of seven *Vitastis*. He closed the study during day in the evening on the same calculation. As the shadow varied from month to month in length, a shadow calendar was introduced showing the length of the shadow below the knee at sunrise and sunset during each month.

Certain days or periods when the season was showing up extremes or when there were natural occurrences like eclipse, study was not permitted.

The place of study was also to be chosen carefully. A place likely to distract or containing impurities was to be avoided at all costs. The place chosen must be peaceful and conduce to concentration of the mind.

6. THE TEXTS AND THE INSTRUCTION

The texts included philosophical and biographical literature of the different authorities. These dealt with the seventeenfold death, prayers and praises of the Jain dignitaries, the duties of the monks and stories of great saints.

The instruction was imparted by a Guru. The process included *Parivartana* or the repeating of the text, *Vacana* or reading, *Prasna* or questioning, *Anupreksa* or the twelve reflections, *Dhammakatha* or musical recital of stories of great persons and the hymns. As he studied, the monk was not allowed to pay attention to anything else except the subject of study. As a precautionary measure, he avoided taking food fully; and even while eating sparingly, he avoided varieties likely to interfere with the mind and promote Tamas, i. e., mental blackout.

A reverential posture was also required of every student. He sat either in the Paryankasana or Virasana posture, as he participated in the learning. Periodically, i. e., at the beginning and the end of important texts like the *Angas*, *Sruta*, *Skanda*, *Praparita* and *Desa*, he had to miss a meal, or upto five meals.

Respect for the Guru was enjoined on every student; and Gurudroha was the most heinous sin. Gurudroha meant the act of disowning the teacher after learning everything from him. The student had to express his gratitude and respect to the Guru every time he learnt, and seek his permission for everything. In case a student wanted to go to

another teacher for further studies, he had to make his desire known to his first teacher and seek his pardon and permission many times. No student was allowed to tear himself from his teacher and to seek another teacher. When a student had completed his learning under his first Guru he had to find out two or three more fellow-students with the same purpose and desire, and seek another Guru in a group. The idea seems to be that if an individual was left alone, he might stray and bring disrepute to the organization.

A certain formality marked the relationship between the teacher and the pupil. When a pupil came seeking a teacher, the teacher seeing him approach should walk seven steps towards him by way of receiving him. After the pupil's arrival, the teacher would put to him routine questions about his welfare and the world of monks. After this first introduction, the teacher would watch his future disciple for three days, and know at firsthand his conduct and attitude. Only on the third day should the pupil formally reveal to the teacher the purpose of his visit. Then the teacher would ask for particulars about his name, family antecedents, previous Guru if any, standing as a monk, his previous studies etc. All these, though generally true of every level of studentship, were specially applicable to advanced students.

The Guru had the right to reject any student.

7. DISCIPLINE AMONG MONKS

A few words about monkish discipline may not be out of place. The whole moral code consisted of

the fivefold Acara, twenty eight Mula Gunas and twelve reflections.

The fivefold Acara consisted of the following :

- (1) An attitude of conviction in the validity of the tenets of the Jina. This was connoted by the concept *Darsana*.
- (2) The right attitude towards study connoted by the concept *Gnana*.
- (3) Right behaviour or *Caritra* in which were included the great vows, abstinence from night meal and the practice of all the austerities.
- (4) The twelvefold penance connoted by the concept of *Tapas*, and
- (5) Courageously living up to all the disciplines of monk-life connoted by the concept *Virya*.

The twentyeight Mula Gunas related to the details of physical austerity like tonsuring the head, nudity, bathlessness etc. These were called Mula Gunas or principal virtues because, these had a vital bearing on the mental life of the monk. The approach of the Jains to these was transcendental; but the Saivites and Vaishnavites seem to have made much of these in their anti-Jain propaganda.

As regards the twelve reflections or *Anupreksha*, these helped to condition the mind of every monk to the highest discipline in which it would refuse to accept an apparently convincing position about worldliness. The subjects of the twelve reflections were: (1) the

impermanence of all things; (2) Jina Dharma as the only asylum; (3) one's reaping the fruits of one's own Karma; (4) the futility of help from others in crossing *Samsara*; (5) misery of wordly existence; (6) the theory of the non-creation of the world by any agency; (7) the realization that life in hell or life as lower creatures is bad; (8) the cause of the Karma cycle; (9) the cessation of that cycle; (10) the dissipation of the Karmic atoms; (11) the function of religion, and (12) the ultimate Enlightenment.

In regard to discipline, there was very little difference between the Svetambara and Digambara monasticism. Only in the Svetambara monasticism there was a better planning of the studies of the different texts. The *Vyavaharika Sutra* of the Svetambaras prescribe a definite course of study spread over a period of twenty years.

8. MEDITATION

Having considered the study methods and discipline of the Jains, it is appropriate to emphasize meditation as a method denoting mental and moral maturity. This method was common to all religions of the world. In the Christian monasticism it was given the pride of place. In Brahminism it was equally important, though at the Grihasta stage the scope for it was naturally limited. Moreover, Brahminical monasticism was unorganized.

In the Jaina religion there were four types of meditation, each with its sub-categories. These were *Arta*, *Raudra*, *Dharma* and *Sukla*.

The first two were considered to be of an inferior level, as they were related to the worldly pleasures. *Dharma Dhyana* and *Sukla Dhyana* were the highest levels.

The four main aspects of *Dharma Dhyana* were

- (1) The proper understanding of the principles of good religious conduct ;
- (2) The thoughts regarding calamities in this world and the next;
- (3) Reflections about the fruits of Karma;
- (4) Reflections about the nature of the world;

This type of *Dhyana* had four qualities which were :

- (1) A love of the religion ;
- (2) An inborn oneness with it ;
- (3) An inner desire to study the scriptures, and
- (4) An urge to interact with godly people.

Dharma Dhyana could be developed by reading the scriptures, clearing doubts and difficulties, reading each text again and again and reflecting over meanings of texts.

In the *Dharma Dhyana* type of meditation, the general thoughts centred round the helplessness of the individual in this world, the transitoriness of earthly existence, religion as a comforting factor and the mystery about the true nature of the world itself.

The *Sukla Dhyana* concerned concentration. The essence of this type consisted in the stability of the mind, total absence of infatuation, insight into the nature of the soul and non-attachment to the body. The inner qualities that this Dhyana promoted were forgiveness, non-attachment, honesty and humility.

Meditation implied concentration. This could be developed only by stages. The highest concentration was connoted by the concept of *Samadhi*.¹⁷

SECTION II - JAIN MONASTIC ACTIVITIES IN TONDAIMANDALAM

1. JAIN CENTRES IN THE TAMIL COUNTRY IN THE IMPERIAL AGE

Jainism was more wide-spread in the Tamil country than Buddhism in the age following the Kalabhra interregnum. Buddhism had perhaps been more prosperous than Jainism in the Sangam age, as may be evident from the comparative rarity of Jain works in the Sangam literature.¹⁸ It is, therefore, a permissible surmise that the religion should have received much boosting during the Kalabhra interregnum.¹⁹ Before the Pallava imperialism was established, Jainism had consolidated itself and was passing through its most active and prosperous period.²⁰ Naturally, the Pallavas recognized the religion as a powerful factor until the new Tamil Saivism got the upper hand.²¹ Mahendravarman, one of the most famous emperors of South India adopted Jainism as his religion for some years; and until his conversion to Saivism by Appar, he gave the religion his best attention and support.²²

Before the reign of Mahendravarman, Jain monasteries had been flourishing everywhere in the Tamil country and in the Telugu and Karnataka territories of the Pallava empire. The tempo of Jain monastic growth might have slowed down with the rise of the powerful Saivite and Vaishnavite movements; but Jaina religious activities continued until the end of the Cola imperialism. After the Cola imperialism, unlike Buddhism, Jainism managed to have a precarious survival in the Tamil country.²³

From a study of the epigraphs and Tamil literature of the Pallava and Cola periods, it is evident that the Chingleput North Arcot, Pudukkottai and Madurai areas were dominated by the Jains during these periods, though every area of the Tamil country had, at least, a few Jain centres.²⁴ In the pages to follow we may consider briefly the most important among the centres.

2. MONASTIC ACTIVITIES IN JINA KANCI

One of the earliest centres of Digambara Jainism, Tirupparuthikunram or Jina Kanci had famous Jain teachers, and possibly, at their instance, the Pallava kings constructed the two Jain temples in this locality. Sri T. N. Ramachandran believes that Nandivarman Pallavamalla might have constructed the Candraprabha Jain temple.²⁵ The presence of a Jain temple may always be taken as an indication of the existence of a flourishing Jain colony. Epigraphical evidence confirms the association of a number of eminent teachers with the place.²⁶ Among these are Mallisena Vamanacarya and Paravadhi Mallipushpasenacarya. It is not improbable that the monastery in Tirupparu-

thikunram played a prominent role in the conversion of Mahendravarman to Jainism.²⁷

In Jain tradition Kanci was one of the four primary centres of Digambara Jainism.²⁸ It is evident then that this monastery specialized in the tenets of the Digambara from of the religion.

3. THE MONASTERY AT VEDAL

At Vedal there are two hills containing two large natural caverns.²⁹ Each of the caverns has a Mandapam annexe. Inscriptions in the place mention a Pallava among the patrons of one of the Mandapams, and Aditya Cola as the patron of the other Mandapam.³⁰ Both the caverns were the residences of Jain teachers of both sexes. Gunakirti Bhatarar was in occupation of one of the caverns. Possibly his lady pupil Kanakavira Kuratti and her lady students pursued their studies in this place after his death. The fact that two large annexes were constructed to what should have ordinarily remained a place of meditation for ascetics suggests that it was accommodation provided for monks as well as lay disciples of both sexes to study at the feet of those eminent preceptors who made the caverns their place of residence.

The monastery of Vedal became memorable as the scene of a great battle of wits between two groups of women pupils.³¹ Kanakavira Kuratti had, according to an epigraph of the 9th century A. D., five hundred women pupils. The residents of the locality also considered Kanakavira Kuratti as their religious preceptor. It happened that 400 nuns of another school (not specified) challenged the pupils of the

Kurattiar to a debate which degenerated into an ugly incident. It looked as if the school of Kanakavira would come to a sudden termination on account of the machinations of the other party. At this stage, the inhabitants of Vedal rallied round Kanakavira and gave every protection to the preceptor and her pupils.³² There is no doubt that Kanakavira Kuratti was one of the most eminent teachers in the history of Tamil Jainism. The alternate name Mādevi Arandimangalam given to Vedal in epigraphs may suggest the perpetuation of a great lady's name by the grateful inhabitants; and who else could that lady be if not Kanakavira Kuratti?

4. THE MONASTERY OF PANCAPANDAVANMALAI

The hill popularly called Pancapandavanmalai found at a distance of four or five miles south-west of the town of Arcot must have been another centre of Jain monastic activity.³³ There are two large caves, one natural and another artificial. A large number of sculptures are found inside the natural cave. There is also an inscription on a rock overhanging the natural cave. Close by, there is another inscription on a rock to the west of the first inscription.³⁴ The artificial cave contains six cells with six pairs of pillars. The figure of a Jina is found on the rock above the cave. The indications are that both the cells housed eminent teachers of Jainism, and monastic training and instruction had been going on for a long period of time in this area.

The first of the inscriptions we have referred to above is a record of the period of the Pallava ruler Nandivarman.³⁵ In all probability this monastery

had the support of Nandivarnan, though the record is in the name of one Naranan. Naranan caused the image of one Naganandi, evidently a Jain spiritual leader, to be cut by the side of a golden Yakshi. Even if Naganandi were to be identified with an ancient Jina divine (there was no Tirtankara of that name) it is a good inference that the monastery was specially devoted to a study of the school of Naganandi.³⁶ The second inscription is interesting as confirming our belief that it was a very large monastery specializing in a particular school of Jainism. The inscription makes provision for a *Palliccandam* (permanent maintenance) for the running of a monastery or a *Palli*.³⁷ The inscription is dated 986 A. D. The first inscription is dated 766 A. D. Thus we have more than one hundred years of continuity for the manastery, without taking into account the years before and after the two dates when the monastery might have flourished.

SECTION III - JAIN CENTRES IN THE PUDUKKOTTAI AREA

1. SITTANNAVASAL

In the Pudukkottai area the most prominent primary monasteries were the ones at Sittannavasal, Nartamalai, Tenimalai and Chettipatti. Sittannavasal has acquired world-wide reputation as the venue of Jain painting comparable to the Ajanta frescoes.³⁸ There is a large natural cave popularly called Eladipattam and seventeen beds with pillows cut into the rock.³⁹ There are also labels on the rocks containing the names of the Jaina teachers who resided there. The Tamil characters are assignable to the 8th century A. D. or later.

Not very far from Sittannavasal is the Arivarkoil or the temple of the Arhat which is one of the few Jain cave temples in that area.⁴⁰ From the architectural and sculptural embellishments adding to the exquisite paintings, there could be no doubt that Sittannavasal was not only a primary monastery but also a great centre of the religion in that area.⁴¹ The sculptures in the cave temple have classical value. On the ceiling is the Vijaya Cakra of the Jina which corresponds to the Dharma Cakra of Buddhism. The figure with a canopy of a single umbrella is found in a niche of the outer hall of the temple. The figure is described as that of a very eminent Acarya or preceptor in an inscription near the sculpture of Parsvanatha on the opposite wall. There is the possibility that the Acarya under the single umbrella canopy represented the chief of the monastery because, inside the temple there are three images of Tirtankaras with the triple-umbrella canopy and the other paraphernalia associated with the Tirtankaras.

The Sittannavasal relics might suggest a new turn in the history of Jainism and Jain education. The appeal to the visual sense seems to have attained special importance during the 8th century A. D. The Buddhists of the Mahayana School had also, by then, progressed in their appeal to the masses through the eye-gate. The Ajanta frescoes which epitomize the story of Buddhism over two or three centuries were the artistic highlights of Mahayanism after it had made its first contribution in the realm of arts in stone.

2. NARTAMALAI

Nartamalai must also have been a primary centre. A large number of cloisters and caverns are still found in this place. Sculptures of the Tirtankaras are also found. The only inscription found in this place in a damaged condition is dated in the reign of Maravarman Sundara Pandya of the 11th century. There can be little doubt as to the antiquity of this centre because we can safely assume that Jainism was under the operation of diminishing returns after the Pallava period; and whatever remnants of the old Jain monastic glory were still found in the Cola and Pandyan periods must be considered the few lucky survivals. Only in very rare cases could they be identified as new developments. The inscription mentions two Jain teachers Dharmadeva Acarya and his teacher Kanakacandra Pandita.⁴² The name of a monastery that flourished in the area is given as Tiruppallimalai monastery. Evidently the area itself got the name of *The Mountain of the Sacred Monastery*. Today the hill is known as Aluruttimalai or the hill that rolls down every body! The monastery might have extended as far as the Bommaimalai and Melmalai where an inscription refers only to Tiruppalli. On Bommaimalai and Melmalai are found the usual monastic relics. On Melmalai there is a rock-cut Jain temple in a location still going by the name Samanar Kunru, though the present inhabitant of this temple is an image of Vishnu. Such changes of divine tenancy of temples are quite common in South Indian history. This is, of course, a much better situation than that in which the original gods are rechristened and made the gods of some other religion!

3. TENIMALAI

Equally important must have been Tenimalai (in the Pudukkottai area) as the venue of a monastery called Andar Madam or the Monastery of the Great Pontiffs. An 8th century Tamil inscription provides some insight into the importance of the institution.⁴³ It states that a Jaina teacher by name Malayadvaja was in residence here doing meditation, and the Irukkuvel king of Kodumbalur came over to the monastery, paid his respects to the teacher, made a grant of a Palliccandam and left. A Mahavira sculpture adorns the cavern. Idols of Yakshis are also found; and near one of them is another inscription mentioning a Jain artist (a teacher by name Valla Udana Seruvatti) as the sculptor who made the Mahavira image. The influence of this monastery must also have been great, and covering areas as far as Chettipatti where excavations have laid bare two big Jain temples with the features of the architecture of the 9th and 10th centuries. Many images of Tirtankaras and other Jain divinities are found in the excavated temples. An inscription of Rajaraja Cola and another dated in the 10th century A. D. testify to the importance of the monastery possibly as one of the greatest primary centres.⁴⁴ Two teachers Dayapala and Vadiraja and their preceptor Matisagara figure in the 10th century inscription.

SECTION IV - CENTRES OF JAINISM IN THE MADURAI AND KUMARI AREAS

1. MADURAI AS A JAIN CENTRE

Next to Kanci, Madurai must have attained pre-eminence as a powerful Jain centre from the earliest

times. We have already referred to the association of Kundakundacarya with the Jain movement in this area, and the founding of the Sangam in Madurai by Vajranandi. Epigraphs and literature are copious in their references to the city as a great seat of Jain learning. Within a distance of seven or eight miles from the city, there are relics of primary monasteries three of which deserve our notice. The first on the hill in Tirupparankunram still enshrines figures of Parsvanatha and Suparsvanatha and contains a Brahmi inscription.⁴⁵ The Pancapandava beds found here are famous.

Six miles to the east of Madurai is the Anaimalai hill which, like Tirupparankunram, is today famous as a Hindu centre, but contains Jain antiquities including a beautiful Yakshini. This must have been a famous monastery on account of the association of the famous teacher-artist Ajjanandi. At Alagarmalai, ten or eleven miles north-west of Madurai are found large numbers of Jain relics and an inscription mentioning Ajjanandi.⁴⁶

In regard to other primary centres in Madurai, one generalization could be made, that most of them had the influence of the great teachers, Gunasenadeva and Ajjanandi.

Uttamapalayam, Muttuppatti, Kongarpuliamkulam, Setti Kudavu, Pechipallam, Poigaimalai, Kilavalavu, Karungalakkudi and Ivarmalai were also primary centres in the charge of eminent teachers.⁴⁷

2. KALUGUMALAI

In the Tirunelveli district the greatest primary centre was Kalugumalai in the Koilpatti taluk. It looks as if Kalugumalai was one of the greatest centres in the whole of India.⁴⁸ Such an impression is gathered from the extensive area of the centre, the large number of relics and epigraphs, and the clear information available in the epigraphs about the centre. There are more than a hundred sculptures, representing Jinas in different sizes, and Yakshinis. The Mahavira representations are wonderful. Kalugumalai is truly the paradise of Jain art in the Tamil country.

The epigraphs tell us the story of a large monastery with distinguished teachers of both the sexes.⁴⁹ It is probable that to the main monastery were affiliated separate nunneries for women. A study of the structures along with the date-range between the earliest inscription and the latest inscription leads us to the inference that the whole centre must have developed over a long period of time. Kalugumalai may be regarded as the Nalanda of the Tamil country so far as Jain education was concerned.

We may now summarize the contents of the epigraphs.

The name of the place was Tiruneccura and the hill Tirumalai or the Holy Hill. The region was called Neccura Nadu. The donors of the different images were great teachers (both male and female), lay followers and members of the mercantile

community. These persons were mostly outsiders. Kuranditirtha, a place in Vembu Nadu accounts for many donors. Another place was Cirupolal in Idaikkala Nadu. Perumparrur in Kottur Nadu and Nalkurkkudi in Vembu Nadu are places in Kerala. That teachers and the common people from places far and near though it fit to perpetuate the memory of the centre in this manner must testify not only to the importance of the centre, but also to the fact of the donors having benefited in some manner, most probably, as former students. Among the teachers listed are Srinandi, senior disciple of Sri Vardhamana of Srimalaikkula; Kanakavira, disciple of Baladeva Kuruvadigal of Tirunarungondai; Kanakanandipperiya, disciple of Sri Kurandi Tirta Bhata; Poornacandra, pupil of Kurandi Kanakanandi Bhata, and Dayapala Periya, disciple of Mauni Bhata of Kadaikattur Tirumalai.⁵⁰ Among the lady teachers mentioned are: Tirucara-nattu Kurattigal, evidently a teacher of Travancore; Pichai Kuratti of Cirupolal; Sanga Kurattigal who had a disciple named Sri Vijaya Kurattiar; Mammai Kuratti whose disciple was Arattanemi Kuratti; Tiruparuti Kuratti who was a pupil of the teacher (male ?) Pattini Bhata or Bhata of the Fast Fame; Naloor Kuratti, a pupil of Nalkur Amalanemi Bhata-ra who had a lady disciple named Nattika Bhata; Milalur Kuratti, a disciple of Perur Kuratti and daughter of Mingaikuman and Tirumalai Kuratti who had a male disciple called Enadi Kuttanan.⁵¹

We may pause now to take a quick look at each one of these names before making a few generalizations. The first lady teacher hails from a place in

Kerala. That she chose to be one of the donors of the Kalugumalai monuments leads us to no other inference than that she was a one-time pupil of the flourishing monastery there. She seems to have been an eminent teacher and a leader judged from the occurrence of her name in two inscriptions. Pichai Kurattigal seems to be a tell-tale name. She might have attained prominence by strict adherence to the rules of the organization, particularly in respect of begging. The next name Sanga Kurattigal suggests the lady's prominent role in a Jina Sanga. Nattika Bhatara (Natya Bhatara) suggests the proficiency of the teacher in the art of dancing.

The Kalugumalai inscriptions prompt us to present a poser: Was there co-education among the Jains? We cannot answer this question in the affirmative, not only for the reason that monasticism was universally based on celibacy, and on the complete social separation of the sexes within a monastic organization, but also for the reason that separate Jain nunneries are known to have existed in many places. However, it seems to be true that after a particular stage there was no objection to a woman's discipleship under a man and *vice versa*. It is likely that such discipleship was rare, and implied a specialized course capable of being handled only by a few experts or scholars.

Among other items of interest mentioned in the epigraphs were the maintenance of fifteen teachers and one Reader in Scripture for the purpose of expounding the sacred text.⁵² The mention of a Reader is particularly interesting. His duty was

perhaps to read out the text while a teacher would make the exposition.

It is not possible to fix the dates of the Kalugumalai monuments with any precision. Excepting two, all the other records are in Vatteluttu. On paleographical grounds, the epigraphs may be assigned to a period between the 8th and the 11th centuries. There could be no doubt as to the centre having existed even prior to the 8th century as its pupils were distinguished leaders and teachers in many places, and seem to be followers of an old school, probably the one developed in Kalugumalai.

3. THE KUMARI AREA

The last area which we may examine in our study of centres is comprised in Southern Travancore and Kumari district. In Southern Travancore there is the hill with the tell-tale name of Tirucaranattumalai. It must have been the abode of a class of Jain sages called Caranas. They are reputed to possess complete mastery over nature. On the top of the hill there is the reputed Bhagavati temple of the Hindus. A study of the images in the temple has revealed their true identity as Mahavira and Parsvanatha, another instance of old gods being rechristened after their conversion to a new religion!

Apart from the images inside the temple (curiously dedicated to a goddess!) the figures of Jinas and Yakshinis silence any possible attempt to prove any Hindu affiliation

There are five Tamil inscriptions in Vatteluttu giving some details about the centre.⁵³ An inscription

dated in the reign of the Pandya king Varaguna records a gift of golden ornaments to the Bhataras of Tirucaranattumalai. These ornaments are stated to have been made by a lady teacher by name Gunamtangi Kurattigal, a disciple of one Arattanemi Bhataras. A second inscription mentions Ajjanandi.⁵⁴ A third refers to the cutting of a sculpture at the instance of Varaguna (Pandya) described as the disciple of Pattini Bhataras.⁵⁵ The fourth mentions a teacher by name Uttanandi Adigal while the fifth contains the name of Adigal, a teacher of another monastery.⁵⁶

The centre in the Kumari district is none other than Nagarkoil itself. Evidence points to this town having once been a great Jain primary centre.

SECTION V - GENERAL REMARKS ABOUT THE TAMIL JAIN MONKS

Jain monasticism should not be considered identical with the cult of the forest recluse. It is true that detachment from worldly considerations was emphasized in the monastic creed, but if it had been detachment in the literary sense, we should not be having many of the splendid achievements of Jain monks in the shape of beautiful caves, life-like sculptures, and paintings unsurpassed in their true beauty and mastery of technique. We should not also be having many of the rare literary works in the different languages of the country. The Jain monks were Sanyasins, but Karma Sanyasins in the sense that so long as the last life breath resided within the body they considered it their duty to be engaged in fruitful work. Though the two broadfields of

monastic activity were education and nursing, there were a large number of areas of humanitarian work in which the Jain monks participated. They were the preachers of moral and good life not only to the Jain laity, but also the general masses of the people, irrespective of the religions to which they belonged. They prepared textbooks on every branch of learning relevant to a moral good life and these works reveal a perfection in terms of the depth of the subject, the organization of the material and clarity of expression all of which invest the works with eternal validity and currency.

There is no doubt that the Jain monks acquired all the skills necessary for successful professional work and human relations during their monastic life. In the realm of knowledge, the skills particularly developed were :

1. the skill to recite effectively;
2. the skill to read out effectively;
3. the skill to explain or interpret;
4. the skill to expound any theme;
5. the skill to hold on to a position;
6. the skill to meet an argument with a counter-argument;
7. the skill to establish the validity of the position taken;
8. the skill to manage a controversial situation ably;

9. the skill to teach a person of any level;
10. the skill to manage large audiences, and
11. the skill to make available neat manuscripts of texts.

Those who were specially talented demonstrated various skills in relation to the domain of their special preference. The Sittannavasal monks have left a pleasing story about themselves, no doubt, untold, in their paintings, particularly, about their wonderful performances with the brush and the colours. Ajjanandi, the sculptor has left for us many of the products of his talented hand and helped us to think over the many skills involved in his artistic products.

The Jain monks might have or might not have impressed the common folks with spiritual miracles. No one can deny even in this age of disbelief in miracles that what the Jains did with their hands and left for posterity, are miracles that have to be conceded and accepted without question as symbolizing the highest perfection that Jain monasticism had attained at one time.

SECTION VI - SOME GREAT JAINA TEACHERS IN THE TAMIL COUNTRY

1. AJJANANDI

Ajjanandi (Aryanandi in Sanskrit) strikes one as the most famous Jain teacher in the Tamil country. His influence must have spread all over the Tamil country and Kerala. In the Tirucaranattumalai (near Citral in Kerala) there are a number of sculptures with the typical Ajjanandi label.

Very little is known about this great Jain preceptor except that his mother was one Gunamathiar. While one could not be certain about the date of Ajjanandi, the paleography of the epigraphs associable with him and the sculptures which were his handiwork point to a date not later than the 8th century A. D. That would assign him to the period of the later Pallavas. In all probability he was contemporaneous with the Saivite and Vaishnavite upsurge in the Tamil country. Evidently his work was part of the last concerted efforts to prevent the religion from a disastrous end.

Ajjanandi must have believed that in regard to the masses of people on whom Jainism had always depended for its support, things seen were mightier than things heard, i. e., the visual appeal was more important than the appeal through the ear. He tried to make Jainism a little glamorous through artistic sculptures, posh edifices and vast places for meditation and education for the devotees. That he was a great teacher is sufficiently impressed by epigraphical evidence. His special equipment was his artistic genius which is reflected in all the sculptural pieces completed by him all over the Tamil country and Kerala.

2 VRISHABADEVA

Sage Vrishabadeva belonged to the 7th century A. D. and appears to have wielded great influence all over the country though he lived and worked in Jammalamadugu in the Cudappah district.⁵⁷ He was one of the greatest preceptors of the Jain law. An inscription assignable to the 7th century on

paleographical grounds sings the praise of this great teacher in the Anushtub metre in Sanskrit.⁵⁸ The verse states that Vrishabha was the mighty cloud to the crops called the faithful followers of the Jain law. This sage stood unshaken and unshakable like the mountain in the disputations with the advocates of rival creeds.

The cave in which the preceptor dwelt is small and the least impressive. But the eminence of the man as a teacher and as a debator must have been one of the causes for the popularity of Jainism in the Southern areas under the Pallava rule. Even today the hill on which the teacher resided is known as the Sanyasi Kunru or the Hill of the Holy man. The Anushtub sloka which has excellent literary merit must have been composed by one of his disciples.

3. GUNASENA

Scores of names of Jain teachers are known from inscriptions of the period between the 8th and 12th centuries, but only a few of these stand out prominently.⁵⁹ Of these, Gunasena seems to be the greatest judged from the mention of his name in inscriptions in the entire Madurai area. Gunasena Deva is described as the disciple of Kurandi Atta Upasi Bhatara of Vembu Nadu. Kurandi Atta Upasi was himself a great teacher whose pupils distinguished themselves. Mahanandi, another pupil of this teacher was a great artist. In all probability Gunasena developed into a leader of a Jain school of thought before he became the Principal of an important monastery called Kurandi Tirukkattanpalli in Vembu Nadu. Gunasena's school

is known to have had at least three generations of continuity. The second and the third generations are represented by a number of great disciples like Kanakavira Periyadigal, Vardhamana Panditar and Gunasena II, the last belonging to the third generation.

The period of Gunasena Deva seems to have been one of widespread and intensive Jain activity possibly to counteract hostile forces. While we could generalize that these forces could have reference to the new Hindu movement, the role of Buddhism in the effort to undermine Jain influence might also have been equally significant. Hiuen Tsang refers to the hostility between the Buddhists and the Nigranta Jains in the South. Gunasena's activities all over the Tamil country might have had reference to the ultimate conflict of survival between the two Kshatriya ascetic Orders which had, for a long time, agreed to co-exist and be united in anti-Brahminical, if not anti-Hindu efforts but which, in the end, fought between themselves in an unedifying struggle for a precarious survival, letting their parent religion reassert itself at their expense.

NOTES

1. According to Jains tradition the fourteen *Puvvas* (Purvas) constituted the first canonical exposition of the Faith. This was expounded by Mahavira himself to eleven Ganadharas, but the *Doctrines* were lost, as the transmission was oral, and one by one of the Ganadharas had passed away. (S. B. Deo's *History of Jain Monachism*)

The codification, for the first time, after the loss of the *Puvvas* took place at the Mathura Council in the 4th century A. D. under the presidentship of Arya Skandila.

2. In this oral transmission doubts were sometimes expressed about the authenticity of the Canon. The Council held at Pataliputra in the 3rd century B. C. had refixed the Canon, but there were many who challenged its authenticity.
3. The edition of Dr. Upadhye is excellent, with a scholarly introduction.
4. Also Vattakera (first century A. D.). This is part of what the Digambaras call Anuyogas, which, like the Vedas, are four in number. These are: *Pratamanuyoga*, *Karananuyoga*, *Dravyanuyoga* and *Carananuyoga*. *Mulacara* comes within the last along with *Trivarnasara* of Vattakera.
5. *Pravacanasara* edited by Dr. P. Upadhye (see introduction)
6. The mastery of Prakrit was part of the education of the Jains in the monastic system even in the Tamil country. The Jain religion did not allow the study of the Holy Texts in their translated form.
7. Bhadrabahu brought Jainism to Mysore, and the contiguity of the Tamil country to the Karnataka region naturally exposed the former to this new influence. There is the tradition that Bhadrabahu commanded his disciple Visakacharya to go forth into the Cola and Pandya countries and teach the tenets of Jainism. Visakacharya, accordingly, came over to the Tamil country and had no

difficulty in propagating the religion: *Epigraphia Carnatica*, Vol. 2, Introduction, page 39)

Also, M. S. Ramaswami Iyengar, *Studies in South Indian Jainism* p. 20

8. M. S. Ramaswami Iyengar, *Studies in South Indian Jainism*, Chapter II, pp. 26-27
9. *Ibid.* During the famine some chose to remain in the country. They adopted the white dress. Those who left the country preferred the rule of nudity. After the famine, when the self-exiled Jains returned, they were loath to adopt the *svetambara* of those that had stayed behind. This was the beginning of the two Orders.
10. *Ibid.* op. cit. pp. 27-29.
11. *Ibid* p. 27
12. *Ibid.* p. 28. One Maganandi was the founder of the Nandi Sangha, Jinasena of the Sena Sangha, Arhadbalin of the Deva, and the Simha Sangha was a division of the Mula Sangha.
13. In my on-the-spot study of Jain relics in the Tamil country what impressed me was the development of the Yakshini cult in the Jainism of Tamil Nadu; and I wonder if there are as many Yakshini forms in North India as in the Tamil country.
14. Mr. Deo would assign him to the first century A. D. (*History of Jaina Monachism* p. 36)
15. M. S. Ramaswami Iyengar op. cit. p. 43
16. *Pravacanasara* (Dr. Upadhye edition)
17. This is common to Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism.
18. It seems to be true that, in the initial race between Jainism and Buddhism in the Tamil country for supremacy,

Buddhism fared better, and Jainism had to suffer the disrepute of being a heretical creed.

(of: *Mahavamsa*, Geiger's Translation)

19. The Kalabhra interregnum, M. S. Ramaswami Iyengar, op. cit. pp. 53-56.
20. The Pallava age saw the reversal in the fortunes of Jainism and Buddhism. While Buddhism lingered, Jainism prospered to the extent of provoking the envy of the Saivites and Vaishnavites.
21. This new Saivism consisted of two facets—one, tracing its origin to Tirumular who, in spite of his North Indian origin, and Sanskrit and Vedic background, became the founder, so to say, of Tamil Saivism; two, the Saivism based on the Smartha Advaita philosophy with its best exponent in Sankara.
22. R. Gopalan, *History of the Pallavas of Kanchi*, p. 90
23. However while Buddhism has totally disappeared from the Tamil country, Jainism continues to be the religion of a very small, but respected, community, admired for its catholicity of outlook and accommodating spirit. A few Jain temples (I would believe, not more than three or four) are existing in oblivion, located in precarious sheds, the older buildings having succumbed to the cruel test of time. The temple near my town (in Hanumanthagudi) is traced to the Mysore Jainism, and as I write this (1961) the ruins of the original temple are still visible.
24. As I conducted the survey for this study I was impressed by the fact that, at one time, the whole of Tamil Nadu had been covered by Jain centres.
25. This is more than a surmise from a study of the *motifs* and the other factors sustaining a chronological placement identical with the period of Nandivarman.

26. Many of these epigraphs belong to the later Cola period, thus affirming a tradition of continuity for Jainism, from the earliest times to the end of the Cola epoch and possibly later.
27. The two deities worshipped were Vardhamana and Vrishabhanatha Tirtankaras. Tradition has it that a Pallava king constructed the shrines.
See. *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1923, p. 4
28. The Digambara Jain work, *Lokavibhaga*, expounded in the Kanci area was copied by one Sarvanandi in Patalika or Pataliputra of the South Arcot District. (R. Gopalan, *History of the Pallavas of Kanchi* p. 11)
29. *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy* (1909) Appendix B. Nos. 81-84.
30. *Ibid.*
31. *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. 3, No. 92
32. *Ibid.*
33. Tiruppamalai is another name for the hill
34. *Epigraphia Indica* Vol. 4, p. 137
35. *Ibid.* p. 136
36. Naganandi was a great name in Jain tradition. Naganandi must have been a great local teacher as may be evident from the inscription.
37. *Palli* must have originally referred to a place of meditation and study,
38. These paintings may belong to the same period as that of the Ajanta frescoes, or later. The current thinking is they are much later than the Ajanta paintings.
39. These beds, as beds elsewhere, were for meditation. The long uninterrupted meditation sometimes led to bodily extinction called *sallekhana* in Jain Ritualism.

40. The term *Arivar* is very interesting. The *Tolkappiam* refers to Arivar, and the term is sometimes interpreted as seers, representing the earliest counterpart of the makers of philosophies like Saivasiddhanta. I think Arivar represented the leaders among great teachers in Jainism. The dedication of a temple to an *Arivar* would naturally suggest this. The Arivar Koil must have been dedicated to a local worthy, possibly a great Siddha, from whom the place might have taken its name. The term Siddha is applied to Jain monks also.
41. The Sittannavasal Jain centre must have extended, as I could see it, over, at least, one square mile.
42. *Pudukkottai State Inscriptions*, Vol. 2, No. 474
43. *Ibid.* Vol. 1, No. 9
44. *Manual of Pudukkottai State*, Vol. II, part ii (page, 1022)
45. *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy* 1909, p. 68
46. *Ibid.* 1910 p, 60
47. The names of the following teachers are found in an epigraph in one of these centres:
 1. Arittanemi Periyar
 2. Attaupavasi Bhatara
 3. Gunasena Peria Adigal
 4. Vardhamana Panditar
 5. Indrasena
 6. Mallisena Periyar
 7. Parsva Bhatara
 8. a woman teacher named Pathini Kurathiyar
48. The place seems to be ideally suited for Jain monastic activities, with its hill-eminence, isolation from the madding crowd's ignoble strife and natural caves.

49. *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy 1907*, page 47
50. *South Indian Inscriptions* Vol. V, Nos. 314, 317, 345, 359 and 383.
51. *Ibid.* Nos: 370, 371 and 372. Also 355, 356 and 394.
52. *Ibid.* Nos: 405 and 406
53. *Travancore Archaeological Series*, Vol. 1, p. 194
54. The influence of Ajjanandi (the correct Sanskrit form being Aryanandi) seems to have been great all over the South.
55. It is interesting that the king had a female teacher. This was not uncommon in ancient India. Pandita Kausiki, for example, was the mentor of Agnimitra (*vide* Kalidasa's *Malavikagnimitram*)
56. The general impression created by study of these inscriptions is that there was some kind of an exchange of teachers among the different monasteries, and that the teachers of various monasteries compared notes, at least once in a while. It is not unlikely that Jain monachism was highly centralized over the whole of Tamil Nadu, possibly over the Karnataka region also, and both the regions were united by a single Church, so far as Jainism was concerned.
57. From the available evidence, he impresses one with the belief that he was the leader of a great school of Jainism.
58. *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy 1939-1943* Appendix B, No. 401 of 1940-41
59. It is not known how many of these were immigrants to the Tamil country. But I guess the Bhatara or Bhatari suffix indicated non-Tamilian origin, while Periyar, Kurathi and similar pure Tamil suffixes indicated the teachers' Tamil nativity.

SUPPLEMENT

1. THE PERIOD OF JAIN MONASTICISM IN THE TAMIL COUNTRY

According to the earliest Buddhist chronicles, Jainism must have come into the Tamil country in the 4th century B. C. and had its heyday of prosperity until the 7th or 8th century A. D. and started fizzling out by the 13th century A. D. But for a short period of persecution of the Jains during the prosperous days of the Tamil Saivite and Vaishnavite movements in the 7th century, Jain monasticism seems to have not only enjoyed the tolerance of Tamil rulers, but even their substantial encouragement sometimes, as may be evident from the references to royal patronage in this essay.

2. UNIQUE FEATURES OF TAMIL JAIN MONASTICISM

I

In section I of this essay we have furnished a brief account of the monastic pattern in general terms. There is a theory that the organization for the Southern region was totally separate with notable deviations from the North Indian organization. While we are not contradicting the suggestion that regional variations in the organization existed and that the Jains were capable of adapting themselves to each region with a view to establishing effective rapport with the masses of the people in the region, we would like to emphasize that in major details the organization was common to the whole country. We have spoken of the four Sangas of the Digambara division. These four Sangas *did* exist in the Tamil country, as borne out by literary and epigraphical evidence. Regarding the Nandi Sanga in the Tamil country, Tirugnanasambandar says :

“கனக நந்தியும் புட்ப நந்தியும் பவண நந்தியும் குமணமா
கனக நந்தியும் குணக நந்தியும் திவண நந்தியும் மொழிகொளா
அனக நந்தியர்...” (Sambandar: *Tevaram*-Tirualavai pathigam)

Apart from this literary evidence, names of Tamil Jain monks like Pushpanandi, Srinandi, Kanakanandi, Uttanandi, Perunandi, Gunanandi, Ajjanandi, Bhavanandi and Chandra-

nandi, found in epigraphs suggest a strong Nandi sect functioning in the Tamil country. The Nandi suffix to the names is significant.

Regarding the Sena sect Tirugnanasambandar has this to say in the same *pathigam* :

“சந்து சேனனும் இந்து சேனனும் தரும சேனனும் கருமைசேர்
கந்து சேனனும் கனக சேனனும் முதலாகிய பெயர்கொளர்”

In addition to the above evidence, names with the Sena prefix like Gunasena, Chandrasena and Devasena are found in inscriptions also.

As regards the Simha sect, it may be pointed out that the members of this sect had the *Vira* suffix to their names. We have Kanakavira, Gunavira and others in epigraphs.

The names of Tiruttakkadevar (the author of *Jivakacintamani*) and Tolamolidevar, suggest the existence of the Deva Sanga also in the Tamil country.

With this unassailable evidence we can assert that the organizational pattern of the Digambaras was generally the same all over the country with minor regional changes.

Regarding the Dravida Sanga, one is not certain when and how it started. According to one view the Dravida Sangam did not connote any major organization as such, but only an offshoot of the Nandi Sanga. The following epigraphical evidence from Mysore seems to sustain such a view:

“ஸ்ரீமத் திரமிள ஸங்கேஸ்மிம் நந்தி ஸங்கேஸ்தி அருங்களா
அன்வயோ பாதி நிஸ்ஸேஷ ஸாஸ்த்ர வாராஸி பாரகைஹி”

(*Epigraphia Carnatica*, Vol. V - No. 131)

Vajranandi is believed to be the founder of this Dravida Sanga. This is what we are led to infer from the *Darsanasara* of Deva Sena.

II

Jainism does not seem to make much bones about the total isolation of the sexes, generally speaking, though, as in every monastic system, free mixing of the sexes was not encouraged in monastic life. One of the Tirtankaras is stated to have married and lived a householder's life.

Celibacy was however the general rule in monkhood. The point is the Jains did not make too much fuss about the total isolation of the sexes. Mahavira did not make any distinction between man and woman. In the Tamil country women (nuns) appear to have played an important role in the monastic organization. There is a suggestion of co-educational set-up at higher levels of study though we cannot generalize that co-education was encouraged.

The role of the nunneries in the Tamil country not only in the education of women disciples but also in social and religious activities among the masses is another distinguishing feature of Tamil Jainism. The part played by the Kurattiyars of the Tamil country was most admirable, especially in the light of the belief that women were not entitled to Nirvana in the original Jain Canon. There was a sect of eclectic Jains called Yapaniyas in the South who evolved common doctrines based on the Digambara and the Svetambara divisions, and believed that women too were entitled to Mukthi like men. Probably the Yapaniyas were responsible for encouraging such phenomenal participation by women in monastic activities.

III

As we have stated in the essay, the Jains seem to have used the original texts in their Prakrit form and did not translate them into Tamil. We have no translation of any of the original canonical texts in Tamil. However, the essence of the Jain creed, particularly the non-controversial aspects, got embodied in Tamil books written by Jain authors with no denominational label. Most, if not all, of the works coming under the anthological title, *Padinenkilkanakku* written by Jains, have a completely secular, social and moral value with no indication of proselytism.

IV

One notable difference between Buddhist monasticism and Jain monasticism was that all the Jain monasteries without exception, were located far away from the din and bustle of cities and towns. The Jains seem to have had a preference for hills and natural caverns as venues of their monastic activity. The Buddhist chaityas and viharas were in the midst of cities and towns. But it did not mean that Jain monks had no contact with the masses of the people. The truth, on the other hand, is that they were in constant touch with the people and were engaged in a continuous programme of the moral education of the lay people. The Jain monks preached good moral life to persons who were not Jains and proved exemplars of such life, themselves.

The Digambara ascetics alone followed the rule of nudity. The lay followers of the religion did not follow the rule. The rule of nudity had reference only to sages and never applied to householders.

3. THE TWENTY FOUR TIRTANKARAS

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Adi Bhagavan
(also known as Vrishabadeva)
ஆதிபகவன் (விருஷபதேவர்) | 8. Candraprabhar
சந்திரப்பிரபர் |
| 2. Ajitanathar
அஜிதநாதர் | 9. Pushpadantar
புஷ்பதந்தர் |
| 3. Sambavanathar
சம்பவநாதர் | 10. Seetalanathar
(or Siddhi Bhataraka)
சீதளநாதர் |
| 4. Abhinandanar
அபிநந்தனார் | 11. Siriyamsanathar
சீரியாம்சநாதர் |
| 5. Sumatinathar
சுமதிநாதர் | 12. Vasupujyar
வாசுபூஜ்யர் |
| 6. Padmanathar
பதுமநாதர் | 13. Vimalanathar
விமலநாதர் |
| 7. Suparasvanathar
சுபாரசுவநாதர் | 14. Ananthanathar
அநந்தநாதர் |

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 15. Dharmanathar
தருமநாதர் | 20. Munisuvardhar
முனிசுவர்த்தர் |
| 16. Santhinathar
சாந்திநாதர் | 21. Naminathar
நமிநாதர் |
| 17. Kundunathar
குந்துநாதர் | 22. Neminathar or Arishtanemi
நேமிநாதர் |
| 18. Aranathar
அரநாதர் | 23. Parsvanathar
பார்சுவநாதர் |
| 19. Mallinathar
மல்லிநாதர் | 24. Vardhamana Mahavira
வர்த்தமான மகாவீரர் |

NOTE: It is interesting to note that most of the Tirtankaras listed above are represented in the Jain monuments in the Tamil country, and it is common sense to believe that all the Tirtankaras were held in great veneration. The sculptural representations of some of these Tirtankaras are still extant among the Jain relics.

4. JAIN CONTRIBUTION TO THE ENRICHMENT OF TAMIL LITERATURE

There can be no denying the fact that but for the development of Jain monasticism in the Tamil country, we should not be having some of the valuable treasures of Tamil literature today. It is likely that a large number of Tamil works by Jains have been lost for ever. But even the number extant represents not a small proportion of the best in Tamil literature. The following table furnishes the important textbooks produced by the Jains which were used not only by Jain teachers but also by other teachers. Books whose Jain authorship is a matter of unresolved controversy are marked in asterisks.

Title of the book	Author
1. Tolkappiam* தொல்காப்பியம்	Tolkappiar* தொல்காப்பியர்
2. 35 Verses	Ulochanar(Tamil Sangam) உலோச்சனார்

Title of the book	Author
3. Nikandu நிகண்டு	Nikandanar நிகண்டனார்
4. Tirukkural* திருக்குறள்	Tiruvalluvar* திருவள்ளுவர்
5. Naladiar நாலடியார்	Jain monks
6. Palamoli Nonooru பழமொழி நானூறு	Munruraiyaraiyanar முன்னுரையரையனார்
7. Sirupancamulam சிறுபஞ்சமூலம்	Makkari Asan Student of Makkayan மாக்காயன் மாணாக்கன் மாக்காரி ஆசான்
8. Elathi ஏலாதி	Gani Medaiyar கணிமேதையார்
9. Tinaimalai Nootru Aimbathu திணைமலை நூற்றுஐம்பது	„
10. Kar Narpathu கார் நாற்பது	Maduraikkannan Kuttanar மதுரைக்கண்ணன் கூத்தனார்
11. Aindinai Aimbathu ஐந்திணை ஐம்பது	Poraiyanar பொறையனார்
12. Aindinai Elupathu ஐந்திணை எழுபது	Muvadiar முவாதியார்
13. Tinaimoli Aimbathu திணைமொழி ஐம்பது	Kannan Sendanar கண்ணன் சேந்தனார்
14. Silappadikaram* சிலப்பதிகாரம்	Ilangovadigal* இளங்கோவடிகள்
15. Neelakesi நீலகேசி	not known
16. Valaiyapathi வலையாபதி	„

* Though not Jain works, these books (10 to 13) draw on Jain Philosophy.

Title of the book	Author
17. Perunkathai பெருங்கதை	Kongu Vel கொங்குவேள்
18. Jivakacintamani ஜீவகசிந்தாமணி	Thiruttakka Devar திருத்தக்க தேவர்
19. Choolamani சூளாமணி	Tolamoli Devar தோலாமொழித் தேவர்
20. Yasodara Kavyam யசோதர காவியம்	Vennaval Udaiyar Vel வெண்ணாவல் உடையார் வேள்
21. Meru Manthira Puranam மேரு மந்திர புராணம்	Vamana Munivar வாமன முனிவர்
22. Verses*	Avvai* அவ்வை
23. Kalingattupparani கலிங்கத்துப் பரணி	Jayamkondar ஜெயங்கொண்டார்
24. Sripuranam ஸ்ரீபுராணம்	Mandalapurudar மண்டலபுருடர்
25. Divakaram திவாகரம்	Divakaranar திவாகரனார் (patronized by Sendan)
26. Pingalandai பிங்கலந்தை	Pingalar பிங்களர்
27. Choodamani Nikandu சூடாமணி நிகண்டு	Mandalapurudar மண்டலபுருடர்
28. Avinayam அவிநயம்	Avinayanar அவிநயனார்
29. Yapperungalam யாப்பெருங்கலம்	Amita Sagarar அமித சாகரர்
30. Grammatical Commentary	Ilampooranar இளம்பூரணர்

Title of the book	Author
31. Neminatham நேமிநாதம்	Neminathar நேமிநாதர்
32. Commentaries to Kavyas அடியார்க்கு நல்லார்	Adiyarkku Nallar அடியார்க்கு நல்லார்
33. Nannul நன்னூல்	Pavanandi பவநந்தி
34. Ahapporul அகப்பொருள்	Nambi நம்பி
35. Commentaries to Poems நச்சினூர்க்கினியர்	Naccinarkkiniyar நச்சினூர்க்கினியர்

Note :- The Jain authorship of most of the books listed above is undisputed. The list is only representative. A big controversy rages round the Jain authorship of the two most important works: *Tolkappiam* and *Tirukkural*. We dare not get involved in it. We have, however, included these two works as the arguments sustaining their Jain authorship cannot be considered flimsy.

Most of the above works have been textbooks in Tamil literature for all Tamilians, their Jain authorship notwithstanding.

5. SOME COMMON CONCEPTS OF JAIN MONASTICISM

(Sanskrit or Prakrit)

Abhiggaha	...	a vow
Abhisega	...	a person well-read in the sutras and fit for the post of an acarya; sometimes equated with the upadhyaya
Abhisegi	...	a nun fit to occupy the post of a pravartini
Agama	...	the sacred texts, the canon

Ahimsa	... verbal, mental and physical non-violence
Ajiva	... a class of ascetics
Ajivika	... a system founded by Gosala, a disciple and contemporary of Mahavira
Ajja	... a term of address to a nun.
Amnaya	... school (of instruction)
Anasana	... fasting
Anga	... a group of texts of the Jaina canon
Antevasi	... a novice, a student
Anuppeha	... reflections (over the nature of worldly life, etc.)
Anuyoga	... a classification of the Digambara texts, viz., prathama, karana, dravya, and carana.
Arihanta	... the Tirtankara
Asana	... bodily posture
Avijja	... ignorance
Bhataraka	... an honorific title of a Jaina church officer
Bikkhu	... the monk
Bikkhuni	... the nun
Dhammakatha...	a religious discourse or story
Gaccha	... a unit of three or seven monks or nuns
Gacchavasin	... a monk who lives a corporate life as a member of a Gaccha
Gana	... a group of three monks; "the school which is derived from one teacher," a group of three Kulas
Ganacintaka	... administrator of the Gana
Ganahara	... head of a gana—chief disciple of the Tirtankara

Gani	...	head of a gana
Ganini	...	head of a gana for the nuns
Jina	...	the Tirtankara
Kula	...	the school founded by a teacher and consisting of his immediate disciples. — "the succession of teachers in one line"
Kulathera	...	an elderly monk who manages the affairs of the Kula (Similarly 'ganathera' and 'Sangathera')
Mahamandal acarya	...	head of a unit of monks
Mandali	...	a group of monks formed for various reasons. — a group of monks taking food together and bound by a common samacari.
Mokkha	...	liberation (from the recurrence of worldly existence in any form)
Mula-guna	...	the basic vow
Mutti	...	non-attachment
Padmasana	...	a posture in which the feet were kept crossed and touching one's thighs.
Paribbajaka	...	a wandering ascetic
Parihara	...	a sort of punishment for transgression which requires the defaulter to undergo it in isolation from the rest of his group.
Pariyaya- thera	...	a monk who has twenty years standing in monkhood
Paryankasana	...	a bodily posture
Pavatti	...	a person looking after the requirements of the members of a gaccha.

Pavattini	...	a senior nun managing the affairs of a group of nuns.
Pavvajja	...	renunciation
Puvva	...	a group of fourteen texts supposed to have formed the twelfth Anga of the Jaina canon.
Raga	...	attachment
Sallekhana	...	fast unto death
Samahi	...	concentration
Samsara	...	cycle of worldly existence
Sanga	...	ascetic congregation
Sukka jhana	...	auspicious meditation
Suri	...	an officer of the church equivalent to the acarya
Tava	...	penance
Thera	...	a senior monk
Theri	...	an old nun, either in age, paryaya or learning
Upanga	...	a group of twelve texts of the Jaina canon
Vandana	...	paying respect, salutation
Vinaya	...	self-control
Virasana	...	hero's posture—sitting as if one is occupying a chair
Vivega	...	giving up of further transgressions
Yapaniya	...	a sect

6 CONCEPTS CONNOTING THE LEVELS OF TEACHERS AND MONKS

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|---------------|---------------|
| 1. Tirtankara | 5. Upadhyaya |
| 2. Bhatarā | 6. Ganadhara |
| 3. Bhatarī | 7. Ganin |
| 4. Acarya | 8. Suri |
| | 9. Pravartaka |

NOTE:- The Tirtankara was the Enlightened One, and Mahavira was the last Tirtankara. After him no teacher was entitled to the status of Tirtankara.

7. TAMIL JAINISM TRACEABLE DIRECTLY TO MAHAVIRA, THE TWENTY FOURTH TIRTANKARA

Mahavira	Nandimitra
Gautama Indrabhuti	Aparajita
Sudharma	Govardhana
Sambuswami	Bhadrabahu
Vishnunandi	Visakamuni

8. FAMOUS JAIN TEACHERS IN THE TAMIL COUNTRY MENTIONED IN INSCRIPTIONS

1. MEN

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| 1. Ajjanandi
அச்சநந்தி | 10. Enadi Kuttanan
ஏனாதி கூத்தனன் |
| 2. Arittanemi Periyar
அரிட்டேநேமி பெரியார் | 11. Gunakirti Bhatarar
குணகீர்த்தி படாரர் |
| 3. Attaupavasi Bhatarar
அஷ்ட உபவாசி படாரர் | 12. Ganisekhara Maru
Porsuriyan
கணிசேகர மறு பொற்துரியன் |
| 4. Ashtopavasigal
அஷ்டோபவாசிகள் | 13. Gunasena
குணசேனர் |
| 5. Bhadrabahu
பத்திரபாகு | 14. Gunavira
குணவீரர் |
| 6. Candranandi Acarya
சந்திரநந்தி ஆசாரியார் | 15. Gunavirakkuravaradigal
குணவீரக் குறவடிகள் |
| 7. Dayapala
தயாபாலர் | 16. Ilaiya Bhatarar
இலைய படாரர் |
| 8. Dharmadeva Acarya
தர்மதேவ ஆசாரியர் | 17. Indrasena
இந்திர சேனர் |
| 9. Elacarya
ஏலாசாரியர் | 18. Kankanandi Periyar
கனக நந்திப் பெரியார் |

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| 19. Kanakacandra Pandita
கனக சந்திர பண்டிதர் | 32. Muni Sarvanandi
முனி சர்வநந்தி |
| 20. Kanakavira disciple of
Baladeva
பாலதேவர் மாணுக்கர் கனக
வீரர் | 33. Naganandi
நாகநந்தி |
| 21. Kundakundacarya
குந்தகுந்தாசாரியர் | 34. Nalkur Amalanemi Bhatarā
நால்கூர் அமலநேமி படாரர் |
| 22. Kurandi Kanakanandi
Bhatarā
குரந்தி கனகநந்தி படாரர் | 35. Nattika Bhatarā
நாட்டிய படாரர் |
| 23. Kurandi Tirta Bhatarā
குரந்தி தீர்த்த படாரர் | 36. Paravadhi Mallipushpa-
senacarya
பரவாதி மல்லிபுஷ்ப சேனா
சாரியர் |
| 24. Kurukkal Chandrakirti
குருக்கள் சந்திரகிர்த்தி | 37. Parsva Bhatarā
பார்குவ படாரர் |
| 25. Maganandi
மாகநந்தி | 38. Pattini Bhatarā
பட்டினி படாரர் |
| 26. Malayadhvaja
மலையத்துவசர் | 39. Poornacandra
பூர்ணசந்திரர் |
| 27. Mallisena Periyar
மல்லிசேனப் பெரியார் | 40. Pushpasena Vamanarya
புஷ்பசேன வாமனாரியர் |
| 28. Mallisena Vamanacarya
மல்லிசேன வாமனாசாரியர் | 41. Santhivira Kuravar
சாந்திவீர குறவர் |
| 29. Matisagarar
மதிசாகரர் | 42. Srinandi
ஸ்ரீநந்தி |
| 30. Mauni Bhatarā
மவுனி படாரர் | 43. Sri Vardhamana of
Srimalaikkula
ஸ்ரீவர்த்தமனார் |
| 31. Mingaikuman
மிங்கை குமன் | 44. Uttanandi Adigal
உத்தநந்தி அடிகள் |

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| 45. Vadiraja
வாதிராசர் | 48. Visakacarya
விசாகாசாரியார் |
| 46. Vajranandi
வச்சிரநந்தி | 49. Vinaiyabhasura
Kuruvadigal
வினாயபாசுர குருவடிகள் |
| 47. Velikongaraiyar
Puttadigal
வேலிகொங்கரையர் புத்தடிகள் | 50. Vrishaba deva
விருஷப தேவர் |

2. WOMEN

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| 1. Arittanemi Kuratti
அரிட்டநேமி குறத்தி | 11. Naloor Kuratti
நாலூர் குறத்தி |
| 2. Avvaiyar
அவ்வையார் | 12. Pattini Kurattigal disciple
of Arishtanemit Bhatara
அரிஷ்டநேமி படாரர் மாணாக்கி
பட்டினி குறத்தி அடிகள் |
| 3. Gunamtangi Kuratti
குணம்தாங்கிக் குறத்தி | 13. Perur Kuratti
பேரூர் குறத்தி |
| 4. Ila Neccurattu Kuratti
இளநேச்சுரத்துக் குறத்தி | 14. Pichai Kuratti
பிச்சைக் குறத்தி |
| 5. Kanakavira Kuratti
கனகவீரக் குறத்தி | 15. Purvanandi Kuratti
பூர்வநந்தி குறத்தி |
| 6. Kavundiadigal
கவுந்தி அடிகள் | 16. Sanga Kuratti
சங்கக் குறத்தி |
| 7. Kudal Kuratti
கூடல் குறத்தி | 17. Siruvisai Kuratti
சிறுவிசைக் குறத்தி |
| 8. Mammai Knratti
மம்மை குறத்தி | 18. Sri-Vijaya Kurathi
ஸ்ரீவிஜயக் குறத்தி |
| 9. Milalur Kuratti
மிழலூர் குறத்தி | 19. Tirumalai Kurathi
திருமலைக் குறத்தி |
| 10. Nalhur Kuratti
நாலூர் குறத்தி | 20. Tirupparutti Kuratti
திருப்பருத்திக் குறத்தி |

A NOTE ON PALLICCANDAM

Palliccandam is one of the Tamil concepts developed as a result of the long period of Jain activity and prosperity in Tamil country. Palli generally denoted both Jain and Buddhist temples or monastic institutions though in its technical connotation it had reference only to Jain institutions. *Palliccar* denoted a grant of land for the maintenance of a Jain. *Palliccandam* was to Jainism as *Devadana* was to Hinduism. Epigraphs refer to the institution of a large number of *Palliccandams* by the Pallavas, Colas and Pandyas in the Tamil country. It is not necessary to make out a list of all *Palliccandams* mentioned in inscriptions. Scholars there who derive *candam* from *sondam* (சொந்தம்) or 'one's share'. The earliest mention of a *Palliccandam* occurs in a Pallava inscription of the 9th century belonging to the reign of Vikramaditya Kampavarman. The latest is dated in the 14th century.

Along with the *Palliccandam* which was exclusively for the maintenance of an institution, there was another kind of endowment which rulers made for the welfare of Jain teachers called *Ganimurruttu* (கணி முற்றுட்டு).