

Studies in South Indian Jainism : Achievements and Prospects*

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With an humble beginning by the publication of a few reports about the Jaina community in the *Asiatic Researches* (Calcutta and London), Vol. IX, during the first quarter of the 19th century, and showing a notable progress with the rise of a host of scholars, both western and Indian, by the first quarter of the 20th century,¹ Jaina Vidya or Jainology nowadays has become a vast distinct field of study comprising many aspects of Jainism—historical, philosophical, doctrinal, literary, inscriptional, scientific etc; and the 2500th Anniversary of Lord Mahāvira's Nirvāṇa recently can be said to have given a new philip to the study of all these branches of the field all over India and abroad too. Now the organizers of this unique Seminar, I should say, have decided upon the most relevant topic for deliberation viz., The Various Branches of Jainology : Achievements and Prospects; and I have chosen to reflect on the Studies in South Indian Jainism : Achievements and Prospects.

It is quite possible that the first team of Jaina teachers entered South India viz., the Telugu country through Kalinga as early as 600 B.C.; and were pioneers in bringing the teachings of Lord Mahāvira to the South. But it is the second team, certainly a large one, headed by Bhadrabāhu and accompanied by his royal disciple Candragupta, which entered Karnataka in 400 B.C. and established its first colony at Kalbappu, that radiated those teachings more effectively and extensively to the Southern and nearby regions in South India. The study of this early phase of South Indian Jainism, which can be said to have its beginning with B.L. Rice in 1909,² progressed at the hands of scholars like Ramaswami Aiyagar and B. Sheshagiri Rao,³ R. Narasimhachar,⁴ Vincent Smith⁵ etc. and the historicity of this south Indian tradition of the great Jain migration was almost established.

The next phase of studies in South Indian Jainism is found represented by the works of B.A. Saletore,⁶

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1. For further details vide 'A Short History of Jaina Research' in *The Doctrine of the Jains*, by Walther Schubring, Delhi, 1962, pp. 1-17.
2. *Mysore and Coorg from the Inscriptions*, London, 1909.
3. *Studies in South Indian Jainism*, Madras, 1922.
4. *Epigraphia Carnatica*, Vol. II, Bangalore, 1923.
5. *The Oxford History of India*, Oxford, 1923.
6. *Medieval Jainism*, Bombay, 1938.

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S.R. Sharma,¹ P.B. Desai,² S.B. Deo,³ Kailas Chandra Shastri⁴ etc., wherein the religious history of South Indian Jainism with the corresponding political background, and based on tradition, inscriptions, monuments and literary evidence, has been very well depicted. Considerable light on the Yāpanīyas, the Kūrcakas, the Gommaṭa cult, the Yaksīnī cult, the innovations and adaptations etc., has been thrown in these works.

At this stage we can hardly forget the timely and relevant miscellaneous contributions, in different degrees, to this field by scholars like N. R. Premi, Hiralal Jain, A.N. Upadhye, Bhujabali Shastri, Jyoti Prasad Jain, B.R. Gopal, Sarayu Doshi, B.K. Khadabadi etc.⁵

Further, V.P. Johrapurkar's findings on the South Indian Bhaṭṭāraka tradition as a part of his whole work⁶ and V.A Sangave's findings on the South Indian Jaina Community as a part of his novel work,⁷ have added new dimensions to the studies in South Indian Jainism.

Moreover we have to remember with gratitude scholars like Robert Swell,⁸ T.N. Ramachandran,⁹ A. Chakravarti,¹⁰ S. Vaiyapuri Pillai,¹¹ K.V. Ramesh¹² etc. for their varied contributions to the different aspects, of the hold of ancient and medieval Jainism, particularly in the Tamil country, as based on the Jaina inscriptions, monuments, vestiges, literature etc. Similarly we have to be proud of scholar like B. Sheshagiri Rao M. Somashekhara Sharma, S. Gopalkr̥ṣṇa Murthy etc. for enlightening us on the position of medieval Jainism particularly in the Telugu country as based on some Jaina living monuments, inscriptions, sculptures and vestiges.¹³

The latest works connected with South Indian Jainism, as far as I know, are two. One is by P. Gururaj Bhatt, *Studies in Tuluva History and Culture*,¹⁴ which contains a separate Chapter (No XIV) on Jainism in Tuluva Country, wherein is given a brief interesting account of the late medieval Jainism along with its political, racial and cultural (including art and architectural) background. The other one is by R.P.P. Singh, *Jainism in Early Medieval Karnatak*,¹⁵ wherein the author has given a religious history of Jainism in Karnatak from 500 to 1200 A.D. Admitting his claim on some novel features in the treatment of the subject, I find that he has also confused himself by mixing the significant Bhaṭṭāraka tradition with the Digambara monarchism in the Karnataka of that period.

After taking, thus, a bird's eye-view of the salient achievements in the field of the Studies in South

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1. *Jainism and Karnatak Culture*, Dharwad, 1940.
 2. *Jainism in South India and Some Jaina Epigraphs*, Sholapur, 1957.
 3. In the *History of Jaina Monachism from Inscriptions and Literature*, Poona 1960.
 4. *Dakṣiṇa Bhārata meṃ Jaina Dharma*, Varanasi, 1967.
 5. (i) These contributions are scattered in the form of various chapters of books and stray papers by these scholars, which are too many to be enumerated here.
(ii) This list of scholars is not claimed as exhaustive.
 6. *Bhaṭṭāraka Sampradāya*, Sholapur, 1958.
 7. *Jaina Community*, Bombay, 1959.
 8. *Historical Inscriptions of South India*, Madras, 1932.
 9. As noted by S. Gopalkrishna Murthy in his preface to the *Jaina vestiges in Andhra*, Hyderabad, 1963.
 10. *Jain Literature in Tamil*, Arrah, 1941.
 11. *History of Tamil Language and Literature*, Madras, 1956.
 12. The same as noted in No. 10, but re-edited by him with some additions and an introduction, Delhi, 1974.
 13. For the contribution of the first two scholars, vide Preface to *Jaina Vestiges in Andhra* and for that of the third, this excellent monograph itself as a whole.
 14. Kallianapur, 1975.
 15. Delhi, 1975.

Indian Jainism, I propose, now, to present to this galaxy of scholars a few outstanding prospects or tasks that strike my mind at this hour, so that the interested and capable scholars may note them and exert themselves to accomplish them too in the days to come. I would enlist them, with some observations, as follows :

(1) *The Yāpanīya Saṁgha : its Origin, Growth and Merger* : It is well known that numerous references to the Yāpanīya Saṁgha are found in inscriptions and literary works. It was N.R. Premi who particularly drew the attention of scholars on some features of this compromising Sect.¹ Then some historians, religious and political, furnished some further details about it.² A.N. Upadhye instituted a systematised study of this interesting Sect by contributing three valuable papers.³ Recently B.K. Khadabadi presented some thoughts on Vijahaṇā, a characteristic feature of the Yāpanīyas.⁴ But a thorough study of this important Sect, which is said to be a product of South Indian Jainism, particularly Karnatak Jainism, is a desideratum. Some 25 years ago, V.S. Agarwal expressed that a detailed study of the Yāpanīyas could be presented in the form of an important research dissertation.⁵ Last year Muni Śrī Hastimallajī, who was staying at Raichur, had sent one of his follower-scholars to Dharwad to plan a line of study in this regard. This shows the need as well as importance of this prospect.

(2) *Reconstruction of the History of Jainism in Andhra Pradesh* : We know that the Telugu country was rather the first in South India to receive the gospel of Lord Mahāvīra through the first team of Jaina teachers moving through Kaliṅga. Later Jaina teachings must have penetrated into this region from the Kalbappu centre too. Thus Jainism must have flourished in this region to a considerable degree. But unfortunately owing to the Buddhist rivalry in the early days and the Hindu revival in the later days, almost all the Jaina literary works most of the Jaina inscriptions and monuments appear to have been destroyed. As a result of this and on some other ground, scholars have just surmised the 9th and 10th centuries A.D. as the possible Jaina period of prosperity in this region. But after going through the monograph entitled *Jaina Vestiges in Andhra* by S. Gopalkṛṣṇa Murthy,⁶ I feel that a few more intensive and extensive efforts, after the manner of the one by this learned Professor, on the part of some enthusiastic archaeologists, epigraphists, and art specialists, would make some more material available for the primary reconstruction of the history of Jainism in Andhra Pradesh. I felt overwhelmed when I read about the existence of a Jaina University at Raydurg—a University in stone, with inscriptions mentioning the names of Jaina teachers belonging to the Mūlasaṁgha and the Yāpanīya Saṁgha which was contemporaneous with the Rāṣṭrakūṭas and the Western Cālukyas.⁷

1. Vide *Jain Sāhitya aur Itihāsa*, Bombay, 1956, pp. 55-73.

2. Scholars like B.A. Saletore, S.R. Sharma, P.B. Desai etc.

3. These three papers are :

(i) Yāpanīya Saṁgha : A Jain Sect, *Journal of the Bombay University (Arts and Law)*, Vol. I., Part 6, 1933.

(ii) On the Meaning of Yāpanīya, *Śrīkaṇṭhikā*, Mysore, 1973.

(iii) More light on the Yāpanīya Saṁgha, *Annals of the Bhandarkar O.R.I.*, Vol. LX, 1975.

4. Some observations on Vijahaṇā, *Journal of the Karnatak University (Humanities)* Vol. XXIV, 1982.

5. *Jain Sāhitya aur Itihāsa*, Bombay, 1956, Paricaya, p. 16.

6. Already noted above.

7. Vide *op. cit.*, pp. 87-88.

(3) *Reconstruction of the History of Jainism in the Western Coast of South India* : Scholars like Saletore, Desai etc¹ noted that several petty kings and chieftains patronised Jainism in the Tuluva country, and Mudabidri happened to be its last stronghold in the upper Western Coast of South India in the late medieval period. Then P. Gururaj Bhatt gave a better picture of this fact in this region.² On the strength of some inscriptions and antiquities found in the Kerala region, some scholars have postulated that the 9th to 11th Cent. A.D. constituted a glorious period of Jainism in the Kerala region.³ But we do not have so far a good picture of Jainism that flourished in this region. It is learnt that the Bhāratiya Jñānapīṭha entrusted P. Gururaj Bhat to conduct this kind of study. But unfortunately he expired suddenly and I have no idea of what were the fruits of his study and who has resumed his work.

(4) *Jaina Teachers and Social Uplift in South India* : Much of the work done in South Indian Jainism is regarding its religious and political aspects in the main. Now we can take up its social aspect and treat it thoroughly. The Jaina teachers, sermons, and the stories, illustrations etc. in them, were the most effective media of social education in the early and medieval periods.⁴ The Jaina teachers always struggled to eradicate the seven vices (*sapta-vyasanās*)⁵ from the masses and cultivate among them social virtues like compassion, truth, honesty, charity etc. Moreover the remarkable adaptability of Jainism to the contemporary social trends and local environments (keeping its basic tenets intact) can also be highlighted here. Keeping these and such other things in view, a social historian can take up this work for the full growth of the knowledge of South Indian Jainism.

(5) *Contribution of Jainism to the Cultural Heritage of South India* : This is one of the most important desiderations, which can also partly include the one noted just above. The tolerant attitude, accomodative nature, vegetarianism etc. available among the people of this part of the country, can be reasoned to owe much to the cultural impact of Jainism that gloriously flourished here. Tradition, political history, literature and above all the inscriptional wealth of this area, can be of great use in this task. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai observed "So far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, we may say that the Jainas were the real apostles of culture and learning."⁶ Moreover, Saletore long back understood the need of this work in the following words : "The contribution of Jainism to the culture of Karnatak, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh can be given in a separate dissertation."⁷

(6) Lastly, I have to pose a small problem but not of less importance. It is, *Ṣaṭkhaṇḍāgama and Dṛṣṭi-vāda* : Seemingly this problem is of a literary nature, but it has full bearing on South Indian Jainism—its tradition and its history. So far we were, on the strength of authority of eminent scholars like Hiralal Jain and A.N. Upadhye, under the impression that the *Ṣaṭkhaṇḍāgama* Volumes are the only surviving pieces of the

1. In their respective works noted above.

2. *Op. cit.*, pp. 425 ff.

3. Vide P.B. Desai, Jainism in Kerala, *Journal of Indian History*, Vol. XXXV-2, 1957.

4. This is true even to this day.

5. Jaina teachers have told, and have been telling numerous stories to eradicate each one of these vices from the life of the masses.

6. *Op. cit.*, p. 60.

7. *Op. cit.*, p. 262.

lost *Dr̥ṣṭivāda*, the 12th Aṅga of the Jaina Canon.¹ But Ludwig Alsdorf, a few years ago, has opined that this is not so.² This sets aside not only our above noted impression, but also the important Dharasenācārya-Puṣpadanta-Bhūtabali tradition underlying the composition of the *Ṣaṭkhaṇḍāgama* Volumes, a singular manuscript (in Kannada script) of which has been preserved at Mudabidri. Now unfortunately we do not have amongst us Hiralal Jain or A.N. Upadhye to reconsider their view in the light of Alsdorf's opinion. Hence, I with due respect to Alsdorf (whom I knew by meeting him at Ujjain)³ and to his valuable contribution to the Jaina studies, appeal to scholars like Kailasa Chandra Shastri to scrutinise this eminent German scholar's opinion in the light of the internal as well as external evidence of the *Ṣaṭkhaṇḍāgama* Volumes, form their views and publish them.

दक्षिण भारत में जैन धर्म

जैन धर्म के प्रसार की दृष्टि से दक्षिण भारत को दो भागों में बाँटा जा सकता है—तमिल तथा कर्नाटक। तमिल प्रान्त में चोल और पाण्ड्य नरेशों ने जैन धर्म को अच्छा आश्रय दिया। खारवेल के शिलालेख से पता चलता है कि सम्राट् खारवेल के राज्याभिषेक के अवसर पर पाण्ड्य नरेश ने कई जहाज उपहार भरकर भेजे थे। पाण्ड्यनरेश ने जैन धर्म को न केवल आश्रय ही दिया किन्तु उसके आचार और विचारों को भी अपनाया। इससे उनका राजधानी मदुरा दक्षिण भारत में जैनों का प्रमुख स्थान बन गई थी। तमिऴ ग्रन्थ 'नलिदियर' के सम्बन्ध में कहा जाता है कि उत्तर भारत में दुष्काल पड़ने पर आठ हजार जैन साधु पाण्ड्य देश में आए थे। जब वे वहाँ से वापस जाने लगे तो पाण्ड्यनरेश ने उन्हें वहीं रखना चाहा। तब उन्होंने एक दिन रात्रि के समय पाण्ड्य नरेश की राजधानी को छोड़ दिया किन्तु चलते समय प्रत्येक साधु ने एक-एक ताडपत्र पर एक-एक पद्य लिख कर रख दिया। इन्हीं के समुदाय से 'नलिदियर' ग्रन्थ बना। तमिल साहित्य में 'कुरल' नाम का नीति ग्रन्थ सबसे बड़कर सम्भ्रा जाता है। यह तमिलवेद कहलाता है। इसके रचयिता भी एक जैनाचार्य कहे जाते हैं जिनका एक नाम कुन्दकुन्द भी था। सर वाल्टर इलियट के मतानुसार दक्षिण की कला और कारीगरी पर जैनों का बड़ा प्रभाव है, परन्तु उससे भी अधिक प्रभाव तो उनका तमिल साहित्य के ऊपर पड़ा है। किन्तु जैन धर्म का सबसे महत्त्वपूर्ण स्थान तो कर्नाटक प्रान्त के इतिहास में मिलता है। यह प्रान्त प्राचीन काल से ही दिगम्बर जैन सम्प्रदाय का मुख्य स्थान रहा है। इस प्रान्त में मौर्य साम्राज्य के बाद ग्रान्ध्रवंश का राज्य हुआ, ग्रान्ध्र राजा भी जैन धर्म के उन्नायक थे। ग्रान्ध्रवंश के पश्चात् उत्तरपश्चिम में कदम्बों ने और उत्तरपूर्व में पल्लवों ने राज्य किया। चालुक्य भी जैन धर्म के प्रमुख आश्रयदाता थे। चालुक्यों ने अनेक जैन मन्दिर बनवाए, उनका जीर्णोद्धार कराया, उन्हें दान दिया और कन्नड़ी के प्रसिद्ध जैन कवि पम्प आदि का सम्मान किया। इसके सिवाय इतिहास से यह भी पता चलता है कि कर्नाटक में महिलाओं ने भी जैन धर्म के प्रचार में भाग लिया है। इन महिलाओं में परमगूल की पत्नी 'कदाच्छिका', सत्तरस नागार्जुन की पत्नी 'जङ्गिकयम्बे', मल्लया की पुत्री 'अत्तिमम्बे', राजेन्द्र कोगाल्व की माता 'पोचम्बरासि', कदम्ब नरेश कीर्तिदेव की पत्नी 'मात्रलदेवी', सान्तरपरिवार से सम्बद्ध 'चट्टलदेवी' आदि के नाम विशेष रूप से उल्लेखनीय हैं।

पं० कैलाशचन्द्र शास्त्री सिद्धान्ताचार्य, जैनधर्म, वाराणसी, १९६६, पृ० ४८-५० से उद्धृत।

1. Vide Introduction to the *Ṣaṭkhaṇḍāgama*, Vol. I.
2. Vide 'What were the contents of *Dr̥ṣṭivāda*'?, *German Scholars on India*, Vol. I, Varanasi, 1973.
3. At the 26th Session of the All India Oriental Conference, 1971.

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