

BULLETIN
OF
THE CHENNAI (MADRAS) GOVERNMENT MUSEUM
**ICONOGRAPHY OF THE JAIN IMAGES IN THE
DISTRICTS OF TAMILNADU**

(COVERING THE MUSEUMS OF THE DEPARTMENTS OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND MUSEUMS)



By
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B.Com., M.B.A., C.A.I.I.B., B.L., M.Soc.Sci., Ph.D., I.A.S.,
Commissioner of Archaeology and Museums
&
Thiru. K. LAKSHMINARAYANAN, M.A., M.Ed.,
Assistant Director,
Government Museum, Chennai-600 008.

NEW SERIES - General Section, Vol. XVII, No.1, 2002

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FOREWORD

I had written the Foreword of the book Iconography of Jain Images in the Government Museum, Chennai, which was published in the year 2001 AD. It gives me great pleasure to write the Foreword of the sequel to that book, the present book, Iconography of Jain Images in the Districts of Tamilnadu (covering the Museums of the Departments of Archaeology and Museums).

I had written in my previous Foreword that South India is the cradle of civilisation. The earliest civilisation that developed there dates back to more than 10,000 to 15,000 years from today. These successive layers of different civilisations sometimes existed side by side and sometimes succeeded one another. The retention of the memory of all these civilisations as a continuum has resulted in a highly evolved civilisation. The famous temples of South India, their sculptures, bronzes, paintings and even the murals show that they are the products of such a fine civilisation.

In the previous work, the same duo, who have written the present book, have documented all the Jain sculptures and bronzes in the collection of the Government Museum, Chennai (Madras), which served as the central museum for the erstwhile Madras Presidency. It, even now, is an important museum for South India, being the second oldest in India. They had not documented the collections in the District Museums of the Department of Museums. The oldest district museum is the Pudukottai Museum, which has a very large and wide collection, having been started in 1910 AD itself. In 2001 AD, the Departments of Archaeology and Museums have been given a common Commissioner, Dr.R.Kannan, one of the authors.

Integration of these two departments has played a crucial role in bringing out the present publication in which the Jain bronzes and sculptures not only in the District Museums of the Department of Museums but also in the Site Museums of the Department of Archaeology have been comprehensively catalogued as of 2002 AD.

This is also the 150th year of the founding of the Government Museum, Egmore, Chennai and the 2600th Birth Anniversary of *Bhagawan Mahaveer*, the most important *Tirthankara*. The authors have also catalogued important sculptures, inscribed figures and bas-reliefs found in various monuments in Tamilnadu and even some roadside idols, so that posterity may know where they existed, if they should not be traceable in the future.

This book also, like the previous one, attempts to put Iconography into a comparative context by comparing Jainism with similar strands of thought in the other ancient religions of Indian origin, Hinduism and Buddhism. The presentation of photographs of the sculptures and bronzes in the collections, monuments and even of some of the images on the roadside is a valuable record for history and scholars everywhere. The photographs are of the usual high standard that has come to be associated with the publications of the Department of Museums in recent years.

This book is one more in the series of books written by Dr.R.Kannan, Ph.D., I.A.S., the Commissioner of the Department of Museums, Government of Tamilnadu within the past three years. I compliment Dr. Kannan for this output, which is in addition to his duties as administrative head of two departments. I also compliment the co-author Thiru Lakshminaryanan, the Assistant Director of the Department of Museums for co-authoring this book. I am sure that this book will be a valuable reference work in the field of Jain Iconography in the years to come.

28-3-2002 AD.
Ezhilagam, Chempauk
Chennai - 600 005.


(S. RAMAKRISHNAN, I.A.S.)

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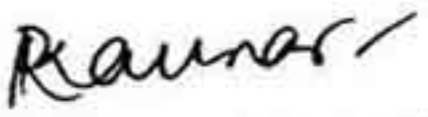
PREFACE

The Government Museum, Chennai (Madras) was the central museum of the whole of South India from 1851 AD onwards in the days of the Madras Presidency before Independence and composite Madras State till 1956 AD. The museum of Pudukottai princely State, which was started in 1910 AD, is a large museum. This was taken over in 1948 AD by the Department of Museums, Government of Tamilnadu. Since 1979 AD, district museums have been opened in several districts. In 2001 AD, the Site Museums of the State Department of Archaeology and the nearly 85 monuments under its control (many of which contain important Jain images) have also been brought under the fold of the same Commissioner. The department has been renamed as the Departments of Archaeology and Museums.

The Jain images received from all over South India have been catalogued in a book published as a Bulletin of the Government Museum, Chennai in 2001 AD under the title 'Iconography of Jain Images in the Government Museum, Chennai'. High quality colour photographs of the images of the seventy three images and the inscriptions have been published in the book. Line sketches of the postures (*Asanas*) of the Jain images were also provided. It also listed in the Appendices, the names of the *Tirthankaras*, their cognisance symbols, their colours, their *Yakshas* and *Yakshis* and their parents. Places and plants related to them have also been described, some for the first time as a result of research.

It was felt that not having documentation on the images in the District Government and Site Museums would leave a great lacuna. Therefore, in the 2600th year of the Birth Anniversary of *Mahavira*, and the 150th year of the Government Museum, Chennai, the same duo who wrote the earlier book have undertaken this task of documenting all the Jain images in the District Museums and Site Museums and also those in the important monuments associated with Jain sculptures and paintings and even some roadside images. The same format as in the previous work has been adopted. A colour photograph of each image of as high a quality as could be got has been provided. The photographs of the inscriptions have been shown in a separate section at the end and listed as was done in the previous book. This is the first attempt to catalogue all the Jain images in the District and Site Museums.

Government Museum,
Egmore, Chennai- 600 008.
25-3-2002


(Dr.R.Kannan, Ph.D., I.A.S.)

To

The memory of late Sri. T.S.Padmanabha Iyer (Retd.) Superintending Engineer (P.W.D) British India & Composite Madras State, my grandfather on his centenary (1901-2001) and my uncle late Sri. P.Subramanian. Also to Ms. Lalitha, my mother, Mrs. Seetha, my wife, Master Sridar Padmanabhan, my son and Ms. Shrikala, my daughter for their encouragement and help.

Dr. R.Kannan, Ph.D., I.A.S.

To

My parents Thiru. R.Kandasamy & Tmt. K.Chandra and my teachers.

K.Lakshminarayanan

Acknowledgements

We acknowledge the help rendered by Ms. Sridevi, Typist of the Department of Archaeology, Curators and Archaeologists. Thiru. J.R.Asokan, Thiru. Balasubramanian, Curators and Thiru. Ramesh, Technical Assistant of the Chennai Museum rendered assistance in photography.

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ICONOGRAPHY OF THE JAIN IMAGES IN THE DISTRICTS OF TAMILNADU (COVERING THE MUSEUMS OF THE DEPARTMENTS OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND MUSEUMS)

ABSTRACT

This book has been written as a catalogue to cover the Jain images in the District Government Museums under the State Department of Museums and Site Museums under the State Department of Archaeology. The previous book 'Iconography of Jain Images in the Government Museum, Chennai' published in 2001 AD is a catalogue of the Jain images in the Chennai museum alone. A wealth of visual material in the form of photographs has been provided in this book just as in the previous one. The total number of images catalogued in this book is 95. This is to help scholars in various parts of the world. It would also enable further research without the need for physical visits except at the most advance stage. Its greatest value lies in its use as a reference document to know the state of the images at this point of time. This will enable detection of any loss or deterioration in the future of these valuable pieces of art.

The book discusses quite a few monuments and temples in Tamilnadu both Hindu and Jain, the former if it has a Jain connection. Most of these are under the control of the State Department of Archaeology or the Archaeological Survey of India, some of them in remote places. These have been discussed in order to analyse and describe the Jain images comprehensively. They also serve as a useful backdrop to the analysis of the images on the basis of their provenance. This leads to the analysis of how Jainism spread in the region which is at present Tamilnadu, its impact on the local culture, language and religious beliefs. The images have been compared with similar pieces found elsewhere. As in the previous book, mythology and literature both of North and South Indian origin and Jain canonical works are used as reference material. This assists in identifying the images and their features with as much accuracy as possible. Paintings in the Jain caves such as those at Sittannavasal and Tirumalai are a good source of information on Jainism, since these caves served as the locus of Jainism. They have been examined in some detail.

The historical and geographical division of present Tamilnadu has its impact on the iconography of the Jain images. In each region, historical facts like the rulers, the people who made donations for worship, the type of worship etc. have been related. This gives the backdrop of the period, which it is hoped will give an understanding of the images in their context. Inscriptions have provided evidence for our long held beliefs like the tolerance of our rulers. It is also likely Jainism was considered a part of extended Hinduism, since their mythologies are interlinked.

In this book, the mythology and the historical evolution of Jainism are only briefly dwelt upon. This is because our previous book has dealt with them in detail.

There has been a constant flow of thought and symbols between Jainism and Hinduism. Ideas from the mother religion, Hinduism and from the reformist agenda of Jainism form the flow. The Yakshi cult is an instance of deities and modes of worship being adopted from one religion to the other. The Ashtamangalas (eight auspicious objects) and Chaturyamas (four fold path of righteous living) are important instances of the same thought process in both religions. This shows that exchange rather than exclusivity characterised the interaction of the three main indigenous religions Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism.

INTRODUCTION

This work is a sequel to the book published under the title 'Iconography of Jain Images in the Government Museum, Chennai' in 2001 AD, which is a catalogue of the Jain images in the Chennai museum. The previous book has narrated both the mythology and the historical evolution of Jainism. It also deals with the philosophy underlying Jainism and how it contains thoughts of a very noble nature like not coveting another's goods (*asteya*), non-violence (*ahimsa*), vegetarianism etc. which were quite a novelty in their day. The exchange of ideas, religious thought and even religious symbols like *Śrīvatsa* between Hinduism and Jainism were also pointed out in the earlier book by the same duo of authors. All the Jain images available at that point of time except one (Seventy three) in the Government Museum, Chennai were catalogued, described and discussed. Photographs of high resolution in colour have been provided of these and other sculptures like the Jain sculptures at *Vallimalai*, Vellore District. The total number of images catalogued in this book is 95. Colour photographs have been provided in this book also.

This will enable detection of their loss or deterioration in the future. This, it is hoped, will help scholars in various parts of the world to do further research without the need for physical visits except in rare cases. The importance of the photographs lies in its use as a reference document to know the state of the images at this point of time.

With the previous book as the backdrop, in this book, all the Jain images in the twenty one District Government Museums and seventeen Site museums under the Department of Archaeology are covered. Some of the images in the monuments under the control of the State Department of Archaeology and Archaeological Survey of India have also been catalogued. Some monuments and temples in Tamilnadu (both Hindu and Jain), where Jain images are found or there is a Jain connection, are also covered. This is done in order to fully analyse and describe the Jain images being discussed. The spread of Jainism in present Tamilnadu and its impact on the culture, language and religious beliefs are examined and placed in the context of the images and their places of origin. They have been related to other similar pieces found elsewhere. As in the previous volume, mythology and literature, both of North and South Indian origin and Jain canonical works, are used as reference material. This helps to identify the images and their features, which are linked to these historical and literary sources.

Present Tamilnadu is divided into its historical and geographical regions for the purpose of analysing the Jain images. In the approach to each region, historical facts like the rulers, the people who gave donations for worship, the type of worship etc. are narrated to give a background which will enable better appreciation of the images, why they were carved or made etc. Use has been made of inscriptions as a source of historical information. For example, two inscriptions in the period of the staunch *Saivite Chola* King, *Rajendra I* records a gift of *Kasus* (Coins or Currency) for a lamp and food as offering to the temple called *Kundavai Jinalaya* in *Tirumalai*, Polur Taluk, Tiruvannamalai District. *Kundavai* is his aunt's name. She commissioned the temple to be built. This shows the tolerance of the King as well as the fact that Jainism was considered a part of extended Hinduism. For instance, the mythology of *Neminatha* (cousin of Lord *Krishna*), whose sculpture is found there, is intertwined with that of Lord *Krishna*, the Hindu God.

ASHTAMANGALAS IN JAINISM AND HINDUISM

Ashtamangalas, i.e. eight auspicious objects are listed both in the Hindu and Jain *Puranas*. *Agni Purana* of Hinduism recognises the following eight objects as *Ashtamangalas*- lion, bull, elephant, a fan, a jar, a banner, a drum and a lamp. But the *Garuda Purana* gives a different list. Cow, fire, gold, clarified ghee, the sun, water,

the king and the Brahmana are stated in the *Garuda Purana* as *Ashtamangalas*. *Skanda Purana* narrates another set of auspicious things seen by *King Indradyumna* on his departure from *Avanti* to *Niladri*. They are white pigeons, swans, white horse, white elephant, and a jar full of water, which contains sprouts of a mango tree. The sprout has a fresh fruit, which is shown as having grown on it. It is placed along with a garland of white flowers and fruits placed below a canopy. The canopy is supported by plantain stalks. However during worship, the eight auspicious objects listed in the *Agni Purana* alone are used (Dange Sadasiv. A, 1986, p.57). The King is not described as having seen all the eight items. The lists as per Jain traditions slightly differ from those given in the Hindu *Puranas*. As per *Aupapadika Sutra*, a *Swetambara* canonical text, the eight auspicious objects are: *Svasthika* (auspicious symbol), *Srivatsa* (auspicious mark representing Goddess Lakshmi), *Nandyavarta* (auspicious mark representing the hoof marks of a cow), *Vardamanaka* (flask containing cosmetic powder), *Purna Kalasa* (full pot), *Darpana* (mirror) and a pair of *Matsya Yugmas* (a pair of fish). The *Digambara* traditions give a slightly different list consisting of a Vessel, full vase, mirror, fly whisk, banner, fan, parasol and throne.

YAMAS (MODE OF CONDUCT - OBSERVANCES) IN JAINISM AND HINDUISM

Parsvanatha, the 23rd *Tirthankara* taught *Chaturyama Dharma* or the observance of the four fold path - *Ahimsa* (non-violence), *Satya* (truth), *Asteya* (not taking from others what is not given voluntarily) and *Aparigraha* (non-possession of worldly objects). The same principles have been emphasised in Hindu scriptures also. *Swami Sivananda* states that *Maharishi Patanjali* (a famous sage and philosopher in ancient India) has assigned *Yama* virtues the most important role in attaining salvation. Further, he points out that the *Bhagavad Gita*, the greatest philosophical book in this world (preached on the battlefield of *Kurukshetra* by *Lord Krishna*) also emphasises the great role of *Yamas* (*Swami Sivananda* from *Visvaayudha*, 2002, p.15).

ADVENT OF JAINISM IN SOUTH INDIA

The arrival of the Jain community under *Srutakevali Bhadrabahu* (a thorough Master of Jain doctrines as expounded by *Mahavira*) to South India in the 3rd Century BC was followed by a mission to go further into the deep south of India by *Sri Vishvakacharya*. Along with a band of devoted followers, he penetrated into the *Pallava*, *Chola* and *Pandya* countries in Tamilnadu. The first set of Jain monks, who came to Tamilnadu in the three centuries before Christ, led a life of seclusion in caverns in the hillocks on the outskirts of the villages and towns and slept on the beds cut on the rocks. Some of them travelled throughout Tamilnadu preaching Jain doctrines and the Jain way of pious and spiritual life as defined in their scriptures. The propagation of Jainism thus started in Tamilnadu in the early pre-Christian centuries. In a few centuries, it became powerful enough to influence the political, religious and literary institutions – indeed the very life and thought of the Tamil people. In the 6th and 7th Centuries AD, Jainism thrived well in many parts of Tamilnadu. A large number of Jain caverns and sculptures relating to this period have been found at various places in Tamilnadu. Almost all the districts of Tamilnadu have yielded quite a large number of Jain artifacts in the form of architectural remains of Jain temples and sculptures. These cover a period of a thousand years from circa 7th Century AD to 17th Century AD.

In this book, sculptures and bronzes in the museums under the control of the Government of Tamilnadu along with their photographs are described, discussed and analysed with reference to their historical context. Also some paintings in Jain caves such as those at *Sittannavasal* and *Tirumalai* have been described and discussed.

SPREAD OF JAINISM IN TONDAINADU REGION (Present North Tamilnadu i.e. North of the River, Cauvery)

Jainism spread in the northern Tamil country during the *Pallava* period (Circa 6th – 9th Century AD) through the western periphery of that kingdom, from the neighbouring *Ganga* territory (present Karnataka), where the most important and famous Jain centre, *Sravanabelagola* and other Jain centres were located. Due to this factor a large number of Jain centres emerged in the area consisting of the present Chingleput, Vellore, Tiruvannamalai, Cuddalore and Viluppuram districts. *Kanchipuram*, *Anandamangalam*, *Siruvakkam*, *Tiramerur*, *Mamandur*, *Vedal*, *Tirumalai* and *Tiruppapuliyur* are some of the important Jain settlements of this area. *Wallajah*, *Wandiwash* (Vandavasi) and Polur Taluks of Tiruvannamalai District have yielded a large number of Jain sculptures and bronzes.

Mamandur, *Vilapakkam*, *Vallimalai*, *Armamalai*, *Perunagar* and *Tirunathankunru* in *Tondai Mandalam* have caverns where Jain ascetics stayed and performed their religious duties in the early centuries of the Christian era. *Tirunathankunru* near *Singavaram* close to *Gingee* has a bas-relief of twenty-four Jain *Tirthankaras* carved on the rock and an inscription of Circa 6th Century AD. The inscription mentions the place as the spot where *Chandranandi*, the Jain Monk died after fasting for 57 days. The *Vilapakkam Pancha Pandava Malai* has an inscription of the 50th regnal year of *Nandivarman II*, *Pallava* (731-796 AD). This inscription refers to the figure of the *Yakshi* carved on the nearby rock face. The natural cavern at *Vallimalai* near Tiruvalam, Vellore District has Jain images and four inscriptions of the *Gangas* and *Banas*. They furnish information about the finding of a Jain shrine, setting up of Jain images etc. Some of the photographs have been published in our earlier book (Kannan Dr. R. et al., 2001). The *Ganga Rajamalla I* (819-853 AD), grandson of *Sri Purusha*, improved the cavern for a *basti* (Jain temple). *Aryanandin*, a Jain preceptor, commissioned the carving of a *Tirthankara* figure and the image of *Devasena*, a pupil of *Bhavanandin*. A superb life size female figure with *Ganga* physique and poise is seen carved on the broad faced boulder in the right corner of the pillared hall of the *Subrahmanya* temple on the hill is locally called now as *Valli*, the consort of Lord *Subrahmanya*. The figure is in standing posture with a single pair of hands. She holds a lotus in her right hand and a bowl in the left at the level of her hip. Though the lotus kept in her right hand makes us to identify her as *Padmavathy*, the *Yakshi* of *Parsvanatha Tirthankara*, I.K.Sharma sees her as *Siddhayika*, the *Yakshi* of *Mahavira* (Sharma I.K, 1992 p.188). We have to respectfully disagree. This cave is under the protection of the Archaeological Survey of India. The *Appandainathar* (*Parsvanatha*) temple at *Tirunarunkondai* is a famous Jain temple of the *Chola* period. Another area, *Venkunram* and its surrounding area has been an ancient zone of Jain colonisation in Tamilnadu. The temple here is a *dvitala* (two storied) temple with circular *shikhara* (top of the tower or *Vimana*) and a simple wall section over the plinth. It has a *Pallava* period *Mahavira* recovered from *Valuvur* and now under worship (Ekambaranathan A. Dr., 2002, p.54). A fine *Vijayanagar* period sculpture of *Yakshi Ambika* is kept in the sub-shrine built for her. The *Tirupparuthikunram-Amanaserkai* or *Jina Kanchi*, across *Vegavati* river at Kanchipuram was an important Jain centre during the *Pallava* period. The *Pallankoil* grant of *Simhavishnu Pallava* (557-590 AD) informs us about the Jain establishment in *Jina Kanchi* and its teacher *Vajranandi*. There are two temples in

Jaina Kanchi, one for *Chandraprabha* and the other for *Vardhamana*. The *Vardhamana* temple has many sub-shrines. *Tirumalai* situated in Polur Taluk of Tiruvannamalai district contains Jain carvings and paintings covering a period of about a thousand years from the 8th Century AD to 17th Century AD. The earliest *Chola* inscription of this place belongs to the time of the *Chola* King, *Parantaka I*. The inscription recorded in the third regnal year of *Parantaka I* (910 AD) mentions the gift of gold made by two residents of *Kaduttalai* for feeding a devotee in the temple. Another gift, a lamp to the *Yaksha* of this temple was made in 959 AD, by a servant of the *Rashtrakuta* King, *Krishna III* (939-968 AD). There are two inscriptions of *Rajendra I*. One of them records a gift of *Kasus* (Coins or currency) for a lamp and food as offering to the temple. The temple is called *Kundavai Jinalaya*. According to this inscription *Chamundappai*, the wife of the merchant *Nannappaiyan* of *Perumbanappadi* alias *Karaivarimalliyur* endowed a lamp to be lighted and kept burning perpetually at the temple of *Sri Kundavai Jinalaya*. The temple was situated on the holy mountain at *Pallichchandam* (a predominantly Jain village) of *Vaigavur*. A later *Chola* inscription informs the service done by a *Yavanika* (Greek ?, in Sanskrit this word form represents feminine gender of *Yavana*, though here it refers to a male; is it a case of imperfect knowledge of Sanskrit in this instance?) called *Ezhini* of *Vanchi* during the *Sangam* period. According to that inscription, *Ezhini* set up images of a *Yaksha* and *Yakshi* on the *Tirumalai* hill. Later they were repaired by *Vidukadalakiya-Perumal* alias *Adiyaman* of the *Chera* race. Two structural temples at the foot hill and caverns with figures of *Tirthankaras* and *Yakshi Ambika* in the middle of the hill are other Jain monuments of this place. The monolithic image of *Neminatha* is 16 feet 6 inches tall. It is a remarkable sculpture (*Sl.No. 1*). Besides the bas-relief sculptures, there are paintings on the walls of the caves in two layers. The paintings of the inner layer belong to the *Chola* period. An important feature in the *Chola* period paintings is the depiction of *Vijaya - Chakra* (Wheel of Victory). Its centre is occupied by a *Jina* flanked by attendants (Balasubramaniam S.R., 1975, p.176).

Even the city of Chennai has yielded many Jain sculptures. Two stone sculptures of *Suparsvanatha* and *Padmaprabha* have been recorded as found from a coconut grove at the junction of *Muthu Gramany* Street and *Appu Mudali* Street in Mylapore by Fr. Hosten in 1921 (Figredo, B.A., Rev. (1952), pp.14-15). The then Curator of Archaeology of this Museum, Thiru K.R.Srinivasan dated these sculptures to 10-11th century AD. During the *Chola* period, there was a temple in Mylapore for *Neminatha*, the 22nd *Tirthankara*. The fragment of a Tamil inscription datable to 12th century AD provides evidence for the existence of *Neminatha* temple in Mylapore in the 12th century AD (Figredo, B.A., Rev. (1952), pp.15). *Avirodhi Alwar*, a Jain poet of the 13th century AD in a Tamil poem in praise of *Neminatha* mentions about his shrine at Mylapore. The *Neminatha* idol of this temple was taken to *Mel Chittamur* temple in Chittamur, 19 Kilometres away from Tindivanam. Jain sculptures have been found within the city in places like Villivakkam, Vyasarpadi and *Puliyur* near Kodambakkam.

GOVERNMENT MUSEUM, CHENNAI

We now catalogue below three sculptures in the Chennai Museum, one recently added and a sculpture left out while publishing the catalogue of the images last year and the third one on loan, displayed at Raj Bhavan, Chennai.

SCULPTURES

Sl.No. 2. MAHAVIRA

Accession (Acc.). Number (No.) 1981/76; Height (Ht.) 98 cm. (Centimetres); Breadth (Br.) 59 cm.

LOCALITY UNKNOWN

Circa 12th Century AD.

This beautiful *Mahavira* sculpture was received as a gift in 1976 AD. The figure of *Mahavira* is depicted in *Ardhaparyankasana* (seated cross legged in meditative posture) on a rectangular pedestal with a decorated back rest and cushion. *Chamara* (fly whisk) bearers, *Bha Mandala* (halo), *Mukkudai* (triple umbrella) and the *Deeksha* (the tree under which he was sitting when he got enlightened) are shown. Four lion figures, the cognisance of *Mahavira* are shown on the front face of the pedestal.

This was left out from the catalogue prepared last year.

Sl.No. 3. MAHAVIRA

Acc. No. 2626/2002; Ht. 52 cm.; Br. 41 cm.

POONDY, TIRUVALLUR TALUK, TIRUVALLUR DISTRICT, TAMILNADU.

Circa 11th Century AD.

Recently a headless *Tirthankara* sculpture in *ardhaparyankasana* (seated *dhyana* or meditative) posture has been transferred from the Poondy Pre-historic Site Museum to Government Museum, Chennai to which it was brought by the Commissioner. The cognisance symbol, the lion is shown in three places on the front of the pedestal.

Sl.No. 4. TIRTHANKARA

Acc. No. 241/1950; Ht. 65.5 cm.; Br. 55.5 cm.

ETTUKKUDI MEDU NEAR COOUM RIVER, TIRUVALLUR TALUK,
TIRUVALLUR DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

10th Century AD.

This *Tirthankara* image is a good 10th Century AD piece. The *Tirthankara* is in *ardhaparyankasana* (seated meditative) pose. There is a *Srivatsa*, which enables us to identify the image as a *Tirthankara*. However, in the absence of a cognisance symbol or snake canopy, we are unable to identify who exactly the *Tirthankara* is. The left hand is broken into two pieces. These are joined by cement. It is on loan to the Raj Bhavan and is on the lawn on the south side.



Sl.No.1
NEMINATHA (TIRUMALAI)



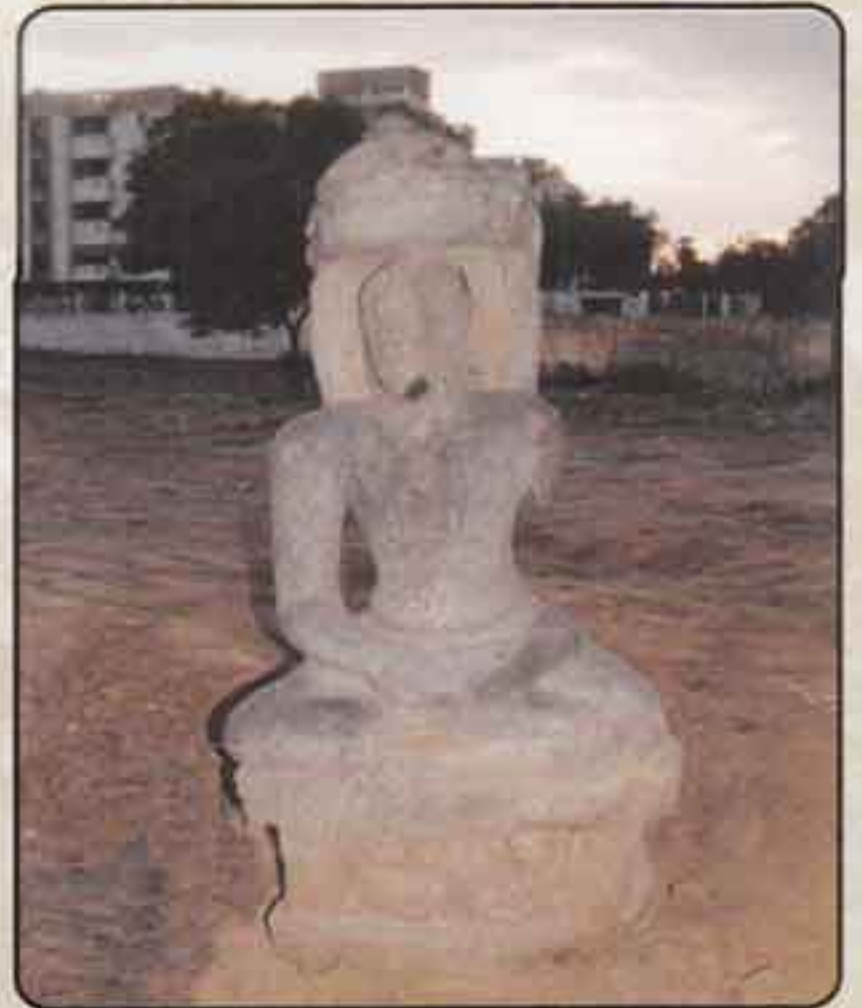
SI.No.2
MAHAVIRA



SI.No.3
MAHAVIRA



SI.No.4
TIRTHANKARA



SI.No.5
MAHAVIRA



PEDESTAL OF SI. No. 5
LIONS - THE COGNISANCE SYMBOL OF MAHAVIRA

MAHAVIRA SCULPTURE AT MANAPAKKAM, CHENNAI

Sl.No. 5. MAHAVIRA

Thiru Chandramoorthy of the Archaeology Department informed us of the existence of a Jain sculpture at *Manapakkam* on Kolapakkam Road, Sriperumbudur Taluk, Kancheepuram District, which is in greater Chennai. We went to the spot and found it on a low lying land being filled up. It is made of granite. There were two lions crouching like the Egyptian sphinx on the pedestal. We, therefore, identified it as *Mahavira*, since the lion is his cognisance symbol. The heads of the lions are turned so that they look out. The sculpture is broken on the left side from the left shoulder onwards. The face is not clear. From the features of the lions and the torso, this sculpture can be identified as belonging to the early 9th Century AD. It is being acquired for the Government Museum, Chennai. This establishes that not only Mylapore but other areas in Chennai had also Jain temples in the distant past. Urbanisation is obliterating the memories of the past, but we are striving to preserve them for posterity.

GOVERNMENT MUSEUM, VELLORE

Next to Chennai Museum, the Government Museum, Vellore has a sizeable collection of Jain images, sculptures as well as bronzes. They are catalogued below.

SCULPTURES

Sl.No. 6. MAHAVIRA

Acc. No. 259/93; Ht. 87 cm.; Br. 54 cm.

SHENBAKKAM, VELLORE TALUK, VELLORE DISTRICT, TAMILNADU,
Circa 10th Century AD.

The figure of *Mahavira* is depicted in the *ardhaparyankasana* (seated) posture on a *simhasana* (throne) with the backrest supported by two lions. The *Chamara* (fly whisk) bearers on either side of the main figure of *Mahavira* keep one of their hands in *vismaya mudra* (the hand kept in exclamation) and carry the fly whisk in the other hand. The face of the *Chamara* bearer on the left side and that of the main *Mahavira* image are flaked out. A decorated *prabha* (arch), which encircles the head, is shown with the *Mukkudai* (triple-parasol) at the top. The tree branches with rounded floral designs form the backdrop. The treatment of the shoulders, torso and hands of this sculpture are typical of the *Chola* School of art.

Sl.No. 7. PADMAPRABHA

Acc. No. 388/2001; Ht. 94 cm.; Br. 69 cm.

PONNAGAR, *MATHANUR*, VANIYAMBADI TALUK,
VELLORE DISTRICT, TAMILNADU,
Circa 13th Century AD.

The figure of the sixth *Tirthankara*, *Padmaprabha* is depicted in the *ardhaparyankasana* (seated) posture. We identify this sculpture as that of *Padmaprabha* based on the full-blown lotus (cognisance symbol in Jainism) carved on the front side of the pedestal. A decorated arch is shown over the head of the *Tirthankara*. On the top of the arch is the *Mukkudai* in three diminishing tiers crowned with a top. The *Chamara* bearers who flank *Padmaprabha* also have *Bha Mandalas* (halos) at the back of their heads. *Padmaprabha* was the son of King *Dhara* and Queen *Susima*.

Sl.No. 8. TIRTHANKARA

Acc. No. AR 317/96; Ht. 105 cm.; Br. 100 cm.

EXACT LOCATION UNKNOWN, WALAJAH TALUK, VELLORE DISTRICT, TAMILNADU,
Circa 9th Century AD.

The figure of the *Tirthankara* is depicted in the seated *dhyana* (meditative-*ardhaparyankasana*) pose. This sculpture might have had a separate pedestal to place the figure upon it. Now, it is without a pedestal. The beautiful countenance of this sculpture reminds us of the *Bhavyas* (Jains who are considered as pure souls) figures gathering lotus flowers in the cool lotus pond in the painting found on the ceiling of the front *mandapa* (hall) of the *Sittannavasal* cave temple in Pudukottai district.

Sl.No. 9. TIRTHANKARA

Acc. No. AR 68/87; Ht. 96 cm.; Br. 34 cm.

KIZHMINNAL, WALAJAH TALUK, VELLORE DISTRICT, TAMILNADU
Circa 10th Century AD.

The figure of the *Tirthankara* is shown in the *ardhaparyankasana* pose. Of the eight *Maha pratiharyas* (eight divine symbols or signs of a *Tirthankara*), *Bha Mandala* (halo), *Mukkudai* (triple umbrella) and *Chamara* (fly whisk) bearers are shown. The *Chamara* bearers keep the fly whisks in their hand extended away from the figure of *Tirthankara* and keep their other hand nearer to the *Tirthankara* in *vismaya* (keeping the hand in exclamation) posture. The tree under which the *Tirthankara* attained his *nirvana* (enlightenment leading to salvation) is also depicted with branches in the form of five coils.

Sl.No. 10. TIRTHANKARA

Acc. No. AR 4/84; Ht. 83 cm.; Br. 65 cm.

ARASANIPALAY, CHEYYAR TALUK, TIRUVANNAMALAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU
Circa 10th Century AD.

The figure of the *Tirthankara* is shown in *dhyana* posture on a *simhasana*. The sculpture is broken and damaged. The face and left knee are flaked out. The *Bha Mandala* (halo) shown on the backside of the head of the *Tirthankara* figure is circular with 13 tongues of flames on the outer circle.

Sl.No. 11. TIRTHANKARA

Acc. No. AR 185/91; Ht. 127 cm.; Br. 63 cm.

CHENGAM, TIRUVANNAMALAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU
Circa 10th Century AD.

This image of a *Tirthankara*, collected from the Government Boys Secondary School, Chengam is sculpted in the seated *dhyana* posture. The face of the figure is almost fully worn out. A round *Bha Mandala* on the backside of the head of the *Tirthankara* and a bell shaped *Mukkudai* over the head are shown. Two *Chamara* bearers are shown on either side of the *Tirthankara* just above the level of the backrest of the *simhasana*. The sculpture is broken below the upper thighs of the *Tirthankara* and is pasted with cement.



SI.No. 6
MAHAVIRA



SI.No. 7
PADMAPRABHA



SI.No. 8
TIRTHANKARA



SI.No. 9
TIRTHANKARA



Sl.No. 10
TIRTHANKARA



Sl.No. 11
TIRTHANKARA



Sl.No. 12
TIRTHANKARA

Sl.No. 12. TIRTHANKARA

Acc. No. 362/99; Ht. 94 cm.; Br. 60 cm.

TIRUMANI, KATPADI TALUK, VELLORE DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 12th Century AD.

The *Tirthankara* image of this sculpture is depicted in seated *dhyana* posture on a pedestal with backrest. Two *Chamara* bearers flank the main image of the seated *Tirthankara*. Portions of the face and the left knee are broken and missing. The pedestal portion below the left knee is also broken. *Prabhavali* (a decorative arch) encircles the head of the seated *Tirthankara*. On the top of the arch is the *Mukkudai* (triple umbrella) in three diminishing tiers.

BRONZES

Sl.No. 13. CHAMARA BEARER

Acc. No. 402/2001; Ht. 12 cm.; Br. 4.5 cm.

ARUMBALUR, POLUR TALUK, TIRUVANNAMALAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 10th Century AD.

This is one of the 22 Jain metal objects (icons 14) received from the Tahsildar of Polur Taluk under the Indian Treasure Trove Act 1878. All these items of archaeological and cultural importance accidentally came to light in the year 1995 AD. After prolonged formalities and procedures, the Department of Museums received them in the year 2001. The figure of the *chamara* or *chowri* bearer is depicted in *tribhanga* (standing in three bends) posture. He carries the *Chamara* in his right hand and keeps his left hand on his hip. This pose and design is comparable with the *chamara* bearer of the *Salukkai* hoard collected in 1989 AD, published in our previous volume (Kannan Dr. R. et al., 2001, Sl.No.47). The main difference between these two sets of Bronzes lies in the torso ornament. The *Salukkai chamara* bearer (*Chamara* bearer) has a sacred thread whereas this *Arumbalur* one sports a *Channavira* ornament (crossed chains worn on the chest).

Sl. No. 14. CHAMARA BEARER

Acc. No. 403/2001; Ht. 12 cm.; Br. 4.5 cm.

ARUMBALUR, POLUR TALUK, TIRUVANNAMALAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 10th Century AD.

Like his counterpart described above, this figure of the *Chamara* bearer also is shown in *tribhanga* (standing in three bends) posture. He carries the *Chamara* in his left hand and appears to have something in his right hand, but in reality nothing is seen during actual observation of the piece.

Sl.No. 15. MAHAVIRA

Acc. No. 393/2001; Ht. 34.2 cm.; Br. 11.5 cm.

ARUMBALUR, POLUR TALUK, TIRUVANNAMALAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 12th Century AD.

The figure of *Mahavira* is depicted in *Kayotsarga* (standing erect in *dhyana*) posture on a lotus seat

over a square pedestal. The delicately carved features like the curly hair of the head, elongated earlobes and finely designed fingers of the hand further enhance the charm of this handsome naked figure. The expression on the oval face and other features of this icon exhibit a close affinity with features found in the *Chola* icons of the *Saivite Nayanar, Appar*.

We identify this figure as *Mahavira* on the basis of the lion cognisance found on the pedestal. On the middle part of the front side of the pedestal, the lion figure is shown. Only the front portion of the lion with its head and two front legs is visible. It has been designed as a projected figure from the face of the pedestal. A one-line inscription is found on all the sides other than the front one, but it is illegible.

Sl.No. 16. MAHAVIRA WITH PEDESTAL AND BACKREST

Acc. No. 394/2001; Ht. 27 cm.; Br. 23.5 cm.

ARUMBALUR, POLUR TALUK, TIRUVANNAMALAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 10th Century AD.

The figure of *Mahavira* is the main figure of what must have been a bronze ensemble. The pedestal, backrest, a tree and *Prabhavali* (decorative outer arch) are other attachable components of this ensemble. Of these, the figure of *Mahavira*, the pedestal and the backrest have been obtained intact. The tree and the *Prabhavali* are broken into pieces and only some of their portions have been retrieved. The figure of *Mahavira* is depicted in seated *dhyana* posture. The image is heavy and solid. It is identified as *Mahavira* due to the lion cognisance found on the pedestal. The design of the ensemble, particularly of the three components, the pedestal, *Mahavira* and the backrest is an elaboration of the design followed in the *Salukkai Mahavira* bronze illustrated as Sl. No. 51 in our previous work (Kannan Dr. R. et al, 2001).

The backrest is shown depicted as a lion throne along with a *Bha Mandala* (halo) with flames on its outer circle. The five bits of the *Prabhavali* available also exhibit the same flame design. The tree carved with meandering branches and leaves in the flattened upper portion has a rod like lower portion. This rod like arrangement is to insert it as a backdrop to the seated *Mahavira* image in the ensemble. The tree portion is designed with three meandering foliage rounds. The central top round has two birds one on the top and the other at the bottom. One squirrel like animal also is shown. Both the tree (Acc. No. 404/2001) and the *Prabhavali* bits (Acc. No. 410/2001) are registered with separate numbers.

The Tamil inscription found at the bottom of the pedestal states that the bronze was made by a Jain nun, *Sri Vijaya Kurathi* (Inscription No. 1). We come across this name again in an inscription of the 10th century AD in *Kazhugumalai* on *Kazhugumalai* hill (refer Tirunelveli region). Here also she has been referred to as the person responsible for commissioning a carving of a *Tirumeni* (figure of a holy person) of a *Tirthankara* on the rock face. Here she has been mentioned as the disciple of *Tatchan Sanga kurattikal* of *Sri Vembaikudi* (South Indian Inscriptions Vol. V, 1986, p.123). *Vembaikudi* is the central portion of the present Aruppukottai Taluk of Virudhunagar District.



**Sl.No. 13
CHAMARA BEARER**



**Sl.No. 14
CHAMARA BEARER**



**Sl.No. 15
MAHAVIRA**



Sl.No. 16
MAHAVIRA WITH PEDESTAL AND BACKREST



Sl.No. 17
MAHAVIRA

Sl.No. 17. MAHAVIRA

Acc. No. 396/2001; Ht. 18 cm.; Br. 6.5 cm.

ARUMBALUR, POLUR TALUK, TIRUVANNAMALAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 12th Century AD.

The figure of *Mahavira* is shown in *ardhaparyankasana* or *dhyana* (seated) posture over a rectangular pedestal. The backside is merged with a metal sheet, which becomes the carved backdrop above the pedestal. On it is shown a lion throne with a cylindrical backrest. Above the backdrop at the back of *Mahavira's* head is shown the *Bha Mandala* (circular halo) with flames on the outer rim. Two *chamaras* (fly whisks) one on each side are depicted. Over the halo, the *Mukkudai* (triple umbrella) is cast in three projected layers.

The front side of the pedestal has two compartments and each has a lion figure. Over these lions is a one line Kannada inscription (*Inscription No. 2*). Dr. Padmanabha Sastri, Deputy Superintendent of Epigraphy section of Archaeological Survey of India has read it as "*Babuti Oja Balini Ma*". This inscription states that the image belongs to the great teacher *Balini Ma*.

Sl.No. 18. PARSVANATHA

Acc. No. 397/2001; Ht. 17cm.; Br. 6 cm.

ARUMBALUR, POLUR TALUK, TIRUVANNAMALAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 8th Century AD.

The figure of *Parsvanatha* is shown in *Kayotsarga* posture, on an inverted cup like pedestal. He has the usual snake canopy over his head. Usually the five-headed snake is an identification of *Suparsvanatha* in Karnataka and North India. On this basis, we have identified the *Suparsvanatha* sculpture from *Peddattumbalam*, Andhra Pradesh in our previous publication (Kannan Dr. R. et al., 2001, Sl.No.35). However, the identification of a *Parsvanatha* sculpture from *Bastipuram*, Kollegal Taluk, Mysore District as *Suparsvanatha* in the explanatory analysis is not correct, since it has seven heads and therefore it is undoubtedly *Parsvanatha* (Kannan Dr. R. et al., 2001, Sl.No.28). In some cases *Suparsvanatha* is shown with a three headed snake canopy. But in Tamilnadu, the figure of *Parsvanatha* is also shown with a five headed snake canopy in many Jain monuments and even a seven headed snake canopy as we could see in *Uthamapalayam* in Madurai. When we say snake, we mean only the cobra. The word is used interchangeably. In Hindu and Jain Iconography, the cobra is the only snake considered worthy of veneration. The exact reason is not clear, though it is identified as a God (Lord *Subrahmanya* or a *Brahmin* sometimes) in mythology. It is supposed to bite only if the person is destined to be bitten. The practice of snake worship is considered to have been adopted and adapted from Jainism, but this is unlikely considering that God *Vishnu* and God *Siva* have cobras associated with them. It can, therefore, be stated that Jainism adopted and adapted it from Hinduism, the older parent religion.

Sl.No. 19. PARSVANATHA

Acc. No. 398/2001; Ht. 10.5 cm.; Br. 3 cm.

ARUMBALUR, POLUR TALUK, TIRUVANNAMALAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 8th Century AD.

The posture of the figure of *Parsvanatha* is similar to that of the previous one. It is broken from its pedestal. The hood of his snake canopy is broken and missing.

Sl.No. 20. TIRTHANKARA

Acc. No. 391/2001; Ht. 47.5 cm.; Br. 17 cm.

ARUMBALUR, POLUR TALUK, TIRUVANNAMALAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 13th Century AD.

This is one of the 14 Jain bronze icons received from the Tahsildar of Polur Taluk under the Treasure Trove Act. The image of the *Tirthankara* is depicted in the usual *Kayotsarga* (standing erect in *dhyana*) posture on a lotus seat fixed over a square pedestal. The figure of the *Tirthankara* has curly hair on the head and elongated ear lobes commonly found in medieval South Indian *Tirthankara* sculptures and bronzes. The treatment of the almond shaped eyes with their ridge, the forehead, pointed nose and bulging lower lip displays a kind of similarity with the features found in the *Singanikuppam Tirthankara* illustrated as Sl. No. 68 in our previous work (Kannan Dr. R. et al., 2001).

The pedestal has two spikes for inserting an attachable decorative arch (*Prabha*). A floral design is found on each of the four top corners of the pedestal. At the base of the pedestal are four rings, one on each side to tie the icon with a larger decorated pedestal when it is taken out during festivals in procession.

Sl.No. 21. TIRTHANKARA

Acc. No. 392/2001; Ht. 40 cm.; Br. 10 cm.

ARUMBALUR, POLUR TALUK, TIRUVANNAMALAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 13th Century AD.

The figure of the *Tirthankara* is cast in *Kayotsarga* posture. Its pedestal is missing. It is broken at its right ankle. The bronze has features similar to the one described above. (Sl. No. 20). But there are cracks on the back of the figure, which exposes a black powdery substance as its inner core. A chemical analysis is being done. This will give more details of its production technique. The analysis will be published in the Museum Journal in the next edition (April, 2002).

Sl.No. 22. TIRTHANKARA

Acc. No. 395/2001; Ht. 22 cm.; Br. 7 cm.

ARUMBALUR, POLUR DISTRICT, TIRUVANNAMALAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU,

Circa 13th Century AD.

The figure of the *Tirthankara* is depicted in the usual *Kayotsarga* posture. Due to age and human disturbance, the image has come out from its pedestal. The pedestal has been entered in the museum record as a separate item (Acc. No. 407/2001, Ht. 8.5 cm.). The most remarkable feature of this bronze is the *Srivatsa* symbol found on the top portion of the chest on its right side. According to the Jain work, *Aupapatika Sutra*, an *Upanga Agama*, *Srivatsa* is one of the eight auspicious symbols. *Achara Dinakara*, another Jain work says that the highest knowledge has manifested itself from the heart of *Tirthankara* in the form of *Srivatsa*, which appears as a special mark on his chest (Rai, Govind Chandra, 1996, p.37). North Indian *Tirthankara* images of *Kushana* times and subsequent periods have this mark at the centre of the chest. But in this bronze this mark is similar to those seen in the *Vishnu* images of Tamilnadu. The *Bhagavata Purana*



SI.No. 18
PARSVANATHA



SI.No. 19
PARSVANATHA



SI.No. 20
TIRTHANKARA



SI.No. 21
TIRTHANKARA



SI.No. 22
TIRTHANKARA



SI.No. 23
YAKSHI AMBIKA



SI.No. 24
YAKSHI AMBIKA



SI.No. 25
YAKSHI AMBIKA

considers *Adinatha*, the first *Tirthankara* as an incarnation of *Vishnu* (Asim Kumar Chatterjee, 2000, p.2). Perhaps, the South Indian design of the *Srivatsa* found on this bronze may be due to the interaction, the Jains had with *Vaishnavites*.

Sl.No. 23. YAKSHI AMBIKA

Acc. No. 399/2001; Ht. 13.8 cm.; Br. 8 cm.

ARUMBALUR, POLUR TALUK, TIRUVANNAMALAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 9th Century AD.

The figure of *Yakshi Ambika* is depicted in seated posture on a lotus pedestal fixed over a square base. She has kept her left leg folded and let down the right one. She has a pair of hands. She carries a bunch of mangoes in her right hand and a single mango in the left palm, which is kept over her left knee. She wears a *hara* (necklace in the form of chain), waist band and lower garment. Her hairdo is in *Kesabandha* (hair done as a bun) form. Her elder son *Subanga* stands on her left side while the younger son *Prabangara* sits on the lion, which is to her right side. A halo is shown over her head. On top of this halo, a seated *Tirthankara* in *dhyana* posture with a round halo is shown. Over the seated *Tirthankara*, five branches of an areca tree with birds on them is depicted. The pedestal, the image of *Yakshi Ambika*, her sons and the trunk of the tree with five branches might have been cast separately and then fixed together. Though the design of the pedestal, decoration and other features of the *Yakshi* and her sons reveal *Ganga* influence, the depiction of the areca tree is more to suit the tradition followed in Tamilnadu.

Sl.No. 24. YAKSHI AMBIKA

Acc. No. 400/2001; Ht. 15.8 cm.; Br. 6.5 cm.

ARUMBALUR, POLUR TALUK, TIRUVANNAMALAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 9th Century AD.

The figure of *Yakshi Ambika* is shown in seated posture over a lotus pedestal on a rectangular base. She has kept her left leg folded and allowed the right leg to hang down. She wears large round earrings, *hara* (garland), *keyura* (Ornament worn on the upper arm), bangles, waist band and a lower garment up to the foot. Her hair do in *Kesabandha* form is very decorative and shows the influence of the present Karnataka region. A round halo with an outer rim is shown at the back of the head of the *Yakshi*. Over the halo at the top is a seated *Tirthankara* figure in *dhyana* posture. Five branches of a mango tree with floral tips spring out from the back of this seated *Tirthankara*.

The *Yakshi* has a pair of hands. She holds her younger son *Prabangara*, who is seated on the knee cap of her folded left leg, by her left hand. She carries a mango in her right hand. Her elder son *Subanga* is shown on the right side on the back corner of the pedestal. Her vehicle, the lion is depicted as a projected figure on the front side of the pedestal. The features of this bronze also exhibit *Ganga* influence.

Sl.No. 25. YAKSHI AMBIKA

Acc. No. 401/2001; Ht. 22.5 cm.; Br. 10 cm.

ARUMBALUR, POLUR TALUK, TIRUVANNAMALAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU.

Circa 10th Century AD.

This figure of *Yakshi Ambika* is designed with rich ornaments. It is very beautiful. She is cast in *samabanga* (standing straight) posture. Her hair-do is decorated with jewels and *sirachakra* (ornament in

disc shape worn on the hair at the back of the head) at the back. She wears round earrings, necklace, *hara* (garland), *kandikai* (neck ornament, thick like a necklace but long like a chain), *channavira* (crossed chain worn on the chest), *keyura* (ornament worn on the upper arm), bangles, waistband, lower garment with festoons and *padasaras* (anklets). In her right hand, she holds something like the stalk of a flower or fruit. As the top portion of the stalk is broken and missing, it is very difficult to tell whether it is a flower like a lotus or a fruit like a mango. The most interesting and important feature of this bronze is the figure of a parrot depicted on the left hand of the *Yakshi*. For this special iconographical feature, we have a later period Tamil literary reference. In the 16th century AD Jain Tamil literary work *Appandainathar Ula* composed by the poet, *Ananthavijaya* on *Appandainathar* (*Parsvanatha*) of *Tirunarunkondai*, there is a description of *Yakshi Ambika*. In the *Ula*, *Ambika* is described as sitting on a golden throne with a parrot on her forearm. In the *Arumbalur* bronze, the parrot rests on the hand of the standing *Ambika*. The seated bird gracefully enhances the poise of the *Yakshi* figure.

This image, which might originally have been fixed on a pedestal, is now without a pedestal. The pedestal received along with this *Yakshi* and other Jain bronzes and registered in the Museum record (Acc. No. 406/2001; Ht. 7 cm) seems to be the pedestal of this *Yakshi* figure. The pedestal has four holes to fix images. The larger central hole is suited to place the *Yakshi* figure described here. This confirms our assumption that the *Yakshi* and the pedestal belong to the same ensemble. The other three smaller holes found there, give the clue to identify the *Yakshi* as *Yakshi Ambika*. Usually the bronzes of *Yakshi Ambika* in standing posture are shown with her two sons and her attendant maid. Of these three minor figures, one or two might have fallen out in course of time, leaving the holes made on the pedestal to act as homologous evidence. The *Yakshi Ambika* bronze in the Government Museum, Chennai and the other two in the *Tirunarunkondai Parsvanatha* temple are comparable for our purpose. In the Chennai (Madras) Museum *Ambika* Bronze (Sl.No.73, Kannan Dr. R. et al., 2001), the small figure of one of the sons usually found in such bronzes is missing, and we see only the hole provided on the pedestal to fix that figure. This is similar to the icons in the *Tirunarunkondai Parsvanatha* temple. In the *Chola* period *Ambika* bronzes also, we come across similar pits on the pedestal in which the missing figures should have been placed. Besides these, the depiction of the areca tree with birds is beautiful. Its featuring as an attachment of this bronze ensemble also helps us to identify the *Yakshi* as *Yakshi Ambika*. In Tamilnadu, the figure of *Yakshi Ambika* in sculptures is shown with an areca tree in many monuments. *Ambika* sculptures in *Pancha Pandavar Malai* and *Tirumalai* in Tiruvannamalai district, *Chitharai* near Kanyakumari, and *Kazhugumalai* near Tirunelveli are all depicted with an areca tree. This is different from the Karnataka and North Indian tradition of depicting *Yakshi Ambika* with a mango tree. A Jain Tamil literary work "*Unjal Pattu*" ("Swing Song") belonging to the late *Vijayanagar* period composed on *Neminatha Tirthankara* of *Sittamur* praises *Ambika* as one who keeps the *Tirthankara* on her head and used to sit under the shadow of the areca tree.

திருவுறையும் சிந்தை நகர் தேநீசர் பாதம்
சிந்தைசெய்து தினம் பணிந்து தெளிந்து நன்றாய்
அருகர்தனை திரு முடிமேல் தரித்த மாது
அருங்குலைக் கமுகு நிழல் அமர்ந்த தேவி

The dress, ornaments and other features of this bronze are characteristic of the *Chola* period. This period is considered as the high point of South Indian Iconography.



SI.No. 26
TIRTHANKARA



SI.No. 27
TIRTHANKARA



SI.No. 28
GANESHA



SI.No. 29
GANESHA, THIRUKKURUGAVUR

JAIN SCULPTURES ON THE ROADSIDE

There are certain Jain sculptures lying uncared for on the roadside. Whatever has come to our notice is catalogued here. We have tried to take them to the nearest museum, but the local people resist and create a law and order situation, claiming they worship them. This is not always the case. But they do have some emotional attachment to them. Therefore, they are left there.

In this sense, there is no mutual exclusivity among the indigenous religions of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. People worship all their images. Jain and Buddhist images are found in Hindu Temples. They represent various points on a continuum of thought rather mutually antagonistic and exclusive philosophies, which cannot coexist. This phenomenon does not occur so much with the Semitic religions, which stress on the exclusivity of their Gods to the exclusion of other Gods.

Sl.No. 26. TIRTHANKARA

Acc. No. Nil ; Ht. 110 cm.; Br. 55 cm.

PERUMUKKAL, TINDIVANAM TALUK, VILLUPURAM DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 10th Century AD.

This Jain image is outside the small village temple below Perumukkal hill dedicated to Lord *Ganesha*. Its photo has been provided in this Bulletin. There is also a big temple dedicated to Lord *Siva*, atop the hill belonging to the *Chola* period with *Vijayanagar* additions. The hill has also a world famous pre-historic petroglyph (Rock Art cut into rock) site. We noticed the image during our visit in 2001 AD. The visit was for research to set up the Rock Art Gallery in the Chennai Museum.

Sl.No. 27. TIRTHANKARA

Acc. Nil; Ht. 105 cm.; Br. 65 cm.

ON THE VIRINCHIPURAM - VELLORE ROAD (ROAD SIDE),

VIRINCHIPURAM, VELLORE TALUK, VELLORE DISTRICT, TAMILNADU,

Circa 9th Century AD.

This is placed on the roadside on the State highway at the 22nd Kilometre from Vellore. It has not been given to the Museum at Vellore due to the resistance of the local people who are attached to it. Therefore, very regretfully we have to let it remain at its present location.

GOVERNMENT MUSEUM, CUDDALORE

Sl.No. 28. GANESHA

Acc. No. 157/2002; Ht. 46 cm.; Br. 36 cm.

KALLIKURICHI, CUDDALORE, CUDDALORE DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 10th Century AD.

This figure was got as a Treasure Trove in 2002 AD. This charming bronze figure of *Valampuri Ganesha* (with trunk turned towards the right side) standing in *Tribhanga* posture on a lotus pedestal is quite interesting. The depiction of two *chamaras* and a very small *Mukkudai* on the *prabha* at the top, two of the eight

pratiharyas (divine signs ascribed to a Jain *Tirthankara*) on the figure of the Hindu God, *Ganesha* is a special feature of this early *Chola* period bronze. *Chamaras* and umbrella over the head of the deities are found in the *Devakoshta* (niche) of the sanctum outer walls of early *Chola* temples. Such sculptures of *Brahma*, *Durga* and sage *Agasthya* in the *Masilamanisvara Siva* temple in *Tiruvaduthurai* are sculpted with two *Chamaras*, one on each side of the divine figures. The *Ganesha* sculptures in the *Devakoshtas* of *Gramam Sivalokanathar Siva* temple and *Thirukkurugavur Vellidal Easwara* temple (8 Kms. from Sirkali, Nagapattinam District) are designed with *Chamaras* and umbrellas (*Sl. No. 29*). But such depiction of Hindu deities in bronze work is rare and unique. The figures of Jain *Tirthankaras*, particularly the *Chaturvimsati Pattas* are designed with *Chamaras* as we see in this *Ganesha* figure. This is an example for the borrowing of iconographic features of Jainism into Hinduism. This mutual exchange among indigenous religions has already been analysed above.

ROADSIDE *TIRTHANKARA* SCULPTURE IN CUDDALORE

There is a big *Tirthankara* Sculpture in granite in Kumarappa Naicken Pettai just off the Cuddalore - Palar-Panruthi road. The *Tirthankara* is in *ardhaparyarikasana*. The image is worshipped by the local Hindus by placing a vermillion mark on the forehead of the idol. They have put up a broken Goddess sculpture near it. It is said that if it does not rain they will make the image lie flat on the face and worship it. This illustrates the intermingling of beliefs between Jainism and Hinduism.



THANJAVUR AND TRICHY REGIONS

Due to the staunch support of the Imperial *Chola* monarchs, the powerful wave of the *Saivite Bhakthi* Movement swept away the Jain temples and monasteries in the *Chola* heartland, the Thanjavur region. But a careful study of ancient inscriptions reveals the existence of some Jain temples and monasteries in this region even during the *Chola* hegemony. Dr. A. Ekambaranathan (1992, pp.115-123) has identified the following eight Jain temples with the information gleaned from ancient inscriptions.

1. *Miladudaiyar Palli*, Jain Temple in *Thirunageswaram*, near Kumbakonam
2. *Sundara Chola Perum Palli* in *Pallan Koil* of *Tiruthuraipoondi* Taluk, erstwhile *Tanjore* District
3. A Jain temple in *Sendalai* of Thanjavur Taluk, Thanjavur District
4. *Kulotunga Chola Perum palli* in *Kuhur* of Kumbakonam Taluk, Thanjavur District
5. *Chitralkai Perumpalli* in *Avarani* of Nagapattinam Taluk, Nagapattinam District
6. *Chedikula Manicka Perumpalli* and *Gangarula Sundara Perumpalli* in *Maruthuvakudi* of Papanasam Taluk, Thanjavur District
7. *Kaviraja Perumpalli* near *Tiruvanaikaval* of Trichy district
8. *Amuthamozhi Perumpalli* in *Tiruvidaikudi*, of erstwhile *Tanjore* District

Robert Sewell in his book titled 'Antiquarian remains in the Presidency of Madras' mentions the existence of a Jain temple in good order in Mannargudi, present Tiruvarur District during his time at the end of the 19th Century AD (Sewell, Robert, 1972, p.280). Dr. B. Jambulingam, a research scholar of Thanjavur Tamil University in his survey for Buddhist antiquities in Thanjavur region came across a few Jain sculptures scattered in different desolate spots. He has identified four seated *Tirthankara* stone sculptures at places like *Kariyankudi* near *Taplampuliyur* in Tiruvarur Taluk, Tiruvarur District, (Sl.No.30) *Kottaimedu* near *Alangudi Patti* of Pudukottai District (Sl.No.31), on the back side of the *Moola Anumar* temple in Thanjavur (Sl.No.32) and in *Senkadu* of *Tiruthuraipoondi* taluk, erstwhile *Tanjore* District. Of them the one at *Kottaimedu* in Pudukottai District is damaged on the head portion. The *Kariyankudi Tirthankara* is very majestic with *Bha Mandala* and *Chamara* bearers. He is in seated *ardhaparyankasana* posture on a lotus pedestal carved over a rectangle base. The first author has seen three *Tirthankara* sculptures in the outer *prakara* (perambulatory space in a temple) of the *Giri Kuchamba* temple, which is situated within the compound of the *Naganathaswamy* temple, *Tirunageswaram*, near Kumbakonam, Thanjavur District. A feature of this temple is that the rays of the moon fall directly on the idol of the Goddess *Ardhachandra Kuchamba* (the Consort of Lord *Siva*) lighting it up on the Full Moon Day of the lunar month of the Hindu calendar, *Karthika* (October 15th - November 14th). There are many similar instances of the rays of the Sun or the Moon falling directly on the deity in several temples of South India. In *Aragalur*, Attur Taluk, Salem District, the Sun's rays fall on the *Shivalinga* of the deity *Kamanathaswami* on *Pubba* star day (Tamil *Pooram*) of the lunar month March 15th to April 15th of the Hindu calendar, *Panguni* in Tamil (*Chaitra* in Sanskrit). The rays of the sun fall directly on the deity on certain days of the year in *Nageswaram* Temple, Kumbakonam Taluk, Tanjore District (on *Nagaswamy*, the *Linga* of Lord *Siva*), on the Sun in *Suryanar Koil*,

Kumbakonam Taluk, Tanjore District, on the *Linga* in *Kailasanatha* Temple, Taramangalam Taluk, Salem District etc.

The Tiruchirapalli (Trichy) region was the cradle of the *Cholas* during the *Sangam* period. These *Cholas* are the *Sangam Cholas* of the twilight period between history and pre-history as distinct from the Imperial *Cholas*, who belong to the historic period from the 9th Century AD onwards. *Silappathikaram*, one of the Tamil epics gives a beautiful account of the state of Jainism in the *Chola* country during the period of 2nd Century AD. According to the description given in that epic, there was a big *Nigganda Kottam* (temple of *Nigganda* in Tamil, *Nirgandha* in Sanskrit meaning persons free from worldly ties) of a Jain *Tirthankara* or *Arhat* in *Kaveripoompattinam*, the ancient capital city of the *Cholas* before it was washed out by the sea (vestiges can be seen in present *Poompuhar* in Nagapattinam district). *Sravakas* (lay disciples of Jainism) were responsible for the construction of this temple. This temple had a shining *silatala* {stone slab carved with Jain *Pancha Parameshtees*, (refer Kannan Dr. R. et al., 2001, p.20 for details of *Pancha Parameshtees*)} made of *Chandrakanda* (moon stone). A certain class of Jain ascetics, who were known by the name *Saranars* (Jain monks), used to visit this temple during festival celebrations such as special consecrations and *Ther* (Temple Car) festivals. Asim Kumar Chatterjee furnishes more details about these *Saranars* (2000, p.109). The Pandit Hargovind Das Prakrit Dictionary (from Asim Kumar Chatterjee, 2000, p.109) describes *Saranas* as a group of Jain monks. According to the Jain canonical text *Anga* (sub-division, *Sthananga*), they were one of the nine *Ganas* (groups), who directly came under the influence and control of *Mahavira* and were his direct followers. Another canonical work, the *Vyavaharasutra*, refers to them as monks who had served at least fifteen years as monks. From the description found in *Sthananga*, we may presume that the *saranas* were in existence even during *Mahavira*'s time. Asim Kumar Chatterjee sees *Saranas* as the Jain counter part of the *Brahminical Parivrajakas* (wandering saints), wandering all over the country, carrying with them the message of the Jain *Tirthankaras*, *Parsvanatha* and *Mahavira*. The *Vyavaharasutra* describes *sarana-labdhi*, the power possessed by these *saranas* (Asim Kumar Chatterjee, 2000, p.109). These *Saranas* were the monks who were believed to have the greatest knowledge of the past, present and future who were responsible for the popularity of Jainism in Tamilnadu. Their activities and behaviour transformed even the non-Jains to becoming great admirers of the Jain religion and to participate willingly in Jain festivals. *Uraiyur*, once the capital city of the *Cholas* and now a suburb of Trichy, had a Jain temple by the name *Kandan Palli* (A Tamilised form of the *Niggandar* or *Nigganda* used to denote Jain temples). The temple was situated in an extensive grove adjoining *Srirangam* (Tiruvarangam) and the image of *Arivan* (*Arhat* or Omniscient) therein, was described as the first God under the triple umbrellas. This might have been the temple of the first *Tirthankara*, *Adinatha*. The very name Tiruchirapalli itself is an indication of its intimate connection with *Palli*, the Jain name for temple. As in the case of other parts of Tamilnadu, here in Trichy region also, the Jain monuments and sculptures in course of time went into oblivion. However the Government Museum, Trichy after its formation began to gather such forgotten ancient sculptures and architectural remains of the past. It also has the following few Jain sculptures.



SI.No. 30
TIRTHANKARA



SI.No. 31
TIRTHANKARA



SI.No.32
TIRTHANKARA



SI.No.33
MAHAVIRA



SI.No.34
MAHAVIRA

GOVERNMENT MUSEUM, TRICHY

Sl.No. 33. MAHAVIRA

Acc. No. T-3/1984; Ht. 85 cm.; Br. 61 cm.

MULLIKKARUMBUR, TRICHY DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 10th Century AD.

The figure of *Mahavira* is sculpted in seated *ardhaparyankasana* posture on a *simhasana* with a backrest cushion. His hands are kept in *yoga mudra* (placing the palms of the hands one upon another) on the lap. Instead of a rounded *Bha Mandala*, an ornamented arch with flames on the outer rim encircles the head of *Mahavira*. Above the arch is the three-tiered *Mukkudai* crowned with a conical knob. The branches of a tree with floral designs form the backdrop for the *Mukkudai*. The tree branches represent the tree under which *Mahavira* attained his *Kevala Gnana* and the flowers symbolise showers of celestial blossoms (For identifying tree, *Yaksha*, etc., refer Appendices in Kannan Dr. R. et al., 2001). The Hindu equivalent is *Kaivalya Moksha* or salvation. This shows the close linkage between Jain and Hindu doctrines, though there are some differences also, which have been discussed in the previous book (Kannan Dr. R. et al., 2001). The two *Chamara* bearers depicted on either side of the main figure of *Mahavira* are well dressed with ornaments. The one on the right side of *Mahavira* carries the fly whisk in his right hand while his counterpart on the left side carries the fly whisk in his left hand. Both keep their free hand on their hip.

In the absence of the lion, the cognisance symbol of *Mahavira*, the few banyan leaves on the tree branch at the top help us to identify this *Tirthankara* sculpture as that of *Mahavira*. The features of this sculpture make us to fix its date as circa 10th Century AD.

Sl.No. 34. MAHAVIRA

Acc. No. T-68/1999; Ht. 107 cm.; Br. 94 cm.

COLLECTOR'S COMPOUND, TRICHY, TRICHY DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 10th Century AD.

The figure of this seated *Mahavira* in *dhyana mudra* (meditative pose) is mostly worn out. The left and right knees are broken and missing. Since it is embedded in a cement pedestal, we could not observe whether the lion cognisance of *Mahavira Tirthankara* on the pedestal is present or not.

Sl.No. 35. NEMINATHA

Acc. No. T-3/1985; Ht. 73 cm.; Br. 28 cm.

SANKALIYANDAPURAM, TRICHY, TRICHY DISTRICT, TAMILNADU,

Circa 10th Century AD.

This well formed relief sculpture is entered in the Museum register as *Neminatha*, the twenty second *Tirthankara*. The *Tirthankara* is shown nude, young and beautiful - the appearance prescribed for a *Tirthankara* image by Jain canons. The image is depicted in *Kayotsarga* posture with a broad face elongated earlobes and a stout body. Two dwarf size *Chamara* bearers flank the *Tirthankara* on either side. *Mukkudai* is shown just above the head. A small portion of the *Mukkudai* and portions of the right hand wrist and fingers are broken and missing. The *Srivatsa* mark decorates the chest of the *Tirthankara*. This is a rare and unusual feature for South Indian Jain icons.

Neminatha was the son of *Samudravijaya*, the king of *Souryapura* (*Mathura*) and *Sivadevi*

(Bhattacharya B.C., 1974, p.57). *Samudravijaya* was a scion of the famous *Yadava* family of Lord *Krishna*. According to Jain traditions, *Neminatha's* cousin brother was the famous God of Hinduism, *Krishna*. *Krishna* was the son of *Vasudeva*, the youngest brother of *Samudravijaya*. *Neminatha* had another name *Arishtanemi*. Before the birth of *Neminatha*, his mother *Sivadevi* saw a wheel of black jewels in her dreams. On account of this he was called as *Arishtanemi* (Bhattacharya B.C., 1974, p.58). *Gomedha Yaksha* and *Yakshi Ambika* are his *Sasana Devatas* or attendant deities.

Neminatha was both bold and strong. But from his boyhood, he was averse to worldly pleasures. Once when *Neminatha* visited the armoury of *Krishna*, for sheer fun he lifted up with ease the heavy mace of *Krishna*, tried the bow and turned around a number of times the mighty *Sudarsan Chakra* and blew hard the Conch of *Krishna*, *Panchajanya* (Shah U.P., 1987, p. 289). This event revealed the enormous strength possessed by *Neminatha*. In spite of this physical strength, *Neminatha* had no desire to marry. So, his father *Samudravijaya* asked *Krishna* to persuade his son to agree to a marriage proposal. *Krishna* took *Neminatha* for water-sports along with his queens. There the queens requested *Neminatha* to marry for which he merely smiled. *Neminatha's* silence was taken as consent and the marriage of *Neminatha* with Princess *Rajmati* was immediately arranged. After the completion of all arrangements, the bride-groom's party started in a procession for going to the bride's pavilion, with *Neminatha* decked in rich garments and ornaments. On his way *Neminatha* saw a number of crying animals impounded in a big enclosure. Overcome with pity he enquired (as Buddha did) of his charioteer about the purpose for which the animals were kept there in such a deplorable condition. The charioteer replied that the animals kept there were for the wedding feast of *Neminatha*. Alarmed at the thought of such a large scale slaughter imminent on his account, *Neminatha* ordered his charioteer to turn back. The compassionate *Neminatha* immediately renounced all worldly pleasures.

The conch is the cognisance symbol of *Neminatha*, but in this sculpture the cognisance is absent. Ofcourse we have examples, where even in the absence of the prescribed cognisance, the *Tirthankara* sculptures are identified, because they have been in use for a long time. The tallest Jain sculpture in Tamilnadu, the standing *Neminatha* sculpture in *Tirumalai*, Polur Taluk, Tiruvannamalai district has no cognisance on its pedestal. But the inscriptions and the traditional sayings refer to the 16 ½ feet tall *Tirthankara* as *Neminatha*. Dr. Ekambaranathan tends to identify the central figure of the three seated Jain sculptures on the back wall of the sanctum of the famous *Sittannavasal* cave cut Jain temple as *Neminatha* (Ekambaranathan Dr A., 2002, p.66). We are respectfully disagreeing with this identification, which we discuss below while describing *Sittannavasal*. As pointed out by Dr. Ekambaranathan, the huge seated *Neminatha* sculpture now kept in the front *Mandapa* (hall) of the temple at the foot hill of *Tirumalai*, Polur Taluk has no conch symbol. But the bamboo leaves carved on the upper part of the sculpture helps us to identify the *Tirthankara* as *Neminatha* on the basis of his attainment of *Kevala Gnana* under the cool shadow of bamboo trees (*Sl.No.36*).

Sl.No. 37. SUMATINATHA

Acc. No. T-2/1985; Ht. 66 cm.; Br. 24 cm.

SANKALIYANDAPURAM, TRICHY, TRICHY DISTRICT, TAMILNADU,

Circa 10th Century AD.

This sculpture also came from the same site of *Sankaliyandapuram*, like the previous one (*Sl. No.35*). Though there is no clear cognisance symbol of the fifth *Tirthankara*, *Sumatinatha* on the pedestal, it is recorded in the Museum register as *Sumatinatha*. In North India, *Sumatinatha* sculptures have a red goose



SI.No.35
NEMINATHA



SI.No.36
NEMINATHA



SI.No.37
SUMATINATHA



SI.No.38
SUPARSVANATHA

as their cognisance symbol. But in the south, the wheel is considered as the symbol of *Sumatinatha*. The present sculpture has neither the red goose nor the wheel.

The figure of this *Tirthankara* is depicted in *Kayotsarga* posture with elongated ear lobes. The *Srivatsa* symbol is found on the chest. Usually *Tirthankara* images from South India do not have *Srivatsa* (Sivaramamurti C., 1954, p.44-46). As such this sculpture and the previous one (*Sl. No. 35*) reveal North Indian influence.

Sumatinatha was the son of King *Megaprabha* and Queen *Sumangala*. He belonged to the *Ikshvaku* race of *Ayodhya*. *Tumburu* and *Purushadatta* are his *Yaksha* and *Yakshi*. In the *Bhagavata Purana* of Hinduism, we have references to *Sumatinatha*. This *Purana* describes *Sumatinatha* as the grandson of *Adinatha* and a follower of the latter. Further it states that *Sumatinatha* will be worshipped in Kali ages by unrighteous and non-Aryan people as their God (Asim Kumar Chatterjee, 2000, p. 4-5). From this it is clear that Aryan refers to people who are righteous or noble and follow *Sanatana Dharma* i.e. Hinduism. It does not refer to a race as 19th Century AD British historians have propagated. They have spread the pernicious theory to facilitate the British Raj to create a division among the South Indian people in accordance with the theory of Divide and Rule (Divide et Impera) (Kannan Dr. R., 2000).

Sl.No. 38. SUPARSVANATHA

Acc. No. T-151/1990; Ht. 107 cm.; Br. 45 cm.

CANTONMENT POLICE STATION COMPOUND, TRICHY, TRICHY DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 10th Century AD.

The image of *Suparsvanatha* is sculpted in the *Kayotsarga* posture with a canopy of a five-headed cobra. At the back of the *Jina* (one who has attained *Nirvana*) is the body of a cobra running down along the entire body of the *Jina* in a zigzag way.

The seventh *Tirthankara*, *Suparsvanatha* was born as the son of King *Supratistha* and Queen *Prithvi* in Banares. The mystic cross *Swastika* is his cognisance symbol. *Matanga* and *Kali* are his *Yaksha* and *Yakshi*. The *Svetambara* sect considers his *Yakshi* to be *Santa*. As he was endowed, from birth, with beautiful sides he was called as *Suparsva* (Bhattacharya B.C., 1974, p.44). *Sattvasaroddhara*, a North Indian Jain work prescribes the number of the heads of the cobra associated with *Suparsvanatha*. It should be either one or five or nine (Bhattacharya B.C., 1974, p.43). The figure of *Suparsvanatha* in the 14th Century AD *Adi Nishidhi* pillar from *Danavulappadu*, Andhra Pradesh is depicted with a single headed snake (Kannan Dr. R. et al., 2001, p. 36-37). But *Sattvasaroddhara*'s prescription does not tally fully with the sculptures in Tamilnadu. We have many *Parsvanatha* sculptures with five-headed cobras in Tamilnadu. The *Parsvanatha* Sculpture panel in the *Pechchipallam Keezhakkuyil Kudi* cave near Madurai illustrated in (*Sl. No. 58*) is an important piece of evidence for our statement. In this panel, the *Parsvanatha* image is sculpted with his devotees, the *Yaksha Dharanendra*, *Yakshi Padmavati* and his adversary *Kamata*. *Kamata* is depicted in the act of hurling a huge rock on the meditating *Parsvanatha*. Later after being unsuccessful with *Parsvanatha*, *Kamata* realised his folly. He then pays homage to *Parsvanatha*, kneeling on the right side of *Parsvanatha*. *Yakshi Padmavati* is on the left side of *Parsvanatha* holding a parasol. *Dharanendra* in the form of a cobra protects *Parsvanatha* by spreading his hood above the head of the *Tirthankara*. Here his heads (some writers use hoods; strictly speaking there is only one common hood with five heads) are five in number. But in *Uttamapalayam* of Madurai district, we have a standing *Parsvanatha* on a lotus pedestal with a seven-headed cobra. Thus in Tamilnadu, the *Parsvanatha* sculptures have both the seven headed and five headed snakes according to the wishes of the persons responsible for their sculpting.

PUDUKOTTAI REGION

From about the 3rd Century BC to about the 13th Century AD, Jains had their centres in many parts of Pudukottai. A number of caverns and sculptures relating to Jainism have been found in various places of the present Pudukottai district and they reveal the popularity that Jainism once had in this district. Jain ascetics, keen on freeing themselves from the shackles of the world, were on the look out for places with a calm atmosphere. In such places they could practise religious austerities and do penance. Pudukottai with its many quiet and cool natural caverns in the small hills offered ideal places for them. The caverns and small hills in and around Pudukottai became the dwelling places of Jain saints. Among the many places where Jainism thrived well in the Pudukottai region, *Sittannavasal*, *Chettipatti*, *Sembattur*, *Nartamalai*, *Tenimalai* and *Mosakkudi* are important. In Pudukottai town itself two places have yielded Jain sculptures. One Jain sculpture has been found on *Sadayapparai*, a small hill near *Tirugokarnam* in Pudukottai. This sculpture, which is worshipped even today by the local people as "*Sadayapparai Muni*" is a Jain *Tirthankara* in seated *dhyana mudra* with the triple umbrella over the head. Three Jain temples have been found at *Chettippatti* with fragmentary inscriptions (Venkatarama Ayyar K.R., 2002, p. 1022-23). From the inscription, we know that the temple was associated with one *Udaya Matisakara Arukar Acharyan*, a famous Jain *Acharya* of the 10th Century AD. The monastery attached to this temple was called *Ainûtruva Perumpalli* endowed by *Jayavira Perilamaiyar*, a member of a guild of 500 merchants. In *Sembattur*, near the *Palli ûrani* channel, we have the remains of a Jain shrine. *Tirthankara*, *Yakshi* images and pillar shafts with a lion base are found there. The inscription at *Tenimalai* (Sl.No. 9, Inscriptions of Pudukottai State, 2002, p. 8) informs about the Jain ascetic *Malayatirajan*, who lived at that time. An *Irukkuvel* chief (the family title of Kodumbalur chieftains circa 9th - 10th Century AD) gave this ascetic rent-free land as an endowment for his maintenance. Together with *Sittannavasal*, *Annavasal* was an ancient Jain centre. Two *Tirthankara* sculptures are found on the west of *Palli ûrani* channel in the village. One of them is headless.

Sittannavasal is about 12 kilometres north west of the town of Pudukottai. It was once an important centre of Jainism where Jainism flourished for over 1500 years, from the 3rd century BC to 13th Century AD. The *Sittannavasal* hillock which runs approximately from north to south has a natural cavern on the eastern side of the hill. In that cavern, 17 beds have been scooped out of the surface of the rock for Jain ascetics to rest and to perform austerities such as *Kayotsarga* and fasting. Most of the stone beds are inscribed. The 13th bed contains an important inscription of 3rd and 2nd century BC in Asokan Brahmi characters of a type peculiar to South India (Ramachandran T.N., 1961, p.30). This inscription gives the names of the persons who first occupied the stone beds and of those who commissioned it to be carved for the saints. The inscription informs that *Situposil Ilaiyar* made this *adhistanam* for *Kavudi Ithen*, who was born in *Kumattur* in *Euminadu*. According to T.N.Ramachandran, the word *adhistanam* is used here in the specific sense of a place where one spends one's life in the fulfilment of a vow or resolution. *Situposil* is the ancient name of *Sittannavasal*, which means the abode of *siddhas* and *arhats*. *Kavudi* is an ancient title, which used to be bestowed on agriculturists. *Ilaiyar*, a native of *Sittannavasal*, made a stone bed for the agriculturist *Ithen*. Dr.A.Ekambaranathan infers Mysore area as the native place of *Ithen*. (Ekambaranathan Dr. A., 2002, p.10).

But T.N.Ramachandran's inference made on the basis of the report given in the South Indian Inscriptions (Volume - V, 1986) seems more probable. According to T.N.Ramachandran's inference, *Ithen* was a native of *Kumattur* in modern Tindivanam region, which was called as *Erumanadu* in ancient times. Two more inscriptions found on the same rock bed inform us of its continuous use for the purpose of performing *sallehana* (fast unto death). First, in the 3rd-2nd centuries BC, *Kavudi Ithen*, then in the 7th century AD, the Jain monk *Koyamanur Kadavulan* from *Koyamanur*, the present *Kovanur* in Tirumayyam Taluk, Pudukottai District and lastly a Jain, *Sramana Tittai Chanan* from *Tittai* near Thanjavur used it for this purpose. The first, seventh, eighth and fourteenth beds also contain inscriptions, which tell the names of other Jain ascetics who performed their austerities here up to the 10th century AD.

The *Sittannavasal* cave temple in the middle of the hill has simple and elegant architecture. It consists of a cubical *sanctum* with a rectangular *ardhamandapa* facing west. The façade of the *ardhamandapa* has two pillars, cubical at the top and bottom, with an octagonal shaft between the cubical parts and two pilasters of the same kind, one at either end. They support corbels with roll ornamentation and a median flat band over which runs the architrave beam with a projecting cornice. The sanctum and the *ardhamandapa* contain sculptures of *Tirthankaras* and saints. The Southern wall of the *ardhamandapa* has the bas-relief sculpture of a seated *Parsvanatha* with a five-hooded cobra (*Pannaga*), in sitting posture in a niche (*Sl.No.39*). Opposite to this, in the northern wall, is shown the figure of a saint seated in *dhyana* under a single umbrella. (*Sl.No.40*) An inscription on the bottom of the pillar nearby tells us that this figure is that of a *Tiruvasiriyar* (a saint-teacher). The back wall of the sanctum contains three seated figures in *dhyana* posture. Triple umbrellas have been shown over the seated figures on the north and centre. But the last one on the south has only one umbrella. Dr.A.Ekambaranathan identifies these figures as those of *Adinatha*, *Neminatha* and *Mahavira* (Ekambaranathan Dr. A., 2002, p.66). But they seem to be those of *Adinatha*, *Mahavira* and an *Arhat* (venerated saint). One umbrella shows lordship over this world only, while three umbrellas show lordship over the three worlds, i.e. heaven, earth and the nether world. *Tirthankaras* are considered to be lords of the three worlds while a saint-teacher is lord of one world only. A figure with the same iconographic feature as seen above has an inscription as *Tiruvasiriyar* (a saint-teacher). Therefore, this appears to be conclusive evidence.

The ceiling of the sanctum and *ardhamandapa* contain paintings. The ceiling of the sanctum has a carpet pattern canopy with ornamental borders and a pattern of squares and circles within. The ceiling of the *ardhamandapa* contains the scene of a lotus tank with men, animals and water beings. A Tamil inscription on the surface of the rock near the southern end of the façade calls this temple as *Arivar koil* (temple of the *Arhat*). The inscription tells that a Jain *Acharya* named *Ilam Goutaman* renovated and embellished the *ardhamandapa* and added a *Mukha mandapa* in front of the cave temple during the reign of the Pandya king, *Srimara Srivallabha* (815-62 AD). Thus the present shape of this temple was given by *Ilam Gautaman* in the 9th Century AD.

When Dr.Paramasivam and K.R.Srinivasan were engaged to clean the paintings, they found out a patch of old painting representing conventional carpet design over which a new layer of paintings was

superimposed. The new layer of paintings commissioned by *Ilam Goutaman* depicts the Jaina *Samavasarana* (some authors call it *Samavasravana*, an auditorium specially designed for Jain *Tirthankaras* for the discourse normally given by them on attaining *Kevala Gnana*) and the *Khatika-bhumi* (a part of the *Samavasarana* auditorium), including a lotus tank, flowers, animals, *bhavyas* (Jains who are considered as pure souls), dancing *apsaras* (celestial danseuses), a royal couple and *hamsas* (swans). K.A. Nilakanta Sastri sees in these paintings "a connecting link between Ajanta and Thanjavur painting of the *Chola* period". Originally the entire *Arivar koil*, including the bas-relief sculptures in the sanctum and *ardhamandapa* was covered with plaster and painted. T.N.Ramachandran has explained at length the superiority of the *Sittannavasal* craftsmanship over that of Ajanta. "The ground plaster in Ajanta, Ellora, Sigria and Bagh which is covered by a thin lime wash and is painted, is of mud, mostly clay or alluvium and silica or sand mixed with small quantities of lime and other organic materials such as cow-dung, husks or vegetable fibres acting as binding medium. The paint is of mineral colours with glue mixture which serves as a fixture". In the case of *Sittannavasal*, "the ground plaster is a lime plaster, a mixture of lime and sand with a thin layer of fine lime plaster over it, on which the paintings are executed in mineral colours without gum or glue adhesive being mixed" (Ramachandran T.N., 1961, p.53).

The Government Museum, Pudukottai also has beautiful Jain sculptures and rare bronzes collected from the Pudukottai region. Nine stone sculptures and five bronzes have been collected. All of them have been displayed in the gallery.

GOVERNMENT MUSEUM, PUDUKOTTAI

SCULPTURES

Sl.No. 41. CHAMARA BEARER

Acc. No. 7; Ht. 55 cm.; Br. 37 cm.

VELLANUR, PUDUKOTTAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 13th Century AD.

The figure depicts a *Chamara* bearer. He is holding the *Chamara* in his right hand. The left hand is kept on the left thigh. The sculpture is broken at the left upper thigh and right lower thigh.

Sl.No. 42. CHAMARA BEARER

Acc. No. 8; Ht. 39.5 cm.; Br. 38 cm.

VELLANUR, PUDUKOTTAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 13th Century AD.

In this figure also, the *Chamara* bearer is shown holding the *Chamara* in his right hand. Unlike the previous one, here the head is tilted towards his left side. The sculpture is broken at the stomach and at the left upper arm.



SI.No.39
PARSVANATHA



SI.No.40
TIRUVASIRIYAN



SI.No.41
CHAMARA BEARER



SI.No.42
CHAMARA BEARER



SI.No.43
MAHAVIRA

Sl.No. 43. MAHAVIRA

Acc. No. 4; Ht. 100 cm.; Br. 90 cm.

VELLANUR, PUDUKOTTAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 10th Century AD.

The figure of *Mahavira* is sculpted seated in *ardhaparyankasana* posture on a lotus pedestal. Of the eight *pratiharyas* (symbols signifying a *Tirthankara*), six viz. the lion throne, *Chamara* bearers, *Bha Mandala*, triple umbrella, shower of heavenly blossoms and the tree under which the *Tirthankara* attained his *Kevala Gnana* (Knowledge of the Omniscient) are depicted. The portion above the neck in the sculpture is completely damaged. In spite of this, the figure of *Mahavira* is very charming, as it has the features of the *Chola* school of art.

Sl.No. 44. MAHAVIRA

Acc. No. 5; Ht. 35 cm.; Br. 33 cm.

VELLANUR, PUDUKOTTAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 13th Century AD

The figure of *Mahavira* is depicted seated in *dhyana mudra* (meditative pose). *Chamara* bearers are shown on either side of the main figure. The part above the head is broken and missing. Though the sculpture is recorded as *Mahavira* in the Museum register, the lion, the cognisance symbol of *Mahavira* is not found.

Sl.No. 45. MAHAVIRA

Acc. No. 6; Ht. 37 cm.; Br. 26.5 cm.

VELLANUR, PUDUKOTTAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 13th Century AD

The figure of *Mahavira* is shown seated in *dhyana mudra*. The head is depicted as having curled hair. *Bha Mandala* is shown above the head. Over the *Bha Mandala* is the triple umbrella. On either side of the *Tirthankara* are the *Chamara* bearers. Though this sculpture is also registered as *Mahavira* in the Museum record, the cognisance symbol of *Mahavira*, the lion is not to be seen.

Sl.No. 46. PARSVANATHA

Acc. No. 2; Ht. 162.5 cm.; Br. 37 cm.;

MOSAKKUDI, PUDUKOTTAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 9th Century AD..

The nearly life size figure of the 23rd *Tirthankara*, *Parsvanatha* (the immediate predecessor of the last *Tirthankara*, *Mahavira*) is depicted in the *Kayotsarga* posture on a lotus pedestal. The curly hair on the head of the figure of *Parsvanatha* is vivid. A five-headed snake spreads its hood over the head of *Parsvanatha* as a canopy. According to *Kalpa Sutra*, *Parsvanatha* was the son of *Asvasena*, King of *Varanasi* by his Queen *Vama*. *Dharanendra* and *Padmavati* are his *Yaksha* and *Yakshi*.

Parsvanatha was the first historical prophet of ancient India to expound the real significance of *Ahimsa*. Though we see the concept of non-violence (*Ahimsa*) in the earlier *Upanishadic* works and Mahabharata, *Parsvanatha's* message of *Ahimsa* became more powerful as it was the entire focus of his message. His other teachings are not to steal, not to lie and not to own or possess physical objects. These are to be found in all schools of Indian philosophy – the concept of nihilism i.e. attachment to sensory objects brings only unhappiness. *Parsvanatha* preached his religion about 800 BC according to mid 20th Century school of historians, though at present there are claims of evidence of earlier dates. The term *Nirgrantha* (*niggantha* in *Prakrit* i.e. knotless) was first invented by *Parsvanatha* and later came to denote his followers (Asim Kumar Chatterjee, 2000, p.13). Ancient Tamil classical works like *Silappathikaram* and others refer to Jains as *Niggandar*. An important point to bear in mind is that *Parsvanatha* bore no prejudice against women. He never hesitated to allow women to embrace ascetic life. The *Nirayavalika*, an *Upanga* canonical text (sub-division of *Anga* text) narrates the event of the conversion of one *Bhuya*, the daughter of *Sudarsana*, a merchant of *Rajagriha* (near *Nalanda* in Bihar) to *Parsvanatha's* faith. She was converted by *Pupphachoola*, the principal lady disciple of *Parsvanatha*.

The slim body, oval face and the graceful posture of this beautiful sculpture exhibits the stylistic features of the *Chola* school of Art. The treatment of the hood and heads of the cobra is very similar to the one we see in the seated *Parsvanatha* sculpture in the Jain cave cut-in temple at *Sittannavasal*. In both cases, the number of the heads is five, the iconographic identification of the seventh *Tirthankara*, *Suparsvanatha* in Karnataka and North India. But in Tamilnadu, as we have discussed elsewhere the five headed cobra is associated with *Parsvanatha* also. From its charming features reflecting the *Chola* School of art, this sculpture may be dated to circa 9th Century AD.

SI.No. 47. TIRTHANKARA

Acc. No. 1; Ht. 18 cm.; Br. 91.5 cm.

VALAMANGALAM, PUDUKOTTAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 13th Century AD.

The majestic figure of the *Tirthankara* is sculpted in seated *dhyana* posture on a *badhrasana* (rectangular pedestal). The robust body and the square countenance of this sculpture establish that it is a work of the period of the Imperial *Cholas* of *Thanjavur*.

SI.No. 48. TIRTHANKARA

Acc. No. 3; Ht. 160 cm.; Br. 92 cm.

MOSAKKUDI, PUDUKOTTAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 13th Century AD.

The figure of the *Tirthankara* is depicted in seated *dhyana* posture. The figure is designed with a face that is square and has elongated ear lobes. The *Mukkudai* is shown over the head in three tiers.



SI.No.44
MAHAVIRA



SI.No.45
MAHAVIRA



SI.No.46
PARSVANATHA



SI.No.47
TIRTHANKARA



SI.No.48
TIRTHANKARA



SI.No.49
TIRTHANKARA

Sl.No. 49. TIRTHANKARA

Acc. No. 9; Ht. 80 cm.; Br. 49.5 cm.

VELLANUR, PUDUKOTTAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU.

Circa 13th Century AD.

The figure of the *Tirthankara* is shown in the seated *ardhaparyankasana dhyana* posture on a throne with backrest. The right side of the main figure, the *Tirthankara* is broken and missing. In this part there might have been a figure of a *chamara* bearer. On the left side is the other *chamara* bearer. Portions of the figure containing the head are broken and missing.

BRONZES

Sl.No. 50. ADINATHA IN CHATURVIMSATI

Acc. No. 33; Ht. 27.5 cm.; Br. 19 cm.

PUDUKOTTAI TOWN, PUDUKOTTAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU,

Circa 10th Century AD..

This interesting *Chaturvimsati Patta* (bronze having a set of twenty four *Tirthankaras*) with *Adinatha* as the *Mula Nayaka* (main deity) and four other Jain bronzes were found within the campus of the Raja's college in Pudukottai town circa 1920-1930 AD. The main *Tirthankara*, *Adinatha* is depicted in the *Kayotsarga* posture on a lotus pedestal, which in turn is fixed on a rectangular pedestal. As the top layer of this rectangular pedestal has been worn out due to age and unfavourable conditions, the figure of the main *Tirthankara* came out as a separate piece from the *Chaturvimsati patta*. The figure of *Adinatha* alone is 16 cm high. A *relievo* of the other twenty-three *Tirthankaras* seated in *dhyana* pose is arranged in the frame of the *Prabha Mandala* in miniature size. The separated standing figure could be identified as *Adinatha* by the long tuft of hair shown hanging on either side of his head over the shoulders. This is one of the identifications of *Adinatha*. On the front side of the worn out pedestal is the figure of a bull, the cognisance of *Adinatha*. On either side of this pedestal are depicted the *Sasana Devatas* of *Adinatha*, the *Yaksha*, *Gomukha* and *Yakshi*, *Chakresvari*. The treatment of the upper part of the *Prabha Mandala* and the *alavattam* (long stick with decorated head like a totem carried by an attendant before high dignitaries to signify their coming) with a *peepul* (Indian fig, *Ficus religiosa*) leaf like top fixed with the frame of the *prabha* reveals the features of the *Rashtrakuta* style of art. On the basis of this fact, the place of the origin of this bronze may be surmised. This image might have been come from somewhere in the present Karnataka region. The design and style of this bronze is very similar to that of the 9th century AD, *Kogali Chaturvimsati Patta*, now in the collection of the Government Museum, Chennai (described more fully in Sl. No. 45 in Kannan Dr. R. et al., 2001). The features of this bronze are characteristic of the circa 10th Century AD period.

SI.No. 51. PARSVANATHA

Acc. No. 35; Ht. 21.5 cm.; Br. 7 cm.

PUDUKOTTAI TOWN, PUDUKOTTAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 8th Century AD.

The figure of *Parsvanatha* is depicted in the *Kayotsarga* posture. Its pedestal is missing. A five-headed snake spreads its hood as a canopy over the head of *Parsvanatha*. The face and the torso with broad chest and the slightly protruding stomach are very natural. But the hands and legs have been made thin and attractive. Again this bronze also exhibits *Rashtrakuta* (present Karnataka and Andhra) features.

SI.No. 52. PARSVANATHA

Acc. No. 36; Ht. 10 cm.; Br. 7 cm.

PUDUKOTTAI TOWN, PUDUKOTTAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 10th Century AD.

This miniature bronze image of *Parsvanatha* stands in *Kayotsarga* posture on a lotus pedestal with a rectangular base. A five-headed cobra spreads its hood as a canopy over the head of *Parsvanatha*.

SI.No. 53. TIRTHANKARA

Acc. No. 34; Ht.; 49.5 cm.; Br. 11 cm.

PUDUKOTTAI TOWN, PUDUKOTTAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU,

Circa 12th Century AD.

The figure of *Tirthankara* is sculpted in *Kayotsarga* posture on a lotus pedestal moulded with a square base. Two pikes and four rings are provided in the pedestal for setting the *prabha* and to fasten the image with a bigger pedestal. In design and style this bronze belongs to the group of *Singanikuppam* and *Gidangal Tirthankara* bronzes. But in depicting emotions like poise and a smiling countenance this is more vivid and therefore can be considered of better quality.

SI.No. 54. TIRTHANKARA

Acc. No. 37; Ht.; 10.5 cm.; Br. 6 cm.

PUDUKOTTAI TOWN, PUDUKOTTAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU,

Circa 16th Century AD.

The figure of the *Tirthankara* is shown seated in *ardhaparyankasana* posture on a lotus pedestal with a rectangular base. Provision is made on the sides of the pedestal to insert the *prabha*.



SI.No.50
ADINATHA IN CHATURVIMSATI



SI.No.51
PARSVANATHA



SI.No.52
PARSVANATHA



SI.No.53
TIRTHANKARA



SI.No.54
TIRTHANKARA

MADURAI REGION

Madurai, the capital of the ancient *Pandya* kings (as distinguished from the later *Pandyas* of the 13th Century AD) was the most important strong hold of Jainism during the *Sangam* age. *Madurai Kanji*, a *Sangam* period literary work refers to a great Jain temple at Madurai. The temple of the *Niggandar* (Jains) at Madurai was built of stone. Its walls were exceedingly high and painted red. Outside the walls were pretty little flower gardens. A large number of the followers of the *Nigganda* faith (Jainism) thronged there to see their monks. In *Silappathikaram*, there is reference to a famous Madurai Jain temple of *Arivan*. *Kavundi Adikal*, a female Jain ascetic who accompanied the hero and heroine of the epic, in their journey to Madurai was anxious to visit Madurai in order to worship *Arivan* in the Madurai Jain temple. In the same epic, we also have a reference for the *Yakshi* cult. *Madhuri*, a shepherdess, living on the outskirts of Madurai worshipped a *Yakshi* by offering rice cooked in milk.

Jainism enjoyed great popularity in the Madurai region till the conversion of the *Pandya* King, *Kun Pandyan* from Jainism to *Saivism* by the joint efforts of his queen and minister and by the miraculous cure effected by the *Saivite* saint *Sambandar*. In spite of this setback, Jainism thrived as a powerful religion in the succeeding four centuries from 7th century AD onwards. The many sites in and around Madurai region even now contain a large number of Jain relics and monuments in the form of caverns, inscriptions and sculptures. They give evidence for the popularity enjoyed by Jainism in this area from 3rd Century BC to 13th Century AD. However, in the pre-Christian era, the caverns were places where the Jain monks used to lead a life of seclusion. The same caverns and some other caverns became pilgrimage spots from the 7th Century AD onwards, testifying to the involvement of the common people with Jainism. Though the *Pandya* kings adopted *Saivism* or *Vaishnavism*, they followed the usual eclectic policy of Hindu rulers. Though *Kun Pandyan* became a staunch *Saivite* after his conversion, his grandson *Arikesari Parankusa Maravarman*, alias *Rajasimha*'s marital relation with the Jain *Ganga* dynasty helped the flow of Jain monks from the *Ganga* region (present Karnataka region) to the *Pandya* country.

Around 8th Century AD, eight important Jain centres developed on the hills around Madurai. They are referred to in the ancient Tamil literary works as *Enperunkunram* (eight great hills). The *Periya Puranam* of the 12th Century AD narrates that about 8000 Jains lived in these hills. Of the eight centres, five have been identified. They are

1. *Parankunram*
2. *Thiruvuruvakam (Samanar Malai)*
3. *Kuranti Malai (Palli)*
4. *Anai Malai* and
5. *Alagar Malai*. (Vedachalam Dr. V, 2000, p.8).

Dr. Vedachalam would like us to consider *Nagamalai (Kongar puliyankulam)*, *Arittapatti Malai (Thirupinayan Malai)* and *Kilavalavu* for inclusion in the list of eight great hills. All these centres contain Jain inscriptions and rock cut sculptures covering a period of 1600 years from about 3rd Century BC to the 13th century AD.

Thiruvuvakam is 12 kilometres away from Madurai on the Madurai-Cumbum High Road. It comprises of two adjoining hills. The hill on the east side has *Keezhakkuyilkudi* in its vicinity. The other side of *Keezhakkuyilkudi* hill is called *Melakkuyilkudi*. The *Melakkuyilkudi* hill has a cavern with 12 rock beds used by the Jain monks in the early centuries of the Christian era. Unfortunately the unrestricted quarrying in this part has weakened the structural strength of the monument. On a rainy day the covering stone of the cavern slipped down.

On the east side of the hill there are two spots with Jain sculptures and inscriptions. On the south side of the hill is the *Chettipudavu* spot. Here are six bas-relief sculptures of *Tirthankaras* and *Yakshi Ambika*. The *Tirthankara* carved at the entrance of the cave is a master piece of Jain Art (Sl.No. 55). *Pechchipallam*, the second spot on the other side has eight carvings. The figure of *Bahubali* finds a place in this group of sculptures (Sl.No. 56). *Bahubali* is the second son of the first *Tirthankara*, *Adinatha*. Three sculptures depict the figures of seated *Tirthankaras*. *Parsvanatha* is depicted in four sculptures. Of these figures, the one sculpted in between the two-seated *Tirthankaras* is important for its artistic treatment and iconographic speciality (Sl.No. 57). In this bas-relief sculpture, the *Yaksha Dharanendra* is shown in his therianthropomorphic form (combined form of human being and beast, to which divine qualities are ascribed (snake in this case)), holding *chamaras* in his two arms above the head of *Parsvanatha*. *Dharanendra* is shown in human form up to the chest from the top, with his hood over his head, which is in human form. The remaining portion of his body below his chest is concealed by the standing figure of *Parsvanatha*. *Anamalai* and *Kazhugumalai* are two other centres where we can see a similar type of *Dharanendra* in his therianthropomorphic form.

In another panel, a *Parsvanatha* image is sculpted with his devotees, *Yaksha Dharanendra*, *Yakshi Padmavathi* and his adversary *Kamata*. *Kamata* is depicted in the action of hurling a huge rock on the meditating *Parsvanatha*. Later, after *Kamata* realised his folly, he pays homage, kneeling on the right side of *Parsvanatha*. *Yakshi Padmavathi* on the left side of *Parsvanatha* holds a parasol (Sl.No. 58).

The *Kongarpuliyankulam* Jain cavern is situated in the Tirumangalam Taluk of Madurai district and lies at the 20th Kilometre of Madurai – Theni main road. Here in a natural cavern more than 50 stone beds have been cut for the Jain Monks. Three Brahmi inscriptions dated to the 2nd century BC are also engraved in the brow-cut (face) of the hanging rock. The beds are neatly carved with raised pillows. On the left side of these beds, a *Tirthankara* image is also cut and below that an inscription is engraved but not traceable because of mutilation (Sl.No. 59). This monument is protected by the State Department of Archaeology.

The present *Umaiyyandar* temple is on the southern side rock of the *Tirupparankundram* hill. Originally this cave temple was dedicated to a Jain *Tirthankara*. It has a cell facing east and a front mandapa with pillars and pilasters. In this cell, a Jain *Tirthankara* image might have been carved but in later days it was converted into a *Siva* Temple. On the top of the head of the present *Ardhanarisvara* sculpture, the branches of a *peepul* tree are seen, which shows that it is a remnant of the original Jain sculpture (Sl.No. 60). From the 13th century AD Tamil inscription engraved in the walls opposite to the Sanctum Sanctorum, we come to know that this temple was converted into a *Siva* temple, *Sundarapandiya Isvaram* in 1223 AD as per the



SI.No.55
TIRTHANKARA



SI.No.56
BAHUBALI



SI.No.57
PARSVANATHA



SI.No.58
PARSVANATHA



SI.No.59
TIRTHANKARA



SI.No.60
ARDHANARISVARA



SI.No.61
BAHUBALI AND TIRTHANKARAS

request of a *Saiva Saint, Prasanna Devar*. Now, this temple is maintained by the Archaeological Survey of India as a protected monument.

In *Yanaimalai*, the attack of *Kamata* and *Dharanendra's* protection of *Parsvanatha* have been vividly carved along with the figures of *Bahubali* and *Thirthankaras* (Sl.No. 61). Twenty years ago, Thiru Chandramoorthy of the State Archaeology Department of the Government of Tamilnadu discovered a mutilated Jain *Tirthankara* stone sculpture (Height 145 cm; Breadth 86 cm.) in *Suttamalli* village, Tirupattur Taluk of present Sivaganga District. His enquiries revealed that there was a Jain temple and that this sculpture and a bronze in the collection of the Government Museum, Chennai listed as Sl.No.67 in our previous publication (Kannan Dr. R. et al., 2001, p.95) belong to this place.

Besides the Jain monuments dotting various spots in the hills around Madurai, the Museums in the city have a few Jain sculptures collected as surface collection. The Government Museum, Madurai, has a seated *Tirthankara* sculpture received from the Government Museum, Chennai at the time of its formation circa 1983 AD. The *Tirumalai Nayak* Palace Site Museum of the Department of Archaeology has half a dozen sculptures collected from Madurai and its adjoining districts.

GOVERNMENT MUSEUM, MADURAI.

Sl.No. 62. PADMAPRABHA

Acc. No. 342/80; Ht. 80 cm.; Br. 38 cm.

PULIYUR, KODAMBAKKAM, CHENNAI, TAMILNADU

Circa 13th Century AD.

This sculpture received for the Madurai Museum from the collection of the Chennai Government Museum in the eighties of the last century is depicted in the seated *ardhaparyankasana* posture on a rectangular pedestal. It has a decorated cylindrical backrest. Two *chamara* bearers in diminutive size are shown on each side of the seated *Tirthankara* at the level of his shoulder above the backrest. A *Prabha* (decorative arch) encircles the head of the *Tirthankara*. Above the arch, the *Mukkudai* is shown. On the left side of the *Tirthankara*, the portion of the sculpture, where the figure of the *Chamara* bearer would have been depicted, is broken and missing.

This image is recorded as *Tirthankara* in the Museum record. But three full-blown flowers carved on the pedestal help us to identify the figure exactly. Red lotus is the cognisance of *Padmaprabha*, the sixth *Tirthankara*. Blue water lily is the cognizance of *Naminatha*, the twenty first *Tirthankara*. In a stone carving it is difficult to differentiate lotus from blue water lily in full blown condition. But other available circumstantial evidence again helps us to identify the *Tirthankara* as *Padmaprabha*. *Padmaprabha* is more popular than *Naminatha*. Next to the most popular four *Tirthankaras* (*Adinatha, Neminatha, Parsvanatha and Mahavira*), the *Chandraprabha, Padmaprabha* and *Pushpadanta* trio are given the prominence of being the principal *Mulanayakas* (principal deities) of some Jain temples in Tamilnadu. At *Tirupparuthikundram*, near Kanchipuram, there is a Jain temple dedicated to *Padmaprabha*. A majestic *Chola* period 77 cm high sculpture of *Padmaprabha* has been collected from Tindivanam, Villupuram District and displayed in the

Government Museum, Chennai. The Government Museum, Vellore also has a 13th century *Padmapraba* sculpture (SI.No. 7). But so far we have not heard of an ancient Jain temple with *Naminatha* as its *Mulanayaka*. Neither have we come across any ancient sculpture of *Naminatha*. Considering the above points, this sculpture may be identified as *Padmaprabha*.

TIRUMALAI NAYAKAR PALACE MUSEUM

SI.No. 63. YAKSHI AMBIKA

Acc. No. 32/76; Ht. 155 cm.; Br. 55 cm.

VILATHIKULAM TALUK, TOOTHUKUDI (TUTICORIN) DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 13th Century AD.

The figure of *Yakshi Ambika*, the *Yakshi* of the twenty second *Tirthankara*, *Neminatha* is sculpted in standing posture, with her servant maid shown in dwarf size. The *Yakshi* has a pair of hands and places her left hand on the head of the dwarf size maid. Her right hand is broken at the portion above the elbow and is missing. She wears a *Karanda makuta* (the crown is in the form of a cone with the base at an angle of 30° pointed towards the apex; this shape is supposed to resemble the neck of a peacock), ear ornaments, shoulder tassels, *haras* (garlands), sacred thread, *Keyura* (Ornament worn on the upper arm), bangles, lower garment and *padasaras* (anklets). The figure of *Neminatha Tirthankara* is depicted on the *Makuta* in seated *dhyana* posture.

Yakshi Ambika is the most famous among the *Yakshis*. Among the twenty four *Yakshis*, *Chakreswari*, the *Yakshi* of the first *Tirthankara*, *Adinatha*, *Jwalamalini*, the *Yakshi* of the eighth *Tirthankara*, *Chandra Prabha*, *Ambika*, the *Yakshi* of the twenty second *Tirthankara*, *Neminatha*, *Padmavati*, the *Yakshi* of the twenty third *Tirthankara*, *Parsvanatha* and *Siddhayika*, the *Yakshi* of twenty fourth *Tirthankara*, *Mahavira* are prominent. Even among these five prominent *Yakshis*, *Ambika* occupies the pride of place for popularity. *Yakshi Ambika* is known by other names such as *Kushamandini*, *Bhagavati*, *Dharmadevi* and *Varasundari*. *Kushmandi* is one of the names of the Hindu Goddess, *Durga*. To counteract the popularity of the *Sakthi* cult of the Hindu religion, Jains in Tamilnadu strongly supported the cult of *Ambika*. The bond between mother and children displayed by *Ambika* has great mass appeal and the Jains used it for the propagation of their faith by raising *Yakshi Ambika* to the level of a compassionate divine mother. When the *Saivite* and *Vaishnavite* temples began to have a separate *Amman* shrine within the temple complex, the Jains also began to consecrate separate shrines for the *Yakshis* within their temple complex. The present *Ambika* sculpture seems to be one such sculpture, sculpted for a shrine. Most of her shrines have her form in seated posture. On the contrary, this sculpture is in standing posture with her faithful attendants. The rich ornamentation considered along with the total expression of this sculpture makes us to date this sculpture to the last part of the 13th century AD.

SI.No. 64. MAHAVIRA

Acc. No. 77/76; Ht. 104 cm.; Br. 64 cm.

PULIYURAN, ARUPPUKOTTAI TALUK, VIRUDUNAGAR DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 10th Century AD.

The figure of *Mahavira* is shown in seated *ardhaparyankasana dhyana* posture on a lotus pedestal



SI.No. 62
PADMAPRABHA



SI.No.63
YAKSHI AMBIKA



SI.No.64
MAHAVIRA



SI.No.65
PARSVANATHA



SI.No.66
TIRTHANKARA



SI.No.67
TIRTHANKARA



SI.No.68
TIRTHANKARA

with a *simhasana*. Of the eight *pratiharyas* of a *Tirthankara*, six are depicted here. The *Simhasana* with decorated backrest, *Chamara* bearers, arch shaped decorated *Bha Mandala*, *Deeksha vriksha* (the tree under which the *Tirthankara* did penance and obtained knowledge of the Omniscient), *Mukkudai* and heavenly blossoms are sculpted.

Sl.No. 65. PARSVANATHA

Acc. No. 78/76; Ht. 112 cm.; Br. 58 cm.

PULIYURAN, ARUPPUKOTTAI TALUK, VIRUDUNAGAR DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 10th Century AD.

The figure of the twenty third *Tirthankara*, *Parsvanatha* is sculpted in seated *ardhaparyankasana* posture. The five headed snake canopy shown over the head of the figure of the *Tirthankara* is the only cognisance available to identify him as *Parsvanatha*. The nude body is sculpted to reveal the characteristics of a *Tirthankara*, viz. youth, beauty and tranquility.

Sl.No. 66. TIRTHANKARA (ACHARYA OR ARHAT)

Acc. No. 2/95; Ht. 120 cm.; Br. 44 cm.

VADUKAPPATTI, VADIPPATTI TALUK, MADURAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 11th Century AD.

The figure of the *Tirthankara* is shown in *Kayotsarga* posture on a lotus base made in rectangular shape. A parasol with a conical knob and two *chamaras* one on either side of the head are also depicted. Instead of a three-tiered umbrella, only a single tiered parasol is represented here. Though it is recorded as *Tirthankara*, it is incorrect, since a *Tirthankara* has a three tiered parasol as his *pratiharya*, signifying lordship over the three worlds (heaven, earth and the nether world). A single tiered parasol signifies lordship over this world only and therefore this is a figure of an *Acharya* or *Arhat* as seen above.

Sl.No. 67. TIRTHANKARA

Acc. No. 69/75; Ht. 97 cm.; Br. 68 cm.

PALAYAKAYAL, TUTUKKUDI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 11th Century AD.

The figure of the *Tirthankara* is shown seated in *ardhaparyankasana* posture on a rectangular pedestal. On either side of the main figure are *chamara* bearers. *Bha Mandala*, *Mukkudai* and the *Vriksha* are also shown.

Sl.No. 68. MAHAVIRA

Acc. No.3/79; Ht. 78 cm.; Br. 30 cm.

SRIVAIKUNDAM, KORKAI, TUTUKKUDI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 11th Century AD.

The figure of *Mahavira* is sculpted in seated *dhyana* posture on rectangular pedestal with back rest. The portions where the figures of *chamara* bearers were broken and missing. There are five lion figures on the front side of the pedestal.

TIRUNELVELI AND KANYAKUMARI REGIONS

Pechchipparai (*Chokkampatti*), *Chitharal* (*Tiruchâranatharmalai*), *Kazhugumalai* and *Nagercoil* are four important Jain vestiges identified in the Tirunelveli and Kanyakumari regions. *Pechchipparai* (*Chokkampatti* near Kadayanallur) has one of the most well planned Jain cave temples of Tamilnadu (Soundararajan K.V., 1975, p.141). The other two are at *Malayadikurichi* and *Sittannavasal*. *Pechchipparai* gets its importance in the study of Jain sculptural art by its bold introduction of the figures of pontifical leaders as portrait sculptures of monks.

In *Chitharal*, we have the earliest Jain inscriptions of the *Pandya* dynasty. The inscription is in Tamil language and belongs to the twenty eighth regnal year of *Varaguna I* alias *Nedunchadayan* (Circa 765-815 AD). The inscription records the gift of gold ornaments to the *Bhattariyas* (Jain priests) of *Tiruchâranatharmalai* made by the teacher (a lady), *Gunandângi Kurattikal*, the disciple of *Aristanemi Bhatara* of *Periyakkudi*.

Kazhugumalai is at a distance of 16 kilometres from Kovilpatti, Virudhunagar District. The famous *Pandyan* monolithic "*Vettuvankoil*", the *Subrahmanya* cave temple and a host of Jain carvings are found here. Inscribed records on the rock, mostly dedicated to describing religious offerings, state several names of Jains involved in this type of work. They commissioned artisans for carving the images of the *Tirthankaras* and their *Sasanadevatas*, their *Yakshas* and *Yakshis*. These inscriptions explain to us how active this Jain centre was in the period between the 8th and 10th centuries AD. They also narrate how it kept in contact with several other Jain centres in Tamilnadu like *Tirupparuthikunram*, *Tirunarunkondai* and *Chitharal*.

Araimalai Alwar (Sl.No. 69), the group of three *Tirthankaras* (*Adinatha*, *Neminatha* and *Mahavira*) (Sl.No. 70), *Parsvanatha* with his *Yaksha*, *Dharanendra* in his therianthropomorphic form (Sl.No. 71), *Bahubali*, the second son of the first *Tirthankara* (Sl.No. 72), *Adinatha*, *Yakshi Ambika* (Sl.No. 73) and *Yakshi Padmavati* (Sl.No. 74) found in *Kazhugumalai* are masterpieces of art sculpted in Tamilnadu. *Mahavira* is depicted here in a panel as the main deity while *Indra*, the chief of the celestials (*Devas*) is shown mounted on his elephant along with other *Devas*. All the *Devas* including *Indra* are shown as peripheral figures around *Mahavira* (Sl.No. 75). Among these, the sculptures of the group of three *Tirthankaras* are the *pièces de resistance* of the art of *Kazhugumalai*. In them, we see the plasticity found in the *Pallava*, *Ganga* and *Nolamba* schools of art. The celestials and flying *gandharvas* with *kinaras* (both are types of celestials) found in these panels remind us of their counterparts in the famous *Arjuna* penance panel in *Mahabalipuram*. The musicians and danseuses within the circular terminals of the decorative creepers exhibit the workmanship usually found in *Ganga* and *Nolamba* temple door jambs and lintels.

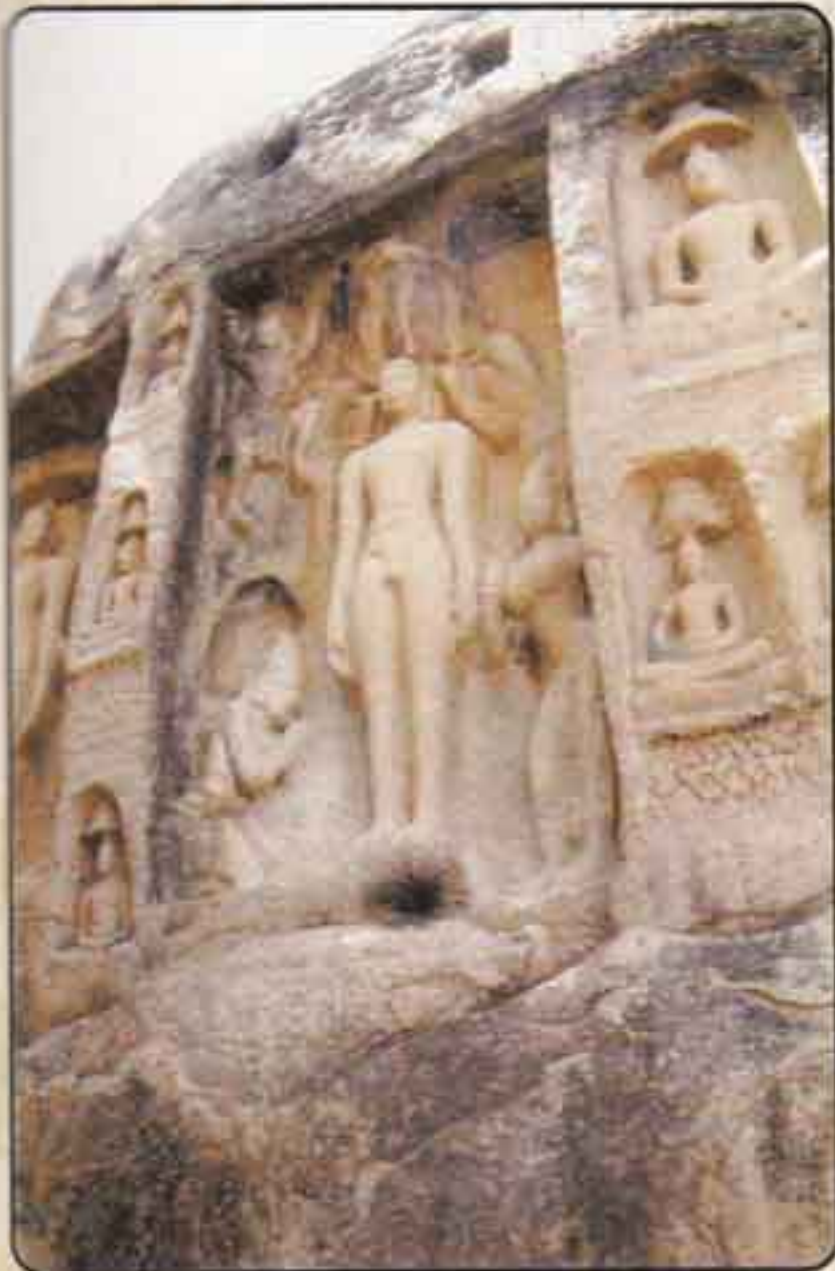
The representation of eight persons driving on various *vahanas* (vehicles) shown over the decorative branches of the *Deeksha Vriksha* is another version of the famous *Dik palakas* (guardian deities of the cardinal directions, a concept of Hinduism) concept profusely used in the Medieval Deccan temples by the dynasties of *Gangas* and *Nolambas* (who governed the present Karnataka region). The introduction of a cobra along with eight figures riding on various animals, is noteworthy. Perhaps, the cobra may represent the *Nagas* from *Nagaloka* (mythological underworld of serpents), who came to attend the sermons of the



SI.No.69
ARAIMALAI ALWAR



SI.No.70
TIRTHANKARAS
(ADINATHA, NEMINATHA, MAHAVIRA)



SI.No.71
PARSVANATHA



SI.No.72
BAHUBALI



SI.No.73
YAKSHI AMBIKA



SI.No.74
YAKSHI PADMAVATI



SI.No.75
MAHAVIRA



SI.No.76
ADINATHA

enlightened *Tirthankara*. The central theme of the art of these four sculpture panels of *Adinatha*, *Neminatha*, *Mahavira* and *Araimalai Alwar* seems to be the representation of the moment of the *Samavasarana* ceremony of the enlightened *Tirthankaras*. For this sermon, all spiritually elevated beings from all quarters of the universe gathered to hear the divine discourse. The depiction of *Indra* (the chief of the celestials in Hinduism) on his elephant mount in the centre of the other eight rider figures is superb. The twisted trunk of the elephant of *Indra* (*Airavada*) adds great dignity and poise to the atmosphere. This shows how Jainism and Hinduism are inextricably intertwined.

The congregation of all the celestial beings (*Devas*) at the time of the attainment of *Kevalagnana* by the *Tirthankara*, to celebrate the great occasion and to hear the sermon of the *Tirthankara* seems to be the most favoured theme of the people who commissioned the Jain carvings at *Kazhugumalai*. Two inscriptions cut in the 3rd regnal year of a Pandya king with the title, *Maran Sadayan* tell about the wells dug for the benefit of the Jain ascetics who stayed in *Kazhugumalai* for practising religious austerities and preaching Jain Philosophy (South Indian Inscriptions Vol. V, 1986, Nos.405-406, p.134). These monks are referred to in the inscription as "*Siddhantam Uraikkum Pattara*" (the teachers who explain Jain Philosophy). In this kind of place, where venerated monks gave profound religious discourses, it is natural that depiction of the scenes of the *Tirthankara's* sermon and the assembly of all beings to hear the sermon got priority for being executed into sculpture. Thus, we have not less than four bas-relief sculpture panels of *Tirthankaras* with the depiction of the arrival of *Saudharma Indra* on his mount, the elephant *Airavada*. Of them, two are the most precious gems of Jain art in Tamilnadu. "*Sri Tirunerchurathu Araimalai Alwar*" sculpture and the *Adinatha* sculpture (Sl.No. 76) from the group of three *Tirthankara* sculptures are unique for their concept and composition. In both panels, the *Tirthankara* is depicted in seated *dhyana* posture with the eight *pratiharyas*, the throne, aura, triple umbrella, *Chamara* bearers, the *Yaksha* and *Yakshi*, tree, shower of celestial blossoms and divine music. From pedestal to *Mukkudai*, the design and style of the main *Tirthankara* figure have the common features of Tamil sculptures from the *Pandya* region. Over the *Mukkudai*, the tree is shown by its branches formed like creepers in curls. Within the curls are shown the figures of musicians and a dancer. Some of the curls in the lower line have floral designs symbolically representing the pouring of flowers from heaven. Above the tree is shown eight riders on their *Vahanas* rushing to see the *Tirthankara* at the moment of his attainment of *Kevalagnana* and to hear his first sermon after his enlightenment. The eight riders are depicted in two groups of four, with each side of the *Tirthankara* having a group. Over them at the top is *Saudharma Indra* on his majestic elephant mount, *Airavada* followed by two men who are canopy holders. On the right side in the *Araimalai Alwar* panel are shown four *Devas* on their *Vahanas* in two rows. In the top row are two *Devas*. One is shown on a cobra and the other on a lion. In the lower row one is on a horse and the other on a *Yali* (a combined form of elephant and lion considered mythical). On the other side on the top row, one *Deva* is on a lion and the other on a bird, which seems to be a swan. In the lower row, one is on a *Yali* and the other on a horse. This same pattern of depiction is followed in the *Adinatha* panel of the group of three *Tirthankaras*. To identify these *Devas*, we have to compare these figures with the painting depicting a procession of *Devas* going to a *Samavasarana* found on the ceiling of

the *Mukha-Mandapa* in front of the *Vardhamana* Shrine and *Trikuta-basti* in *Tiruppathikundram*. T.N.Ramachandran has identified the figures of the paintings on the basis of their *Vahanas*. The Devas on the swan and horse are identified as *Sukra* and *Isanendra* respectively. *Deva*, *Lavanta* also has the horse as his mount and symbol on his crest. *Devas*, *Mahendra* and *Pranata* also have the bull and *Makara* respectively as their mount and symbol (Ramachandran T.N., 2002, p.120). Therefore, we may identify the *Devas* shown in *Kazhugumalai*, on the horses as *Isanendra* and *Lavanta* and the one on the swan as *Sukra*. As the lion is the *Vahana* of *Sanatkumarendra*, one of the two lion riders could be identified as *Sanatkumarendra*. All these four *Devas* belong to the group of *Kalpavasi-Devas* described in Jain *Puranas*. The *Deva* on the other lion and the one on the cobra may be identified as *Dig Kumara* and *Naga Kumara* respectively. They belong to *Bhavanavasi Deva* group. The two-*Yali* riders are not identifiable. The *Kalpavasi Devas* and the *Bhavanavasi Devas* are two groups of *Devas* out of the four categories described in Jain *Puranas*.

The *Nagaraja* temple in Nagercoil town, Kanyakumari District once was an important Jain centre. It is the ancestral town of the first author. In the inscriptions of the 8-9th century AD, Nagercoil area was referred to as *Kottaru*. An inscription in *Kazhugumalai* assignable to 9th century AD states that the Jain monk *Padamoolathan* hailed from *Kottaru*. His disciple *Pushpanandi* and the latter's disciple *Shantisena* commissioned the carving of the figures of the *Tirthankara* in *Kazhugumalai* (Ekambaranathan Dr.A., 1993, p.113).

The *Nagaraja* temple was actually a Jain temple. It was converted as a Hindu *Naga* temple after the time of the King *Bhutamavira Martanda Varma Raja* (*Maharaja Martanda Varma*, the founder of the Travancore kingdom). Twenty years ago K.V. Soundarajan found six Jain images in worship in this temple and two brass images of a later period depicting *Parsvanatha* and *Yakshi Padmavati* in standing posture. (Soundararajan K.V., 1981, p.110). The first author has seen four sculptures in his younger days. We could not trace the brass images and some sculptures despite the best efforts of the Archaeological Officer, Tirunelveli. The gateway to the temple seen now is in typical Kerala style. It is called "*Mahameru Malikai*". But it has its connection with Jain mythology. According to Jain mythology, every *Tirthankara* at the time of his birth has to undergo the ceremony of *Janma-Abhisheka*. On the birth of a *Tirthankara*, *Saudharma Indra* with his wife reach the natal bed of the *Tirthankara*, pays his homage and takes the child to the peak of Mount *Maha Meru* with great pomp and festivity. There the child is bathed with celestial water. As the first bathing of the *Tirthankara* to be takes place on Mount *Maha-Meru*, it is called as *Jina-Janmabhisheka Peetah*. This mount is flanked by four celestial forests called *Bhadrasala*, *Nandana*, *Saumanasa* and *Panduka* and is surrounded on all four directions by *Jina* temples (Ramachandran T.N., 2002, pp.83-84). From the above description, we may easily infer that the *mandapa* called *Maha-Meru Malikai* in this Jain temple should have been used in olden days, for the ritual of *Jina Janma- Abhisheka*. The Jain sculptures of *Parsvanatha* (though the snake canopy has five heads, it is *Suparsvanatha* in Karnataka but *Parsvanatha* in Tamil region) and *Tirthankaras* found on the pillars in front of the *Nagaraja* shrine attest the fact that Jainism was there as late as 16-17th century AD. (Sl.Nos. 77,78,79).



**SI.No.77
PARSVANATHA**



**SI.No.78
TIRTHANKARA**



**SI.No.79
TIRTHANKARA**



**SI.No.80
MAHAVIRA**



SI.No.81
MAHAVIRA



SI.No.82
MAHAVIRA



SI.No.83
TIRTHANKARA

GOVERNMENT MUSEUM, TIRUNELVELI

Sl.No. 80. MAHAVIRA

Acc. No. Ar. 9; Ht. 114 cm.; Br. 77 cm.

ALVARTIRUNAGARI, TOOTHUKUDI (TUTICORIN) DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 9th Century AD.

The figure of *Mahavira* is beautifully sculpted in the seated *ardhaparyankasana* posture on a rectangular base attached with a decorated backrest and cylindrical cushion. The *chamara* bearers hold the *chamara* in one hand and keep the other hand in *vismaya mudra*. A *Prabha* (decorated arch) encircles the head of *Mahavira*. *Mukkudai* in three tiers is depicted over the arch. Further above the *Mukkudai*, the tree under which *Mahavira* attained *Kevala Gnana* is shown symbolically as five coils with floral designs inside them. The floral design represents heavenly blossoms. Therefore, this design serves a dual purpose i.e. to represent the *Deeksha* Tree as well as the fact of becoming a divinity, which is acknowledged by the heavenly blossoms showered by the celestials. On the front side of the pedestal, five lion figures, the cognisance for *Mahavira* are carved.

Sl.No. 81. MAHAVIRA

Acc. No. Ar. 8; Ht. 84 cm.; Br. 44 cm.

MANDIKULAM, TOOTHUKUDI (TUTICORIN) DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 9th Century AD.

This image of *Mahavira* is also similar to the previous one. On the front side of the base, three lion figures are carved.

Sl.No. 82. MAHAVIRA

Acc. No. Ar. 17; Ht. 68 cm.; Br. 58 cm.

MURAMAN, TOOTHUKUDI (TUTICORIN) DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 9th Century AD.

The figure of *Mahavira* is depicted in the seated *ardhaparyankasana* posture over a rectangular pedestal. *Mahavira* has a backrest. The portion of the sculpture above the shoulder is broken and missing. There are three lion figures carved on the front side of the pedestal.

Sl.No. 83. TIRTHANKARA

Acc. No. Ar. 6; Ht. 123 cm.; Br. 78 cm.

UTTIRAKOSAMANGAI, RAMANATHAPURAM DISTRICT, TAMILNADU,

Circa 9th Century AD.

The figure of the *Tirthankara* is depicted in seated *ardhaparyankasana* posture on a base attached with backrest. In the Museum register, this beautiful *Pandya* sculpture is recorded as *Mahavira*. But in the absence of *Mahavira*'s cognisance, the lion, it is safer to refer this sculpture as *Tirthankara*. The figure of the *Tirthankara* has an arch shaped *Bha Mandala*, *Mukkudai* and *Deeksha Vriksha*. A portion of the *Mukkudai* is broken and missing. The tree is depicted with a six coil formation with floral designs inside each coil. This design is similar to (Sl. No. 80).

KONGU REGION

The area of the present districts of Salem, Namakkal, Erode and Coimbatore and portions in the districts of Dharmapuri, Karur and Dindigul formed a geographical entity. This area has been referred to as *Kongu Mandalam* (*Kongu* region) from the *Sangam* age onwards. As the north-western part of Tamilnadu, this area is directly exposed to the neighbouring *Mysore* (Karnataka) region. Its contact with the *Mysore* region naturally led to a close cultural interaction in which religion played a big role. Jainism and its propagators from the *Mysore* region came and settled in many places of the *Kongu* region. *Dharmapuri*, *Adiyamankottai*, *Vijayamangalam*, *Vellode*, *Perundurai* and *Cheenapuram* are some of the important Jain sites in the *Kongu* region.

Dharmapuri came under the influence of Jainism during the time of the *Nolamba* King, *Mahendradhiraja* and his successors in the 9-10th century AD. Two merchants *Nidhiyanna* and *Santiyanna* built a Jain temple here in the 9th Century AD. The *Parsvanatha* stone sculpture of the 10th century AD lying on the road side, near *Adiyaman Kottai*, Dharmapuri, is a concrete evidence of the strong influence of Jainism in the 9th Century AD.

Thirukameeswaramudaiya Nayanar (Kamanathasivami) Siva Temple in the Village *Aragalur* in Attur Taluk of Salem district possesses two Jain bronzes (Poonkunran R., 1979, p.190). One of them is *Yakshi Ambika* - Height 45 cm.; Breadth 21 cm. (*Sl. No. 84*). The son riding on the lion to the left of the *Yakshi* carries a whip in his left hand. This resembles the *Ayyanar* iconography of Hinduism. The *Yakshi* can be dated to circa 8th - 9th Century AD from the iconographic features. She is shown in standing posture on a lotus base which in turn is fixed on a rectangular pedestal. This design of the pedestal is characteristic of *Mysore* region in present Karnataka. Standing in *tribhanga* posture, she holds a bunch of mangoes in her right hand. Her left hand is in the mode of giving a mango to one of her sons who stands there extending his right hand to receive it. The other son is depicted on her right side seated on a lion. Her *Tirthankara*, *Neminatha* with a *Mukkudai* is shown above her figure. This bronze can be compared with the two bronzes in the Cleveland Museum of Art and Los Angeles County Museum, U.S.A. for similarity of theme and workmanship. While the bronzes of *Yakshi Ambika* in the foreign Museums are depicted with a mango tree, the *Yakshi* at *Aragalur* temple is without the mango tree. The other Bronze is that of a standing *Tirthankara* - Height 56 cm.; Breadth 17cm.; (*Sl. No. 85*). The figure of the *Tirthankara* is in *Kayotsarga* posture on a lotus base which is on top of the pedestal. The golden traces seen on the inner lines of the fingers, eye lids and on the curls of the hair on the head tells us that this bronze had been gilded in gold. This can be dated to circa 9th Century AD. The third sculpture is that of a seated *Tirthankara* (*Sl. No. 87*). It is made of white quartzite stone. Quartz is a locally available mineral. It is broken at the neck and pasted with some chemical. It is under worship in the *Ardhamandapa* of the sanctum of the *Shivalinga*, *Kamanathaswami*. This can be dated to circa 13th - 14th Century AD. The *Thyaganur Buddhas* which are under worship are also nearby (Kannan Dr.R, 2001, Sl.No.38, 38A, p.74). This again proves the point that there is intermingling of Jainism, Hinduism and Buddhism in India.



SI.No.84
YAKSHI AMBIKA



SI.No.85
TIRTHANKARA



PEDESTAL OF SI. No. 85
TIRTHANKARA
WITH LIONS RAMPANT
(A POSE SEEN IN EUROPEAN HERALDRY)



SI.No.87
TIRTHANKARA



SI.No.88
MAHAVIRA



SI.No.89
AYYANAR



SI.No.90
MAHAVIRA

Tingalur, *Cheenapuram* and *Vellode* all small villages or towns in Erode District have Jain temples. There is a temple of the ninth *Tirthankara*, *Pushpadanta* in *Tingalur*. However, *Vijayamangalam* near *Perundurai* in Erode District is the most important Jain centre in the western part of Tamilnadu. A locality in *Vijayamangalam* was called *Bastipura* (town of Jain temple). An interesting structural Jain temple is located there. The various sub-shrines of this temple have the sculptures of *Adinatha*, *Ananthanatha*, *Mahavira* and *Yakshi Ambika*. The oldest inscription of this temple is related to the *nisidhika* {memorial for those who took the *Sallehana* vow (refer Kannan Dr. R et al., 2001, p.35) for details of *Sallehana*} of *Puliyappai*, sister of the *Ganga* general, *Chamundaraya*. He is connected with the famous *Sravanabelagola Gomateeshvara* statue. In the *Chola* period, this temple was known as *Vira Sanghata Perum Palli*. This is how it is recorded in the inscription of the period of *Kulotunga II* dated 1163 AD. *Virasangada* is a military title conferred in the *Chola* army (Soundara Rajan K.V., 1975, p.156). Even during the *Vijayanagar* period, the temple was looked after well. An inscription datable to 1402 AD in the reign of *Harihara II* (1377-1404 AD) of the *Vijayanagar* period refers to some land grants made to this temple. There are sculptures of the early *Vijayanagar* period describing the events of *Adinatha's* life on the beams of the *Mandapa* of this temple. In *Vellode* and *Cheenapuram*, temples for the first *Tirthankara*, *Adinatha* were built. Just as *Vijayamangalam* is connected with the Jain poet-monk *Konguvel*, the author of *Perunkathai*, a Tamil literary work of considerable merit, *Cheenapuram* is connected with the Jain grammarian and monk *Bhavanandi*, the author of the famous Tamil Grammar text, *Nannool*. *Parsvanatha* had a temple in *Perundurai*, which is now in dilapidated condition.



SL. No. 86
TIRTHANKARA FIGURE ON THE BOULDER,
TIRUMURTHI MALAI



INSET -
TIRTHANKARA

There are Jain Monuments in Pollachi and Udumalpet Taluks of Coimbatore District. *Anamalai*, 9 Kms southwest of Pollachi is a small village. The small hill to the west of this village is called as *Jain Kal Durgam*. It has a Jain temple. *Tirumurthi Malai* is 13 Kms southwest of the town, Udumalpet. Here on the slopes of the Anamalai Hills near a waterfall, a Jain figure is engraved on an immense boulder of the hill, which is 30 feet high. This is a figure of a seated *Thirthankara* with *Chamara Bearers* on either side, as seen on page No. 69 (*Sl.No.86*). The figures are not in perpendicular, but in horizontal position with heads to the east. The outlines of the figures are highly worn out. An inscription of this place refers to the figure as *Amanaswami* (naked God) i.e. Jain God and the place as *Amana Samudhiram* (Mylai Sini Venkatasamy, 2000, p. 169).

There are Government District Museums in every district in the *Kongu* region and Site Museums in Coimbatore and Dharmapuri. However, Jain sculptures are found only in the Government Museums at Coimbatore and Salem. The Site Museums at Dharmapuri and Coimbatore also have Jain sculptures.

GOVERNMENT MUSEUM, COIMBATORE

Sl.No. 88. MAHAVIRA

Acc. No. 1/90; Ht. 74 cm.; Br. 39 cm.

KOLIVAKKAM, CHINGELPUT DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 16th Century AD.

The figure of *Mahavira* is sculpted in the seated *ardhaparyankasana* posture on a base attached to the backrest. The *Mukkudai* is shown over the head of the figure of *Mahavira*. Though the figure is recorded in the Museum Register as *Mahavira*, the cognisance of *Mahavira*, the lion is not found. This sculpture was transferred to the Coimbatore Museum from the collection of the Chennai Government Museum in 1990 AD.

Sl.No. 89. AYYANAR

Acc. No. 25/94; Ht. 80 cm.; Br. 53 cm.

NADUVACHERI, AVINASHI TALUK, COIMBATORE DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 16th Century AD.

This sculpture collected by the curator on his field trip as surface collection in 1990 is unique for its iconographic specialty. Though the sculpture has the features of *Ayyanar*, the guardian deity of Hinduism, it can also be identified as that of a Jain *Yaksha*. The figure of *Ayyanar* is sculpted in *Utkudikasana* posture (sitting with his right leg hanging down with the left leg folded and resting on the pedestal). He holds a *chendu* (a crooked stick) in his right hand and keeps the left hand on the folded left leg. Below him on the front side of the pedestal is carved a beautiful figure of an elephant as if it is coming out of the pedestal. The depiction of an elephant figure on the central part of the pedestal makes us to consider this sculpture more as a Jain *Yaksha* than the *Ayyanar* figure of Hinduism. According to Jain traditions, two *Yakshas*, *Maha Yaksha*, the *Yaksha* of the second *Tirthankara*, *Ajithanatha* and *Brahma Yaksha*, the *Yaksha* of the 10th *Tirthankara*, *Sithalanatha* have the elephant as their *Vahana*. But the crooked stick or *chendu* is prescribed only for *Brahma Yaksha*. On this score, we may identify this sculpture as that of *Brahma Yaksha*. This sculpture is very similar to the one illustrated by T.N.Ramachandran in his *Tirupparuthikundram* and its

temple as figure 2 of the plate No.V. The sculpture described with a photograph by T.N. Ramachandran belongs to the *Vardhamana* temple of *Tirupparuthikundram* i.e. *Jina Kanchi* (Ramachandran T.N., 2002).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE MUSEUM, COIMBATORE

Sl.No. 90. MAHAVIRA

Acc. No. 258; Ht. 50 cm.; B5 38 cm.

ALATHUR, SATYAMANGALAM TALUK, ERODE DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 10th Century AD.

This *Mahavira* sculpture from a dilapidated Jain temple in the Village *Alathur* of Satyamangalam Taluk of Erode district has been brought to the site Museum as a surface collection along with two Tamil *Vatteluttu* (old Tamil script) inscriptions. The inscribed stone slabs also came from the same spot. One inscription (Acc. No. 259; length 112 cm; height 65 cm) states that the temple was renovated by the Queen *Vanavan Madeviyar* during the time of one *Alathur Adikal* under whose care the temple was (*Inscription No.3*). The other inscription (Acc. No. 260; length 166 cm; height 63 cm) was inscribed in the 33rd regnal year of the *Kongu Chola* King, *Konattu Veera Chola Perumal* (*Inscription No.4*). As certain words are damaged, we could not decipher it. Both inscriptions refer to the temple as *Vira Sanghata Perum Palli*. It is quite interesting to know that the famous *Vijayamangalam* Jain Temple also has this name. As such there might have been a close relationship between these two temples. Both might have got patronage from *Chola* Generals.

The figure of *Mahavira* is depicted in the *ardhaparyankasana dhyana* posture on a lotus base carved over a rectangular base. Three lions, the cognisance of *Mahavira* is shown on the front face of the rectangular pedestal. The figure of *Mahavira* is depicted with a throne with backrest, *chamara* bearers, *Bha Mandala* and the triple umbrella. The features of this sculpture make us to date it to circa 10th Century AD.

Sl.No. 91. PARSVANATHA

Acc. No. 215; Ht. 90 cm.; Br. 63 cm.

PONGALUR, COIMBATORE, TAMILNADU

Circa 12th Century AD.

The figure of *Parsvanatha* is depicted in seated *ardhaparyankasana* posture. The hood of the Cobra an identification for *Parsvanatha* is shown. But that portion is so much worn out that we cannot count the number of the heads. This makes our task of identifying it very difficult. The right side of the *Tirthankara* figure is broken and missing, so that now we can see only one *chamara* bearer depicted on the left side of the *Tirthankara*.

GOVERNMENT MUSEUM, SALEM

Sl.No. 92. PARSVANATHA

Acc. No. 54/76; Ht. 122 cm.; Br. 49 cm.

PARUTTIPALLI, MALLASAMUDRAM, NAMAKKAL DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 9th Century AD.

The figure of *Parsvanatha* is depicted in *Kayotsarga* posture with a seven-headed snake, a standard

form of depicting *Parsvanatha* in the Mysore region. Above the hood that acts as a canopy over the head of the figure of *Parsvanatha*, is shown the *Mukkudai* in conical shape crowned with a knob. This rare and beautiful sculpture is broken into two pieces above the shoulder and pasted together. A *Prabha* (ornamented arch) frames the figure of *Parsvanatha*. The figures of lotus and conch might have been carved on the rim of the arch but they are not identifiable in the present worn out condition of the sculpture. The design and style of this sculpture is comparable to the one found on the road way in *Adiyaman Kottai*, Dharmapuri District.

SITE MUSEUM, DHARMAPURI

Sl.No. 93. ACHARYAS

Acc. No. 36; Ht. 75 cm.; Br. 91 cm.

NEAR KOTTAI ISVARAN TEMPLE, DHARMAPURI, DHARMAPURI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 9th Century AD.

This is a beautiful sculptural work made for the Jain *Acharyas* or *devotees*. Two such persons are shown in seated *dhyana* posture. The features of this rectangular panel remind us of the 9th century AD inscription which records the donation made by two Jain followers *Santiyanna* and *Nidhiyanna* for the repairs of a Jain temple at Dharmapuri (Asim Kumar Chatterjee, 2000, p.187.)

Sl.No. 94. HOLY FEET OF A TIRTHANKARA - TWO SIMILAR SCULPTURES

Acc. No.16; Ht. 54 cm.; Br. 51 cm. for No.1.

Acc. No.17; Ht. 52 cm.; Br. 50 cm. for No.2.

KUNTHANI, HARUR TALUK, DHARMAPURI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

Circa 12th Century AD.

These two sculptures of the two feet of a *Tirthankara* probably of *Mahavira* is an attempt to adopt the Hindu *Vaishnavite* concept of worshipping the two feet of Lord *Vishnu* found in many temples. This practice came into vogue in *Tamilnadu* during the Imperial *Chola* period. The feet themselves are 19 cm long and 7.5 cm broad. These are rare pieces. We consider them as Jain pieces, because they were found in a site where Buddhist and Jain artifacts were found.

ROADSIDE COLLECTION IN DHARMAPURI

Sl.No. 95. PARSVANATHA

Ht. 122 cm.; Br. 49 cm.

Circa 9th Century AD.

In the *Parsvanatha* of *Adiyaman Kottai*, lotus and conch representing *Padmanidhi* and *Shankhanidhi* (*Yakshas* governing wealth from land and sea respectively) are artistically depicted. This is a special feature of the *Ganga* School of Art. It is on the Salem-Dharmapuri Highway near *Adiyaman Kottai* at the fork, where it was seen by the first author at the junction of Palacode-Rayakottai and Dharmapuri road at Kilometre 144/4 in front of a small village temple of *Shiva* of the Vijayanagar period, 100 metres from the road. The cognisance symbol is not visible as the *peetah* portion is buried in the ground.



SI.No.91
PARSVANATHA



SI.No.92
PARSVANATHA



SI.No.93
ACHARYAS



SI.No.94
HOLY FEET OF A TIRTHANKARA



SI.No.95
PARSVANATHA

CONCLUSION

This book fills the gap in knowledge caused by not covering in the previous book 'Iconography of Jain Images in the Government Museum, Chennai' in 2001 AD, the Jain images in the District museums and Site museums under the State Department of Archaeology. The previous book is a catalogue of the Jain images in the Chennai museum alone. The total number of images catalogued is 95. The wealth of visual material in the form of photographs would, it is hoped, obviate the need to go in person for reference for scholars in various parts of the world. It would also enable further research. Images have been catalogued along with their photographs. Most important it serves to document the images at this point of time, so that any loss of images or their deterioration can be easily detected in the future.

We have discussed above, quite a few monuments and temples in Tamilnadu (both Hindu and Jain), the former usually only if it has a Jain connection. Most of these are under the control of the State Department of Archaeology or the Archaeological Survey of India. A few are located in remote places. These have helped to analyse and describe the Jain images in the catalogue more fully. They also serve as a useful backdrop to the regional analysis of the images done above. This has led us to examine the spread of Jainism in present Tamilnadu and its impact on the culture, language and religious beliefs. The images have been placed in the context of their places of origin. They have been related to other similar pieces found elsewhere. As in the previous volume, mythology and literature both of North and South Indian origin and Jain canonical works are used as reference material. Linkage to these historical and literary sources helps to identify the images and their features with more accuracy than would be the case otherwise.

Along with sculptures, bronzes and bas-relief figures, some paintings in the Jain caves such as those at *Sittannavasal* and *Tirumalai* have been described and discussed above. This is because Jain iconography is interrelated with the exquisite paintings in the caverns. As stated above, these caves played a crucial role in the development and spread of Jainism in the present Tamilnadu region. *Sittannavasal* paintings and Jain bas-relief sculptures are depicted in the Rock & Cave Art gallery in the Chennai Museum designed and organised this year.

The historical, geographical division of present Tamilnadu is used as stated above, since the advent of Jainism is in different periods of time and follows different patterns. This has its impact on the iconography of the Jain images. In each region historical facts like the rulers, the people who gave donations for worship, the type of worship etc. have been narrated in order to show the mode of worship, social practices etc. then prevalent. This gives the scenario of the period, which it is hoped will give an understanding of the images in their context, why and how they were made etc. Inscriptions are a good source of historical information. This has provided evidence for our long held beliefs like the tolerance of our rulers. The inscriptions that attest to the existence of the Jain temple called *Kundavai Jinalaya* in *Tirumalai*, Polur Taluk, Tiruvannamalai District show the tolerance of the Imperial *Cholas*, who were staunch *Saivites*. It is also likely Jainism was considered a part of extended Hinduism. For instance, the mythology of *Neminatha* (cousin of Lord *Krishna*).

whose sculpture is found there is intertwined with that of Lord *Krishna*, the Hindu God. The presence of *Indra* at the *Samavasarana* ceremony of *Adinatha* is another instance.

Since the previous book has related both the mythology and the historical evolution of Jainism, we have touched upon them in this book only to the extent necessary to describe or analyse the Jain images catalogued in this book. There has been exchange of ideas between Jainism and Hinduism. The kernel of the ideas is usually from the mother religion, Hinduism but there are cases of the reformist agenda of Jainism having been adopted into Hinduism. This exchange extends to even mythology and religious symbols. The mythology of *Neminatha* and the presence of *Indra* at the *Samavasarana* ceremony are good examples in mythology of this commonality. The bronze *Ganesha* described above is a not so common case of a Hindu deity being depicted with Jain iconographic symbols. The flow of philosophical thought is seen in the commonality of the *Ashtamangalas* and *Chaturyama* in both Hinduism and Jainism. The adoption of the *Sakthi* cult of worship of the Goddess in Tamilnadu as the *Yakshi* cult is an instance of deities and modes of worship being co-opted. This shows that exchange rather than exclusivity characterised the interaction of the three main indigenous religions Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism.

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APPENDIX (INSCRIPTIONS)



INSCRIPTION No. 1
(REFER MAHAVIRA BRONZE SI. No. 16)



INSCRIPTION No. 2
(REFER MAHAVIRA BRONZE SI. No. 17)



INSCRIPTION No. 3
(REFER MAHAVIRA SCULPTURE SI. No. 90)



INSCRIPTION No. 4
(REFER MAHAVIRA SCULPTURE SI. No. 90)

YAKSHI (CHAMARADHARINI)

Acc. No. AR. 53; Ht. 64 cm; Br. 60 cm.

IRANIYAN PADUKALAM,

NANGUNERI TALUK,

TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU.

Circa 10th century AD.



This life size sculpture of *Chamaradharini* seems to be one of a pair usually sculpted along with the Jain *Tirthankaras* images meant for the sanctum. This 10th Century AD *Pandya* sculpture is a response of the *Pandya* sculptor to his *Chola* counterpart, who used to produce large size sculptures. Unfortunately, this *Yakshi* is headless. The voluptuous feminine charm of this sculpture is comparable with famous North Indian *Yakshi* sculptures especially the *Didarganj Yakshi* of the *Mauryan* period kept in the Patna State Museum. Other *Yakshi* sculptures in Buddhist caves of the early Christian era in the western part of India exhibit a continuity of art tradition from the early 3rd Century BC to the 10th Century AD. The *Yakshi* in *Tirunelveli* in the deep south of India resembling so closely a far north sculpture viz, the *Didarganj Yakshi* is truly a remarkable connection. This shows that throughout our history, there was exchange of thought and may be artisans between one part and other parts of India. This bears out the thesis of a Pan-Indian civilisation (Kannan, Dr. R., 2000, p.52).

