

‘REDISCOVERING JAIN TRADITION IN WAYANAD’

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(A video graphic representation on the Jain temples is attached separately in a DVD)

DECLARATION

I, Sasi C.T, Principal Investigator, (Assistant Professor, Department Of History, Govt College, Kalpetta, Wayanad, Kerala) do here by declare that, this is a bona fide work by me, and that it was undertaken as a Minor Research Project funded by the University Grants Commission during the period 2014-15.

Kalpetta

22/9/2015

SASI C T

CERTIFICATE

Govt College Kalpetta, Wayanad

Kerala

This is to certify that this Minor Research Project entitled '*REDISCOVERING JAIN TRADITION IN WAYANAD*', submitted to the University Grants Commission is a Minor research work carried out by Sasi C T, Assistant Professor, Department of History, Govt.College, Kalpetta. No part of this work has been submitted before.

Kalpetta

22/9/2015

Principal

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PREFACE

This proposed study entitled ‘Rediscovering Jain tradition in Wayanad’ is an enquiry on different aspects of the Jain community in Wayanad. Wayanad is the only district in Kerala where the Jains have a dominant position. Despite the revival of Hindu culture, the Jains of Wayanad have been following Jain cultural traditions without any alteration. This study is an attempt to bring out the important features of Jain cultural traditions and to find out the cultural centres of the Jains of Wayanad.

OBJECTIVES

An in-depth study of the Jain settlements in Wayanad had not been conducted so far. The major objective of this study is to bring to light the major centres of Jainism in Wayanad. The study also attempts to highlight different aspects of the socio cultural life pattern of the Jains of Wayanad. There are a number of Jain basthis in Wayanad which are left unattended by the Jains and the public. Such historically important architectural edifices need to be protected for posterity. Making a documentary on the ruined Jain temples will help to create awareness among the public.

METHODOLOGY

The present study of ‘Rediscovering Jain Tradition in Wayanad’ is sought to conduct with the help of primary and secondary sources. Data is collected with the help of field trip and interview. Interview, based on with some of the Jain leaders and social activist and those who belong to the Jain community would provide primary data on this study. Published works by eminent authors shall also be consulted during the study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. *The Malabar Manual* of William Logan is considered as an important source for reconstructing Kerala history. The author, an officer of the British India, who served as the collector of the Malabar district of the British India, collected the socio economic details of the region for administrative purpose. This collection of the information led to the writing of a detailed history of Malabar. When scientific historical study on Kerala, especially on Malabar was not initiated in a proper sense, the sources used by William Logan for his Manual, was a new attempt in this regard. The Manual gives detailed account on the geography, people, history of Malabar and land revenue system under the British rule in Malabar. Logan gives a lot of information about Wayanad and its socio cultural settings.

2. *Wayanad: Its People and Tradition* by C. Gopalan Nair deals with the ancient history of Wayanad. This work attempts to trace the historical back ground of Wayanad. This book examines the features of Wayanad, the life style, customs and traditions of ethnic tribes of Wayanad.

3. *Wayanad Rekhakal* by O K Johny provides a comprehensive picture of Jains in Wayanad. The author is a prominent journalist, documentary director, and cine critic. This work is written on the basis of his journalist experiences. This book is a treasure house of information on Wayanad from prehistory to contemporary period. The major areas of enquiry are the prehistoric culture, Sanga age, Jain cultural remains, Muslim culture, colonial period etc. Apart from this he also examines the myth and legend relating to Wayanad, Tribal socio cultural life, etc. the book is an important source on Wayanad.

4. *Ariyappedatha Wayanad* by Gopy Mundakkayam deals with the history of Wayanad from prehistory to modern times.
5. *Jainism in Kerala* by Dr. P D Padmakumar. is a detailed study on the evolution and spread of Jainism in Kerala. Himself a Jain, the author makes every attempt to explore the detailed history of Jainism in Kerala especially in Wayanad.
6. *Ritual, Caste, and Religion in Colonial South India* is an edited work. The editors are Michael Bergunder, Heiko Frese and Ulrike Schroder. This book consider Jainism as one of the nine subdivisions of Hinduism along with Buddhism, Shaktatism, Vaishnavism, Saivism, Sikhism, Brahmoism , Aryasamaj and Theosophy.
7. *The Religions of India* by Roshen Dalal is a concise guide to nine major faiths like Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Islam, Sikhism, Christianity, Judaism, Bahais, Zoroastrianism along with tribal religions. It also gives meaning and explanations of concepts related to major religions.
8. *Keralacharithrathinte Ullarakalilekku* by Velayudhan Panikkassery gives a lot of information on one of the ancient Jain settlements in Kerala. According to him Thrikkanamathilakam was once a Jain settlement which is related to the ancient Tamil epics, *Chilappadhikaram* and *Manimekhalai*. The author says that Thrikkanamathilakam was not only a cultural centre but also an important market place.
9. *Indian Philosophy* (vol.I) by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan is an authoritative work on Indian philosophy. This work deals with the various aspects of Indian philosophy. An in depth study on Jainism is given in this work.
10. *Jainadharmam Keralathil* is a Malayalam translation of Dr. P.D Padmakumar's *Jainism in Kerala*. The translator is V. V Jinendra Prasad.

11. *India Enna Vismayam* is a Malayalam translation of A. L Basham's *Wonder that was India*. The Translation is done by C. P Aboobacker. *Wonder that was India* is considered as a classical work on ancient Indian history. Basham gives in detail the Jain beliefs and doctrines.

The details collected from primary and secondary sources are analyzed for reaching conclusion. Primarily the data was collected through interview with various persons ranging from historians to laymen. Sometimes the interview was informal and the data provided by the persons belonged to the less academics groups has touched the very socio cultural life of the tribals of wayanad, giving scope for further studies.

The present study is an attempt to reveal the socio cultural and historical life of the Jains of Wayanad. While undertaking the study it is learnt that much more effort is necessary to get a complete picture of the topic. My study has two parts. In the first part, an effort has been taken to provide information on some aspects of the Jain tradition regarding their settlements, social customs and traditions etc. Secondly an earnest attempt has been taken to prepare a documentary on the Jain basthis , which are scattered around Wayanad and in a dilapidated condition. The features of a Jain wedding are also pictured in the video.

The first part of the study is divided into seven chapters.

The first chapter or the introductory chapter is aimed to give an overall history of Wayanad district from pre history times to the present. It examines the history, geography, economy, population, size etc. of the present day Wayanad.

The second chapter gives information the historical background of the development of Jainism as a major religion in North India and the circumstances that led

to the spread of the religion to the far South. The chapter briefly describes the main doctrines of Jainism and the life of its founders also.

The third chapter deals with Jainism in Kerala. The earliest Jain settlements of Kerala and the present condition of Jainism in those centres are discussed here

The fourth chapter deals with Jainism in Wayanad. The historical background of the spread of Jainism to Wayanad and important Jain settlements in the district are discussed in detail. Description of some Jain temples which are noted for its architectural style is also discussed in this chapter.

The fifth chapter gives information about Jain cultural traditions and rituals. This chapter is an enquiry about various Jain rituals related with social life such as birth, death, wedding, festivals etc.

The Sixth chapter examines the contributions of the Jain community and the part played by some eminent Jains to the development of modern Wayanad.

The seventh chapter is the concluding chapter. Here the summary of the findings are specified.

Though video graphic representation of the ruined Jain temples are made separately, pictures of the Jain temples are also given for easy reference. A list of the Yakshas and Yakshinis is also given in the appendix. Selected bibliography and the list of persons interviewed are also attached.

To highlight the demographic trends, tables are also given in the appendix.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Etymologically the word 'Wayanad' is a combination of two Malayalam or Tamil words, 'vayal' and 'nadu'. Vayal means field and 'nad' means land. Thus Wayanad means 'land of fields'¹. There is another version regarding the origin of the name. According to this, the region was known as Mayakshetra (Maya's land) in the earliest records. Mayakshetra evolved into Mayanad and finally to Wayanad.²

Geographically most of the district is covered by thick forests. Archaeological evidences show that the land was inhabited by Stone Age people thousands of years back. The new Stone Age carvings at Edakkal caves in Ambukuthimala near Ambalavayal is a living testimony of Stone Age culture in Wayanad

Though the land has great historical background, recorded history of the land is available only from the 18th century onwards. The introduction of colonial rule in India paved the way for colonial historiography. New attempts had been taken by the colonial masters to understand the history of the colonial people for consolidating their hold. An understanding on the life, customs, traditions etc was an administrative necessity of the colonial masters.

¹. C Gopalan Nair, *Wayanad: its people and tradition*, 1911

². *Madras Manual of Administration*, Vol III, page 1025, 1911

Tradition says that the earliest rulers of Wayanad were the Veda kings. Their history is mixed with myth and is not reliable. With the disintegration of the Chera Empire, so many local chiefdoms came into existence in Kerala. Naduvazhis and Desavazhis began to exercise authority over the people. Of these, in the early decades of 18th century, Wayanad came under the rule of the Kottayam rajas of present day Kannur District.³

From 1760 onwards Wayanad was occupied by Hyderali of the Mysore kingdom. After him, his son and successor, Tipu Sultan returned Wayanad to the Kottayam rulers. The Anglo Mysore conflict for political domination changed the history of Wayanad also. The defeat of Tipusultan in the 3rd Anglo - Mysore war led to the Treaty of Sreerangapatanam of 1792. By this Tipu Sultan handed over Malabar to the English. Then the English East India company claimed Wayanad as their own which was objected by the Pazhassi Raja of the Kottayam dynasty. Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja organized a militia comprising the Kurichia tribes of wayanad. The guerrilla warfare caused great hardships to the company. But finally they succeeded in eliminating Raja's influence over Wayanad with his defeat and death in 1805.

The British occupation of Wayanad had great impact on the economy and politics of Wayanad. The company introduced plantation economy in Wayanad. Tea and coffee estates had been set up. For military and economic purposes roads were laid across Wayanad which connected Kozhikode and Thalassery. Those roads brought the military equipments and hill produces to the company camps. With the fall of Mysore and Pazhassi, the monopoly on spice trade enriched the company.

³. O K Johny, *Wayanad Rekhakal*, (Mal.) Page 19

The colonial administration made every attempt to control the spice trade. They built inland transportation facilities to collect the hill produce. Further they improved the roads built by the Mysore rulers and connected with the new roads built by the company. The new roads were connected with major markets and townships of South India like Mysore, Guddalore and Ooty.

Population

As per the Census Report of 2011, the total population of the district is 817420. Of this, 785840 are living in rural areas where as 31580 are living in urban areas. Among the rural population of 785840, 386283 are males and 399557 are females. In the urban settlement there are 15401 males and 16179 female⁵. Like other districts in the state the number of females in the district is higher than the males.

As per 2011 census, sex ratio in the district is 995 per 1000 males. The density of population is 383 per sq.kms. The decadal census shows an increasing tendency in the density of population. One important characteristic feature of this district is the large Tribal population, consisting mainly of Paniyar, Adiyar, Kattunayakan and Kurichiyans communities. SC and ST population comes 4% and 17% respectively. Wayanad is a mountainous tract with picturesque plateau.⁶

⁴ Govt.of Kerala, *Panchayath level statistics*, wayanad district, 2011, page 6

⁵ <http://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011census/C-01.html>

⁶ Govt.of Kerala, *Panchayath Level statistics*, Wayanad district, 2011, page 6

Geography

Wayanad District came in to existence on 1st November, 1980 as the 12th District of Kerala consisting of Mananthavady, Sulthan Bathery and Vythiri Taluks. The district has an area of 2131 square kilometres. The District is situated on north eastern portion of Kerala state. The District is bounded on the North by Kodagu District of Karnataka State, on the East by Mysore District of Karnataka State and Nilgiri District of Tamilnadu State, on the South Malappuram District and Kozhikode District, on the West by Kozhikode District and Kannur District.

Kabani River, one of the east flowing rivers of Kerala, is the main river of the District. Almost the entire Wayanad District is drained by the Kabani river and its three tributaries viz. Panamaram, Mananthavady and Thirunelly. The District lies at an average height of 900 to 1200 metres above the mean sea level. The mean annual temperature is 23.80C. During December- January temperature lowers to 15°C experiencing severe cold and during summer season the temperature will go up to 35°C ⁷

Though the original settlers of the land are the adivasis, later they were displaced by the emigrants. The earliest migrants were the Jains. They came from Karnataka in the 13th century. The feudal system of land relations was introduced into Wayanad with the arrival of the Nairs from the nearby Kottayam and Kurumbranad kingdoms in the 14th century. The Muslims of Kozhikode and Malappuram also started their migration in the subsequent periods. From 1940 onwards there was a large scale Christian and Ezhava migration from south Kerala to wayanad.

⁷. Govt.of Kerala, *Panchayath level statistics, Wayanad district*, 2011, page 6

Economy

The important crops are coffee, tea, paddy and cardamom. Agriculture is the principal occupation of this District. The most important crops which are cultivated in the District are pepper and paddy. The major plantation crops are Coffee and Tea. Wayanad contribute 9 % of pepper production in the state which is second largest producer in the State. Similarly Wayanad district has first position in the production of coffee and ginger. Its contribution is about 79% and 44% respectively.

The geographical and climatic conditions are very helpful in making the land a 'land of fields'. The district has a pleasant climate because of its distance from the mean sea level. The main economic activity of the people of Wayanad is agriculture. Different food crops like rice, tapioca and plantains are cultivated. The cash crops like coffee, tea, pepper and cardamom etc. are the backbone of the economy.

As per the report of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in 2006, out of a total of 640 districts, Wayanad is listed as one of the country's 250 most backward districts. Because of the high dependence on agriculture, there are frequent agrarian crises in the district. Between 1997 and 2005, more than 150,000 farmers across India have committed suicide, of which nearly 8% were from Kerala (11,516). 90% of these were in Wayanad. The decline of prices of coffee, pepper, ginger, areca nut etc. adversely affected the farmers.

The Jain Community contributes a major share in the economy of the district. The Jains who are scattered around Wayanad laid the foundation of present day Wayanad. The Jain socio economic life is distinct from other communities. They have been acting as an integral part of social life, by absorbing and assimilating the good sides of other communities and also by providing positive principles to other communities.

Chapter II

Historical background of Jain tradition

Jainism, a religion which is based on the principle of non violence had its origin in the 6th century B C. The new creed which is originated as a reaction against Brahmanical religion was opposed to the elaborate and expensive Brahmanical religious rites. It advocated a simple and ascetic life to the common people. The exponents of this new creed have made substantial contribution to Indian thought and culture. Jain teaching of Ahimsa or non violence in deeds, words and thought formed the basis of Mahatma Gandhi's political philosophy and bears particular importance in the present day world of tension and terrorism. According to Gandhiji, it was Lord Mahavira, who practiced to the fullest extent and has propagated most the doctrine of Ahimsa

According to the Jains, the 24th Thirthankara, Vardhamana Mahavira is considered as the real founder of Jainism. There were 24 Thirthankaras in Jain tradition. The historicity of the first 22 Thirthankaras are doubtful. The 23rd Thirthankara was Parswanatha, the son of Aswasena, the king of Varanasi. He practiced non violence, truth, non possession and non acceptance of anything which was not voluntarily given.

The last Thirthankara, Vardhamana Mahavira, was born in 599 B C at Kundalagrama near Vysali. His father Siddartha was the chief of a Kshatriya clan Janthri. His mother Trishala was a Licchavi princess of Vaisali. He was married to Yesodha. Mahavira renounced the world at the age of 30 and became a wandering ascetic. For 12 years Mahavira practiced severe penance and self mortification. At the age of 42, he attained Kaivalya or the ultimate state of knowledge. He became a Jina or the Conqueror. He had established full control over his passions. He travelled in various places and

visited Kosala, Magadha, Mithila, Champa etc. He died in 527 B C at Pava near Rajagriha. His followers were known as Jains.

The essential Teachings of Jainism

Jainism rejects the authority of the Vedas. The main emphasis of Jainism is on Triratnas or Three Jewels i.e. Right knowledge, Right faith and Right conduct and on ahimsa or non violence. Jainism recognizes the law of Karma⁸. It also believes in the theory of rebirth and transmigration of soul. According to Mahavira there is a super natural energy- the highest, the noblest and the fullest manifestation of all the powers which lie latent in man. He taught that the aim of life is to obtain Mukti, or Salvation. In other words the aim of life is the liberation of the soul from the earthly bondage.

The most remarkable and impressive feature of the teachings of Mahavira is the emphasis on Ahimsa or nonviolence or non injury to any living creature. The Jains take care that they do not cause injury even to the smallest creature⁹. The Jains believe that all objects, whether animate or inanimate have life in them. To the Jains severe penances and strict discipline of the body are essential for attaining Mukti or Salvation. Mahavira preached that starving the body is a virtuous action. According to Mahavira followers of Jainism is required to take the following five vows of Non injury, Speaking the Truth, No stealing, Brahmacharya and Non possession¹⁰

⁸. A L Basham, *Wonder that was India* (Mal.) page 432

⁹. ---, page 435

¹⁰. Ibid

Jainism was opposed to caste system and Brahmin domination. The worship of 24 Thirthankaras is another essential feature of Jainism. For the propagation of his principles Mahavira organized an order of his followers. His eleven disciples were known as Gandharas or chief of schools. Aryasudharman became the head of the Jains after the death of Mahavira,. After him Badrabahu and Sambhuta Vijaya led the Jain Order. When there was a severe famine in Magadha, Badrabahu and his followers migrated to Sravanabalgola, in Karnataka. They returned to Magadha when the famine was over. Their return created a schism in the Jain order which led to the division of the order into two – the Digambaras and Swethambaras.

Badrabahu led the Digambaras and Stulabadra, the successor of Sambuthavijaya led the Swethambaras. The Digambaras lead a hard life and they do not wear clothes. On the other hand the Swethambaras wear white clothes and believe that they should fulfil their obligation to society.

The simple religious rites, free from unnecessary ceremonies, rituals and sacrifices, stress on moral principles etc attracted the common people. Jainism received royal patronage from the early Mauryas. Kharavela of Kalinga in Orissa also patronised Jainism. The use of vernacular languages such as Prakrit and Ardhamagadhi also helped the popularity of the new creed.

Jainism enriched Indian culture in many ways. The Jain Literature encouraged the vernacular languages. The religious and non religious literature which was written in Ardhamagadhi and Prakrit, led to the development of Marathi language. They also enriched languages like Kannada, Tamil and Telugu. Jivakachintamani, a Tamil work is their contribution to Tamil language.

The sacred book of the Jains is known as Agamasiddhanta. The original Jain texts are called Parvas and are fourteen in number. The Parvas are arranged into twelve parts called Angas. This literature is adopted only by the Swethambaras. Later a number of commentaries on the Jain works have been prepared by Jain scholars¹¹.

The Jains popularized the concept of Ahimsa, applicable both to human beings and animals. Their effort made Brahmanism to reform itself within the religion.

Jainism enriched Indian art and architecture. The stupas, carved pillars and large statues stands as the testimony of Jain skills. Jain sculptures are seen in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala. The large statue of Gomateswara at Sravanabelgola in Karnataka is a marvel in rock cut carving. The rock cut temples like the Hathikumbha cave temples at Udayagiri in Orissa, the Dilwara Jain Temple at Mount Abu in Rajasthan etc display the extraordinary skill in architecture.

The Jains mostly favoured trade and commerce as their profession. They were rich enough to construct huge religious centres such as the Jain temples at Sravanabelgola and Mount Abu.

¹¹. A L Basham, *Wonder that was India* (Mal.trans.) page 436

Chapter 3

Jainism in Kerala

Rediscovering of the Jain tradition in Kerala is a difficult task since many of the non Hindu shrines and centres of settlement were assimilated to the Hindu fold either by force or by contingency. The cultural and architectural remains undoubtedly prove that Kerala had sufficient number of Jain followers in the past. The concept of Yakshas and Yakshis in the Kerala society along with the discovery of Jain relics speaks about the Jain tradition of Kerala.

Jainism got royal recognition with the embracement of Jainism by Chandragupta Mourya, the ruler of Magadha. He popularised Jain teachings in Magadha and in north India. Chandragupta Mourya encouraged missionary activities and sent many missionaries to different parts of India. It is believed that some of them reached south India and introduced the teachings of Mahavira in the south. The first Jain settlement in Kerala appeared around 8th century.¹² Let us have a look at the early Jain centres of Kerala.

In the past Kerala was a part of Tamilakam. Chithral, now in Tamilnadu was a part of Kerala. The images of Thirthankaras on the walls of the Saraswathi temple and the idols of the 23rd and 24th Thirthankaras erected in the santum sanctoram of the temple, prompt us to believe that the Saraswathi temple at Chithral was a Jain basthi at least upto 13th century.¹³

¹². Dr. P D Padmakumar, *Jainism in Kerala*(mal.tr.) page 25

¹³. Dr. P D Padmakumar, *Jainism in Kerala*(mal.) page 37

Nagarcoil, in the south, once a part of Travancore kingdom was a prominent Jain centre at least from 8th century to 12th century¹⁴. At the Nagarajaswami temple of Nagarcoil, six Jain idols have been found. We can see the idols of Parswanatha and Mahaveera inside the temple even now.

Another prominent Jain centre of Kerala was Palakkad. Archaeologists and historians have unearthed many Jain temple relics from Palakkad district. The temple for the 8th Thirthankara, 'Chandraprabhakshetram' is in Palakkad. The place is called Jaina medu. But the number of Jain population here has been reduced drastically. It is believed that the Jain temple was built by two diamond merchants of Karnataka. Like the Jain temples of Wayanad, the temple is made with granite.

The temple has the images of Chandraprabha Thirthankara along with the statue of a Ksethrapalan, (gate keeper) and a number of Sasanadevatas like Jwalamalini Devi, Padmavathi Devi, Vijayalakshmi etc. At present the temple is in its ruins. At its peak there were 400 Jain families in and around Palakkad. Now it has only one Jain family to perform rituals here. Yet Jain festivals and rituals have been conducted here without fail.

The Chaturmukha Basthi and the Parswanatha basthi in Bangara Manjeswar, Kasargod, gives information about the Jain settlements in Northern Kerala. The place is near to Karkkala in Karnataka state, which was a Jain settlement after their flight from the Hoysala kingdom. Like other settlements in Kerala, the Jain population in Kasargod is also very limited.

¹⁴. Dr. P D Padmakumar, *Jainism in Kerala*(mal.) page 36

Kallil Bhagavathi temple, near Perumbavoor was an oldest Jain temple in Kerala. The idols of Parswanatha and Mahaveera are kept in this temple. But later this Jain basathi has been converted as a Bhagavathi temple¹⁵

The Irinjalakkuda Bharatha Kshetram was also a Jain basthi. Bharatheswara, who was the eldest son of the first Thirthankara, Rishabadeva was worshipped here¹⁶. But with the expansion of Aryanization, the idol has been considered to be the idol of Bharatha, the brother of Lord Rama. The Hindus consider it as the one and only temple dedicated to Lord Rama's brother, Bharatha.

The domination of Hinduism in the later centuries adversely affected Jainism and Buddhism. Many Jain Basthis and Buddha viharas have been attacked and converted into Hindu temples. The conversion of many rulers from Jainism and Buddhism to Saiva and Vaishnavite sects also caused the decline of these religions. Yet many continued to be the followers of Jain tradition.

Archaeological studies and the presence of Jain Thirthankara idols and Sasanadevatas in many temples of Kerala prove that almost all districts of Kerala had Jain settlements in the past. But in course of time Jainism declined in Kerala also. It may be due to the lack of royal patronage or by the revival of Hindu tradition. The decline of the Hoysalas also may have caused the decline of Jainism in the South.¹⁷

¹⁵ O K Johny, *Wayanad Rekhakal*(mal.) page 55

¹⁶ Dr. P D Padmakumar, *Jainism in Kerala*(mal.) page 39

¹⁷ Dr..K K N Kurup, Article on *Jain society of wayanad*, Sri Ananthanatha swami Kshetram, Kalpetta, Platinum Jubilee souvenir,2008. Page 44

Chapter 4

Jainism and Wayanad

According to Dr. P. D Padmakumar, Jainism reached Kerala from Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Karnataka was a stronghold of Jainism during the reign of Chandragupta Maurya especially in Sravana Belgola. Chandragupta was a great promoter of Jainism and sent many missionaries to different parts of India. Among them somebody came to Kerala and spread Jainism here. This is considered to be the first Jain migration to Kerala. Another group of Jains migrated to Kerala around the 8th century from Tamil Nadu.¹⁸

Karnataka was a major Jain centre with the migration of Badrabahu and his followers. In Kerala, Wayanad because of its proximity to Karnataka saw the flowering of Jainism reaching to its zenith in 11th to mid 13th century AD. The spread of Jainism to Kerala started in the 8th century AD. Jains are the first group who migrated to Wayanad. The Kannada speaking Jain people in Wayanad are known as Gowdas, and they belonged to the Digambara sect.

In the 12th Century, the Hoysala king of Karnataka, patronized Jainism. Vishnuvardhana, a Hoysala ruler had conquered the Nilgiri region, which also included Wayanad. It was during his time that the influence of Jainism spread to farther south. But when Vishnuvardhan embraced Vaishnavism, the Vaishnava- Saiva sects let loose an act of aggression against the Jains.

¹⁸.Dr. P D Padmakumar, *Jainism in Kerala*(mal.) page 25

Due to extreme persecution by the Saivites, many Jains left their original home and settled at Karkala in South Canara. It is believed that Jainism reached Wayanad through this group. Kallil near Perumbavoor, Wayanad, Palakkad etc. were the main Jain centres in Kerala.

The ruins of Jain Bastis in Wayanad district clearly explains the rich legacy left by the Jains to Kerala culture. Epigraphical references and ruins of Jain temples speaks that Wayanad was a major Jain settlement in Kerala.

It is believed that the Jains migrated to Panamaram on the banks of Kabani river. From there the Jain groups were spread to the different parts of Wayanad¹⁹. Epigraphical evidences say that the first Jain settlement in Wayanad was at Arepathre, near Panamaram. The geographical location of this site is now under dispute. During the days of the Hoysala Dynasty Jainism was in its peak in Wayanad. Hoysala kings promoted Jainism and they sent many missionaries to different parts of India to spread Jainism. The Western Chalukyas or the Chalukyas of Kalyani also encouraged Jainism. Under Thailapa (10th century) many Jain basthis were built in south India. The Jain centres and agricultural villages of Wayanad came in to existence during this time²⁰. There are many proofs, which justify the existence of Jainism in Wayanad.

¹⁹ M V Sreyamskumar, Article on *Jain influence on wayanad*, Sri Ananthanatha swami Kshetram, Kalpetta, Platinum Jubilee souvenir, 2008. Page 55

²⁰ Dr. K K N Kurup, Article on *Jain society of Wayanad*, Sri Ananthanatha Swami Kshetram, Kalpetta, Platinum Jubilee souvenir, 2008. Page 45

An inscription discovered from a Jain basti at Varadur near Panamaram has references about the early Jain settlements and temples in Wayanad. The inscription is dated as Saka era 1606, shows that Jainism was still very powerful even in 17th Century. The inscription which was noticed by Dr. M. R Raghava Varriar, a noted epigraphist and historian, has reference about the earliest Jain settlements in Wayanad. The copper plate inscription which was placed under a water fountain at Varadur Ananthanatha swami temple deals with the grant of various ritual materials to the Jain basathis of Wayanad by Lalithappan, the younger son of Bommarasan of the Karkala Aramana basathi in the Saka year 1606¹⁹.

The inscription dated *sakavarsha1606 rakthakshi samvalsara jeshtabahula sukravara* reads:

Karkala aramana basthiya bommrasanu mommaka lalithappanu devapooja chinna belli thamrakanchu upakaranakalumadisi kotta bibara.

The inscription gives details about the grant of such items as shodasabhavana yanthram, vellimukkuda, dondasruthavalayam, dasabhavanayanthram etc to various Jain temples of Wayanad. The Jain chaithyalayas or temples referred in the inscription are Arepathra, Bennagodu, Palagondur, Hennarudubedhi, Puthangadi, and Hosangadi. The Arepathra Chaityalaya is not yet identified. It is believed that it was at the hilltop near to the Panamaram river. The other Kannada touch place names are identified as Venniyode, Palukunnu, Sultan Batheri, Puthangadi and Mananthavady respectively.

These Kannada place names are an indication of Wayanad's Karnataka connection. Important Jain settlements in Wayanad at present are in Mananthavady, Panamaram, Kaniyambetta, Kalpetta, Varadur and Anchukunnu

²¹ O K Johny, *Wayanad Rekhakal*(mal.) page 56

Early Jain settlements and Chaithyalayas in Wayanad.

Based on the Varadur inscription, Dr. M. R Raghava Varriar says that there were seven Jain centres in Wayanad viz. Manikyapuri, Ksheerapuri, Kalpathi, Vennayode, Palagondur, Hosangadi and Hennarudubeedhi²². It is believed that Manikyapuri was at the present day Manichira. The location of Ksheerapuri is not yet identified. Kalpathi may be Kalpetta, the present day District headquarters. Vennayode, Palakkunnu, Hosangadi and Hennarudubeedhi are already identified as present day Venniyode, Palukunnu Mananthavady and Sultan Bathery respectively.

1. Hennarudubeedhi (Sulthan Batheri)

One of the earliest Jain settlements in Wayanad is referred in Kannada as Hennerudubeedhi (meaning 12 streets). Now there is a Jain Temple called Kidanganad basthi. It is supposed to have been built around fourteenth century A.D. In the Mysorian invasion of late 18th century, Tipu Sultan, believed to have used this temple as his battery (armoury). Even before this, the place was already deserted by the Jains, may be due to a severe draught. The Structure is now under the possession of Archaeology Department who repaired the temple in 1996 and 2014. Though this temple surroundings had a large Jain population in ancient times, there is no Jain in this area now.

²² Dr.M. R Raghava Varriar, *Jainamatham Keralathil*, Kottayam 2012(Mal.) p 45

The pillars and walls of the temple are engraved with the images of Tirthankaras. One of the specialities of this temple is that no piece of wood is used for the construction of the temple. Even the roof of the temple is made of stones. The Wayanad Jain community conducts a Navakhalasha Panchamritha Abhisheka Pooja at this temple on the occasion of Mahaveer Jayanthi every year.

This Jain temple is built in the Vijayanagara style of architecture having Mukhamandapa, Garbhagriha, Ardhamandapa and Mahamandapa. But parts of this structure are destroyed in the later years. An unfortunate thing happened last year. Last year the Archaeological Survey of India has repaired the temple. But the repair work has caused great damage to the original structure. Inexperienced workers, having no historical or cultural senses were entrusted with the task of making the maintenance work. Modern machineries were used for the removal of age old roof and stone blocks. It was the timely intervention of the public that saved the structure from more destruction. (A video graphic presentation of this temple is given separately)

The Jain architecture in Wayanad has the influence of the architectural styles of Vijayanagara Empire, Hoysala and Ganga dynasties. According to William Logan architecture of later Hindu temples in Kerala was influenced by the architectural styles of the Jain temples²³. The Jain temples at Sultan Bathery, Panamaram etc are completely made of stones. No piece of wood is used in its construction. Even the roof is made of stones.

²³. William Logan, *Malabar Manual* (Mal. Tr) Mathrubhumi, 2007. Page 147

2. Panamaram

The two Jain temples near Panamaram are now called as 'Vishnu gudi' and 'Janardhana gudi' respectively. These ruined Jain temples are a splendid show case of the Hoysala architecture and stone carvings. These temples are made by stones which is not available in that locality and believed to be brought from Karnataka. In the view of historians the Hoysala kings of Karnataka have done a lot to propagate Jainism. But the ill fate of the Jains in Karnataka started after King Vishnu Vardhana's conversion to Vaishnavism.

The Jain temples of Panamaram contain beautiful rock carvings. The rock carvings include the images from Jain and Hindu mythology. The images like Thirthankaras, yakshas and yakshinis, lesbian, erotic images, etc are carved in the pillars. The Stone temples, (*Kallambalam* in Malayalam) decorated with beautiful images clearly speaks about the highly artistic talent of the Hoysala artists. The images of the Yakshas and Yakshinis, and the images of Thirthankaras throw light on the emergence of Yakshi cult in Kerala. It is interesting to note that most of the Jain yakshas and Yakshinis are the protectors of the thirthankaras. But in the Hindu belief, the yakshis are mostly pictured as blood thirsty witches. Such a picturisation may be an attempt by the brahmanical religion to alienate the people from embracing Jainism. (*Also see the video graphic representation*)

Jains believed that Yakshas and yakshinis are *sasanadevatas* or protectors of Thirthankaras. In the Jain creed each and every thirthankara has his own Yakshas and yakshinis. (A note on the yakshas and Yakshinis is given in the appendix) The images of Ambika yakshi, Padmavathi devi, Jwalamalini, Garuda Yakshan, Vijaya Yakshan, Parswanatha Thirthankara and Hindu mythological images are carved at Panamaram Jain temples.

The Jain temples of Panamaram are believed to be raided and destroyed during the Mysore invasion by Tippu Sulthan during late years of 18th century. The Garbha gruha, Mukha Mandapa, detached Namaskara Mandapa and the cloistered wall, all made from granite pillars and heavy sheets are now in ruins. Many of the sheets or pillars of the temple with beautiful motifs were either stolen or destroyed. It is unfortunate that the left side of the front wall of the Janardhanagudi has completely collapsed in the last rainy season. The historical minded public and social workers are raising their voice for protecting these historical structures. It is learnt that the ASI has issued a notification regarding the taking over of the ruined Jain temples.²⁴ At present, these Jain temples are located in the private properties. The Jain temples at Panamaram, which are noted for its rock carvings and paintings, are completely ignored except by the students of History and by some tourists. At present many of the old Jain Bastis are in a dilapidated condition, because of the negligent attitude of the authorities and the public.

Near to these old structures, a new Jain temple has been constructed at Puthangadi in 1950. This temple has the one and only Bahubali idol in Kerala²⁵

3. Kalpetta

a) Kalpetta Chandranatha Giri : This is a beautiful location in Wayanad from where we can get a panoramic view of Wayanad. There was a Jain Temple at Chanadranatha Giri. Chanadranatha Giri is situated on top of a single huge rock near to the present day Kalpetta

²⁴. Desabhimani, Malayalam daily, Kozhikkode edition 13/9/2015

²⁵. V V Jinendraprasad, Article on *Wayanattile Jaina kshethrangal*, Sri Ananthanatha swami Kshetram, Kalpetta, Platinum Jubilee souvenir, 2008. Page 86

Civil station and NH 212. The huge single rock is called Mayiladipara (Dancing Peacock rock). At the top of the rock there was an idol of Chandranatha Tirthankara. Jains used to visit the basthi on special occasions. The idol was later destroyed but the temple structure is already there. Behind the rock there are a number of caves supposed to have been used by Jain monks for meditation. There is no proper way to reach the temple. This gives the miscreants the opportunity to occupy the place and destroy the serene atmosphere. (*See the video graphic presentation*)

b) Kalpetta or old Kalpavathi was an old Jain settlement which is mentioned in the Varadur water fountain inscription. The Temple which was in its ruin was shifted to a new place called Ananthakrishnapuram on the Kalpetta- Mananthavady road. Near to the present temple there is a rock cut cave shelter supposed to have been used by Jain monks for meditation. (Watch the video graphic representation of the cave shelter.) The Ananthanatha swami temple is one of the main temples of the Jains of Wayanad. Most of the Jain weddings of the district are conducted here.

4. Mananthavady

Mananthavady is one of the earliest Jain settlements in Wayanad. In the Varadur water fountain copper plate inscription the place is referred as Hosankady. The old Jain temple (Hosankadi Basathi) which is situated 1 km away from the present day Mananthavady has been renovated in 1958. The temple is called Sri Adheeswara Swami temple.

5. Varadur

The Sri. Ananthanatha Swami temple at Varadur has a recent origin. It is the temple from where a copper plate inscription has been discovered by Dr. M. R Raghava Varriar, known as the Varadur water fountain copper plate inscription. It gives information about the Jain temples of Wayanad. It is believed that the temple was

originally situated at Arapathre near Panamaram river. The present temple was constructed in 1964.

6. Anjukunnu:

Anjukunnu is another important Jain settlement. A new temple has been constructed in 1996 and the idol installation ceremony or Panchakalayana prathishta was conducted. Sri Parswanatha is the diety of this temple.

7. Palukunnu:

Palukunnu is another important jain settlement in Wayanad. It is referred in the Varadur copper plate inscription as Palagundu. A chaithyalaya for Sri Parswantha was constructed here in the past. The temple got renovated in 1950.

8. Venniyode :

Venniyode is another very old Jain settlement in Wayanad. It is referred in the past as Bennagaud. There is a Jain street in this place accommodating more than 35 families. Upon the ruins of an ancient temple a new temple namely Shri Santhi Natha Basathi, has been constructed in 1955. In 1991 a *Manasthambh*, first of its kind in Wayanad is erected in front of the Santhinatha basathi.²⁶

²⁶. V V Jinendraprasad, Article on *Wayanattile Jaina kshethrangal*, Sri Ananthanatha swami Kshetram, Kalpetta, Platinum Jubilee souvenir, 2008. Page 88

It is unfortunate to note that many of the prominent Hindu temples of Wayanad are once Jain basthis. Many of the Jain temples of Wayanad were converted as Hindu temples due to many reasons. Some of the temples like Thalachillawan temple of Sultan Batheri and the Umamaheswary temple of Puthurvayal are assimilated to the Hindu fold when Jains deserted their settlements. The Eacharakkolly Vaishnava temple near Bavali was once a Jain basathi.²⁷

Jain settlements in contemporary Wayanad

At present the Jain Community in Wayanad has been divided into nine units. Each unit has a committee consisting of 9 members. The unit Committee has a Chairman, a Convenor and Seven members. The following are the nine units: Anjukunnu, Kalpetta, Kaniyambetta, Karinkutty, Muttill, Neervaram, Poothadi, Puthiyidam and Venniyode.

The purpose of the Committee is to monitor the well being of the Jain families of the respective units. It extends its support to achieve a high level of living. Most of the Jain families are engaged in agriculture and business. The committee ensures better participation of the family members in the social and community activities. It is a welcome thing to note that most of the Jain families are better positioned in the economic and social sphere largely due to the efforts of the community committees.

²⁷. V V Jinendraprasad, Article on *Wayanattile Jaina kshethrangal*, Sri Ananthanatha swami Kshetram, Kalpetta, Platinum Jubilee souvenir, 2008. Page 90

Chapter 5

Jain Cultural Traditions and Rituals

The Jains of Wayanad have been following a variety of rituals and ceremonies from birth to death. Many of such customs and traditions are shaped by their close tie with Hindu fellowmen. Yet some of the ceremonies bear Jain cultural identity. Attainment of Moksha is the ultimate goal of the Jinan and all their tradition are evolved from the teachings of Jain Thirthankaras. Though Jainism advocates simple ceremonies, free from Brahmanical yagas and yajnas, present day Jain ceremonies like wedding sometimes shows the luxurious expression of richness.

Birth

When a child is born in a Jain family, the father and grandfather is insisted to follow purity time. The purity time is for 12 days. All the members of the family wear only white dresses. After 12 days of the birth the mother and child is permitted to enter the house from rear. After then the hair of the child will be cut off. The relatives visit the child with gifts of gold and silver. On that occasion the father gives a new silk dress to the mother. Elaborate ceremonies are conducted by the Jain priests.

Wedding

The wedding ceremony of the Jains of Wayanad lasts for 7 days. There are several rituals associated with Jain marriage. The Jains consider marriage as a worldly affair. After the engagement the family of the bridegroom gives a feast to the relatives and neighbours. There will be rituals in all the six days. On the fifth day the bride gives such items as dry coconut, banana fruit, areca nut, betel leaves etc to the bridegroom's house members. In the morning of the seventh day, the bride groom is taken to the temple where he wears a *poonool* (sacred thread), which is given by the Jain priests. At the

temple, the saree, fruits and wedding pendent, to be given to the bride will be offered to the deity for blessing. After then the pipal leaf and mango tree leaf, tied together will be placed in a fully filled copper pot. It follows a pot pooja or kalasa pooja.

The ceremonies on the part of the bride start at early morning. The bride and relatives reach the temple before dawn and starts the poojas. On the wedding day she has to take bath after each pooja and has to wear new dresses after each bath. This ceremony will continue for hours. After this the bride and bride groom will be taken to the kalyana mandapa separately, escorted by relatives with music.

Before the entry of the bridegroom to the wedding platform, the sight of the bride groom by the bride will be blocked by placing a curtain in front of the bride groom. Then the bride will be taken to the mandapa and will stand in front of the bridegroom. Then curtain will be removed. It follows the wedding ceremony. (*a video clip of the wedding ceremony is attached*). The other ceremonies like exchange of flower chain and tying of the nuptial thread etc. are that of a typical Hindu wedding style.

A peculiar feature of the Jain wedding ceremony is the tying of both the bride and bride groom with a cotton thread. After a while the thread will be removed and will be offered for ritual ceremonies. Moving around the ceremonial fire and the mandapa will follow. Once again a flower thread will be tied up around the newly wedded couples and will be removed after chanting certain hymns. Then the couples have to bow before the fire altar. After the marriage a grand feast will be given to the relatives and best wishers of the wedding. After the marriage ceremony the bride will be taken to the bridegroom's house.

The Sree Ananthanatha Swamy Kshetram, Kalpetta and the Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swami Kshetram, Eranalloor, near Panamaram are the two temples where

most of the Jain weddings are conducted. It is interesting to note that the temple priests of the Sri Lakshmi Narasimha swami kshetram, Eranalloor are coming from Karnataka. In many occasions the ceremonies are in tune with the Hindu scriptures.

Death

The Jain practice of accepting death is called Santhara or Salleghana. It is the practice of accepting death by taking no food for many days. The Jain practice of Santhara has been invited criticism from many quarters. The Rajasthan Highcourt has banned the practice of Santhara in August, 2015. But the Supreme Court has stayed the order of the High Court stating that it is a part of religious belief. Any how the Jains of Wayanad are not following Salleghana as a general practice. One such Salleghana was reported in 1950 when Santhimathi Bhai Mathaji, a prominent Jain lady of Wayanad, who worked for the propagation of Jainism observed the Salleghana at Maniyamkode.

Festivals

Diwali and Paryushana are the two important festivals of the Jains. Paryushana literally means 'abiding' or 'coming together'. On this occasion the Jains take the vows of learning and fasting. Usually the Paryushana takes eight or ten days of fasting and rituals. The date for the Paryushana festival falls in the Bhadrapada Shuklachaturthi. During the 8-day Paryushana festival, the Jains recites the verses from various Jain texts like the Kalpa Sutra, Thatvartha Sutra etc. which elaborates the life and works of great souls who lived during the time of Mahavira and Neminath Thirtankara.

Diwali (Deepavali) or the festival of light is observed by the Jains with great vigour and enthusiasm. It is the second most important festival of the Jains after Paryushana. The Jains believe that Mahaveer attained Moksha on Diwali. The festival is on the month of Aswina, of the Saka era. It is believed that Mahaveera commenced his last sermon in the early morning of the previous day and it ended only in the late night of

Diwali. The kings who attended the last sermon decided to keep alive the knowledge of the Jina symbolically by lighting lamps.

Relating to Jain principle of fasting and meditation, the Jains observe fasting and Ekasan. The duration of the fast is mostly one day to thirty days. On the days of fasting the Jains of Wayanad, who are Digambaras, do not take food or water more than once in a day. The Digambaras and Swethambara sects have differences regarding the taking of foods.

Chapter 6

The Contributions of Jain Community to Wayanad

Jainism played an important role in shaping modern Wayanad. The rich cultural traditions of the Jains have deep impact on the social and economic life of Wayanad. The Jain religious beliefs based on the principle of non violence have affected the economy of the district. Being strict vegetarians the Jains promoted eco friendly cultivation in the district.

The Jains strictly followed the concept of ahimsa and are conscious about all living organisms. According to them even the creatures in the soil have the right to live. Destruction of their settlement and killing while making the field for cultivation is against the Jain principle of non violence. Therefore they were against digging and ploughing of the soil. Thus in the earlier times of their migration the Jains cultivated such crops which require no ploughing and digging.

The Jains introduced coffee crop in Wayanad. Even today the coffee produced from Wayanad has great demand in international market. Coffee is the main crop of modern Wayanad. Majority of the families in Wayanad has coffee plants in their surroundings. The Jains planted Robusta coffee, one of the delicious and most wanted coffee powders in the market. The seeds of the Robusta coffee were brought from Africa.

In the field of irrigation Jains have contributed a lot. Some of the dams and ponds built by Jains still exist in Cheeral, Kazhampukunnu, Nambiarkunnu, Chuliyode, Kolliyadi, Thaloor, Sultan Bathery, Meenangadi, Panamaram, Anjukunnu and Nadavayal. These ponds and dams were built in the medieval period. The Jains of that time used to store water in these ponds, dams and irrigated the crops. Doddappan Pond,

near Sultan Bathery is one of those kinds. These ponds and dams, adjourned to the Jain temples were not only for the exclusive use of the temples but also for the use of men and animals. Jains were experts in paddy cultivation and they introduced it in Wayanad. Like that the introduction of pepper and Robesta coffee were the contributions of Jains. Another important contribution of Jains is in the field of architecture.

Most of the ancient Jain temples of Wayanad were built either in the Vijayanagara style or in the Hoysala style. The temples have Mukhmandapa, Garbhagriha, Ardhamandapa and Mahamandapa. The Sultan Bathery Jain temple is a classic example of Vijayanagara style. One of the specialities of this temple is that for the construction of the temple no piece of wood has been used, even the roof of the temple is made of stones. The engravings in the Puthanangadi Jain temple deserve a special mention here. Along with the Jain statues, the images of Matsya, Kurma and Varaha images too can be seen on the walls of this temple.

Jains are the first group who started social life in Wayanad. Centuries ago they migrated and started living together. The older name of Sulthan Bathery was 'Hennaredu Beedhi', which means 'twelve streets'. Since the Jains reached Kerala from Karnataka many of the place names are also Kannada related. One such name is Hennarudu beedhi. The name 'Hennarudu Bedhi' tell us that there were twelve well organized streets and it was the main centre of Jains. Thus Jains paved the way for the social life in Wayanad.

Up to 8th c AD, the Jain Viharas acted as the centres of social activities. The Jain centres were the educational centres of early Kerala society. They also acted as hospitals and banks. When Vedic religion was against public education, Jains imparted education

to common people in their own language by founding educational centres called 'salais'. But such salais were not common in Wayanad

The Jains popularized Ayurvedic Medicine in Kerala. To the Jains human beings, plants and animals are not different in their relations. They made Kerala a major centre of Ayurveda medicine. Jain traders popularized the products of Kerala such as pepper, ginger, cardamom, cinnamon, etc. to the world.

Persons to be remembered

The vision and works of some of the Jain personalities laid the foundation of modern Wayanad. One such visionary was Shri. M. K Jinachandran. He is considered as the founding father of modern Wayanad. He initiated the process of transforming an agrarian oriented backward district into a modern Wayanad. He was a great visionary and he did many things for the development of Wayanad and its people. It was M K Jinachandran who started the first high school in Wayanad (1944) to impart education to the common man. The school is named as Subbu Krishna Memorial Jain School, Kalpetta (S KM J School) At present this School is emerged as one of the premier educational institutions in Wayanad. A number of Primary schools were also founded by him in different parts of Wayanad. He noticed that the tribal community is lagging behind in all walks of life. In order to provide education to the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe, he started the Kanyagurukulam. He was elected to the Indian parliament also.

Shri. Maniamkode Krishna Gowder, is another prominent Jain who actively participated in the national movement. He succeeded in bringing Gandhiji to Wayanad on January 14th, 1934 as a part of Harijan uplift movement. It was he, who brought the seeds of Robusta coffee from Africa. He contributed very much for the development of agriculture in Wayanad.

The Jains considered education as a means for development and liberation. Hence many Jains contributed their wealth for establishing schools and other institutions in Wayanad. Many of the schools and hospitals in the district were started in the lands contributed by Jains. Even today the Jains continue the tradition of donating land and resources to the public welfare. The land for the proposed M K Jinachandran Memorial Govt. Medical College, Wayanad is donated by a Jain Trust.

Shri M P Virendrakumar, noted politician, writer and social activist is a well known Socialist from the Jain community. He was elected to the different houses of the representative institutions in India. He served as a minister both in the centre and the state legislatures. He has won many awards in various fields such as literary, social, political, environmental etc. His son, M V Sreyamskumar is also active in politics. He represents Kalpetta constituency in the Kerala Legislature since 2006. Both of them are the members of the Director Board of Mathrubhumi, a leading printing and publication company in Kerala.

It is not easy to mention the names of all the contributors. The names of M K Subbayya Gowder, who worked very hard for the construction of the Sri Ananathanatha Swami Temple at Puliarmala, Kalpetta need to be mentioned. Sri M K Padmaprabha Gowder, the father of Sri M P Virendrakumar, Shri M S Padmayya Gowder, Shri Chandrayya Gowder, the founder of the Gandhi Memorial School at Anjukunnu, Sri. P M Padmanabhan, president of the Kalpetta panchayath and president of Panamaram cooperative land mortgage bank etc are to be remembered.

The Jains have contributed very much for the development of Wayanad. They laid the foundation of an agrarian and commercial economy in Wayanad. The Jain community

has produced great patriots and freedom fighters. Today the urban life requirement of Way anad is mostly provided by prominent Jains

Chapter VII

Conclusion

At present Wayanad is considered to be one of the important Jain centres in the State. According to the latest Census of 2011, total Jain population in Wayanad is 1797. Among them 872 are male and 925 are female. In Wayanad the main Jain centers are Mananthavady, Panamaram, Anjukunnu, Venniyode, Varadoor, Kalpetta and Kaniyambetta. The highest number of Jain followers in Kerala is in Wayanad district. Ernakulam district ranked second. (See Table I) Kalpetta, Mananthavady, Varadur, Vennyodu, Palukunnu etc. still accommodates Jain families.

The Jain population in the district shows a tendency of growth compared with the last census of 2001. As per the survey of 2001, the district had a Jain population of 1581. Among them 797 were male and 784 were females. By the Religious Data of the Census report, India, 2015 the Jain population in the district is 1797. Of this Vythiri Taluk accommodates majority of the Jain families. Out of 1797, Vythiri Taluk has 1022 Jains (including the Jains of Kalpetta Municipality) against 542 of Mananthavady and 233 of Sultan Batheri Taluks.

The small number of population is an indication that the Jains still follows their culture and tradition without much deviation. They are not bothered about making conversion to their faith through unfair means. According to them number is not a matter, but actions and involvement in the moral and social development that is the important matter. Following the principle of non violence and community help the Jains in the district enriches the cultural development of Wayanad.

Though the Jains are given Minority community status by the constitution, they are not demanding concessions from the govt. as done by other minority communities.

Most of the Jain families are not economically sound and is eligible for concessions. Unlike other communities the Jains are not communally organised and is not a problem for communal harmony.

The Jain community in Wayanad has been preserving their cultural identity despite the influence of Hinduism. They are not hostile to the Hindu cultural traditions and are generous to accommodate even Hindu deities in their prayer hall! It is interesting to note that some of the Hindu deities which are associated with the Jain Thirthankaras are accepted by the Jains. The presence of Hindu images at the Puthangadi Jain temple may be an indication of this fact.

The Jains are supposed to be the leading business magnates in all states in India. But in Wayanad they are mainly engaged in agriculture. The younger generation of the Jain families are highly educated and many pursue professions other than agriculture. At present Jains are a minority as far as their population is concerned. The Jains constitute only 0.4% of the Indian population. In Wayanad too they are only 0.2%.

But they have the highest literacy percentage in India. The literacy percentage among male is 97.4 and female literacy percentage is 90.6²⁸.

The present study was designed to rediscover the Jain traditions in Wayanad. While undertaking the project it has been realised that much study and time is needed to get a complete picture of the topic. Yet I tried to provide some idea about the problem within the time frame. The study provides only a glimpse of the Jain life. A detailed study can be undertaken in future.

The present condition of many Jain temples in Wayanad is really pathetic. The unattended Jain temples are scattered around the district leaving the rich cultural tradition of the Jains. The remnants of the Vijayanagara and Hoysala style of architecture are to be

protected. The huge stone slabs with artistic decorations are lying here and there in the coffee plantations. Many such stone slabs were taken away by the needy for constructing their houses or farm houses. Some of them are used as washing slabs! The decision of the Archaeological Survey of India regarding the protection of the stone temples is well accepted by those who are clamoured for the same for many years. Let them preserve the rich Jain cultural centres of the past in its original form.

Jawaharlal Nehru wrote: “Truly speaking, Jainism is an independent and original religion, for it is neither Hinduism nor Vedic religion, but of course, it is an aspect of Indian life, culture and philosophy”

The essence of Jain philosophy can be seen in the words of Max Muller. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan quotes the words of Max Muller, “There can be no destruction of things that do exist, nor there creation of things out of nothing. Coming into existence and ceasing to exist, things have, because of their attributes and modes”²⁹

²⁸.India Census report, 2011

²⁹Max Muller, *Sacred Books of the East*, quoted by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p 275, Oxford University press, New Delhi, 2008.

Table I

Jain Population share in Kerala - District wise

District	Total Population	Jain population		
		Total	Male	Female
Kasargod	1307375	130	73	57
Kannur	2523003	193	97	96
Wayanad	817420	1797	872	925
Kozhikkode	3086293	601	302	299
Malappuram	4112920	68	38	30
Palakkad	2809934	78	44	34
Thrissur	3121200	62	29	33
Eranakulam	3282388	1176	578	598
Idukki	1108974	44	22	22
Kottayam	1974551	83	48	35
Alappuzha	2127789	74	31	3
Pathanamthitta	1197412	44	20	24
Kollam	2635375	63	31	32
Thiruvananthapuram	3301427	76	40	36
Total	33406061	4,489	2,225	2,264

Table II

Jain Population share in Wayanad District - Taluk wise*

Taluk	Total Population	Jain Population		
		Total	Male	Female
Mananthavady	258140	542	264	278
Sulthanbathery	297863	233	113	120
Vythiri	261417	1022	495	527
Total	817420	1797	872	925

*<http://www.censusindia.gov.in>

Table III

Jain Population share in Wayanad District - Municipality wise*

Municipality	Total Population	Jain Population		
		Total	Male	Female
Kalpetta	31580	281	134	147
Total	31580	281	134	147

(The population in the Kalpetta Municipality is included in the total population of
Vythiri Taluk)

*<http://www.censusindia.gov.in>

Images

Map of Wayanad District* (Not to scale)



*<http://www.kuruvatravels.com>



Jain temple at Sultan Batheri

(Kidanganad Basthi)



RUINS OF JAIN TEMPLE

Jain Temple Sultan Bathery 1911



Chanrdanatha Giri Basti, Kalpetta

(Mayiladi para Jain temple)



Stone Sculpture, Janardhanagudi, Panamaram



Chandranatha Giri Basti, Kalpetta



STONE SCULPTURES, PANAMARAM



Old Kannada inscription at Jain temple, Panamaram



Visnugnudi, Jain temple at Panamaram



Janardhanagudi

Jain Temple, Puthengadi, Panamaram



Janardhanagudi

Jain Temple, Puthengadi, Panamaram



Janardhanagudi

Jain Temple, Puthengadi, Panamaram



Vishnugudi, Jain temple, Panamaram

Jain Symbols



Jain emblem

The emblem is collectively chosen at the 2500th anniversary of Mahavira in 1974

Features

1. The outer border represents the universe
2. The semi circle represents the Siddhashila, liberated body less souls zone
3. The three dots represents 'Triratnas' (Right Knowledge, Right Belief and Right Conduct)



Ahimsa Hand

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