CHAPTER - IV

BUDDHIST & JAIN MONUMENTS
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Buddhism and Jainism are had emerged as revolutionary religions opposing the Vedic religion. Thanks to Gaudhama Buddha and Varthamana Mahavira, these two religions emerged and established a strong hold in north India. Due to the royal patronage given by Asoka and Chandragupta Maurya, these two ideologies spread in far off places.¹

As far as ancient Tamilagam was concerned, these two religions would have spread in the soil during the post Sangam period. The Kalabhras extended a helping hand for the spread of these two religions in this part of the country.² Gradually Jainism established a strong hold in Tamilagam comparing with Buddhism.

Due to the Pallava and Pandya royal patronage, Jainism spread in the entire Tamil country. A number of Jain pallis, and Jain centres emerged. Kanchipuram, Madurai and Kazhugumalai became the strong centres of Jainism.³ There are a number of, sculptures, Pallis (dwelling places of Jain and Buddhist monks) and some Brahmi inscriptions are available in Tamil Nadu region pertaining to this period and beyond.

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In the Kanyakumari region, Jainism and Buddhism established a strong base.\textsuperscript{4} Places like Kottar, Putheri, Vadasery, Therur, Mandaikadu, Kurandi, Aralvaimozhi, Chitharal and Thirunandikkarai became the important centres of these two religions. Nagaraja temple at Nagercoil was once a Jain Palli and because of the Travancore royal patronage it was converted into a centre for serpent worship.\textsuperscript{5}

Kottar, the celebrated town was once a popular Jain centre. A number of Jain scholars lived in this place.\textsuperscript{6} Let us discuss all the important Jain and Buddhist monuments one by one.

The origin and history of Buddhism and Jainism in Kanyakumari District were brought to light by the Kanyakumari Historical and Cultural Research Centre, Nagercoil. According to Dr.S.Padmanabhan, General Secretary of the centre, Pothalaka (Pothigai hills), Putheri, Therur, Aralvaimozhi, Sakkiyankodu, Kottar, Esanthanku were the important Buddhist centres and Kottar, Chitharal, Kurandi and Thirunandikkarai were the important Jain centres in Kanyakumari District in ancient days.\textsuperscript{7}

\textsuperscript{5} S. Padmanabhan, \textit{Naga Valipaadum Nagarajar Aalayamum}, Nagercoil, 1961, pp. 1-5.
\textsuperscript{6} \textit{Ibid}.
\textsuperscript{7} \textit{Aaivu Kalanjiam}, Monthly Historical Research Journal, Nagercoil, December 2005, pp. 16-20.
BUDDHIST MONUMENTS

In Kanyakumari District the evidences of Buddhist monuments are not explicit. There are some hypothetical places where the scholars claim as Buddhist centres. The feasibility of a Buddhist temple in these places will be dealt with. They are Esanthanku, Therur, Kottar, Aralvaimozhi, Mandaikadu, Saakiankodu and Putheri.  

Esanthangu (Srimoolavasam)

Only one inscription has been discovered in the southern most part of India which makes a direct reference to Buddhism. This is the copper plate inscription of the Ay king Vikramatiya Varaguna of the 9th century A.D. who ruled South Travancore that is the present Kanyakumari district. The inscription begins with an invocation to the Buddha, son of Suddhodana, the Dharma and the Sangha. This inscription brought to light that a Buddhist vihara flourished at Srimoolavasam and Vikramaditya Varaguna (A.D.885 – 925) donated some landed properties to the monastery. Literary references are also available about Srimoolavasam. Mushikavamsam, a Sanskrit work describes Srimoolavasam as a reputed centre of Buddhist activities.

The poem refers to a Buddhist vihara at Moolavasam on two occasions. The first reference is in connection with the protection given to it from sea erosion. Vikramaditya Varguna built a wall on the seashore and saved the shrine from the deluge of the waves. The next reference is in connection with the visit of King Vallabha who on returning from an unsuccessful expedition entered the shrine and worshipped the idol of Buddha.¹⁰

The fact that an idol of Avalokitha otherwise known as Lokanatha was discovered in Gandhara bearing the superscription "Dakshinapatha Moolavasa Lokanatha" further strengthen the view that Srimoolavasam was a reputed centre of Buddhism.¹¹ The belief is that Vajrabodhi (661 – 730 AD) of Malainadu (Pallava Country) with his disciples carried the image of Avalokitha from Srimoolavasam to Gandhara on his way to China also and Japan. It is also believed that Vajrabodhi who preached Tantric Buddhism in China also taught the Buddhists the martial art of Kanyakumari named Adimurai which might have become Karate and Kung Fu nowadays.¹²

Most of the historians of Kerala are of the opinion that the famous Buddhist centre Srimoolavasam was a village on the coastal

¹¹. S. Padmanabhan, From Kalari to Karate, article written in Indian Express, English daily, Madurai dated 15.07.1989.
¹². Ibid.
area of the modern Ambalapuzha or old Quilon, a portion of which was submerged in the sea. But evidence has come to light that Srimoolavasam is the coastal village Esanthanku in the present Kanyakumari district. If the Sanskrit word Srimoolavasam is translated into Tamil it will become Esanthanku which means the abode of God. How the word Thothathri became Vanamamlalai, Ajagajapuram became Tiruvadanai, Vedaranyam became Tirumaraikkadu and Srivilapalpuram became Tirupparappu, Sirimoolavasam also became Esanthanku in Tamil.13

Inscriptional evidences said that Esanthanku and the surrounding areas were ruled by the Ay kings Kokarunandakan (A.D. 857 – 885) and later Vikramadiya Varaguna (A.D.885 – 925).14 There is an epigraphic evidence to show that Varaguna first embraced Buddhism and later Jainism. Even now the people of Esanthanku say that a portion of their village was washed away by the sea and the portion is now called by the local people as Aayiramkaal Pozhi Mugham15 which denotes that a thousand pillared edifice was once there and it might be the world renowned Buddhist vihara. Looking at these points of view it can be reconstructed that the great Buddhist

15. Personally visited, discussed with the local people and understood.
monastery at Esanthanku ie Srimoolavasam might have been swallowed by the sea.

**Therur**

Therur is a village situated three kms from Suchindrum,\(^\text{16}\) the abode of Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma. In the inscriptions found in Therur, the village is refered to as *Theranur* which means the place of Buddhists especially those who belonged to the Theravada school of Buddhism. The beautiful stone images of Avalokitha and his consort Tara devi are found in a temple locally known as *Elaya Nainar Koil*.\(^\text{17}\) The annual festival of the temple is conducted by the village people on the full moon day of the Tamil month of Chithirai (April – May), which is the birthday and also the day of Nirnana of the Buddha. On that day the devotees cook and take only vegetable food.\(^\text{18}\) Perhaps this is an impact of Buddhism. It is learnt that even in 1919 a group of Buddhist monks from Srilanka visited this temple to worship the deities. Recently a Japanese scholar Dr. Shu Hikosaka came to Therur and identified the images of Avalokitha and Tara devi.\(^\text{19}\)

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Aralvaimozhi

It is a matter of interest to note that in the temple of Meenakshi Sundareswarar at Aralvaimozhi the presiding deity is Sastha. Amarakosa tells us that Sastha is a name attributed to Lord Buddha. Like Buddhists, the Jains also worship Sastha. But the vehicle of Sastha worshipped by Buddhists' is horse whereas of the Jains' is elephant. In Aralvaimozhi the vehicle of Sastha is the rotating horse which resembles the rotating Dharma Chakra of the Buddhists. According to the Buddhist principle turning the wheel of Dharma Chakra represents turning the royal chariot wheel of a universal empire of truth and righteousness. The annual festival locally known as “Thampiran Vilayattu” with rotating horse is like the festivals of Buddhists held in China and Japan. Similar festival is also celebrated at Putheri and Erachakulam in Kanyakumari district which are also believed to be centres of Buddhism once.

Kottar

The old name of Nagercoil was Kottar. At Kottar both Jainism and Buddhism flourished in ancient days. Thirugnana-sambandar a Saiva saint of the 7th century A.D. ridiculed the Jain and

Buddhist monks who were roaming in the streets of Kottar.\textsuperscript{23} Hence it can be inferred that Theravaada Buddhists lived in Kottar and the nearby village Therur.\textsuperscript{24} The southern gateway of the Nagaraja temple at Nagercoil known as \textit{Mahamerumaligai} is like the entrance of a Buddhist vihara.

**Putheri**

Putheri is a village very near to Nagercoil town. The village and the adjoining tank bear the name of Lord Buddha. It is interesting to note that at a time when sheep and hens were sacrificed to the village deity Maadan in all the petty Gods, only vegetable foods were offered to him in the village of Putheri. It was perhaps the impact of Buddhism on the village people. Mayilai Seeni Venkatachamy, a Tamil scholar has identified a Hindu temple which was once a Buddhist chaitya at Putheri.\textsuperscript{25}

**Mandaikadu**

There is a belief that a Buddhist nun of Quilon in Kerala known as "\textit{Kollathu Ammachi}\textsuperscript{26} came to the coastal village Mandaikadu.

\begin{itemize}
\item[23.] \textit{Aaivu Kalanjiam}, Monthly Historical Research Journal, Nagercoil, April 2004, pp. 18-20.
\item[24.] \textit{Ibid.}
\end{itemize}
of Kanyakumari District and attained Nirvana near the famous temple to Bagavathy. On the basis of this belief, thousands of devotees from Quilon and the surrounding regions are used to undertake pilgrimage on foot, carrying yellow coloured flags in their hands and uttering the slogans "Devi Saranam, and Mandaikattu Amme Saranam". The term Saranam itself is an important mantra of the Buddhists. The three jewels (Triratnas) of Buddhism are Buddham, Dharmam and Sangham. The slogans Buddhham Saranam Kachami, Dharmam Saranam Kachami and Sangham Karanam Kachami are noteworthy in Buddhism. It is interesting to note that an image of Buddha has been found under the papal tree in the outer prakara of the temple of Bhagavathy at Mandaikadu.

**Sakkiyankodu**

There is a place called Sakkiankodu near Mandaikadu. It is well known that Buddha is also known as Sakkiamuni. The temple of Vinayaka found at Sakkiankodu was once a Buddhist chaitya, for an image of Buddha adorns the vimana of the Vinayaka temple.

When the Bakthi cult reached its zenith and the intelligentsia of the south came under the influence to the Vedantic zeal of Adi Sankara, Buddhism along with Jainism began to fade away in this land. When this evangelic wave reached the southern most end, a thorough change took place in the religious field. Thus Buddhism once reigned supreme in Kanyakumari had eclipsed without leaving any concrete evidence whatsoever.

**JAIN MONUMENTS**

Unlike Buddhism, Jainism established a very strong base in ancient Tamilagam particularly the southern end of that country. Eventhough Jain teachings and principles are very tough to follow comparing with Buddhism, it had penetrated the Tamil country. The royal houses particularly the rulers and princesses of that period were ardent followers of Jainism. Kings like Mahendravarma Pallava and Kunpandya were the staunch supporters of Jainism that resulted the spread of that religion in a systematic manner. The existence of Jaina Kanchi, a suburb of Kanchipuram town is a matter of fact confirming the influence of Jainism. The Pallava, Pandya royal patronage over Jainism is proved by the existence of Nagamalai Pudukkottai, Kaluhumalai even now. The Jains of present day Kanyakumari District are the North Indian Jain traders who had settled here very recently. These Jain temples belonged to Svethambara sect of Jainism, unlike the Digambara sect of Jainism that had existed in Tamilnadu.
Monuments found in different parts of Kanyakumari District testify to the prevalence of Jainism in the olden days. There is epigraphic evidence to show that there were flourishing Jain settlements in Kottar, the suburb of Nagercoil town, Kurandi, Tiruchcharanathumalai now called Chitharal and Thirunandikkarai which are all in the present district of Kanyakumari. From the Jain vestiges and inscriptions found in Samanarmalai, Kalugumalai and Tiruchcharanathumalai in the districts of Madurai, Thoothukudi and Kanyakumari respectively, we learn that a large number of Jain monks who were there hailed from the above four places in Kanyakumari District. The erudite scholars and their disciples from these centres of learning left votive images cut on the rocks in different centres of Jain culture.\(^{31}\)

**Chitaral**

Otherwise called as Thirucharanathumalai, Chitaral is situated about 6.5 kms from Kuzhithurai, a suburb of Marthandam, the second largest town in Kanyakumari district.\(^ {32}\) In that hilly track, one Bhagavathi temple is seen in which there are three sanctum sanctorums. A sixteen legged Mandapa and a Muha mandapa are also seen there. In the northern side of the temple, *Madapalli* is seen.

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Unlike the remaining edifices the central sanctum has been built with bricks and lime.\(^{33}\)

The temple and the huge rock in the background presents a striking view. The top of the rock commands a beautiful view of the jungle-clad hills, the low lying paddy fields, river and the numerous Palmyra groves.\(^{34}\) The sun set seen from the temple porch is a pleasant sight indeed.

Located amidst picturesque surroundings, the monastery was built beneath a hanging rock. Adjacent to the monastery is the temple having three rooms in which the statue of Bhagawan Mahavira in the Padmasana posture is seen. Two lions have been carved into the peedam of Mahavira’s statue. To its left and located beneath the idol of a ‘dancing snake’ in the statue of Parasavanathar in the ‘nirvana’ posture.\(^{35}\)

The statue of Jain Goddess Padmavathy located to the right side of Mahavira’s statue, is worshipped. However, no poojas are performed for Mahavira and Parsavanathar.

It is said that the monastery served as a \textit{palli} (educational centre) where teachings of Jain dharma and the preachings’ of the

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Thirthankaras were imparted to scholars and students, who were mainly women called as Kuranthiyar.\textsuperscript{36}

The temple also has images of the 24 Thirthankaras, carved by sculptors with the assistance of Jain scholars belonged to Thirunedumparai and Thirunarunkondai two small hamlets situated at Thanjavur District and Vellore District respectively. The names of these sculptors are also engraved here. It is believed that the Jain saints from these two places might have come from the places and stayed there. The inscriptions of Chitharal cave temple mention the following Jain saints. They are Achananthi Adigal, Uthananthi Adigal, Veerananthi Adigal etc. Significantly names of the female saints like Narayana Kurathiyar, Kunanthangi Kurathiyar are also recorded in it.\textsuperscript{37}

According to inscriptions, King Vikramadita Varaguna visited the monastery in the ninth century and donated 'Nanda lamps' and 'Golden Lotus' to the temple.\textsuperscript{38}

A Gopura in a dilapidated condition is also there in the hillock. In the northern side we can see the sculptures of 24 Jain

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{36} S. Padmanabhan, \textit{Temples in Kanyakumari District}, Nagercoil, 1970, pp. 5-10.
\item \textsuperscript{37} Personal interview with Dr. S. Padmanabhan, aged 82, Secretary, Kanyakumari Historical and Cultural Research Centre, Nagercoil dated 15.04.2012.
\item \textsuperscript{38} S. Padmanabhan, \textit{Temples in Kanyakumari District}, Nagercoil, 1970, pp. 5-10.
\end{itemize}
Thirthankaras. In the Padmavathi Sannathi, no statue is available except a palikal and paavai vilakku (lamp with a lady).

In the sixteen legged mandapa, a number of sculptures are seen in all the sixteen pillars. Sculptures like lion, fish, linga, monkey, devil, suran, Thirthankar, Parsvanathar, elephant etc. are seen. In the central point, Gajalekshmi sculpture has been encarved. The Muha mandapa has six pillars in which lion, linga, a saint in yoga posture have been encarved. In front of the sixteen legged Mandapa Dwarabalakas are seen. As per the inscriptive evidences, upto 10th century A.D., it was a Jain palli and later due to the successive Chola and Travancore influence, it was converted into a Bagavathy temple. We can see the remains of the old monument near the sixteen pillared mandapa.39

In the southern side of Bagavathy temple, the name of Ay king Vikramaditya Varaguna has been encarved in an inscription. The existing sixteen pillared mandapa of Bagavathy temple and the Madapalli (Kitchen) were constructed in A.D. 1373 (Kollam Era 548), which has been mentioned in the pillar inscription of sixteen pillared mandapa. Another inscription belonged to Moolam Thirunal Maharaja explains the installation of Bagavathy statue and the Mahakum-pabishega conducted there.40 Now there is no Bagavathy statue in the mandapa.

40. Ibid.
There was no clear pathway on the hill leading to the temple, and the opening of a new path was felt necessary to prevent visitors being misled. Whenever the path passes through a rocky bed, the rock should be dressed into steps, and in other places, granite step should be fitted up with masonry backing.

Thanks to the Kanyakumari Historical and Cultural Research Centre, a cultural festival was organized at Chitharal along with the Archaeological Department, Government of India on 25th October 1999 that paved the way for the publicity of this place.41

The Kanyakumari Historical and Cultural Research Centre (KHCRC) has appealed to the Central Government to take steps for declaring the historical Jain temple and monastery at Chitharal in Kanyakumari District as a World Heritage Monument.

Thanks to the sincere efforts taken by Mr. Sunil Palival, the then District Collector and Hon. N. Suresh Rajan, the then Minister for Tourism, Government of Tamil Nadu, Rs.53 lakhs were sanctioned for the promotion of Chitaral as a tourist centre. In this connection, a pathway to reach the temple, childrens park, 485 metres drainage facility, granite desks, 5000 litre overhead tank, waiting room at the

entrance, and beautiful steps to reach the temple have been facilitated.\textsuperscript{42}

**Tirunandikkarai**

It is situated 17 kms from Kuzhithurai on the banks of river \textit{Nanthi}. In the northern side of the village, we can see a rock cut temple in the near by hill.\textsuperscript{43} It belonged to 8\textsuperscript{th} century A.D. An inscription of this temple mentions the name of the village as "Sri Nanthi Mangalam". Another pillar inscription of this temple narrates the land donation awarded during the region of Rajaraja, the Great. The nearby village \textit{Rajaraja Thennathu Valluvanattu Muttom} was renamed as \textit{Mummudi Chola Nallur} by Rajaraja, the Great and was donated to the rock cut temple at Thirunandikkarai.\textsuperscript{44} In the mandapa near by sanctum sanctorum, we can see the Chola paintings in a ruined stage.

Thirunandikkarai, contains an ancient rock-cut cave temple having an image of Shiva and a structural monument dedicated to the same God near the rock. There are epigraphical evidences to show that the rock-cut-cave temple was a Jain one originally upto the 9\textsuperscript{th} century A.D. and it was converted into a Shiva temple by Raja Raja Chola in the 10\textsuperscript{th} century A.D.

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\textsuperscript{42} \textit{Dinamalar}, Tamil Daily, Madurai, dated 22.08.2012.
\textsuperscript{43} S. Padmanabhan, \textit{Temples in Kanyakumari District}, Nagercoil, 1970, pp. 5-10.
\textsuperscript{44} K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, \textit{The Cōlas}, Madras, 1955, pp. 215-218.
\end{flushleft}
The rock-cut cave temple at Thirunandikkarai is on the southern slope of the hill which lies east-west. It consists of a verandha with supporting pillars, one small chamber containing an image of linga and a rectangular hall in front of the sanctum sanctorum. There is an another Shiva temple on the southern side of the hill at a lower level and this structural temple reflects Kerala style of art and architecture. The rock-cut cave temple is purely of Jain origin.

The Travancore Archaeological Department has officially recorded eleven inscriptions found at Thirunandikkarai. The earliest of all records is an inscription belonging to the 9th century A.D. The line “Thirunandikkarai Bhadarar Kudutha Bhoomi” which means that the land assigned to the temple at Thirunandikkarai was donated by the Bhadarar, is clear evidence that the land on which the structural temple of Shiva stands was obtained from the Jain monks. The word Bhadarar which denotes a Jain monk which is found frequently in the inscriptions in Thirucharanathumalai and Kalugumalai which happened to be famous Jain settlements during the 9th century A.D.

The inscription in the rock-cut cave temple at Thirunandikkarai mentions the name of the Ay king Vikramaditya Varaguna and his activities. Probably Viranandi Adigal of Melapalli temple at Thirunarungondai in the Vellore district who engraved a
votive image at Thirucharanathumalai directed the hewing of the rock-
cut cave temple standing at a place nearly 10 km. from
Thirucharananthumalai.\textsuperscript{45} Because of his stay at this place the river
flowing in front of the hill came to be known as \textit{Nandiyar}.
Mr. Venkayya, a famous historian confirms that the place has been
named after the river.

The Huzur Office plate which belongs to the eighth regnal
year (A.D.876) of king Varaguna of Ay kingdom adds that a lady
member of the royal family of Ay dynasty named Murugansenthi
embraced Jainism in the esteemed presence of one Jain monk, most
probably Veeranandi Adigal. King Varaguna dedicated her to the holy
feet and donated some lands to the temple in this connection. T.A.
Gopinatha Rao who has edited Travancore Archaeological Series
interpreted the word \textit{Thiruvadisaaratha} as a marriage function.\textsuperscript{46} He
said that king Varaguna married Murugansenthi. But Kavimony
Desigavinayagam Pillai, noted Epigraphist and Tamil scholar objected
to it and gave a new meaning. According to him the work
\textit{“Thiruvadisaartha”} means dedication of oneself to the Almighty.\textsuperscript{47}

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\item \textsuperscript{45} S. Padmanabhan, \textit{The Forgotten History of the Land’s End}, \textit{op.cit.},
  pp. 20-25.
\item \textsuperscript{46} K.V. Krishna Ayyar, \textit{A Short History of Kerala}, Trivandrum,
\item \textsuperscript{47} S. Vaiyapuri Pillai, \textit{Kavimani Desikavinayagam Pillai}, Madras,
\end{itemize}
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There is ample evidence to show that Murugansenthi was offered to the holy feet of Adi Bhagavan by the King Vikramaditya Varaguna. Among the Jain ladies the ancient custom of devoting oneself entirely to religious pursuits giving up marriage and family life exists even today. Jains celebrate this as a grand function which is called as *Deeksha Kalyanam*.\(^{48}\) Similarly when Murugansenthi, a female member of the Royal family of Ay dynasty decided to dedicate herself to the service of Jain Dharma, the Ay king Vikramaditya Varaguna offered her at the feet of Adi Bhagavan and some lands were also assigned to the temple in commemoration of this function.

It is interesting to note that foot-print worship is a common feature in Jainism even now.\(^{49}\) During his visit to Mount Abu, Sir Monier Williams writes in his book “Buddhism” that, “Jains are quite ardent foot print worshippers. Nearly every shrine at the summit consisted two foot prints of some one of the 24 Tirthankaras (especially Parsvanath) impressed of a marble altar. Groups of worshippers bowed down before the shrines and deposited offerings of money, rice, almonds, raisins and spices on the foot marks”. He opinies that Jainism first introduced foot print worship in India. Practically the worship of foot print is so closely connected to Jainism that no other religion can claim

\(^{48}\) Personal interview with Mr. Pradeep Lal, aged 56, President, Nagercoil, Jain Sangh, Nagercoil on 12.2.2012.

\(^{49}\) *Ibid.*
the origin of it. There are a number of references to footprint worship in ancient Tamil literary works of Jain authors. In Tamil Nadu the footprints of Gundagundacharya are revered in Ponnur hills and of Varmana Muni in Jaina Kanchi. In Sravanabelgola the footprints of Bhadrabahu and of Chandragupta Maurya have been inscribed and they are held in high esteem by the pilgrims. In Kanyakumari district one can see the foot-print worship in Vazhukkamparai near Suchindrum, Sripaadaparai in the mid-sea at Kanyakumari and Kurandi near Therur.50

The inscriptions on the eastern wall of the rock-out-cave temple which belongs to the 18th year of the Chola king Rajaraja I (A.D.1003) record the grants to the temple for the celebration of a festival in Aippasi Sathayam, the birthday of the king. It was also required that a perpetual flame be kept before the image in the name of the king. This lamp was to be known as Rajaraja Thirunanda Vilakku.

During the period of Rajaraja Chola the cave temple appears to have passed into the hands of the Hindus. The rock-out-cave temple owned by the Jains was then converted into a Hindu shrine. During this period the peedam containing the foot prints was removed and an image of Shivalinga might be installed in the cave. Recently Kanyakumari Historical and Cultural Research Centre has

discovered that the peedam of foot prints in the cave temple which was
enshrined in the cave temple is found on the top of the hill. The Jain
origin of the temple is now so completely forgotten that the people
believe that this cave temple was originally a Hindu place of worship.

The rock out cave temple has a *verandah* and a big hall.
We can see a number of paintings in this cave temple but those are in
dilapidated condition. Significantly these paintings are looking like
Chithannavasaal paintings.

To summarize, once a Jain monument, it was converted
into a Shiva temple later in which a granite Linga was installed, which
belonged to Pandya period but the Pallava style has been applied to it.

**Kurandi Jain Temple**

Kurandi is a small village situated near Therur village, have
a distance of 8 kms from Nagercoil. It is a typical Jain centre during
the medieval period. The paddy fields of this region are called as
*Pallivayal*.\(^{51}\) A number of Jain scholars belonged to this village worked
for the construction of Jain sculptures at Kaluhumalai. In this village
there is a granite temple dedicated to Koraknathar. It is also in a
dilapidated conditions. It is a typical Jain centre in which *paada*
vazhibaadu (worship of foot print) was very popular till recently.

\(^{51}\) Personal interview with Mr. K. Raman, aged 65, Kurandi village on
18.2.2013.