SOME JAINA METAL IMAGES FROM AN UNPUBLISHED GHOGHĀ HOARD

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The hoard of Jaina metal images from Ghoghā, an ancient sea-port town in District Bhavnagar in Gujarat, was a chance discovery during the renovation work at the Navakhaṇḍā Pārśvanātha temple when a cellar was detected in 1961. It had a secret cupboard built into the wall which yielded 240 Jaina bronze images. Soon after the discovery, the hoard was examined by M. A. Dhaky and H. P. Shastri of the Department of Archaeology, Government of Gujarat. They also published a brief article by way of a preliminary report⁴. As reported therein, the treasure contained some 28 small and insignificant images and 66 other images, but each without an inscription. The interesting content of the inscriptions of the remaining images was also published in the report. It provides names of donors, villages and towns, castes of traders, and of gacchas and Sūrīs, all of the Śvetāmbara sect.

In 1978, Śetha Kālā Mithā-ni-Pedhī, Ghoghā, donated 129 images from this hoard to L. D. Institute of Indology, Ahmedabad; these had been earlier selected and set aside as important by Dhaky and Shastri with the recommendation to the temple trustees to guard them carefully. A majority of these are inscribed and are represented as ek-tīrthās or paṇca-tīrthās. The figures in most cases are defaced due to lustral ceremonies conducted continuously for centuries; therefore, the physiognomical details are in most cases not clear. The eyes, the śrīvatsa mark on the chest, and the cushion or seat of the Jina are inlaid with silver or copper.

The images under reference range from early tenth century to early 17th century A. D. But there were images of the later date mentioned in the original report which refers to an image dated A. D. 1720 which fixes the date after which the treasure was concealed in the wall.

The Ghoghā hoard, as can be anticipated, represents the art of the medieval and late medieval period in western India. From western India, we earlier had two major hoards of Jaina metal images, namely Akoṭā² and Vasantagadh³. They cover a period ranging from the sixth century to the 11th century A. D. The art of the subsequent centuries is represented by the Ghoghā hoard.

The Jaina metal images produced after the tenth century show the development of the many workshops in the region. But, in spite of their perceptible differences with each other, they look alike, for they are based upon certain formulas within the unified western Indian style in general. The style had persisted with tenacity as far as early 16th century, though thereafter it becomes baroque which marks the climax of elaboration in details and geometrical compositions.

Formalism in western Indian art is visibly manifest from the beginning of the 11th century. It is apparent in geometrical compositions as well as in figural
representations. The figures now do not show the flowing contours in their bodily forms as witnessed in the early period. They betray the gradual increase in the tendencies towards geometrical abstraction.

Some relatively early metal images from the Ghoghā hoard belonging to the tenth and 11th centuries, mark the last phase of the Vasantagaḍh tradition. This is clearly noticeable from their compositions. The flamboyant halo as well as the oval prabhā-aureole can also be discerned in these examples.

The representations of the male cāmara-bearers is an important part of the composition in the later medieval period. They are absent in the Akoṭā hoard which very largely has early images. But the introduction of the cāmara-bearers can be seen in some images in bronze produced after the mid-tenth century at Vasantagaḍh⁴. This feature to some extent can help fixing the date of certain images.

The introduction of the torana element in western Indian Jaina bronze images was a step forward towards an elaborate scheme in their compositions. This is first noticed at Vasantagaḍh in certain bronze images produced after the mid-tenth century A. D.⁵ The torana gave a new outlook to the Jaina metal images. They look more appropriate for the worship in a shrine in the residential quarters.

From the beginning of the 12th century, some changes appear in the mode of image worship among the Śvetāmbara Jaines. They had now begun āṅgīs (body decoration) hang to images. Therefore, some of the images are provided with looped hinges on the parikara. In some images of this period, a chatra-puruṣa behind the parikara of the image is also present. In regard to the technique of manufacturing western Indian metal images in the late medieval period, these were produced in parts such as the mūlanāyaka (principal image), piṭha (pedestal), parikara (surround), torana (undulating arch), and the attendant figures. These parts were then assembled to form the complete image by soldering technique. Revetting technique was also used in fixing small figures.

Some of the representative examples of Ghoghā hoard are catalogued below in chronological order:

1. Tritirthi of Pārśvanātha
   Bronze, western Indian, Vasantagaḍh style,
   Date: c. early 10th century A. D.
   16.0 x 9.5 x 6.0 cms.
   Acc. No. Ghoghā 19  (Fig. 1)

Jina Pārśvanātha here is seated on a cushion placed on a piṭha decorated with two full bloomed lotuses and a carpet. He is on either side flanked by a Jina standing on a lotus against a flamboyant oval shaped prabhā on either side. The nimbed Yaksā Dharanendra and Yaksī Padmāvati are seated below to his right and left side. The seven-hooded snake canopy is surmounted by a triple-umbrella which is
held firmly by supporting arms and flanked by a vidyādhara on either side. Nine planets are represented in a group on the base. The male cāmaradharas are absent.

2. Caturvināśati-paṭṭa of Ādinātha

Bronze, western Indian, Vasantagaḍha style

Date: V.S 1123 / A. D. 1066

36.5 x 25.0 x 14.0 cms.

Acc. No. Ghoghā 1 (fig.2)

Ādinātha is identified by his hair locks flowing on his shoulders. He is also attended by the bull-faced Yakṣa Gomukha on his right and Yakṣī Cakreśvarī on his left, both seated on their vākanaśas, the bull and the Garuda. A pair of deers also appear in front gazing at the cakra in the centre of the piṭha. The Jina is seated in dhyāna on a cushion inlaid with silver placed on a stepped gaja-simhasana kept on a dvīṅga pedestal. The face has silver inlaid eyes with no details. On either side of Ādinātha stands a Jina in kāyotsarga against a flamboyant oval halo. On the backplate of the Jina are two round pillars and a flamboyant aureole which is surmounted by a triple-umbrella topped with a kalaśa; it is flanked by a drummer and a vidyādhara-angel on either side. The whole forms a central tritiṛthi surrounded by a torana-like composition in the same plane unlike the usual architectural conception.

A column of five niches containing a seated Jina figure flanks on either side of the central tritiṛthi. Towards the interior on either side stands a Jina outside the niche on the top; whereas the other side is occupied by a makara-head. The two bludgeon ends alone of the crossbar are visible. These are supported by a gaja-vyāla bracket, and below each stands a cāma rα-bearer. The two sides of the triangular parikara above have a row of three seated Jinas in receding planes sitting under a small chaṭtra. A small tritiṛthi occupies the apex. Here, a Jina is seated in a niche and outside it are standing Pārśvanātha and Supārśvanātha on the right and left respectively. On the base are represented donors, a male and a female, in aṅga muḍrā and nine planets arranged in pairs with the exception of one in the centre. Flames emanate from the border of the parikara.

The inscription behind the piṭha reads:

श्रीस्वादिश्रेष्ठदेवे वीरपिष्क्षेप्रतिमामति आप्तादिज्ञपुजूः अशुर्विश्वकर्मांकिस्त मिति || संवत १९२२.

The sons, Anpaṭā, and others got this caturvināśati-paṭṭa made for the religious merits of their father Vīra of the Sarvāliya gaccha. Saṃvat 1123.

3. Tritiṛthi of Pārśvanātha

Bronze, western Indian, Vasantagaḍha style

Date: V.S. 1135/A. D. 1078

14.5 x 10.0 x 5.5 cms.

Acc. No. Ghoghā 36 (Fig. 3)

Under a snake-hood canopy, the Jina is seated on a cushion supported by a
viśvapadma emanating from the dvi-āṅga pedestal. He is flanked by a standing Jina and a cámara-bearer on either side and Yakṣa Dharaṇendra and Yakṣī Padmāvatī on his right and left flank. A semi-circular parikara raised on a crossbar is set in an ogee arch having four tooth-like projections on the exteriors on either side. The snake-hood surmounted by a chatra having a kalasa-fianial is flanked by a vidyādharā on either side. Navagrahas are seen in a group on the base.

The inscription behind the parikara reads:

सं. १९५४ श्री भट्टेद गच्चे श्रीमतापेवर्षीप्रेमिकयागिर्य प्रथितिहासिक काविता

In Samvat 1135, Pāhinī got made (this image) for the religious merits of Yaśodeva, the son of the head of Śrī Bhaṭṭakrada gaccha.

4. Seated Pārśvanātha
   Bronze, western Indian, Gujarat
   Date: V. S. 1154/A. D. 1097
   15.0 x 10.0 x 7.0 cms.
   Acc. No. Ghoghā 34 (Fig. 4)

Pārśvanātha is seated on a cushion supported by a viśvapadma, under a snake-hood canopy. He is flanked by a male cámara-bearer standing on a lotus on either side. The Yakṣa Dharaṇendra and Yakṣī Padmāvatī are seated on his right and left. A semi-circular perforated parikara is borne on a cross-bar supported by two plain pillars. The snake-hood is surmounted by a chatra with the usual jar-fianial on top and flanked by a drummer and a vidyādharā on either side. The parikara is also endowed with some stylised vegetal pattern. The nine planets are represented in a group on the dvi-āṅga pedestal.

The inscription behind the parikara reads:

सं. १९५४ चैत्राख्ये प्रतिनिधित्वम् ॥
उ. भूपति उ सुहु उ पुषु उ वच्चाजेन स्वर्गसत्तात्य उ कागश्रेयोर्य काविता ॥ शास [पद्गच्छे]

The image was installed in the month of Vaisākha in samvat 1154. Thakkura Bhumala, Thakkura Sūha, Thakkura Mupra, and Thakkura Vaccharāja made the image for the religious merits of Thakkura Kāga related to their sister resting in heaven of Thārāpadra gaccha.

5. Seated Jina
   Bronze, western Indian, Gujarat
   16.0 x 10.0 x 6.5 cms.
   Acc. No. Ghoghā 18 (Fig. 5)

The Jina is seated on a cushion placed on a viśvapadma placed on a dvi-āṅga pedestal. The figure is defaced but the eyes and Śrīvatsa mark on his chest are
seen inlaid with silver. He is flanked on either side by a male cāmara-bearer standing on a lotus and on the pedestal a Yakṣa and a donor-male, a Yakṣī and the donor-female on his right and left respectively. Architecturally conceived backplate has upright pillars supporting a crossbar. The padmaprabhā is surmounted by a chatra with the jar-finial on top. It is flanked by a drummer and a vidyādhara on either side. Nine planets are represented in a group on the pedestal.

The inscription on its back reads:

सं. ८९ माघे वर्षामध्ये पितृव्य श्री [चो] र्म श्रीसदेवविषोचनेन काविता

In Sānīvat 81 in the waxing half of the month Māgha, Śrī Sadevavairocana got made this image for the religious merits of his paternal uncle.

The first two digits of the year are perhaps missing in the inscription. Stylistically, the image belongs to the 12th century; therefore, the actual year could be Sānīvat 1181.

6. Tritirthi of Śaṅtinātha

Bronze, western Indian, Gujarat

Date : V. S. 1234 / A. D. 1177

16.0 x 9.8 x 5.5 cms.

Acc. No. Ghoghā 52 (Fig. 6)

The nimbated Jina is seated on a cushion kept on a simhāsana placed on a pedestal. The figure is defaced; it shows a śrīvatsa mark inlaid with silver. A deer, the cognizance of the Jina, is represented on the pedestal between two groups of nine planets, five on the left side and four on the right side. The mūlanāyaka is flanked by a Jina standing under a triple umbrella with foliage on either side. The Yakṣa Garuda and the Yakṣī Nirvāṇī are seated near the simhāsana on the left and the right side. There is no backplate of the image. A semicircular arch surmounted by a kalaśa with stylised flames on the border accommodates a circular halo, a triple umbrella with foliage, and kalaśa on the top. This constitutes the parikara which is raised on a crossbar supported by two upright thin posts erected on the pedestal.

The inscription on the reverse reads:

सं. १२३४ माघ वर्ष....श्री शांतिविधिः कावितेः प्रतिलिपिः श्रीधम्मेश्वरविषोचनेः श्रीरामचंद्रे:।

In the dark half of the month Māgha in Sānīvat 1234, the image of Śrī Śaṅtinātha was made (and) installed by Śrī Rāmacandra, the disciple of Śrī Dharmasūri.

7. Seated Pārśvanātha

Bronze, western Indian, Gujarat

Date : V. S. 1258 / A. D. 1201

17.5 x 11.8 x 7.5 cms.

Acc. No. Ghoghā 12. (Not illustrated)

Pārśvanātha seated in dhyāna on a cushion is placed on a simhāsana covered with
a carpet kept on a dvi-āṅga pedestal. The figure shows a squarish broad face and squattish torso, the eyes and īṛvatsa mark are inlaid with silver. He is flanked by a male camaradhara on each side and nimbated yakṣa Dharaṇendra and yakṣi Padmāvatī along his right and left flank. On either corner of the pedestal are seen four planets in a group on a separate pīṭha placed obliquely. The perforated parikāra surmounted by a pot-finial with foliage is placed on a crossbar supported by two round pillars, one on each side of the Jina. The snake-hood canopy surmounted by a chatra with a kalaśa on the top is flanked by a drummer and a vidyādhara.

There are four loops for hanging āṅgi (body decoration), two near the kalaśa and two at the corners of the cushion. A chatra-puruṣa appears behind the inscribed parikāra which reads:

सं. १२५८ क्षेत्रशुद्धि १० रवि त्रिगुणपात्रे भारापदर्शि । पोहकसुल द. राणकेन प्रतिमा कारिता ।

On Saturday, the tenth day of the brighter half of the month Jyeṣṭha in Saṃvat 1258, Thakkura Rāṇaka, the son of Prahitha in Triguṇāpantha, of Thārāpadra gaccha, got this image made.

8. Seated Jina

Bronze, western Indian, Gujarāt

Date: V. S. 1290/A. D. 1333

19.4 x 12.8 x 8.0 cms.

Acc. No. Ghoghā 14 (Fig. 7)

The Jina is seated on a cushion placed on a simhāsana covered with a carpet. The eyes and īṛvatsa mark are inlaid with silver. He is flanked by a male flywhisk-bearer standing on a lotus on either side. At the base are represented Yakṣa and Yakṣi, donors, and eight planets in two groups. The circular halo incised with lotus pattern has perforations along the border and above it appears a tasseled tri-linear umbrella with a kalaśa on top. It is flanked by a drummer, an elephant, and a vidyādhara on either side. The semicircular parikāra with beaded border and the ghāṭa with foliage on top is placed on a crossbar supported by two round pilasters.

Two loops for hanging āṅgi (body decoration) appear near the finial at the top.

The inscription on the back reads:

सं. १२९० वर्ष दौसावाल ज्ञातिय श्रे. आसपाल पति शहजपालेन माता महाश्रीपालेन मातामह पहलावाल-कारिति प्रतिमिन्ते श्री चंद्रचर्च(यैः) तन्त्रांगृहितकादातिजयिमथः श्रीमुनिमिति इद्युपिधः

In Saṃvat 1290, the image was made by Sahajapāla, the son of the Śreṣṭhi Āsapāla of Disāvāla Jñāti, along with his grand-mother Rupā, and maternal grand-father Mahasārapāla and was installed by Śrī Muni Candrasūri, in the line of the Navāṅga vṛttikāra (i.e. Abhayadevasūri) of Śrī Candra gaccha.

9. Caturvimśati-pāṭṭa of a Jina

Bronze, western Indian, Gujarāt

Date: V. S. 1412/A. D. 1355

21.0 x 13.5 x 7.8 cms.

Acc. No. Ghoghā 2 (Fig. 8)
The Jina with a broad face and a squattish torso is seated on a cushion kept on a simhāsana placed on a tri-anga pedestal. He is flanked by a standing and a seated Jina, one above the other forming a central pañcatirthī. The Yakṣa and Yakṣī are seated below. The halo is a perforated lorus surmounted by a circular trilinear chattrā flanked by an elephant on either side. The torana surrounds the main deity. On it are represented 19 seated Jinas. The ogee-arch of the torana is surmounted by a cusped arch supported by a small strut on either side. A ghaṭapallava is seen on the top. At the two extremes stand male camara-bearers on a lotus console. On the base are represented eight planets in pairs and a donor-male and a donor-female at the corners are seen in front.

The inscription behind the parikara reads:

सं. १५१२ वर्ष विविधविवधातुलस्वत्तपूर्वज...महा धनपाल पु. म. भीमसीत भा. पूजल पु. विजयमसीत था. बबल देवि......क्षेत्रों महा लाखरसिहध्वीभन्न कङ्खित प्र. श्री हरिप्रसीतिभि: ।

In Samvat 1412, Mahām Lākhaṇasimha got made Śrī caturvīmśati-paṭṭa for the religious merits of his father, his paternal uncle, his brother, his mother, and all other ancestors ....Mahām. Dhanapāla, (his) son Mahām. Bhīmasīha, (his) wife Pūjal, son of Vikramsiha, (his) wife Bauladevī ...........(it was) installed by Śrī Haribhadra Sūri.

REFERENCES:

4. Ibid., figs. 18 and 19.
5. Ibid.


