

Wall Paintings as Depicted in the Patodi Jaina Temple, Jaipur

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Painting in ancient India was integrated with the social life of man. It was not only a mark of man's personal achievement but it also revealed his cultivated taste. Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* enjoins the importance of wall paintings in the auditoria :

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Varied informations on wall paintings are found in the *Purāṇas*. The *Chitra-sūtra* of the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* offers an encyclopaedic knowledge on painting including the wall painting. The other texts are : The *Chitralakṣaṇa* by Nagnajit, Bhoja's *Samarāṅgaṇa-sūtradhāra*, Someśvara's *Mānasollāsa*, Vātsyāyan's *Kāma-sūtra* and Yaśodhara's *Jayamaṅgalā*, commentary on it also make equally good references.

This tradition of mural painting remained as forceful as in Amber and Jaipur too – the capital city of *Kachawāhās*. Here the mode of embellishing wall remained in vogue for more than three hundred years, i. e., from late 16th century to the present century.

The paper dealt here is on the wall paintings as depicted in the Patodi Jaina Temple, Jaipur. It is apparent from the earliest murals found in Amber and Bairath that wall paintings had begun to receive royal patronage from the time of Raja Man Singh (1590-1614 A. D.), when he came in contact with the great Mughal Emperor Akbar – the embellishing of walls with paintings had become a necessity and also a fashion.

For a number of centuries Amber¹ and Sāṅgāner² were the Jaina literary centres of the Dhundhar region and Amber remained one of the earliest centres of *Bhaṭṭārakas* too³.

After the establishment of the Jaipur city in 1727 A. D., the shifting of Jaina scholars, poets, artists and businessman took place who after migration constructed their own temples⁴, places of importance and established *Grantha Bhaṇḍāras*⁵.

The Digambara Jaina temple (Paṭodī)⁶ situated in Maniharo Ka Rasta, Modi Khana, Jaipur, is said to be an example of later Jaina temples in northern India and there is a marked influence of later Mughal structural order and is characterized by artistic degeneration⁷. The builder of this temple was Jodh Raj Patodi and the idol of God Ādinātha installed in it. With the shifting of capital, the *Gaddī* of *Bhaṭṭārakas*⁸ was also shifted to Jaipur in *Samvat* 1815 and temple of *Paṭodiyan* became the centre of their activities.

During the time of Sawai Madho Singh I and Sawai Pratap Singh⁹ the Jains were holding the highest posts of administration in the state, including that of Dewans¹⁰.

It has always been the fascination of the royalty of Jaipur to get their palaces, courtyards, chattries, temples painted. The subject matter in these pertain to the pictorial records of their customs, beliefs, mythology and history. We still find numerous such places as examples¹¹. Paṭodī temple is one of them which has painted dome with the subjects relating to the Jaina themes.

The Painted Themes

As one climbs the stairs to reach the temple complex we come across a open courtyard, towards whose centre the salatial Jaina symbols (*Aṣṭamāṅgalika*) are found carved in a brass door. The mid ceiling of the dome has lotus petals, the small petals in between and bigger petals spreading out from it in green and red colour scheme, the extensive floral design in it leaves no place unutilized. Down below in an arch format are 16 panels of the places where *Tīrthaṅkaras* attained liberation¹². In between these, there are 16 more marble figures of *Gandharva's* hanging out and eight *Vidyādhars* painted in between the above two subjects in a circumference with *camvara* or *morchal* in one hand and lotus in the other. Identical dress of *Dhotī*, *Dupaṭṭā*, *Mukuṭa*, *Bhuja-Bandh-Mālās* and *Kaṇṭhī* are worn. Further below is painted the scenes of 16 dreams of '*Tīrthaṅkara-mātā*' and '*Pañcakalyāṇaka*'¹³ that is '*The Garbhāvataṛaṇa*' (descending of Gods head in the embryo), '*Janmābhiṣeka*' (Birth rights), '*Dīkṣāgrahaṇam*' (Initiation) : *Kevala Jñāna*, Enlightenment : *Mokṣa*, '*The Siddhacakra*' and '*Neminātha's* marriage procession scene', is among the beautiful ones painted with the precision of miniature work. Just over the pillars eight long narrow panels and in between another 8 squarish shaped panels where Jaina beliefs and scenes of common people worshipping the Jaina Gods, going to *Tīrthas* and celebrating the sacred occassion are depicted. In few of them the details of the scene depicted has been

inscribed with red colour on pink coloured wall. The wall facing the idol and behind the door are two identical panels of male figures which seem to be the '*Dvārapālas*' holding stick with both hands, wearing *Jāmā*, *Paṭakā*, Headgear and all ornaments. On top of it are two small panels of Indra's holding stick and plate with a pot. On both sides are two identical bigger panels showing *Indra* with 4 females dancing on both the hands.

Below it there are 2 subjects relating to Jaina preachings — that is the 'Cosmic tree'. Here symbolically a Banyan tree is shown with a man clinging on its hanging roots. These roots are being constantly cut by white and black coloured rats symbolising the day and night. Over the hanging man there is bee-hives from which honey drops are falling and the man is busy in tasting the nectar of human existence, he is ignoring the inspiration to ride a near by religious vehicle. He is oblivious of the fact that once the hanging roots are cut he will fall in the dark regions of hell which are symbolized by serpents below.

On the right side front wall, in an arch is painted the symbolic *Jāmuna* tree representing 6 different characteristics (*svabhāvas*) of human beings. The black natured man is shown cutting the tree by its root itself. Blue natured man is cutting a whole branch and white natured man is cutting the bigger stems of the tree. These are considered inauspicious *svabhāvas*. Out of auspicious *svabhāva* the yellow natured man is busy in plucking the bunch of *Jāmuna* fruit. Whereas pink omened man is plucking a single fruit and the most well omened man is satisfied in collecting the fallen *Jāmuna* fruit from the ground. This is a very good depiction of people in the society out of whom some are good omened and some are bad omened. The pillars and ceiling of the temple complex has floral patterns painted in the centre and on four sides with gaudi colours, the pillars have the common lotus design painted.

Technique of the Wall Paintings

The workmanship done in the Paṭodi temple is on *Araish*. It is not true fresco but may be called secco that is *tempra* painting done on a dry fresco ground. (The media in which plaster is prepared with marble powder and lime and allowed to be dried and painted there on). The pigments in this process do not enter the ground but stay on the dry surface — so quite a number of colour can be applied. We find numerous shades of colours used in painting the temple, the main ones are the natural pigments — *Kājala* (lamp black) for Black, *Nīla* (indigo) for Blue, *Gerū* (red stone powder) for red, *Kesara* (saffron) for orange, *Harbhata* (terre-

verte) for green, *Safedā* or *cūnā* (lime) for white, *hirmich* for brown and *Pevrī* (yellow clay) for yellow. Further more light and dark shades were also used by mixing white and black to the natural pigments.

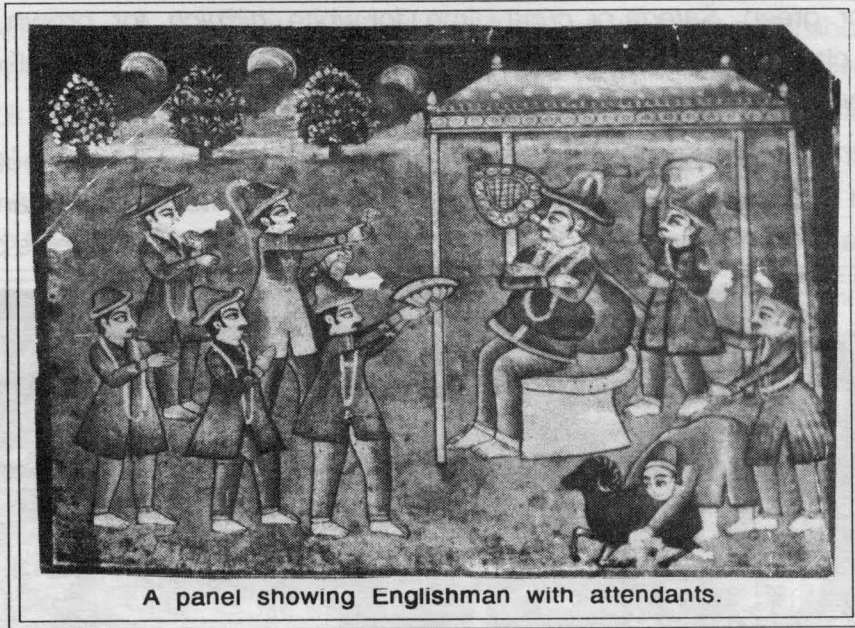
Though this temple (Paṭodī) has Jaina subjects painted but the style adopted in depicting the figures, material culture, architecture and landscape is the same as found adopted in the walls of the other *havelīs* and temples of Jaipur¹⁴.



Patodi Temple Jaipur

The only difference is that here Jaina themes have been depicted so as to reinforce the religious aspect of the influential Jaina community. This temple was built at an early date but the paintings depicted seems to have been painted at a later date as one of the panels here depict an Englishman seated on a stool with attendants holding fan and artificial flower, the figures are attired in coat, trousers and hats (Plate 1). This enables us to date the paintings to early 19th century during the advent of British and Jaipur signing a treaty with them in 1818 A. D.

Today the tradition of painting on *Araish* wall has almost come to an halt, very few artists are continuing this technique, Padmashrī Kripal Singh Shekhawat of Jaipur had painted a mural on the Jaipur Railway Station in the typical Jaipuri style – *Ala-Gila*¹⁵ process. In Banasthali Vidyapeeth too, this tradition is followed and training is imparted to students every year by Shri Devaki Nandana Sharma. Some murals in Jaipuri and Italian process are also found painted in the campus of University Maharani's College, Jaipur.



One finds that the old temple paintings are being repainted in oil colours under the patronage of rich Jain community. The painters belong to Bhojaka¹⁶ family who are active throughout India.

References

1. Jagat Siromani temple of Amber is one of the most ancient Jain temple, Sānwalā Jī Kā Temple of *Samvat* 1120 has Blue stone idol of God Neminātha.
2. There still exists seven Jain temples in the vicinity of the Sanganer town – Śrī Jainī Bābā Kā Temple, Śrī Jain Temple Godikhānā, Śrī Jain Temple Patniyan, Dhair-Pari Temple, Shri Digambara Jain Temple Sangheji kā (It was constructed in the 10th century), Shri Digambara Jain Temple Luhadiyan and Digambara Tholiyan Jain Temple.
3. Lalita Kirti established the Bhaṭṭāraka Gaddi in Amber in *Samvat* 1600 c. f. Kasliwal K. C., Jain community of Amber, Sāngāner and Jaipur cultural Heritage of Jaipur, 1979, p. 154.
4. Though there are about 180 Jain temples in Jaipur but the temples famous for their arts and architecture are – Terāpanthī Baḍā Temple, The Digambara Jain Temple (Paṭodī), Tholiyan kā Temple, Sir Moriyān Kā Temple, Darogājī Kā Temple, Saṅghīje Kā Temple, Jain Temple Baḍā Dīwānājī, Choote Dīwānājī Jain Temple, Badhī-Chāndjī Kā Temple, Bairathiyan Jain Temple, Maruji Jain temple, Laskara Jain Temple etc.

5. The *Grantha Bhaṇḍāras* of Jaina temple (Paṭodī) has 2565 manuscripts in its collection. A complete catalogue has been prepared and published by Digambar Jaina Atiśaya Kṣetra Sri Mahavīrajī c. f. Jaina P. C., *Jaina Grantha Bhaṇḍāras* in Jaipur and Nagaur, p. 79.
6. It is said that the foundation was laid on the same day when the foundation of Jaipur took place in 1727 A. D. c. f. Jaina Biltiwala Gyan Chand, *Jaina Temple and Kala ke Kendra*, Jaipur Darshana, Jaipur Adhai Sati Samaroha Samiti, p. 146.
7. The brackets supporting the *chajjās* are multiple but thin and unimpressive in size. These are devoid of structural grace or architectural grandeur and serve as feeble carriers of the great heritage of the Jaina temple architecture c. f. A. Ghosh, *Jaina Art and Architecture*, Vol. II, New Delhi, p. 337.
8. The installation ceremony of Bhaṭṭārka Kṣemendra Kīrti (*Saṁvat* 1815 - 1822) took place.
9. Mahārājā Sawāi Pratāpa Singh honoured the Bhaṭṭārakas by presenting a palanquin and whisk whenever they entered the city.
10. The list of Jaina Dewans from the time of Mirza Raja Jai Singh (*V. Saṁvat* 1668 to *V. Saṁvat* 1724), Sawai Madho Singh II (*V. Saṁvat* 1918 to *V. Saṁvat* 1979) can be seen. cf. Bhanawat, Dr. Narendra, *Jaina Sanskriti Aur Rajasthan*, Jaipur Ke Dewan, Jaina Pt. Bhanwar Lal, p. 338-339.
11. The frescoes are found painted in Pundrek Jī Kī Havelī, Pratap Narayan Purohit Kī Havelī, Jagat Siromani Temple, Samodh Jī Kī Havelī, Dushadh Jī Kī Havelī, Sisodia Rani Palace, Bhojana Shala, Amber, etc.
12. The Jainas regard these places as their *Tīrthakṣetras* or *tīrtha* for example Girnar, Pavapurji etc.
13. The left side wall of the Saṅghījī Kā Temple similar type of *Pañcakalyāṇaka* theme is found painted. In Jaina temple Siromoriyan too the same subject is shown carved in relief of marble and there on painted. In Digambara Jaina Chatsu Kā, Haldiyan Kā Rāstā has two of these subjects painted on both sides of the front wall of the temple (Marriage of Neminātha and *Janmā-bhiṣeka*).
14. Sawai Jai Singh (1699-1743 A. D.) established the system of thirty six *kharakhanas* to organise the management and upkeep of the art treasurers, day to day running of the affairs, maintenance of protocol and other para-

phernalia, sūratkhānā was one of these *kharkhanas* where the artists prepared paintings. The artists were also assigned the work of decorating the wall of palaces temples of royalty.

By the time of Sawai Pratap Singh (1778-1803 A. D.) Jaipur had developed its distinctive style and had matured in a fullfledged school, for details see Vaish Rita, Jaipur Shailī Kā Itihāsa, Akarti Raj Lalit Kala Academy, January 1976, Varsh 10, Vol. 3, p. 26.

Pratap: Rita, *Kachhawāhā Rājā Ke Sanrakṣaṇa Me Panapī Citrashailī*, Navabharata Times, 26th Aug. 1986, Das A. K. Marg, Vol. XXX, p. 82.

15. In this *Ala - Gila* process the painting is done on a wet plaster and artist and mason has to co-ordinate their work to complete a picture in a single stretch.
16. The artists of Bhojaka families were trained in Raja Ravi Verma's style in oil painting (1848-1906 A. D.).

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Malaviya Nagar,
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