

## More Sculptures from Bhagalpur

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### *Adimithuna Images*

The Jaina art<sup>1</sup> in India has its own colour. While the gods and goddesses in the Hindu and Buddhist religion show supernatural things, the images of Jaina Tirthankaras are purely in the human form.<sup>2</sup> They are neither polycephalic nor multihanded. But the sculptors of the Jaina images gave importance to the Jina's parents, a typical Indian feeling. A few images showing the figures of Jina's parents have come to light in the eastern and central India. The author of this paper has made a survey of such images and studied them in iconographical perspective.

Let us examine first the general features of such Adimithuna or Yugalia sculptures. The foremost feature is the presence of a couple, either in standing or sitting posture carrying children in their laps under a tree. They are surrounded by a number of children. Above the branches of tree, a lotus pedestal is placed, sometimes resting upon the lions back. On the lotus seat, Jina is shown seated in deep meditation in *padmāsana mudrā*. The trilinear umbrella over the Jina's head and a decorated halo behind are evidences of his godhood. His palms form the shape of a lotus-bud, an important *yoga-mudrā*. Except the Jina all the persons carved out in the image, are decked with all sorts of ornaments.

One such image is adorning the British Museum, London.<sup>3</sup> It is from Bihar. Next from Rajghat (Varanasi) is displayed in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Benaras.<sup>4</sup> Two such sculptures have been kept in the Museum of Varendra Research Society, Rajshahi (Bangladesh).<sup>5</sup> In the National Museum, New Delhi<sup>6</sup> we have one such bronze icon from

<sup>1</sup> Shah, U.P., *Studies in Jaina Art*, Varanasi, 1955.

<sup>2</sup> Bhattacharyya, B. C., *The Jaina Iconography*, New Delhi, 1974 (reprint), p. xix.

<sup>3</sup> Sharma, B. N., *Jain Pratimayen*, New Delhi, 1979, p. 102.

<sup>4</sup> Arch. No. 212. (Bharat Kala Bhavan, Benaras).

<sup>5</sup> Sharma, B. N., *op. cit.*, p. 95-96.

<sup>6</sup> Arch. No. 75.196. (National Museum, New Delhi)

Bengal and one stone sculpture from the Northern India.<sup>7</sup> At least two such icons have been reported from the Central India.<sup>8</sup>

Recently, the author of this paper has noticed a masterpiece stone sculpture showing the Adimithuna along with Jina in the Sri Campapur Digambar Jain Siddhaksetra, Nathnagar (Bhagalpur).<sup>9</sup> It gives all iconographic details which we discussed earlier. (fig. 1) It is carved out in black basalt stone which is locally available in the Rajmahal and Kharagpur Hills. It measures 30.5 × 15.3 centimeters. It is quite in tact. It was discovered from a dried tank at Campanagar (a suburb of Bhagalpur town) in the year 1914 A.D.<sup>10</sup> The couple looks like a royal pair because they are heavily decked with beautiful ornaments. They are seated in *sukhāsana* pose. The ornamanted *vṛttabandhajaṭā-jāṭa* of the couple is quite attractive. Even the babies in their laps and children seated beneath are also provided with ornaments. The Jina is seated in the *yoga-mudrā* upon a well-decorated and ornamented throne. The trilinear umbrella over his *uṣṇīṣa* styled hair is quite unusual from the iconographic point. The author thinks that it shows some influence of local art.

According to some, such sculpture shows the Jina's parent<sup>11</sup> while others try to identify them as Yakṣa and Yakṣi.<sup>12</sup> The author of the present paper agrees with the first view. The seated Jina can be identified with Bhagavan Adinatha and the couple with his parents. We know Bhagavan Adinatha was born in the family of Kulakara Nabhi. He was the first king and the first Tirthankara.<sup>13</sup>

The Adimithuna, the parents of Bhagavan Adinatha has also been worshipped by the Jaina devotees because they gave birth to the founder of Jainism. The Bhagalpur Adimithuna image can be dated in c. 8th century A.D.

<sup>7</sup> Arch. No. 74.3491. (National Museum, New Delhi)

<sup>8</sup> Arch. No. 75.5377. (National Museum, New Delhi)

<sup>9</sup> P. C., *Bihar District Gazetteer, Bhagalpur*, Patna, 1962.

<sup>10</sup> P. C., *The Antiquarian Remains in Bihar*, Patna, 1963, p. 78.

<sup>11</sup> Sharma, B.N., *op. cit.*, p. 30.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 83.

<sup>13</sup> *Kalpāsutra*, p. 205 ff.

### Ancient Caubisi of Bhagavan Adinatha

The *Caubisi*<sup>1</sup> has a great religious importance in the Jaina pantheon. Generally, Bhagavan Adinatha or Rsabhanatha act as the *mūlanāyaka* (chief deity) in such iconic representations. The remaining twentythree Jinas encircle him either in the *khadgāsana* or in *padmāsana mudrā*. Rarely, a *caubisi* of Bhagavan Parsvanatha also met with. Actually the main purpose behind carving out such *caubisi* images lies in the fact to recognise Bhagavan Adinatha as chief of the Jaina cult. It also simplifies the purpose of worshipping all the twentyfour Jinas at one place.

The town of Bhagalpur<sup>2</sup> (ancient Campapur) is wellknown to the Jaina community. The *caubisi* of Bhagavan Adinatha under study is enshrined in the Sri Campapur Digambar Jain Siddhaksetra, Nathnagar.<sup>3</sup> It was discovered alongwith several other ancient icons from a dried tank near Campanagar in the year 1914 A.D.<sup>4</sup> It is carved out into black basalt. It measures 61×30.05 centimeters. It is quite intact. (fig. 2) Bhagavan Adinatha is seated upon a double petalled lotus pedestal in *padmāsana mudrā*. He is in deep meditation. His curly hair and *uṣṇīṣa* over it are similar to the image of Lord Buddha. Two Vidyadharas holding long garlands in their hands are flying over the Jina's head. The trilinear (*trichatra*) umbrella emerging behind his head is attractive. His Sasandevi Cakresvari and Yaksa Gomukha (in human form) are seen near him. All the remaining twentythree Tirthankaras are seated in *padmāsana mudrā* around the *mūlanāyaka* Bhagavan Adinatha. Two worshippers are seen near him. His *lāñchana*, the bull is carved out below the lotus pedestal. An elephant, however, is carved out on the otherside of the bull. In between the bull and the elephant a female deity has been carved out in the place of usual *cakra* (wheel of law). She is holding a baby in her lap and seated in *ardhaparyāṅkāśana*. Her *vṛttabandha* *jūṣṭājūṣṭa* is attractive. She may be identified as goddess Ambika, the Sasanadevi of Bhagavan Neminatha, the 22nd Jaina Tirthankara.

The depiction of goddess Ambika with the image of Bhagavan Adinatha is rare from the iconographic point of view. We have only similar example at the Archaeological Museum, Raipur, M.P.<sup>5</sup> Here the figure

<sup>1</sup> Joshi, N.P., *Pracin Bharatiya Murtivijnan*, Patna, 1977, p. 214.

<sup>2</sup> Roychoudhury, P. C., *Bihar District Gazetteer, Bhagalpur*, Patna, 1962.

<sup>3</sup> Sinha, Ajoy Kumar, *Jaina Shrines in Bhagalpur*, Bhagalpur, 1983.

<sup>4</sup> Patil, D. R., *The Antiquarian Remains in Bihar*, Patna, 1963, p. 78.

<sup>5</sup> Shrama, B. N., *Jain Pratimayen*, New Delhi, 1979, p. 78.

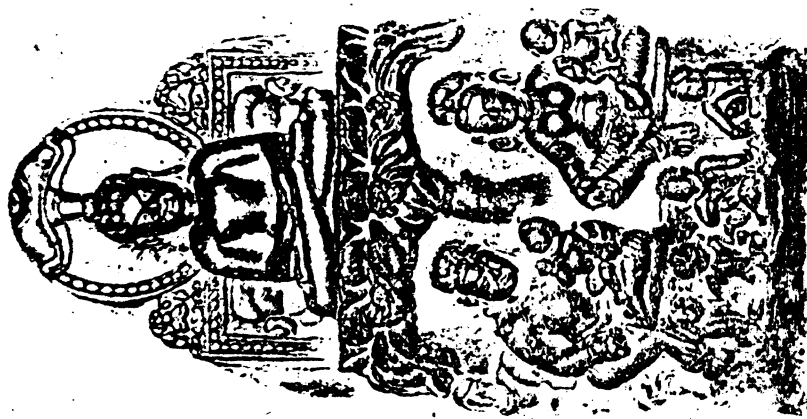


Fig. 1

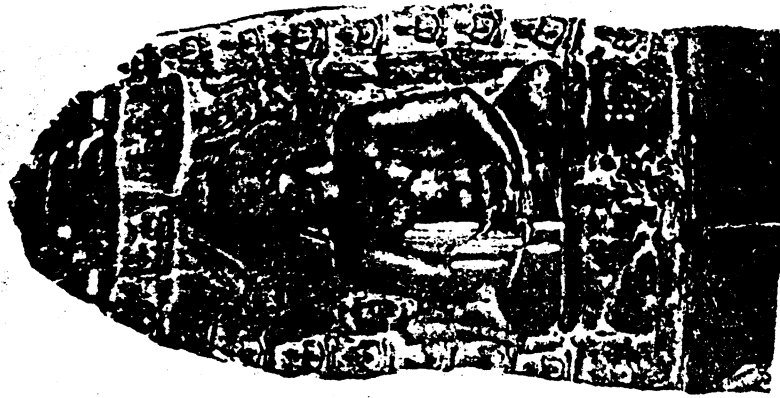


Fig. 2

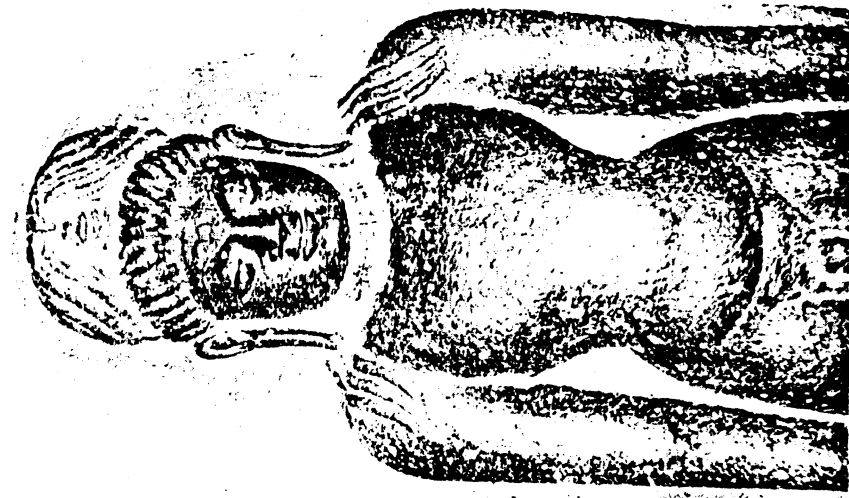


Fig. 4



Fig. 3

of goddess Ambika has been carved out in place of goddess Cakresvari, probably due to her importance in the Jaina pantheon.

Besides, this *caubisi* of Bhagavan Adinatha is a singular specimen of its type from the iconographic point of view, reported so far from the eastern part of Bihar. It can be dated in circa 8th century A.D.

#### *A Rare Khadgasana Image of Bhagavan Adinatha*

The stone image of Bhagavan Adinatha under study has been enshrined in Sri Campapur Digambar Jain Siddhaksetra, Nathnagar (a suburb of Bhagalpur Town). It is carved out in ashy black stone and measures 25.3 × 15.3 cms. (fig. 3) The black stone, however, has been referred to as best material to carve out the idols of Jaina Tirthankaras.<sup>1</sup> The image shows Bhagavan Adinatha standing in *kāyotsarga mudrā*, a typical yogic form prescribed in the Jaina canons. Actually, Jainism believes in penance (*tapasyā*).<sup>2</sup> The Jina's hands are hanging upto his knees. He is nude and youthful in look. The *śrīvatsa* mark upon his chest is, however, not clear. All these features are according to the principles laid down in the *Ilpa* texts for carving out the idols of Jaina Tirthankaras during the early and medieval period.<sup>3</sup> The Jina's face is calm and serene in appearance accordingly.<sup>4</sup> He is standing upon a simple pedestal on which a *cakra* (wheel of law) in the form of simple dotted circle has been carved out just below the Jina's feet. The wheel is flanked by two bulls, the *lāñchana* of the Jina. His elongated ears, half closed eyes, tied hairs and a very simple trilinear umbrella (*trichatra*) over his head are clear-cut example of early sculptural art of the eastern India. The oval shaped *prabhāvalī* behind his head also shows simple linear design. On both sides of the standing Jina, we find a number of seated deities, which adds more importance to it. To his left side near the shoulder, his Susanadevi Cakresvari is seated in the *padmāsana mudrā* upon a lotus pedestal. She is holding a *cakra* (wheel) as her emblem. On the right side, near Jina's other shoulder, Gomukha, the Yaksha is shown seated upon a lotus pedestal in the *padmāsana* attitude. The flying Vidyadhara emerging from Gomukha's back is attractive and important from iconographic point of view. One of his hand

<sup>1</sup> *Pratisthasarasamgraha*, 3.77.

<sup>2</sup> *sramyamitī sramanah tapasyamitīyarthah*, *Dasavaikalika Sutra*, 13.3.

<sup>3</sup> *ajanalambabahuḥ śrīvatsyankaprasantamurtiśca*

*digvasastaruno rūpavamsaḥ kayor'hatam devūh*, *Bṛhatsamhita*, 58, 45.

<sup>4</sup> *santaprasannamadhyosihanāsagrasthavikaradrīk*

*śarpārnabhavarudhanuvidyāṅg lakṣaṇanyitam*, *Pratisthasaroddhara*, 1.62.

is in boon-giving (*varada*) pose. Just below the Sasanadevi Cakresvari, the Gandharva Yaksa has been carved out.<sup>5</sup> He is also seated upon a lotus flower in the *ardha paryāṅkāśana*. He is holding a snake in his right hand. On the other side, below the Yaksa Gomukha, we find the figure of Yaksa Kuvera seated in the *padmāsana* upon a lotus seat. He is holding a club accordingly. His *vṛttabandhajaṭājūṭa* is typical to the pre-Pala sculptural art of the eastern Bihar. In the lower most row, below the figure of the Gandharva Yaksa, figures of Jina's parents have been beautifully carved out. They are seated in the *sukhāsana mudra* upon a lotus seat. They are giving boon to the devotees. Above all, we find the figure of Yaksa Bhṛkūṭi<sup>6</sup> on the other side of Jina's parent. Bhṛkūṭi is associated with the bull and hence should be close to Bhagavan Adinatha. In the Jaina art of Bihar, this representation is rare from the iconographic point. A devotee, may be donor, has been carved out with the folded palms (*añjali mudrā*) upon a lotus seat in kneel down position.

The above mentioned description of the ancient *khadgāsana* Adinatha image proves its iconographic importance. It is singular example of its type inside the eastern part of Bihar. It definitely belonged to the circa 7th-8th century A.D. and hence of great archaeological importance too.

#### *An Early Image of Bhagavan Adinatha*

The earliest known Jaina stone sculpture of Bhagalpur is enshrined in the Sri Champapur Digambar Jain Siddhaksetra, Nathnagar,<sup>1</sup> a suburb of Bhagalpur town. It represents Bhagavan Adinatha or Rsa-bhanatha, the first and founder Tirthankara. (fig. 4) The temple itself is an old one and said to be constructed in V. S. 1559.<sup>2</sup> The statue of Bhagavan Adinatha is in *khadgāsana* pose. The sculptor followed the *śilpa* guidelines laid down by Vasunandi. Bhagavan Adinatha is standing with his feet at a distance of about two inches from each other and his hands resting naturally by the sides, definitely not touching his body. His *vṛttabandhajaṭājūṭa* (roundish hair style) reminds us of the iconographic tradition followed during the Gupta and late Gupta periods (c. 5th-7th century A.D.). Locks of hair, another pre-Pala feature,

<sup>5</sup> Bhattacharya, B. C., *The Jaina Iconography*, New Delhi, 1974 (Reprint), p. 97.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93.

<sup>1</sup> Martin, Montgomery, *The History, Antiquities, Topography and Statistics of Eastern India*, Vol. II (London, 1837), p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Patil, D. R., *The Antiquarian Remains in Bihar*, (Patna, 1963), p. 79.

are hanging over Bhagavata's both shoulders. The *śrīvatsa* mark is clear and his nudeness indicates that it belonged to the Digambara sect. The physical proportions of his body has beautifully been carved out in ashy granite stone which measures 96.5×48.3 centimetres. His elongated ears and a round mole mark over his forehead are also important iconographic features. The *dharmacakra* has been carved out just in the centre of the plain pedestal. His *vāhāna*, the bull, is carved out by the side of the *dharmacakra*. It is curious to note that this idol of Bhagavan Adinatha has not been accompanied by any Yaksha or Yaksini. It belonged to the *circa* 5th-6th century A.D.