Some Inscriptions and Images on Mount Satrunjaya

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The age of antiquity or ancient monuments is generally inferred from the styles of architecture and sculpture and on the basis of available inscriptions. Since the temples at Śatruñjaya were renovated from time to time through many centuries very little evidence of antiquity has been left for us. For want of published old inscriptions, sculptures in temples, scholars came to believe that the temple-city of Śatruñjaya could hardly claim to be earlier than or even as old as the Jaina-temples-site of Delvāḍā, Mount Abu.

One can see several streets and rows of temples and images on Mount Śatruñjaya. A common man can hardly make any distinction between the earliest and the latest specimens of art among the hundreds and thousands of images in this temple-city, where no human habitation is allowed. But the searching eye of a historian is on the look-out for all stray old inscriptions and specimens of art.

According to literary traditions, Śatruñjaya is an ancient tīrtha of the Jainas. In the Jñātāadharmakathā, a Jaina canonical text, it is referred to as Puṇḍarikagiri.¹ In later Jaina literature, this place is

¹ Sūtras 55, 56, 60, pp. 109, 112. Abhayadeva, the Commentator, has identified Puṇḍarikagiri with modern Śatruñjaya (p. 111 A).
associated with some auspicious events in the life of Rśabha, the first Tīrthaṅkara. It is also said that a temple was dedicated to Rśabhanātha, on this mountain. Puṇḍarikasvāmī, the first Gaṇadhara of Rśabha, obtained emancipation on this sacred mountain and a memorial to him, in the form of a shrine with his image, was raised here. Since then, the mountain came to be called Puṇḍarikagiri.²

We shall now refer to a few images and inscriptions which throw more light on the art and antiquity of this site.

Fig. 1 illustrates a beautiful marble image of Puṇḍarikasvāmī installed in the first cell adjacent to the staircase, beside the main entrance to chief shrine of Rśabhanātha (Ādinātha) on this mountain. This sculpture, fortunately well-preserved, is about 2.5 feet in height and about 1.5 ft. broad at base. The pedestal or the lowermost part of the sculpture has an inscription in four lines.³ A big lotus with an ornamental long stalk springs from the top of the pedestal, and divides the whole sculpture into two sections. The upper section shows a figure of Puṇḍarikasvāmī, sitting in the padmāsana, dhīṇamudrā, on a cushion-like seat placed on the full-blown lotus. There is a back-rest whose two ends show lions supporting the horizontal bar resting on two pillars. Above are two divine garland-bearers, and on top the chatra or the umbrella. The figure of the Gaṇadhara could easily be mistaken for that of a Tīrthaṅkara, if the inscription had not specifically shown that it represented Puṇḍarikasvāmī.

Below the lotus, the two sides of the stalk further form two sections, the centre being occupied by the sthāpanā⁴. To the right of the sthāpanā sits a Jaina monk, a guru, in the act of giving a discourse to the two disciples sitting in front, with folded hands, on the other side of the sthāpanā.

This is one of the finest examples of sculptural art of Gujarat in V. S. 1064 (=1006 A.D.), the date of the inscription. Unfortunately part of the beauty of this sculpture is marred by modern black paints.

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² For a fuller account, see Shah, Ambalal Premchand, Jaina Tirthasarvasamgraha (in Gujarati, Ahmedabad), pp. 98-108.
³ The inscription was first published by Shah, Umakant Premanand, in Jaina Satya-Prakāśa (Gujarati Journal, Ahmedabad) Volume 17, No. 3, pp. 51-58.
⁴ For understanding the symbolism of Sthāpanā (also called Sthā-panacārya) see, Shah, U. P., Studies in Jaina Art (Banaras, 1955), pp. 113-115.
glass eyes, and studded metal pieces on different parts of the body of Puṇḍarikasvāmī and the two smaller figures. This is a practice which has undermined the beauty of many a Jaina sculpture, old or new. The inscription reads as under:

(1) श्रीमुग्धदिगिरिकुण्डरीकान्ता च कमली ।
च्याला शरद्यु के छायु त्तके चर्चायार्यासानम: || 1 ॥
श्रीसंगमिककुलनिर्विवाय रक्षनमस्तत्तमुंगक: ॥
दिव्यक्षेत्रभिरिसके मातृपुरोष्याचित्वसः || २ ॥
वझ वह्ये धल्य चतुर्भिताधिके दिव्यमण्डथः ।
(५)तौमादिसे आपार्ज्ज्यायमंसे कुमारिन्तिबायां ॥ ३ ॥
भर्मरेकः श्रम वस्त्र श्रीमित्रोपयकारमवः ।
पुंडरीकदाससिबेत्तमेतसक्षीरतः ॥ ४ ॥ चतुर्भिः: कलाकरकः ॥

According to the inscription, Muni Saṅgamasiddha, moon of the firmament of the Vidyādhara-Kula, meditated on mount Śatruṅjaya, before Yugādideva (Adinātha) and Puṇḍarika. Having purified himself by the practice of austerities and sallekhanā, observing dauntlessly his fast for a month and four days, attained to Heaven on Monday the second day of the dark half of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa, in V. S. 1064. Śreṣṭhī Ammeyaka, son of Rodheyaka, caused to build this shrine and (consecrate) the image, for his own merit.

This Muni Saṅgamasiddha is probably the grand-teacher of Pādalipta, the author of Nirvāṇakalikā.

This is the earliest known inscribed and dated image available at Śatruṅjaya. It is important also as a fine specimen of art.

Fig. 2, preserved in a cell on the right side of the northern part of the circumambulatory passage of the main shrine, represents a householder, i.e. a śrāvaka, a Jaina lay worshipper. The inscription on its pedestal shows that this is a statue (a portrait sculpture?) of Śreṣṭhī Nārāyaṇa.

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5 One of the four ancient lineages of Śvetāmbara Jaina monks.

6 Compare the colophon of Nirvāṇakalikā, wrongly ascribed to the first Pādalipta, who is said to have flourished in c. 2nd century A.D. But Dr. U. P. Shah, in his “Iconography of the Jaina Goddess Ambika”, Journal of the University of Bombay, September 1940, p. 159, f. n. 6, pointed out that Nirvāṇakalikā was a work of c. eleventh century A.D.
On a raised cushion, surmounted by a design looking like petals of a full-blown lotus, sits Nārāyaṇa in the aṇjalimudrā (with folded hands), in the lalita-posture, i.e., with his right-foot hanging and the left tucked up. He wears ornaments like armlets, bracelets, anklets, an ornamental broad girdle, necklaces and big circular ear-rings. He has a long beard, whether or not he had moustaches in the original is difficult to ascertain on account of the modern black paint, but it is probable that the paint is on the original mustaches. His hair are tied into a small top-knot on the head, on each side of which is a divine garland-bearer. This is unusual, since a lay-worshipper is not known to have been accompanied by heavenly attendant mālādhāras.

The marble sculpture is a beautiful specimen of secular sculpture of the eleventh century A.D.

The two-line inscription on the pedestal reads as follows:

(२) श्रीजनागकरिप्रस्त श्रीपरिवर्तनरत नारायणस्त रूपसन्म ििवेश्वर (िरी) विक्रमसम्बन्धसंख्या सं ११३१ ||

According to the inscription, this statue of Śreṣṭhī Nārāyaṇa, the younger brother of Jajanāga, and father of Kapardi, was set up by Siddha and Vira in (Vikrama) Saṃvat 1131 (i.e. 1075 A.D.)

Fig. 3 represents a twelve-armed Goddess who is well-known as Mahiṣa-mardini in Hindu traditions and as Saccikādevi in Jaina traditions.

It is a beautiful marble sculpture of the goddess in bold relief, the back showing a trefoil-like arch surmounting two pillars and thus suggesting that the Goddess is placed in a miniature shrine. On top of the sculpture, in the central part of the arch, is a miniature shrine with a Jina sitting in it.

The Mahiṣa-demon is an excellent specimen of animal-sculpture. The figure of the goddess, with her one foot trampling on the buffalo-demon pierced by her long trident, is a work of superior workmanship, full of life and vigour and beautiful modelling.

In her right hands, the goddess shows the sword, the disc, the trident, the arrow and the varada-mudrā, while in the left ones she holds the shield, the vajra-ghanṭā (combination of thunderbolt and bell), the mace, the conch, the bow and the head of the personified demon (placed on the buffalo-demon).

The ornaments and the modelling deserve comparison with the famous Sarasvati from Pallu in the old Bikaner State, now preserved
in the National Museum, New Delhi. The sculpture must be assigned to a period c. 1000–1050 A.D.

The small figure of a female worshipper on the lower end of the left pillar deserves notice as a fine specimen of miniature figure and on account of the mode of representing the scarf or oḍhāṇī covering the head and the back.

The inscription on the pedestal reads as follows:

(३) संवत् १३७१ कर्तः माहुद्वि १४ सोमे श्रीमद्देवकेशवेश वेषद्वारिको षाङ्गल्यणपुञ्ज साहासाहानय साहोगोत्व माहांरणाधस्वस्वयमेव संपत्ति षाङ्गामानारणानुजें साहार्गीणाधमाधजें संयतालिंकुस्नेतेजें पुत्र साहसाहानय साहासाहानय साहामान साहास सांगनाधस्वकुंडव- सन्नद्योपेतेवन निजजुर्धवेविशिष्टिकारिता कारिता।

याबद्ध व्यूिनचन्द्रां याबद्ध मेनमहीयर:।

तांबतु श्रीचिन्तामणिति:।

The inscription shows that this image of Saccikādevī was set up by Saṅghapati Sādu Desala, the elder brother of Luṇāsimha, and younger brother of Aśādhara. He was son of Ājaḍa and grandson of Salakṣana and belonged to Vesāta-gotra of Ukeśa lineage. He, along with other members of the family and his sons Sahajapāla, Sāhanapāla, Sāmanta, and Sāṅgana, set up this image of the family deity Saccikādevī, in the year 1371 V. S. (=1314 A.D.)

There is a shrine of Saccikādevī at Osia in Rajasthan. The Ukeśa lineage is named after this ancient town which was known as Ukeśa or Upakesa-pūra. The Oswāla baniās are named after this Osia and are supposed to have hailed from this town.

At Osia also, the Saccikādevī image represents the form of Mahiśamardini.

Fig. 4 represents statues of Minister Samarasimha and his wife Gugān. This is an important sculpture of the famous “Samarā-sāha” who renovated, in V. S. 1371, the various shrines at Śatrūnjaya. A detailed account of this minister, his lineage and his family is available in Nābhinandana-jinoddhāra-prabandha.

The minister stands with folded hands, while his wife carries a purse (money-bag) in her right hand and a cup or bowl containing sandal-wood and saffron-paste for worship is held in her left hand.

The dress and ornaments of both the figures deserve notice.

Deśala, referred to in the inscription on fig. 3 above, is the father of this Samarasimha. The inscription on fig. 4 runs as follows:
Fig. 5 shows a part of a beautiful metal sculpture representing one figure of a Jina in the centre, and two smaller Jina-figures on two sides above the halo of the bigger Jina. A two-armed Kubera-like Yakṣa sits on a lotus to the right of the main figure, while on the corresponding left end we find a two-armed Yakṣi Ambikā sitting in the lalita-posture. There is no inscription on this image, but on stylistic grounds it can be assigned to c. tenth century A.D. or a little earlier.

Unfortunately the present whereabouts of the bronze are not known, but the present writer had once seen it in one of the temples on Mt. Śatruṅjaya. A new photograph of the whole figure is thus not possible and only this photograph of a part of it, obtained from the Sheth Anandji Kalyāṇji's Peḍhī, Ahmedabad, is reproduced here. It will however be seen that the bronze is a beautiful specimen of metal sculpture in Western India.

We have noted above four inscriptions from this site. A few more inscriptions ranging from V. S. 1207 to c. 1405 A. D. are noted below.

Inscription no. 5 is on a metal image in Shrine No. 302 situated on the left side of the chief gate of the main temple of the Caumukha Tuṅk. The inscription reads as under:

(५) श्री सिद्धेश्वर मुरार सं ५ वैशाख २ गुरु सिद्धसहिःकरोऽस्मि (मोक्ष) न्यूर्यंध्र-भार्यांणुण्डेरविभयस्या श्रीशांत्यानाथविव कारित् ||

According to this inscription, this image of Śrī Śāntinātha was installed for the spiritual benefit of Guṇadevi, wife of merchant Hariścandra belonging to the Bhimapalli-gaccha. The image was consecrated on Thursday the 2nd day of the dark fortnight of the month of Vaiśākha in the year 4 of the Siddha-Hema-Kumāra Saṁvat.

This is a very important inscription, first noticed by Muni Śrī Puṣyavijaya and published by him in the Jaina Satya Prakāśa, Vol. VIII, No. 1 (Ahmedabad, 1943), pp. 259-261. The metal image must be very carefully preserved, being the only known inscriptive evidence of the Siddha-Hema-Kumāra Era.

Three great personalities of the history of Gujarat are associated in the name of this Saṁvat (Era). One is Siddharāja Jayasimha, the second is Acārya Hemacandra and the third is king Kumārapala of Anāhilapura-Pātaṇ. The era seems to have started with the death of
king Siddharāja Jayasimha and the accession of his successor Kumārapāla in Vikrama Saṁvat 1199.

The name of Hemacandra, the great scholiast and monk whom both the above rulers highly respected, is also associated with this era. Hemacandra himself, in his Abhidhānacintāmaṇi (§. 171) composed in V. S. 1207–8, mentions this era in the following way while explaining संवत् = वषे— "यथा विक्रमसंवत्, सिद्धेष्ठेमकुमारसंवत्।"

The metal image should thus date from V. S. 1203. No other inscription referring to this era is yet known but one would not be surprised if some more inscriptions dated in this era are discovered in future. It seems, however, that the era ceased to be in use, soon after the deaths of Hemacandra and Kumārapāla since no other inscriptions posterior in age to these personalities are known to have referred to it. On the contrary almost all such inscriptions refer to the Vikrama era, or in a few cases to the Śaka era. Even in colophons of old manuscripts we do not find any dates in this era.

Inscription No. 6, from Shrine No. 280, reads as follows:

(६) संवत् १२२८ ज्येष्ठशुद्धिदि १० शनी श्रीविष्णुविग्राहयागच्छे पहुँचेन धर्म पाल[१ त्य] 
श्रेयसे प्रतिष्ठा कारिता।

The image was caused to be made by Pahudeva of the Devananda-kīyagaccha⁷, on Saturday, the tenth day of the bright half of the month of Jyeṣṭha, in V.S. 1228, for the spiritual merit of his father Pāla.

Inscription No. 7 is on a mutilated image stored in one of the underground chambers. The inscription reads as follows:

(७) संवत् १२७३ वसे कारितकुश्यिदिए १ गुरी श्रीविष्णुके श्रीविष्णुविग्राहयागच्छे पंथवाचक पदमयो: 
शिष्य पंथवेदविधते मूर्ति: कारिता भ्रातुपुत्र पंथवाचक | मंगल महाभ: | चिरं नंदु।।

According to this inscription, this image of Paṇḍita Yaśovardhana, disciple of Paṇḍita Āśacandra and Padma of Vāyaṭiya gaccha and hailing from (belonging to) the town of Dhandhukaka, was set up by Padmacandra, the (spiritual) son of his brother (i.e. the disciple of his monk brother), on Thursday, the first day of the bright fortnight of the month of Kārtika in V. S. 1273.

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⁷ Devanandakīya-gaccha is mentioned in the colophon of the palm-leaf manuscript (V. S. 1194) of Pramāṇantarabhāva, at Jesalmer. The colophon also says that Devanandagaccha is a sub-gaccha of Hārijya-gaccha, cf., Jaina-Pustaka-Praśasti-Saṅgraha, p. 104.
Fig. 1. Image of Puṇḍarīkasvāmī, Śatruṅjaya (d.V.S. 1064)

Fig. 2. Sculpture of Śreṣṭhi Nārāyaṇa, Śatruṅjaya (d. V. S. 1131)
Fig. 3. Image of Mahiṣamarddini, Śatruṅjaya (dated V. S. 1371)

Fig. 4. Sculpture representing Minister Samarāsimha and his wife (d. V. S. 1414)
Fig. 5. Jaina Metal Sculpture, Šatruñjaya
Inscription No. 8 is from a mutilated statue of a Jaina householder (śrāvaka) in standing posture, found from an underground chamber. It reads as follows:

(८) सं। १२०३ वर्षे फागणुदिन ७ पाद्रामे महं।...........हुत महं प्रमाणस्य मूर्ति।
ललगुणेन कारिता ||

According to this inscription, this statue of Minister Prabhāsa, son of ..........., was set up by his son Jagapāla of the village of Pādara, on the seventh day of the bright fortnight of the month of Phālguna in V. S. 1313.

Inscription No. 9 is obtained on the image of a monk in Shrine No. 701 (Old No. 626). This was read as follows:

(९) सं। १२४२ माषिकूदिसे अ शुकेश्रीनांदगच्छे पूज्यश्रीगुणसुलिया चूँकि।
पूर्णामचैत्य स्वरूपसेयसे इर्मूर्तीकारिताप्रतिविद्याश्रीकिण(द)पद्मदितिष्ठ।
चंद्रशालु यावत् नेदरता ||

According to the inscription, this image of venerable Śrī Gūnasenasūri of Nāgendragacchha was caused to be made by Pt. Rāmacandra for the spiritual merit of his preceptor, on Friday, the eighth of the bright half of the month of Māgha in V. S. 1342, and installed by Śrī Jinabhadrasūri.

Inscription No. 10 is from a mutilated Jina-image in an underground chamber and was read as under:

(१०) संवत् १४०५ वर्षे माषिकूदिसे १० सोमे श्रीपोर्णानाबाजल्यश्री।......[म]हं।
पद्मदितिष्ठुत महं ।ललगुणेन स्वमात्मचायीहीरनरतियसे श्रीअजितनाथबिंबं कारितं ||

According to it, this image of Ajitanātha was set up by minister Sāṅgaṇa, son of minister Mālageva, resident of Posināṇa for the spiritual welfare of his mother Bāyi Hīrana, on Monday, the tenth of the dark half of Mārgga in V. S. 1405.