

Some Unpublished Jaina Images of Bihar

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An Early Image of Bhagavan Santhinatha with the Jyotiska Devas

The town of Bhagalpur, ancient Campa,¹ preserves a number of early Jaina sculptures in various temples. It is one of the most sacred places for the Jainas. In the beginning Jainism was an atheist religion² but during the early historic period the Jainas came closer to the Hindus and started idol worship.³ They adopted a number of Hindu gods and goddesses such as Ganesa, Sarasvati, Astadikpalas, Navagrahas and so on and so forth. They worship the Navagrahas (nine planets) as Jyotiskadevas who used to encircle the Tirthankara, just to pay reverence.

There is an early image of Bhagavan Santinatha, the sixteenth Tirthankara at Sri Campapur Digambar Jain Siddhaksetra, Nathnagar⁴ (a suburb of Bhagalpur). It measures 61 × 30.5 centimetres and is carved out in black basalt. (Fig. 1) The Jina is seated in the *samparyāṅkāśana* on a double petalled lotus pedestal. In the centre of the pedestal, a *dharmacakra* (wheel of Law) has beautifully been carved out. The pedestal, however, rests upon the back of two youthful lions seated in opposite direction by the side of wheel of law. Just below the *dharmacakra*, figure of a *mṛga* (deer, the *lāñchana* of Bhagavan Santinatha) is engraved by whose side two devotees with folded palms are seen. The Jina's elongated ears, half closed eyes, curly hairs, round mole mark, halo behind the head and a *śrīvatsa* mark are all typical to the Jaina art. The flying Gandharvas with long flowery garlands are depicted just by the side of the Jina's head. But the most striking iconographic feature in this sculpture is the presence of Jyotiskadevas⁵ on either side of Bhagavan Santinatha. The leader of the Jyotiskadevas is Surya (Sun-god). He is engraved on the right side near the shoulder of the Jina. He has been described in the Jaina scriptures as the deity of the East and the husband of Ratna Devi.⁶ He holds two lotus flowers in his hands. Here in this

¹Patil, D.R., *The Antiquarian Remains in Bihar*, Patna, 1963, p. 78.

²Sharma, B.N., 'Foreword', *The Jaina Iconography* by B. C. Bhattacharya, New Delhi, 1974 reprint, p. 10.

³*Ibid.*

⁴Sinha, A.K., *Jaina Shrines in Bhagalpur* (in the press)

⁵Bhattacharya, B.C., *The Jaina Iconography*, New Delhi, 1974 reprint, p. 116.

⁶*Ibid.*

image, the Surya is engraved in *lalitāsana* pose holding two full blossomed lotus flowers in both hands. On the other side of the deity, Candra, the Moon-god, has been depicted who is said to be the master of stars and ruler of the north-West Quarters. The Moon-god is seated in *samparyāṅkāśana*. He is in *barada* (boon-giving) *mudrā*. The Digambara description of the planet has no mention of his symbols. Just below the Sun-god, figure of Mangala is seen. He is known as the son of the earth and ruler of the South. He is holding a spear in his left hand which is prescribed in the Digambara *śilpa* texts.⁷ The fourth Jyotiskadeva, Budha is seen just below Candra who is said to be his father. He is ruler of North region. He is holding a long sword in his left hand. The Digambara *śilpa* texts, however, inform us merely a book for this planet. The next planetary god, Brhaspati, has been depicted below Mangala. He is the ruler of the north-Eastern quarters. His emblems are not clear. According to Digambara texts Brhaspati sits on a lotus and holds a book, *kamaṇḍalu* and a rosary.⁸ The sixth Jyotiskadeva, Sukra is seated below Budha in *samparyāṅkāśana*. A rosary like object is seen in his left hand while his right hand is in *varada mudrā*. He is the ruler of the south-East regions and teacher of demons. The seventh planetary deity, Sani (Saturn) has been depicted in almost *tribhāṅga* pose, holding a standard⁹ like object by both hands. None of the Jaina texts refer to the terrific form of last two un auspicious planetary deities Rahu and Ketu who have only been referred to as ruler of south-Western and ruler without any region respectively. In the present sculpture, only Rahu is present. He is in extremely terrific form. His hands are in the *tarpaṇa mudrā* same as in the Hindu Navagraha sculptures.

Now let us evaluate the importance of the sculpture under study. It is singular early specimen in side the province of Bihar showing only eight Jyotiskadevas reported so far.¹⁰ Absence of Ketu is of great importance from the chronological point of view. Ketu is a later addition in Indian art.¹¹ Impact of the Hindu art is also clear from the representation of the saturn. The author of this paper think that the image in question belonged to the early Pala period (circa 8th century AD.)

⁷Nirvanakalika.

⁸Pratiśhasaroddhara.

⁹Visnudharmottara, 69. 1-8

¹⁰Sinha, C.P., *The Early Sculptures of Bihar*, Patna, 1980, pp. 133-135.

¹¹Banerjee, J.N., *The Development of Hindu Iconography*, Delhi, 1974 third edition, p. 444.

A Rare Image of Caubisi of Adinatha at Bhagalpur

The town of Bhagalpur,¹ well known sacred place for the Jainas, has a number of shrines² dedicated to Bhagavan Vasupujya. It was the place where occurred the *pañcakalyāṇas*³ of Bhagavan Vasupujya. Due to this fact, Bhagavan Parsvanatha,⁴ the twenty third Tirthankara and Bhagavan Mahavira,⁵ the last Tirthankara, paid their valuable visits here. A big temple complex was erected during the sixth century B.C. inside the ancient city of Campa (modern Campanagara, a suburb of Bhagalpur town). It was referred to in the ancient Jain literature as Punabhadda Yakṣa Caiya.⁶ A number of ancient Jain images⁷ were recovered from a tank (probably the ancient tank caused to be excavated by the order of queen Gaggara) at Campanagara. Majority of them are adoring the Sri Campapur Digambar Jain Siddhaksetra, Nathnagara.⁸ One of them, a *caubisi* of Bhagavan Adinatha is, however, preserved in the Sri Digambara Jain Mandir, Jain Mandir Lane, Bhagalpur. This temple was constructed in the Vikram Samvat 1929 (1872 A.D.) by the efforts of local Jainas, just to provide boarding facilities to the Jain pilgrims.

The *caubisi* of Bhagavan Adinatha (Fig. 2) is carved out of black stone. It measures 16 × 10 centimetres. It is carved out in an almost rectangular piece of stone. The sculptural details are in four tiers. The upper most tier has the figure of Bhagavan Adinatha who is seated in the *samparyāṅka mudrā* (cross legged position). His half opened eyes, elongated ears, and locks of hair hanging on shoulders denote this image as of Bhagavan Adinatha. He is flanked by two attendants, standing one on his either side. The Jina has *triratha chatra* over his head. They are decorated with the *aśokadruma*. The flying Vidyadharas holding long flowery garlands in their respective hands are engraved just over the head of Bhagavan Adinatha. He is seated on Kailasa, the seat prescribed for him in the *tilpa* text.⁹ In the second tier from the top, seven figures of the Tirthankaras have been carved out. They are all

¹Roychoudhury, P.C., *Bihar District Gazetteer—Bhagalpur*, Patna, 1982.

²Sinha, A.K., *Jaina Shrines in Bhagalpur* (in the press)

³*Samavayanga*, p. 67.

⁴*Bhagvati Sutra*, p. 2234.

⁵Law, B.C., *Mahavira : His Life and Teachings*, London, 1937, p. 32-33.

⁶*Aupapadika Sutra*, p. 10ff. (Sailana Ed.)

⁷Patil, D.R., *The Antiquarian Remains in Bihar*, Patna 1963.

⁸Sinha, A.K., *Early Jain Images from Bhagalpur* (in the press)

⁹*Rupamandana*, verse 27.

standing in *khadgāsana mudrā*. They are all nude. From right to left, the Jinās are standing in chronological order, viz., Ajitanatha, Sambhavanatha, Abhinandanatha, Sumatinatha, Padmaprabha, Suparsvanatha, and Candraprabha. Their *lāñchanas*, viz., the *gaja* (Elephant) *aśva* (Horse) *kapi* (Monkey), *kraunca* (Curlow), *abja* (Lotus) *śvastika* and *śaśī* (Moon) have been engraved below their feet accordingly.¹⁰ In the third tier from the top, as many as eight Jinās have been depicted again in the chronological order from right to left. They are, viz. Suvidhinatha, Sitalanatha, Sreyamsanatha, Vasupujya, Vimalanatha, Anantanatha, Dharmathantha and Santinatha. They are also in *khadgāsana mudrā*. Their respective *lāñchanas*, viz., the *makara* (crocodile), *śrīvatsa*, *khagisa* (Rhinaceros), *mahiṣa* (Buffalo), *śukra* (Boar); *śyena* (Hawk); and *vajra* (Thunderbolt) have beautifully been carved out under their feet. In the lower most tier we see figures of remaining eight Tirthankaras, again in the chronological order. They are Kunthunatha, Aranatha, Mallinatha, Munisuvrata, Naminatha, Neminatha, Parsvanatha and Mahavira. They are also in *khadgāsana mudrā*. Their *lāñchanas*, viz., the *mrga* (Deer) *Chāga* (Goat); *nandjā-varta*, *ghaṭa* (pot); *kūrmā* (Tortoise); *nīlotpala* (Blue lotus); *śaṅkha* (conch); *phaṇi* (Serpent) and *simha* (lion) are clearly visible under their feet. All these Tirthankaras have been provided with double circled halo behind their heads which denote to their godship.

The *caubīṣṭi* of Bhagavan Adinatha under discussion shows certain similar features to those reported from the Bangladesh *caubīṣṭies* which belonged to the late Pala (circa 10th-11th century A.D.) period. A *caubīṣṭi* of Bhagavan Candraprabha displayed in the Dacca Museum¹¹ Bangladesh presents the remaining twenty three Jinās in seated (*pad-māsana*) posture. The Dinajpur Museum (Bangladesh)¹² *caubīṣṭi*, however depicts all twenty three Jinās standing in four tiers on the either side of Bhagavan Adinatha. The museums of Bihar have not preserved any *caubīṣṭi* in stone.

Hence, the author of this paper, thinks that the Bhagalpur Digambar Jain Temple's *caubīṣṭi* of Bhagavan Adinatha, which certainly belonged to the Pala period, is of great archeological interest.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, verses 5-6.

¹¹Sharma, B.N. *Jaina Pratimayen*, Delhi, 1979, p. 95.

¹²*Ibid.*

Some Jaina Images at Pakur (S. P)

Pakur¹ is a sub-divisional headquarter of the district of Santal Parganas. It is well connected with the district headquarter Dumka by a metalled road and by rail with Bhagalpur and Calcutta as well. The District Gazetteer of Santal Parganas is quite silent about Jainism. But the author of this Paper surveyed the town of Pakur and inspected four early images of Jaina Tirthankaras which at present are enshrined in a newly constructed temple at local Harindanga Bazar, just near the Pakur Railway Station.

The Digambar Jain Mandir, Pakur has some bronze images. The author of this paper came to know from the Secretary of that temple that all the Jaina images belonged to Rajasthan. Their forefathers brought these icons with them to Pakur for religious purposes. At present only five or six Jaina families, all engaged in business, are living at Pakur. The temple contains only four images, two of marble and two bronzes.

The oldest icon represents Bhagavan Parsvanatha. (fig. 3) It is a bronze which measures 10.2 × 5.1 centimetres. According to an inscription engraved upon its pedestal, we know that it was donated to a temple in the Vikram samvat 1527 (A.D. 1470). Bhagavan Parsvanatha is seated in *samparyanāsana* upon a high platform. His hair tied in *uṇṇṭa* style gives an early look. The image represents the Jina seated cross-legged on a seat placed over a *pañcarāṭha* pedestal with both palms placed one over the other on the lap in the attitude of meditation (*yogt-mudrā*). Parsvanatha is readily distinguished by the presence of the seven hooded serpent canoping over his head. He has been represented entirely nude suggesting his Digambara form. He has elongated ears, mark of *śrīvatsa* symbol over his chest, and *cakra* over the soles of his feet. In accordance with the canonical texts,² Parsvanatha should be accompanied by the Yakṣa Dharanendṛa and Yaksini Padmavati. But in the present example these two companions are conspicuous by their absence. The front face of the pedestal has three niches, separated from each other. In the central niche we find the representation of snake³ the *lāñchana* of Bhagavan Parsvanatha while in the two other niches there are two lions holding the seat of Bhagavan Parsvanatha over their back. The entire representation is fairly good. In the knowledge of the present author who extensively surveyed the Jaina images in the

¹Sinha, A.K., 'Santal Parganas District through the Ages', *Bulletin of The Tribal Welfare Research Institute*, Vol XXIV, Ranchi, 1980, pp. 77-84.

²Bhattacharya, B.C., *The Jaina Iconography*, Delhi, 1968 reprint, p. 58.

³*Rupamandana*, verse 6.

eastern Bihar, this image of Bhagavan Parsvanatha is the earliest bronze icon in this region.

Another early bronze enshrined in Sri Digambar Jain Temple, Pakur represents the eighth Tirthankara, Bhagavan Candraprabha,⁴ locally known as Canda Prabhu. It is a tiny specimen measuring 5.2×3.8 centimetres. It is dated in the Vikrama Samvat 1671 (1614 A.D.). The Jina is seated in *padmāsana* and in deep meditation. Bhagavan Candraprabha's worship is very popular in Rajasthan. In this eastern part of Bihar, this image is one of the early specimen of its type.

The remaining two icons are carved out of marble—one in black marble representing Bhagavan Parsvanatha and the other in white marble depicting Bhagavan Candraprabha. (fig. 4) They belonged to the first quarter of the nineteenth century A.D. The image of Bhagavan Parsvanatha is in *padmāsana* pose. The seven-hooded snake is canopied over his head. There is an interesting story regarding association of serpent with Bhagavan Parsvanatha in the *Pārśvanātha Carita*.⁵ Once upon a time Parsvanatha saw a great serpent having been burnt in the fire lit during the *pañcāgni tapah* performed by an ascetic. Parsvanatha, who happened to be present there, extinguished the fire miraculously and rescued the serpent from being burnt into the fire. The serpent was in due course reborn as Dharaṇendra, the king of the nether world. At some later period, when the Jina was performing austerities in the forests of Kau-sambi, the serpent king Dharaṇendra presented himself in state and paid due honour to him. Since then, Bhagavan Parsvanatha became close to him. The *śrīvatsa* mark over the chest of the Jina is very clear. The last specimen belonged to the Vikrama Samvat 1881 (1824 A.D.) and represents the eighth Tirthankara Bhagavan Candraprabha in the *padmāsana mudrā*. It is carved out in the white marble and measure 13.8×10.5 centimetres. His symbol, *śaśi* (Moon) is clearly visible in the centre of the pedestal over which Bhagavan Candraprabha seated cross-legged with both palms placed one over the other on the lap in the attitude of a Yogi.

In the district of Santal Parganas where Jainism has a very little grip in the society, the above mentioned sculptures are not of less importance. It shows the deep religious feelings of the Jains of Pakur, who migrated from Rajasthan alongwith them.

⁴Sharma, B.N., *Jaina Pratimayen*, Delhi, 1979, p. 42.

⁵Bloomfield, M., *The Life and Stories of the Jain Saviour Parsvanatha*, Baltimore, 1914, p. 10.

Some Jaina Images of Monghyr

Monghyr,¹ the ancient city of Mudgagiri, was an important centre of Jainism during the early historic period. We know from the *Padma-carita*² of Acarya Ravisena that Jaina cult was in flourishing condition in the vicinity of Monghyr during the 7th century A.D. Temples of the Tirthankaras were being built and teachers were always moving in these sacred places propagating the principles of Jainism. Acarya Jinasena and Acarya Haribhadra³ (circa 8th century A.D.) also described the Anga region as a centre of Jainism. Recently, the author of this paper has published a torso of Bhagavan Parsvanatha⁴ discovered from the Monghyr Fort area. It belonged to the circa 9th century A.D. and carved out of black stone. It supplemented the literary evidences regarding Jainism in Monghyr.

Some Jaina sculptures are enshrined in the Sri Parsvanatha Digambar Jain Mandir, Bara Bazar, Monghyr. The present temple according to its Secretary was constructed in the Vikrami Samvat 1936 (1879 A.D.). The temple is dedicated to Bhagavan Parsvanatha, the twenty third Tirthankara. It is worshipped by the Digambara Jainas. It is said that the present temple was erected upon the ruins of an old temple. At present the population of the Jainas in this town are not more than one hundred.

The author of this paper, who inspected the images enshrined inside the temple, has selected three of them for study. All the three represents Bhagavan Parsvanatha. Two of them bears the date V.S. 1936 (1879 A.D.) while the third one is very important from the archaeological point of view. It represents Padmavati, the Sasanadevi of Bhagavan Parsvanatha over whose head the Jina is seated. It is dated in the year V.S. 1548 (1491 A.D.).

Let us examine the iconographic details of two images of Bhagavan Parsvanatha. The black stone image of Bhagavan Parsvanatha measures 16×10 inches. The Jina is seated in *samparyāṅkāsa*. The seven hooded serpent is canopied over his head from back. His hair style is typical. His long ears, half closed eyes, *trivāsa* mark over chest are

¹O' Malley, *Bihar and Orissa District Gazetteer—Monghyr*, Patna, 1926, pp. 30-52.

²Sinha, B.P. (ed), *The Comprehensive History of Bihar*, Vol. I, Pt. II, Patna 1974, p. 457.

³*Ibid.*, p. 458.

⁴Sinha, A.K., 'A Torso of Parsvanatha in the Bhagalpur Museum (Bihar)', *Jain Journal*, Vol. XVII, No. 3 (Calcutta, 1983), pp. 101-102.

depicted according to the *tilpa text*. His *lanchna* the snake, is seen in the centre of the pedestal. The second image of Bhagavan Parsvanatha (fig. 5) is in bronze. It measures 10×8 inches. Bhagavan Parsvanatha is seated in the *samprayankāsana*. The *lanchna* of Bhagavan, the serpent is clearly visible in the middle of the pedestal. The Jina is in *yoga mudra*. A nine hooded serpent is canopied over his head. Generally, Bhagavan Parsvanatha is canopied by a seven hooded snake. The practice of depicting the nine hooded snake is mentioned in the *Gandhinī Sādhaka* (Parsvanatha Navaphana Dhivana).

The most important Jaina image enshrined in the Sri Parsvanatha Digambar Jain Mandir, Monghyr, is of Sasnadevi Padmavati, (Fig. 6) the Yakṣiṇī of Bhagavan Parsvanatha. It is carved out in white marble and measures 12×6 inches. According to an inscription inscribed on the pedestal of this icon, it was installed in the year Vikram Samvat 1548 (A.D. 1491). Goddess Padmavati is seated in *samprayankāsana* upon a lotus pedestal. She is endowed with four hands. She is holding a goat (*ankuṣa*) in the upper right hand while a noose in upper left hand. She is seated in deep meditation. She is keeping a rosary in lower left hand and the *kūṣa* grass like object in lower right hand. She is bearing a long necklace and round *kundalas*. As she is associated with the nether regions or *pātālapuri*. She is canopied by the serpent which is a symbol to her. According to the *tilpa* texts, Bhagavan Parsvanatha is seated over the canopies of the serpent which headed Padmavati. Bhagavan Parsvanatha is seated in *padmāsana* and canopied by a five hooded serpent. The figure of Padmavati under discussion is very important from archaeological point of view because it is singular specimen of its type on the basis of published materials.

From the above discussions, it has become clear that the town of Monghyr is closely associated with Bhagavan Parsvanatha since early historic period. Further the discovery of a colossal torso of Bhagavan Parsvanatha from the heart of the town also strengthens this view. It belonged to the Pala period (circa 9th-10th century A.D.). The original temple dedicated to Bhagavan Parsvanatha was destroyed several times but it always sprung like a blue lotus over the demolished one. The present temple dedicated to Lord Parsvanatha is the latest one in this respect. The author of this paper hopes to bring more material relating to Jainism in Monghyr to light.

Bloomfield, M., *The Life and Stories of the Jaina Saviour Parsvanatha*, Baltimore 1914, p. 20.
Pratishthasamskṛti (MSS).