

Digambara Memorials from Western India pre-20th Century CE

Tillo Detige

Today, Digambara ascetic communities (*saṅgha*) composed of renouncers of varying ascetic ranks (*pada*) are flourishing. These *saṅghas* originated in the 20th century CE, when there was a gradual increase in the numbers of both the iconic, naked, fully-initiated, male renouncers (*muni*) and female renouncers. At least modest shrines are erected for most contemporary Digambara renouncers, and often considerable structures are built for the *ācāryas*, the leaders of the ascetic *saṅghas*. Digambara renouncers seem to have been commemorated as commonly in the early modern period (ca. 1400–1800 CE). In the present chapter, I discuss hitherto little studied, pre-20th century CE memorials from Rajasthan¹ and adjacent areas, commemorating renouncers and lay scholars or ritual specialists (*pañḍita*) affiliated to the Mūlasaṅgha Balātkāraṅga, the dominant Digambara ascetic tradition in early modern Western India.² The memorials are foot icons (*caraṇa*, *pādukā*) or commemorative pillars (*niṣedhikā*) installed in pavilions (*chatrī*) or on simple platforms (*cabūtarā*). Anthropomorphic depictions of the commemorated renouncers are also encountered. The memorials were erected on cremation sites which sometimes grew into considerable necropolises. Ritual was performed at these memorials, and a specific iconographic form also developed in veneration of entire *bhaṭṭāraka* lineages.

The memorials stand to correct the long-standing understanding of the *bhaṭṭārakas*, the Digambara mendicant leaders of the time, as mere clerics or administrators. Prior to the 20th century CE, deceased and living *bhaṭṭārakas* were instead venerated by their devotees as ideal renouncers. The study of the pre-20th century CE Digambara memorials allows for further important insights, foremost among these glances into the shifting composition of the Digambara *saṅghas* during the second millennium CE. The *bhaṭṭāraka* rank was inserted on top of the Digambara ascetic hierarchy in the late medieval period, above that of the *ācārya*. Next to female renouncers and *brahmacārīs*, the *bhaṭṭāraka saṅghas* also included *munis* and *ācāryas* until respec-

tively the mid-17th and the 18th century CE. In the 19th century CE, in the absence of broader circles of renouncers, *pañḍitas* reached a higher standing and were also commemorated with often considerable memorials. A few 19th century CE *munis* found commemorated seem to have been unrelated to the *bhaṭṭāraka* traditions and are hitherto poorly known precursors to the 20th century CE *muni* revival.

As is clear from a map of finding spots (Map 1), the memorials also constitute a valuable source for reconstructing the geographical distribution of the various Balātkāraṅga branches. They indicate both the frequent shifting of individual seats within bound regions and the geographical complementarity of the different branches. The Ḍhūṇḍhāḍāsākhā was active for most of its existence in Ḍhūṇḍhāḍa, the region of Jaipur. The two Śākambharīśākhās (Ajamera-*paṭṭa* and Nāgaura-*paṭṭa*) were moored in the Śākambharī region, which includes the cities Ajmer and Nagaur. And next to later expansions into Mevāḍā and coastal Gujarat, the two Vāgaḍāsākhās (Bṛhadvāgaḍāsākhā and Laghuvāgaḍāsākhā) flourished in Vāgaḍā, a region in South Rajasthan and North-East Gujarat.³

Chatrīs

In the early modern period as much as now, Digambara renouncers were typically commemorated with a memorial stone installed in an open pavilion (*chatrī*, *chatarī*), a raised platform with four, six, eight or more pillars supporting a cupola. (Photo 1) A footprint icon (*pādukā*) or commemorative pillar (*niṣedhikā*) was typically installed centrally under the *chatrīs*' dome, either directly on the floor or on a low plinth. The architectural design of the *chatrīs* varies between different centuries and regions, yet especially within Rajasthan a classical *chatrī* form was used with considerable continuity. (Photo 1, 8) Unique to the Vāgaḍā region of South Rajasthan were multi-storied, square *chatrīs*. (Photo 2) A more modest form of commemoration typically used for lower ranking renouncers were



(Photo 1) Six-pillared *chatrī* of Bhaṭṭāraka Candrakīrti (s. 186[6?], left) and roughly coeval, four-pillared *chatrī* reused to install *pādukā* of the Kāṣṭhāsaṅgha Nandītatāgaccha Bhaṭṭāraka Yaśakīrti (s. 2034). Candragiri, Ṛṣabhadeva-Keśariyājī. (March 2013)



(Photo 2) Multi-storeyed, square *chatrī* and smaller, round *chatrī* (on the right in the back). Choṭī Nasīyā, Sāgavādā. (January 2014)

(Photo 3, opposite) Frescoes preserved inside the *caraṇa-chatrī* of Paṇḍita Vimanarāma (s. 1887). Nasīyā, Sākhūna. (February 2016)

cabūtarās. These are low, square or octagonal platforms or simple cubical structures with a single *pādukā* exposed in open air. Longer *cabūtarā* tables with multiple *pādukās* are also found. Frescoes with floral and geometric patterns or depictions of animals and humans found inside the dome and on the pillars of a few 19th century CE *chatrīs* were possibly applied more commonly in earlier centuries too. (Photo 3) A few *chatrīs* also feature stuccos depicting musicians and dancers or small bas-reliefs of the commemorated renouncers inside the cupolas. As the inscriptions of *pādukās* and *niṣedhikās* often attest, the memorials were typically erected and consecrated by incumbent *bhaṭṭārakas* who were the successors of the commemorated *bhaṭṭāraka* or gurus of lower-ranking renouncers and *paṇḍitas*.

Pādukās

Again just like today, the type of memorial stone most numerous used in pre-20th century CE Western India is a carved depiction of the feet of the commemorated individual (*pādukā*).⁴ This widespread South Asian iconography refers to the common practice of bowing to and touching the feet of a living guru. The corpus of early modern Digambara memorials from Western India includes few if any specimens of the related carved footprints (*caraṇa*). Most Digambara Jains today in fact use the two terms *pādukā* and *caraṇa* interchangeably, next to the compound *caraṇa-pādukā*. There is much variety in the style and size of *pādukās*, but we can often see an evolution during the course of the early modern period from basic, smaller stones with simple, crude depictions to larger, finely carved and intricately decorated *pādukās*. Slabs with multiple *pādukās* functioning as a combined memorial for several individuals are frequently found. (Photo 4, back) From the second half of the 18th century CE, *pādukās* of fully-initiated renouncers (*bhaṭṭārakas*, *ācāryas*) often feature carvings of water pitcher (*kamaṇḍalu*) and whisk (*picchī*), the typical Digambara ascetics' paraphernalia, a rosary (*mālā*) also appearing regularly. This distinguishes them from *pādukās* of *jinas* which are also very common, and probably serves precisely to indicate to the devotee that the *pādukā* commemorates a non-liberated renouncer rather than a *jina*.

Niṣedhikās

Commemorative pillars (*niṣedhikā*) were popular in 16th and 17th century CE Western India. In the Vāgaḍā region, combined sets of separate *pādukā* and *niṣedhikā* stones were consecrated in the second half of the 18th century CE (Photo 4, front), and a hybrid form integrating both developed in the first half of the 19th century CE (Photo 5). Thereafter the *niṣedhikā* entirely disappeared from Western India, and only *pādukās* were used. Most *niṣedhikās* are quadrangular and range in height from three to five feet. A few specimens are found of up to six, seven or eight foot high, and some of these are flat quarry stones. Occasionally *niṣedhikās* are ornately carved into a temple design. (Photo 5, 6) Most however have a sober, almost stern appearance. The top is usually rounded and the upper section of the stone is left broader. One or more sides of this section are typically embellished with line carvings or bas-reliefs of *jinas* in *padmāsana* (cross-legged) posture, and below these is frequently a carving of the commemorated renouncer. The latter are most often depicted in *khaḍgāsana* (standing) posture, naked in the case of male renouncers, and bearing ascetic paraphernalia.

Kīrti-stambhas

In Western India, half a dozen specimens have been discovered of a specific type of commemorative pillars which I refer to as *kīrti-stambhas*, as some are called by local Jains.⁵ These are round or square pillars of varying size, mostly larger and heavier than common *niṣedhikās* but similarly installed in *chatrīs*. (Photo 6) They are covered on all sides with several dozens of small, generic carvings of naked renouncers in *padmāsana* or *khaḍgāsana* posture similar to those found on *niṣedhikās*. Short inscriptions under each of these figures identify them as the consecutive incumbents of a specific mendicant lineage, giving their names and sometimes their year of consecration to the seat (*paṭṭābhiṣeka*). The lineages recorded on *kīrti-stambhas* typically include both the late medieval and early modern *bhaṭṭārakas* as well as the *ācāryas* which according to these traditions' accounts preceded them in the first millennium CE.



Anthropomorphic depictions

In the 20th century CE, freestanding, often polychrome and almost life-size anthropomorphic images of contemporary Digambara *munis* became popular both at their memorial sites and as temple icons. Such portrait statues were also created of the last two *bhaṭṭārakas* of Western and Central India, Candrabhūṣaṇa (d. 1974 CE) and Yaśakīrti (d. 1967/1978 CE?), at their seats in Sonagiri (Madhya Pradesh) and Pratāpagaṛha respectively. (Photo 7) While these are generic depictions rather than portraits, a number of early modern precedents to such anthropomorphic images can be found. The most numerous are the depictions of commemorated renunciators on *niṣedhikās* and *kīrti-stambhas*. Similar carvings are occasionally also found inside the lintels of *chatrīs*. Of particular note are a few almost freestanding statues of renunciators. An undated black marble representation identified by its inscription as Muni Mahākīrti is found in the Baḍā Mandira in Vidiśā in Madhya Pradesh. A white marble depicting three female renunciators is preserved in a temple in Surat in Gujarat. The naked representation of *bhaṭṭārakas* and other male renunciators should probably not be taken to indicate that they all practiced permanent ritual nudity. More likely, it is an idealised conception, or at most a reflection of how they appeared occasionally, at meal-times or image consecrations.⁶

Cremation and commemoration

Most Digambara memorials are erected at the site of cremation, and thus indicate the towns where the commemorated renunciators died. Some of the sites continue to be used for the cremation of locally deceased itinerant renunciators. Many of the finding spots are referred to as *naṣiyā* (or variations). Although now often surrounded by sprawling suburbs, these sites were once located outside of the historical town centres. Occasionally *bhaṭṭārakas* are found commemorated at two places. In such cases one site probably indicates the renouncer's actual place of death, the secondary shrine possibly erected in a town where he had been particularly popular or active. (Photo 1, 7) Memorial stones of early modern renunciators are regularly found in *mandiras*. Most of these were probably transferred there to protect them or because the *chatrīs* or *cabūtarās* to which they originally belonged were ruined. This distinguishes them from the *pādukās* of famous 20th century CE Digambara *ācāryas* which are found in temples across India and are especially produced for this purpose. Only in the Vāgaḍā region on the Rajasthan and Gujarat borderland in the late 18th and first half of the 19th century CE, memorials were directly installed inside *mandiras* or in *chatrīs* annexed to temples.

Whenever available, hillocks and lakesides were preferred places for the erection of memorials. Near former *bhaṭṭāraka* seats we often find clusters of *chatrīs*, sometimes constituting veritable necropolises. In two square *chatrīs* in the Vāgaḍā region, *niṣedhikās* were gradually added commemorating renunciators of the Vāgaḍāśākhās. The *chatrī* at the Nasīyājī in Naugāmā features thirteen 16th century CE *niṣedhikās*. (Photo 2) That at the Choṭī Nasīyājī in nearby Sāgavāḍā houses 17 *niṣedhikās* from the 16th and 17th century CE. The Ānteḍa Nasīyām (Ānteḍa Chatariyāmṇi) in Ajmer has eleven *chatrīs* (including one repurposed), 18 *cabūtarās*, and one shrine room. (Photo 8) At the time of my visit (February 2013), 23 *pādukās* of renunciators and *paṇḍitas* had been preserved, one from the early 16th century CE, others ranging from the early 18th to the first half of the 20th century CE. All of them seem to have been affiliated to the Śākambharīśākhā Ajamera-paṭṭa. The Vidyānandi Kṣetra in Surat (Gujarat) on the other hand is a site with over eighty *pādukās* commemorating *bhaṭṭārakas* of multiple



(Photo 4) *Pādukā* and *niṣedhikā* of Bhaṭṭāraka Devacandra (s. 1822, front), and double *pādukā* commemorating Bhaṭṭāraka Mahicandra and possibly Bhaṭṭāraka Nemicandra (s. 1881, back). Junā Mandira, Sāgavāḍā. (January 2014)

Balātkāragaṇa and Kāṣṭhāsaṅgha Nandītaṭagaḥccha lineages as well as contemporary Digambara renunciators.

Ritual

We have evidence of ritual veneration of both living and deceased early modern *bhaṭṭārakas*.⁷ Rituals were probably commonly performed at the early modern Digambara memorials for at least some time after the renunciators' demise. Many *pādukās* feature carved outlet channels for the drainage of ablution liquids. *Bhaṭṭāraka pūjā* compositions retrieved from manuscripts at a few *bhaṭṭāraka* seats also explicitly refer to the *pādukās*.⁸ At the Vidyānandi Kṣetra in Surat (Gujarat) and the Balātkāragaṇa Nissāi in Kārañjā (Maharashtra) ritual performance at *bhaṭṭāraka* memorials remains a living tradition, notably on their death anniversary (*pūṇya-tithi*). The specific sculptural form of the *kīrti-stambha* seems to have been developed for the material veneration of an entire mendicant lineage. In the mid-18th century CE Bhaṭṭāraka Vijayakīrti and Ācārya Rājākīrti consciously developed the Ānteḍa



(Photo 5) Memorial of the Balātkāragāṇa Bhaṭṭāraka Yaśakīrti with *niṣedhikā* and *pādukās* on an hourglass-shaped plinth (s. 1887) in a *chatrī* annexed to the Sambhavanātha Mandira, Īḍara. (January 2014)



(Photo 6) *Kīrtistambha* of the Balātkāragāṇa Vāgaḍāśākhā (s. 1571) in a closed *chatrī*. Nasīyāṇi, Naugāmā. (January 2014)

Nasīyāṇi into a necropolis of the full Śākambharīśākhā Ajamera-paṭṭa by erecting memorials of earlier incumbents who do not even seem to have been seated in Ajmer. Memorials of later *bhaṭṭārakas* continued to be erected in a spatial-chronological arrangement over the ridge of the hillock, and devotees may well have experienced and structured their visit to the site as a ritual veneration of the whole lineage.

Relic veneration has been found to be practiced across contemporary Jaina traditions.⁹ Yet it remains a question whether ashes and bone relics collected post cremation were also enshrined under the early modern Digambara memorials. Beyond their possible significance as sites of empowerment, the memorials also expressed and bolstered the prestige of the mendicant lineages, and filled the void left by the renunciators' demise in devotional, ritual, and economic networks of lay and ascetic devotees and sponsors.¹⁰ The living memory of most early modern Digambara renunciators has now long faded, and the legitimacy of the *bhaṭṭāraka* traditions in general is often contested. It is little

surprise therefore that their memorials are today little-visited or abandoned, leaving many *chatrīs* dilapidating, repurposed into small *mandiras*, or cleared for new construction projects. Even when early modern memorials are preserved and still in some ritual usage, there is often little historical understanding of who was originally commemorated.

Late Medieval *ācāryas* and *bhaṭṭārakas*

The oldest Digambara memorials discovered to date in Western India stem from the 11th to 13th century CE. In the Choṭā Mandira in Narāyaṇā a s. 1083¹¹ *pādukā* commemorating an *ācārya* is said to have been retrieved from excavations in recent times. At the Baṛā Mandira in the same town another *pādukā* is found without inscription but with a similar design not found in later centuries, a monolith marble raised on a pedestal with a prominent drainage channel. About a dozen late medieval *niṣedhikās* are found on the hilltop Jūnī Nasīyā in Jhālarāpāṭana, identified specimens commemorating 11th to 13th century CE *ācāryas* and a 13th century



(Photo 7, above) *Chatrī* with anthropomorphic *mūrti* and *pādukā* of the last Kāṣṭhāsāṅgha Nandītaṭagaccha incumbent Bhaṭṭāraka Yaśakīrti (s. 2023). Jain Boarding, Pratāpagaṛha. (February 2014)



(Photo 8, above) *Chatrīs* and octagonal *caraṇa-cabūtarās* (in front of and behind first *chatrī* on the right). Ānteḍa Nasiyām, Ajmer. (February 2013)

(Photo 9, left) Double *chatrī* commemorating Bhaṭṭāraka Kṣemakīrti and Ācārya Viśvabhūṣaṇa (s. 1759). Śāntinātha Mandira, Ashok Nagar, Udaipur. (March 2013)

CE *bhaṭṭāraka*. It is possible that they were originally installed in open air, representing an earlier stage in commemoration practice, before it became common to erect *chatrīs* to house Digambara memorial stones. The history of the medieval Digambara ascetic traditions and their connection to the early modern *bhaṭṭāraka* lineages needs to be studied further. Yet it is clear that the latter in important ways continued rather than replaced the former, the *bhaṭṭāraka* rank introduced in the late medieval period on top of the pre-existing ascetic hierarchy, above that of the *ācārya*.¹²

Early Modern *munis* and *ācāryas*

The *muni* and *ācārya* ranks were hitherto commonly thought to have disappeared at the time of the 'origin' of the *bhaṭṭāraka* 'institution' early in the Sultanate period (1206–1526 CE). It is now clear that *munis* and *ācāryas* flourished well into the Mughal period (1526–1857 CE) as pupils of or otherwise subordinate to the *bhaṭṭārakas*. In Western and Central India, *munis* are attested until the mid-17th century CE, and *ācāryas* until the 18th century CE.¹³ In Rajasthan, memorials have been found of at least half a dozen 15th to 17th century CE *munis* and about a dozen and a half 16th to late 18th century CE *ācāryas*. Memorials of *ācāryas* and *munis* are far outnumbered by those of *bhaṭṭārakas*, but the higher-ranking *bhaṭṭārakas* were probably commemorated more frequently and that too with higher quality and thus longer surviving memorials. Textual attestations of individual *munis* and *ācāryas* are indeed more numerous than their memorials,¹⁴ and these can be taken as more representative of their prevalence in the early modern *bhaṭṭāraka saṅghas*. The corpus of retrieved memorials also helps us better understand the hitherto little-known but frequently used *maṇḍalācārya* title. *Maṇḍalācāryas* are thought to have taken care of parts of the *bhaṭṭārakas*' sphere of influence. But from the 15th to the 18th century CE, several Balātkāragaṇa lineages originated from successions of subordinate *ācāryas* or *maṇḍalācāryas* which at a later point claimed *bhaṭṭāraka*-hood and independence from their parent lineage. While later manuscript sources like *paṭṭāvalīs* (lineage lists) often spuriously ascribe the *bhaṭṭāraka* rank to these earlier incumbents, their memorials attest their actual *ācārya* or *maṇḍalācārya* ranks.

The necropolises of Vāgaḍā offer a good glimpse of the diverse composition of the early modern *bhaṭṭāraka saṅghas*. Among the identified, 16th and 17th century CE *niṣedhikās* in the *chatrī* at the Choṭī Nasīyājī in Sāgavāḍā are those of four incumbents (three *bhaṭṭārakas*, one *maṇḍalācārya*), three *ācāryas*, two *munis*, and two *brahmacārīs* (six memorial stones unidentified). The communal *chatrī* at the Naugāmā Nasīyājī features 16th century CE *niṣedhikās* of four lineage incumbents (three recorded as *ācāryas*, one as a *maṇḍalācārya*), two or probably three further, 'common' *ācāryas*, one *muni*, and three *brahmacārīs* (two memorial stones unidentified). The height of the *niṣedhikās* in Naugāmā corresponds to the relative hierarchic rank of the commemorated renunciators, at about two foot for *brahmacārīs*, three foot for *munis* and common *ācāryas*, and four foot for incumbent *ācāryas* and *maṇḍalācāryas*. At the Śantinātha Mandira in Ashok Nagar, Udaipur, an elegant twin *chatrī* features memorial stones of Bhaṭṭāraka Kṣemakīrti and Ācārya Viśvabhūṣaṇa, consecrated on the same day in the very early 18th century CE (s. 1759) by Kṣemakīrti's successor Bhaṭṭāraka Narendrakīrti. (Photo 9) Here, the relative status of both commemorated renunciators' respective ranks is indicated by both a *niṣedhikā* and a *pādukā* of the *bhaṭṭāraka*, installed under a large dome, versus only a *niṣedhikā* for the *ācārya*, under a smaller cupola.

By the 18th century CE, Digambara communities had

significantly changed from preceding centuries. The *muni* rank had become obsolete and the *bhaṭṭāraka* circles were now constellations of *bhaṭṭārakas*, *ācāryas*, and lay *paṇḍitas*. The overall corpus of the Ajmer necropolis offers a good sample of this later period. The site includes memorials of eleven Śākambharīśākhā Ajamera-paṭṭa incumbents (one early 16th century CE, others early 18th to 20th century CE), five mid-18th century CE *ācāryas* (s. 1782–1821), and eighteen 18th–20th century CE *paṇḍitas* (s. 17[?–]–1992). Hierarchical differences are once more materially expressed, in this case by the use of *chatrīs* for most *bhaṭṭārakas*, versus *cabūtarās* or in one case a small *chatrī* for *ācāryas* and *paṇḍitas*. (Photo 8) At the Pārśvanātha Mandira (aka Nasīyāmji) in Bassī, some thirty kilometres East of Jaipur, stand four *caraṇa-chatrīs* of similar proportions and antiquity. (Photo 10) Two still feature *pādukās*, commemorating the *ācāryas* Kanakakīrti (*pādukā* s. 1750, *chatrī* s. 1781) and Mahīcandra (s. 1828), the other two remain unidentified. An inscription in the site's mandira dated to s. 1750 names Kanakakīrti as a pupil of the Ḍhūṇḍhāḍasākhā Bhaṭṭāraka Narendrakīrti. The memorials' inscriptions however fail to pay such deference to the nearby *bhaṭṭāraka* seat. This might indicate that the Bassī *ācāryas* developed some degree of independence, perhaps not unlike successions of *ācāryas* attested in textual sources which didn't make the transition into full-blown *bhaṭṭāraka* lineages.¹⁵

Female Renouncers

A few mostly 15th and 16th century CE memorials of female renunciators (*āryikā*, *kṣullikā*, *brahmacārīṇī*) have also been found. Most are *niṣedhikās* of rather modest dimensions, although probably only the most popular nuns were commemorated. The particularly large, heavy, and relatively ornate, early 15th century CE memorial of Bāī Āgama Siri at the Pārśvanātha Atīśaya Kṣetra in Bijauliyām (s. 1483) seems to indicate that this nun was particularly influential. Female renunciators' *niṣedhikās* typically feature carvings of both female and male renunciators, the latter probably representing the heads of the mendicant lineages to which the commemorated nuns belonged. Their inscriptions frequently attest further female renunciators in pupillary relations. These are important indications of the flourishing of female renunciation in the early modern period, which often goes unrecorded in the male renouncer dominated traditions. A late 15th century CE (s. 1544) statue preserved in the Digambara Mandira in Gopīpura, Surat (Gujarat) is a unique memorial. It is now venerated as an icon of the goddess Padmāvati, but iconographic elements indicate that it depicts three female renunciators. The inscription identifies the sculpture as a memorial of Kṣullikā Jinamatī and also records the names of two *āryikās*, all affiliated to the local Balātkāragaṇa lineage.¹⁶

Paṇḍitas (18th – 20th century CE)

A considerable number of memorials of lay ritual specialists or scholars (*paṇḍita*) has been found in Western India. Among the memorials at the Ajmer Ānteḍa Nasīyām are six or seven *paṇḍita pādukās* belonging to the 18th century CE and one from the 19th century CE. Two further *pādukā* slabs at the site consecrated in s. 1992 by the last incumbent of the Ajmer seat (Bhaṭṭāraka Harṣakīrti, d. s. 1999) commemorate his two predecessors together with respectively two and eight *paṇḍitas*, probably pupils or associates of theirs. *Pādukās* of mostly 19th century CE *paṇḍitas* are also found at *nasīyās* in the Jaipur region and elsewhere in Rajasthan. (Photo 3, 11) Since only renunciators are deemed worthy of ritual veneration in the Digambara tradition,



(Photo 10) 18th century CE *chattrīs*, two identified as commemorating the *ācāryas* Mahācandra (s. 1828, central in front) and Kanakakīrti (*pādukā* dated to s. 1750, *chattrī* built s. 1781, left in the back). Pārśvanātha Mandira (Nasiyāṃjī), Bassī. (December 2014)

(Photo 11, opposite) Ensemble of *caraṇa-chattrīs* commemorating 19th and early 20th century CE *paṇḍitas*. Digambara Jaina Mandira Nasīyāji, Bundī. (February 2014)

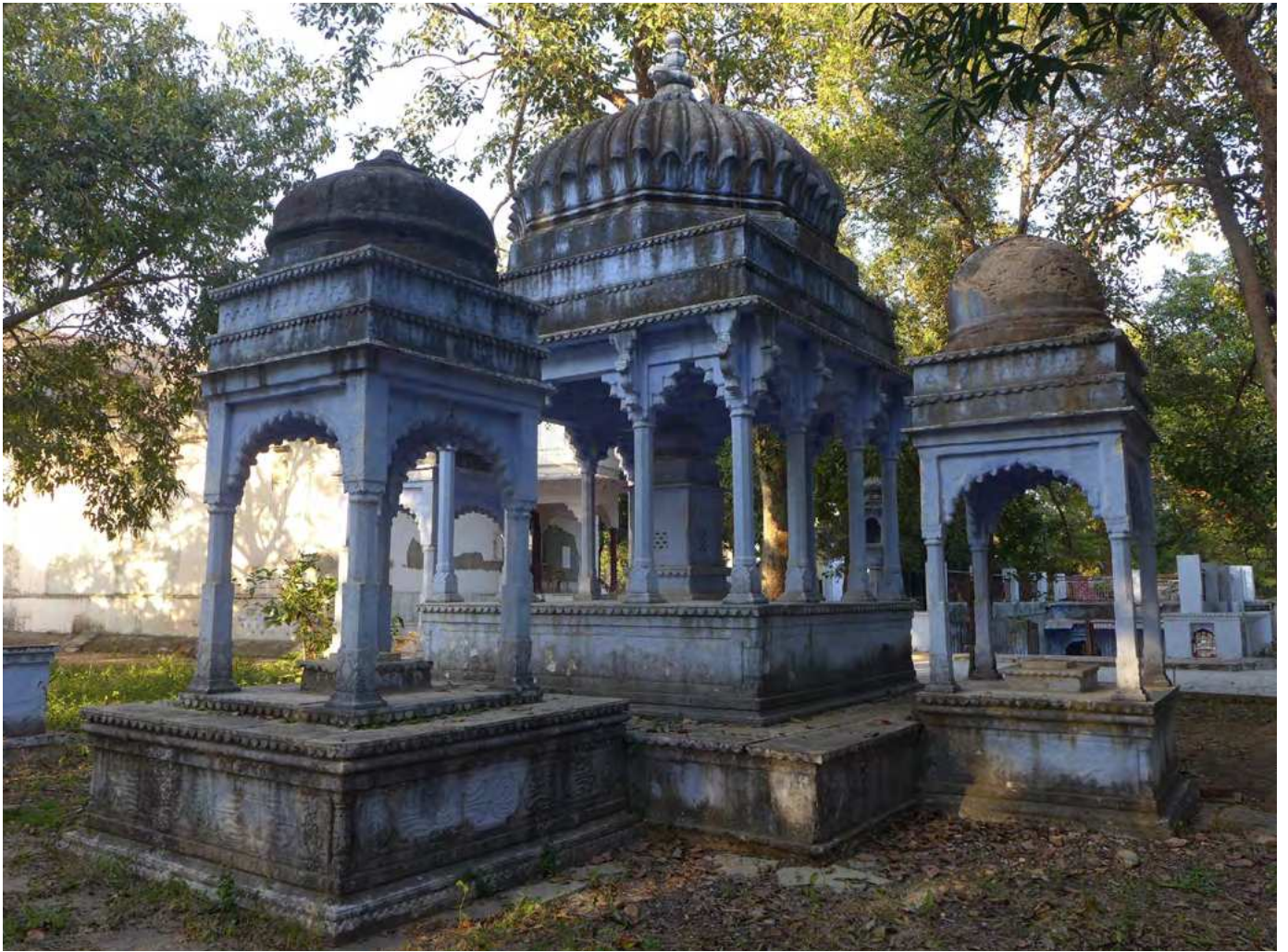
All images courtesy of the author.

the finding of *paṇḍitas*' memorials is somewhat surprising. Some are very modest shrines, but most are typical, average-sized, or even considerably large *chattrīs* raised on high plinths. It is striking that *paṇḍitas*' memorials appeared exactly in the 18th and 19th century CE, when first *munis* and later also *ācāryas* had disappeared. The commemoration of lay *paṇḍitas* seems to have filled a void in devotional practice in the absence of renouncers, just as the *paṇḍitas* themselves presumably took up some of the religious functions in teaching and ritual otherwise also performed by renouncers. In the 20th century CE, as *munis* reappeared in growing numbers and their commemoration was initiated, the status of lay *paṇḍitas* was curbed back and they were no longer commemorated.

19th century CE *munis*

Common perception holds that Digambara *munis* disappeared altogether in the Sultanate period and reappeared only in the early 20th century CE with the so-called '*muni revival*' spearheaded by the three illustrious *ācāryas* Śāntisāgara 'Dakṣiṇa', Śāntisāgara 'Chāṇī', and Ādisāgara. Occasional reports and attestations are found of Digambara *munis* roaming in 19th century CE Northern India. These are usually thought to have been so-called *nirvāṇa*

svāmīs, solitary renouncers from South India who came North to visit pilgrimage shrines. Yet, when puzzled together, the scant information available shows that some also developed considerable activities in Western and Central India. Memorials of two 19th century *munis* have been found in Rajasthan, one at the Pageleji Nasīyā in Sāgavāḍā (Muni Ṛṣabhasena, s. 1905) and one at the Choṭī Nasīyā in Jhālarāpāṭana (Muni Siddhasena, s. 1948). A textual attestation describes Ṛṣabhasena and two further *muni*-associates of his as naked and itinerant renouncers. Siddhasena on the other hand may have been a Terāpanthī with a more sedentary presence in Jhālarāpāṭana.⁴⁷ Meanwhile, the corpus of memorials discovered to date allows to speak of a continuum of Digambara memorials in Western India from the late medieval to the contemporary period. Ācārya Śāntisāgara 'Chāṇī' (1888–1944 CE) for example died in Sāgavāḍā and was commemorated at the Choṭī Nasīyāji, which has served as a Digambara cremation site since at least five centuries and constitutes an ever-growing necropolis. Commemorative practices then form one field in which the contemporary *saṅghas* stand in direct continuity from the early modern mendicant lineages, rather than representing a novelty *ex nihilo*, a return to an imagined golden age, or a revival after a supposedly disruptive Islamic period.



References

- Detige, Tillo. 'Worshipping Bhaṭṭārakas.' *Jaina Studies: Newsletter of the Centre of Jaina Studies* 9 (2014) 27–30.
- Detige, Tillo. 'Sātpātrāya samarpitaṃ: Manuscript Copies and the Early Modern Digambara Saṅgha.' *The Gift of Knowledge: Patterns of Patronage in Jainism*. Eds. Christine Chojnacki & Basile Leclère, 274–370. Bengaluru: Sapna Book House, 2018.
- Detige, Tillo. "'Guṇa kahūṃ śrī guru": Bhaṭṭāraka Gītas and the Early Modern Digambara Jaina Saṅgha.' *Early Modern India: Literature and Images, Texts and Languages*. Eds. Maya Burger & Nadia Cattoni, 271–85. Heidelberg and Berlin: CrossAsia-eBooks, 2019a.
- Detige, Tillo. 'Tataḥ Śrī-Gurus-Tasmai Sūrimantram Dadyāt: "Then the Venerable Guru Ought to Give Him the Sūrimantra": Early Modern Digambara Jaina Bhaṭṭāraka Consecrations,' *Religions* 10/369 (2019b) 1–31.
- Detige, Tillo. 'Digambara Renouncers in Western and Central India, c. 1100–1800.' *Encyclopedia of Jainism*. Eds. John Cort, Paul Dundas & Kristi Wiley, 182–215. Leiden: Brill, 2020.
- Flügel, Peter. 'The Jaina Cult of Relic Stūpas,' *Numen* 57 (2010) 389–504.
- Hegewald, Julia A. B. 'Foot Stones and Footprints (Pādukās): Multivariate Symbols in Jaina Religious Practice in India.' *In the Footsteps of the Masters: Footprints, Feet and Shoes as Objects of Veneration in Asian, Islamic and Mediterranean Art*. Ed. Julia A. B. Hegewald, 357–423. Berlin: EB-Verlag Dr. Brandt, 2020.
- Joharāpurakara, Vidyādhara. *Bhaṭṭāraka Sampradāya*. Sholapur: Jaina Samskriti Samrakshaka Sangha, 1958.

Notes

- 1 Unless when noted differently, all towns referred to are situated in the contemporary state of Rajasthan.
- 2 The Kāṣṭhāsāṅgha Nandītaṭagaccha had less numerous branches in Western India. Memorials of renouncers of this tradition are also retrieved in the region, but not systematically discussed here.
- 3 I introduce different names for the Balātkāragaṇa lineages than those introduced by Joharāpurakara 1958, who termed them the Dillī-Jayapuraśākhā (Dhūṇḍhāḍaśākhā), Nāgauraśākhā (Śākambharīśākhās), Īḍaraśākhā (Bṛhadvāgaḍāśākhā), and Bhānapuraśākhā (Laghuvāgaḍāśākhā). Many of Joharāpurakara's names referred to the location of the seat of the final incumbents but did not accurately represent the lineages' earlier distribution.
- 4 On Jaina pādukās, see most recently Hegewald 2020.
- 5 Similar monuments are also reported from Karnataka (Julia Hegewald, personal communication, 23/11/2020).
- 6 Detige 2020: 200–3.
- 7 Detige 2019a, 2019b.
- 8 Detige 2014.
- 9 Flügel 2010.
- 10 Flügel 2010, esp. 472 ff.
- 11 Like other Western Indian inscriptions, pre-20th century CE Digambara memorials are dated in *vikram saṃvat*, a calendrical system which depending on the month is 56 or 57 years ahead of common era.
- 12 Detige 2019b.
- 13 Detige 2020: 197–9.
- 14 Detige 2018.
- 15 Detige 2020: 198–9.
- 16 Joharāpurakara's (1958) Sūrataśākhā, which I refer to as the Lāṭaśākhā.
- 17 Detige, unpublished research.



PURE SOUL.

The Jaina Spiritual Traditions

PURE SOUL.

The Jaina Spiritual Traditions

Edited by

Peter Flügel, Heleen De Jonckheere, Renate Söhnen-Thieme

With

Nalini Balbir, Piotr Balcerowicz, Nick Barnard, Shivani Bothra, John E. Cort,
Heleen De Jonckheere, Tillo Detige, Peter Flügel, Richard Clinton Fynes,
Dharmchand Jain, Patrick Krüger, Jérôme Petit, Samaṇī Pratibhāprajñā, Ashik Shah,
Priyanka Shah, Kalpana Sheth, Corinne Smith, Renate Söhnen-Thieme,
Eric Daniel Villalobos, J. Clifford Wright

For Paul Dundas



CENTRE OF
JAINA STUDIES

First published in the United
Kingdom in 2023 by
Centre of Jaina Studies
Text © 2023 the individual
writers as stated

Maps:

By Vicki Herring, with Peter Flügel,
Bhavesh Shah, Meena Gandhi,
Kamini Gogri, Smita Jain,
Urmila M. Prabhat, Ashik Shah.

Cover image:

Manoj Sakale
Pure Soul, 2018
Oil on canvas, 122 x 91 cm

All rights reserved. No part of this
publication may be reproduced or
transmitted in any form or by any
means, electronic or mechanical,
including photocopy, recording
or any other information storage
and retrieval system, without prior
permission in writing from the
publisher.

British Library Cataloguing-in- Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book
is available
from the British Library
ISBN: 978-1-3999-4686-5

Designed by Roger Fawcett-Tang,
www.struktur.co.uk

Printed and bound by Calderstone
Printers, Surrey

Contents

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4 | Pure Soul: Conceptions and Representations
Peter Flügel | 96 | Six Jaina Bronzes
Peter Flügel, Patrick Krüger, Priyanka Shah |
| 16 | Jain Scriptures
Nalini Balbir | 104 | Mukhavastrikā: Historical and Symbolic Significance
Samaṇī Pratibhāprajñā |
| 26 | Hidden Treasures of The Jaina Manuscript Libraries in Western India
Kalpana Sheth | 112 | Jīva-Dayā in the Sthānakavasī Tradition
Dharmchand Jain |
| 32 | Jains and the Printed Book
John E. Cort | 118 | Kundakunda, a ‘Collective Author’: Deconstruction of a Myth
Piotr Balcerowicz |
| 40 | The Life and Afterlife of Mahāvīra
Heleen De Jonckheere | 126 | The Visual and Material Culture of the Tāraṇ Svāmī Panth
John E. Cort |
| 46 | Jaina History and the Universal History of The Jainas
Renate Söhnen-Thieme | 134 | Banārasīdās and the Adhyātma Movement
Jérôme Petit |
| 56 | A Digambara Jain Pārśvanātha Figure from Karnataka: Making and Movement of a Jain Icon
Nick Barnard | 138 | The Poet and the Pandit: Ānandghan and Ṭoḍarmal Show the Way to Liberation and Bliss
Richard Clinton Fynes |
| 68 | Uvasaggaharastotra of Bhadrabāhu
J. Clifford Wright | 144 | Śrīmad Rājacandra: ‘The Best Indian of His Times’
Ashik Shah |
| 70 | Digambara Memorials from Western India pre-20th Century CE
Tillo Detige | 152 | The Kāñjī Svāmī Tradition: Adhyātmik Revivalism in the 20th Century
Corinne Smith |
| 80 | The Paraphernalia of the Kharatara Gaccha Mendicants
Shivani Bothra | 162 | Modern Jaina Yoga and Meditation
Samaṇī Pratibhā Prajñā |
| 86 | The Śvetāmbara Mūrtipūjaka Yati Lineages
Eric Daniel Villalobos | 172 | The Trimandiras of the Akrama Vijñāna Mārga
Peter Flügel |