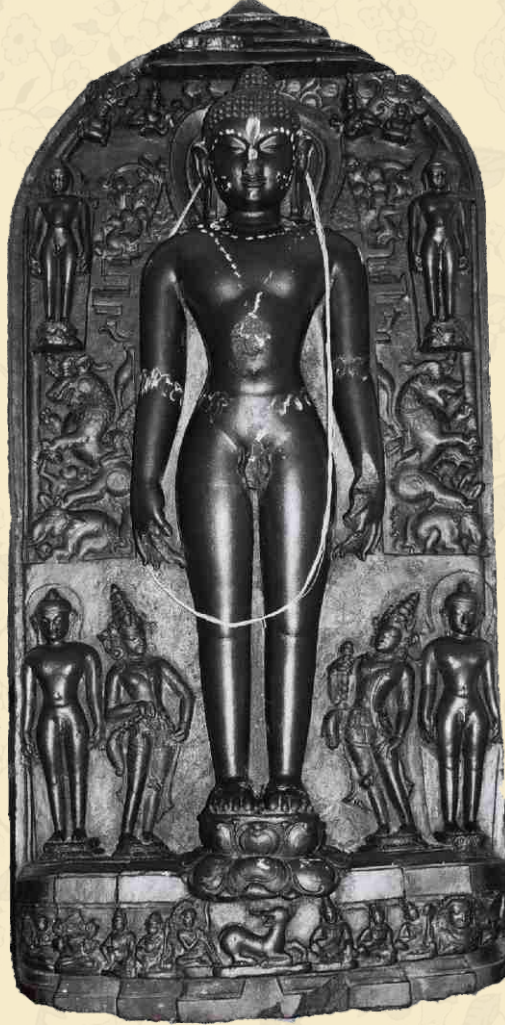


Jainism in West Bengal : An Archaeological Approach



Dr. Shubha Majumder
Superintending Archaeologist
Archaeological Survey of India, Kolkata Circle

प्रकाशक :
श्री भारतवर्षीय दिगम्बर जैन तीर्थ संरक्षिणी महासभा
नन्दीश्वर फ्लोर मिल, कम्पाउण्ड, ऐशबाग, लखनऊ (यू.पी.)

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श्री भारतवर्षीय दिगम्बर जैन तीर्थ संरक्षिणी महासभा द्वारा पश्चिम बंगाल में किये गये कार्यों सचित्र



श्री दिगम्बर जैन मंदिर, बारहमसिया



1008 भगवान श्री शांतिनाथ
श्री दिगम्बर जैन मंदिर, देवली



1008 भगवान श्री पदमप्रभु
श्री दिगम्बर जैन मंदिर, पाकवीरा



बारहमसिया मंदिर की प्रतिमाएँ



श्री दिगम्बर जैन मंदिर, पोलमा



पोलमा मंदिर की प्रतिमाएँ



श्री दिगम्बर जैन मंदिर, भांगरा



भांगरा मंदिर की प्रतिमाएँ



श्री दिगम्बर जैन मंदिर, हरियालीडीह



हरियालीडीह मंदिर की प्रतिमाएँ



श्री दिगम्बर जैन मंदिर, पुन्बा, लोलाडा

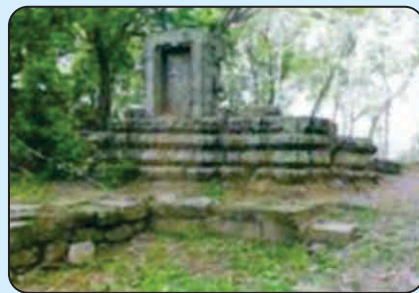


पुन्बा, लोलाडा मंदिर की प्रतिमाएँ

पुरुलिया जिले में प्राचीन दिगम्बर जैन मंदिर



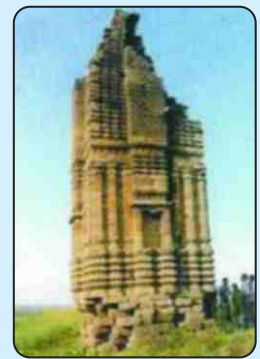
पाकवीरा



बुधपुर



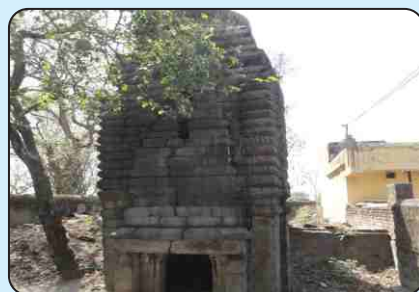
चायसामा



तेलकूपी



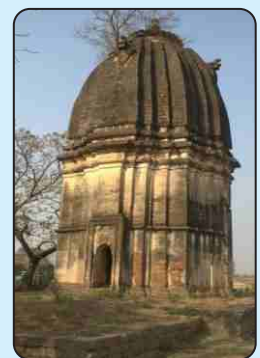
बड़गर



छर्वा



बांदा



धारापट

Jainism in West Bengal : An Archaeological Approach

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प्रकाशक :

श्री भारतवर्षीय दिगम्बर जैन तीर्थ संरक्षिणी महासभा

गजराज गंगवाल
राष्ट्रीय अध्यक्ष

राजकुमार जैन सेठी
राष्ट्रीय महामंत्री
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संयुक्त महामंत्री

बंगाल प्रान्त टीम

निर्मल पुष्पा बिन्दायका
अध्यक्ष प. बंगाल

सुनील कुमार पहाड़िया
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मनीष गंगवाल
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मंत्री प. बंगाल

मनोज कासलीवाल
कोषाध्यक्ष प. बंगाल

दिनेश कुमार गंगवाल
पुरातत्व संयोजक प. बंगाल

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समर्पण...

श्री भारतवर्षीय दिगम्बर जैन महासभा के विगत 40 वर्षों से लगातार अध्यक्ष पद रहे परम सम्मानित श्री निर्मल कुमार जी सेठी का अचानक 27 अप्रैल 2021 को देहावसान हो गया। उनके देहावसान से पूरे जैन जगत को ही नहीं अन्य समाजों को अपार दुःख हुआ। उनका निधन जैन समाज के लिए अपूर्णिय क्षति है जिसकी पूर्ति नहीं की जा सकती।

स्व. श्री निर्मलकुमार जी सेठी

जैन पुरातत्व (Heritage) अनादि काल से है। हम ईसाई धर्म को लगभग 2000 वर्ष, इस्लाम धर्म को 1500 वर्ष, राम का युग 5000 वर्ष, बुद्ध को महावीर के समकालीन आदि मानते हैं, लेकिन जैन धर्म भगवान आदिनाथ से भी पहले का है। जो भारत वर्ष ही नहीं इन्डोनेशिया, श्रीलंका, बर्मा, पाकिस्तान, मिश्र, यूनान, कम्बोडिया आदि देशों तक फैला हुआ था। स्व. श्री निर्मल कुमार जी सेठी ने महासभा के अन्य उद्देश्यों के साथ जैन पुरातत्व का संरक्षण, संवर्द्धन व अवशेषों की खोज आदि मुख्य कार्यों का इस क्षेत्र में प्राथमिकता से काम किया।

इसी प्रकार भारत के प्रत्येक प्रान्त व उनके छोटे छोटे शहरों-गावों में जैन धर्म फैला हुआ था, जिसके अवशेष लगातार आज भी मिल रहे हैं। इसी को ध्यान में रखते हुए बंगाल प्रान्त के जैन हैरिटेज का संयोजन कर उन्हें पुस्तक रूपी माला में पिरोने का प्रयास तीर्थ संरक्षिणी महासभा बंगाल प्रान्त ने किया है। प्रस्तुत पुस्तिका का लेखन व संकलन Dr. Shubha Majumdar, Superintending Archaeologist, Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), Kolkata Circle ने किया है। महासभा उनका हृदय से आभार व्यक्त करती है।

यह पुस्तक स्व. श्री निर्मल कुमार जी सेठी को समर्पित है। जितना कार्य जैन हैरिटेज के संयोजन व सुरक्षित रखने में श्री निर्मल जी सेठी ने किया है, कोई नहीं कर पाया। तीर्थ संरक्षिणी महासभा बंगाल प्रान्त की नई टीम सेठी जी के सपनों को पूरा करने के लिए कृत संकल्प है। पश्चिम बंगाल पुरूलिया, पार्श्वनाथ, पंच पहाड़ के जीर्णोद्धार का कार्य आपकी प्रेरणा से आगे बढ़ पाया है। श्री सेठी जी ने पुरातत्वविदों से सम्पर्क कर उनसे जैन अवशेष व पुरातत्व की खोज करने का निवेदन किया, जिसके बहुत ही सार्थक परिणाम निकलें हैं। उनको पुरस्कार देकर सम्मानित भी किया।

वर्तमान समय में भारत या आसपास के देशों में जैसे कम्बोडिया, श्रीलंका, इण्डोनेशिया, आदि देशों में जहाँ खुदाई के कार्य होते हैं, वहाँ जैन पुरातत्व के ही अवशेष मिलते हैं। जिससे पता लगता है कि जैन धर्म सबसे प्राचीन धर्म है। वर्तमान समय में सबसे महत्वपूर्ण कार्य जैन पुरातत्व का संकलन, संरक्षण व खोज ही सबसे महत्वपूर्ण है। जिसमें स्व. श्रीसेठी साहब एवं महासभा ने अपना सबसे ज्यादा ध्यान इसी कार्य के लिए किया है।

महासभा की नई टीम उनके इस प्रयास को आगे बढ़ायेगी। ये मैं विश्वास दिलाता हूँ।

शुभेच्छु :

राजकुमार सेठी, राष्ट्रीय महामंत्री

श्री भारतवर्षीय दिगम्बर जैन महासभा तीर्थसंरक्षिणी

स्व. श्री निर्मल कुमार जैन सेठी तीर्थ संरक्षिणी महासभा में योगदान

1. अध्यक्ष बने : 3 जनवरी 1981 कोटा (राजस्थान)
2. तीर्थ संरक्षिणी महासभा की स्थापना : 5 फरवरी 1998 श्री महावीर जी (राज.)
3. प्रकाशन : प्रकाशन प्राचीन तीर्थ जीर्णोद्धार पत्रिका वर्ष 1988 से हर माह नियमित रूप से 4000 प्रतियों का प्रकाशन
4. जीर्णोद्धार कार्य में सहयोग : करीब 88 लाख रुपये जीर्णोद्धार/विज्ञापन
5. घोषणा : स्व. माताजी, स्व. भाई एवं स्व. धर्मपत्नी की स्मृति में 25-25 लाख रुपये
6. गुल्लक योजना : 20 हजार गुल्लकों का वितरण
50 हजार गुल्लकों के वितरण का लक्ष्य
7. मंदिर जीर्णोद्धार : 650 मंदिरों का जीर्णोद्धार
जीर्णोद्धार वर्ष 2001 में 125 मंदिरों के जीर्णोद्धार का लक्ष्य
8. म्यूजियम में जैन गैलरी का निर्माण : लखनऊ, गोरखपुर, मथुरा, झांसी में अपने परिवारी जनों की स्मृति में एवं सीरोन मडावरा, मोहन्दा, पानीगांव में म्यूजियम की स्थापना
9. जमीन क्रय : पंचेतपहाड़ के विकास के लिए
10. डिजिटल प्रदर्शनी का निर्माण : स्वयं की राशि से प्रदर्शनी का निर्माण करवाया करीब 20 स्थानों पर किया गया प्रदर्शन
11. जैन चेयर की स्थापना : उत्कल संस्कृति विश्वविद्यालय उड़ीसा में
12. विदेशों में प्राचीन मंदिरों की खोज : इथोपिया में 3 सिद्धशिलाओं एवं श्रीलंका में 3000 वर्ष प्राचीन जैन मंदिरों की खोज
13. विद्वानों के साथ विदेश यात्रा : कंबोडिया, इंडोनेशिया, बांग्लादेश, वियतनाम, ग्रीक, पेरू, ग्वाटेमाला आदि
14. अनुदान दिलाने में सहयोग : भारत सरकार द्वारा उड़ीसा सरकार को संग्रहालय हेतु 90 लाख का अनुदान दिलवाने में सहयोग
15. पुस्तकों का प्रकाशन : सेठी ट्रस्ट की ओर से प्राचीन मंदिरों एवं पुरातत्व सम्बन्धी 10 पुस्तकों का प्रकाशन
16. 1 जनवरी 2021 को संस्था की स्थापना : **निर्ग्रन्थ आर्कियोलॉजिकल सेंटर** नामक संस्था की स्थापना जिसके अंतर्गत 36 में से 17 स्थानों में अपने संयोजक नियुक्त किए गए हैं एवं 5 व्यक्तियों की परामर्शदात्री समिति भी बनाई गयी है।
17. सेमिनार : भारतवर्ष एवं विश्व में 50 से अधिक सेमिनार
18. वेबिनार : मई 2020 से 18 अप्रैल 2021 तक माह के प्रत्येक शनिवार एवं रविवार को रात्रि में विश्व के जैन एवं अजैन जिनमें मुख्यतः पाकिस्तान, बांग्लादेश, अमेरिका, ग्रीक के पुरातत्वविदों एवं इतिहासकारों के साथ वेबिनार।
19. समाधिमरण : 27 अप्रैल 2021 की रात को सभी रिश्तेदारों एवं साथियों के साथ एक वेबिनार करने के पश्चात उनका स्वर्गवास हो गया।



प्रकाशकीय उद्बोधन

राजकुमार सेठी

राष्ट्रीय महामंत्री,

श्री भारतवर्षीय दिगम्बर जैन तीर्थसंरक्षिणी महासभा

बंगाल प्रांत प्राचीन काल से जैन धर्म का मूल स्थान रहा है। भगवान महावीर का समवशरण यहाँ आया था। वर्धमान, मानभूमि, वीरभूमि, 24 परगना आदि स्थानों के नाम भगवान महावीर से ही सम्बन्धित हैं।

श्री भारतवर्षीय दिगम्बर जैन तीर्थ संरक्षिणी महासभा पश्चिम बंगाल के पुरुलिया जिले में मंदिरों का जीर्णोद्धार करने हेतु एवं जिन प्रतिमाओं को विराजमान करने हेतु सन् 1990 से ही कार्यरत है। अभी तक पाकबीरा, भाखड़ा, बारहमसिया, भाष्करडांगा, आडसा, मानबाजार, चाल्का, लखारा में रक्षितपुर, हरियालीडीह, दुसासा आदि 36 मंदिरों का जीर्णोद्धार किया जा चुका है एवं जिनालय बनाकर जिन प्रतिमायें विराजमान हो चुकी हैं। पुरुलिया जिले में 121 से ज्यादा ग्रामों में जैन प्रतिमायें होने का पता चला है। महासभा 80 स्थानों पर प्रतिमाओं को संधान कर चुकी है।

पुरातत्व विभाग के पूर्व राष्ट्रीय निर्देशक श्री गौतम सैन गुप्ता ने मई, 2002 को कोलकाता के कला मंदिर सभागृह में एक सेमीनार में कहा था कि पश्चिम बंगाल में 1000 से ज्यादा जैन धर्म से सम्बन्धित पुरातत्व एवं ऐतिहासिक महत्व के क्षेत्र हैं। आप लोग योजना बनाकर कार्य कीजिए पुरातत्व विभाग आपका पूर्व सहयोग प्रदान करेगा।

1890 में अंग्रेज पुरातत्वविद् सी.जे. बगलर, बंगाल में 100 से ज्यादा स्थानों पर जैन मंदिरों एवं मूर्तियों का पता लगाया था। पाकबीरा तब से बंगाल पुरातत्व विभाग के रिकॉर्ड में है। पुरातत्वविद् अम्बिकाराय चौधरी ने सन् 1940 से 1950 तक इन क्षेत्रों का भ्रमण करके जैन भग्नावशेषों के बारे में काफी विस्तार से लिखा है।

वीरभूमि जिले में भी बहुत स्थानों में जैन मूर्तियों एवं मंदिरों के अवशेष प्राप्त हुए हैं। भगवान महावीर को वीर नाम से भी जाना जाता है, इस नाम से ही इस अन्चल का नाम वीरभूमि पड़ा है।

इस पुस्तक के लेखक डॉ. शुभ मजूमदार पुरातत्वविद्, अधीक्षक Archaeologist Survey of India (ASI) Kolkata Circle ने बंगाल प्रान्त के जैन हैरिटेज की खोज कर डाटा एकत्रित कर इसको पुस्तक के रूप में प्रकाशित करवाने में अद्भुत सहयोग दिया है। हम इनके उपकार को जीवन भर नहीं भूल सकते हैं। यह जैन समाज के हैरिटेज के विख्यात पुरातत्वविद् हैं। लगातार जैन हैरिटेज की खोज में लगे रहते हैं व हमारा एवं जैन धर्म के परोपकार में बहुत सहायक हैं। हम भगवान से प्रार्थना करते हैं कि इनको स्वस्थ जीवन एवं दीर्घायु प्रदान करें। साथ ही महासभा इनका बहुत-बहुत आभारी है। इस पुस्तक के प्रिन्टर श्री बसन्त जैन, सरस्वती प्रिन्टर्स, जयपुर जो कि श्रीभारतवर्षीय दिगम्बर जैन महासभा (श्रुत) के राष्ट्रीय उपाध्यक्ष भी हैं उनका भी धन्यवाद !

Brief Profile of Author

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He is a young promising scholar in the field of Archaeology, Art and Iconography. He had obtained his Master Degree (2006) from University of Calcutta in Archaeology. Then he did Post Graduate Diploma in Archaeology from Institute of Archaeology, Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi and passed in 2009. He has also qualified U.G.C., J.R.F. in 2009. He has completed his Doctoral Research works on Jainism in Ancient Bengal: A Study on its Archaeology, Art and Iconography from the Department of Archaeology, University of Calcutta.

He has been credited for publishing more than 40 research papers on different aspect of art, iconography and archaeology of eastern and central India in National and International journals. He has published one book on 'Jaina Heritage of Chharra' and edited a book 'Pratnadarpan' published by the Anchalik Itihash O Loksanskriti Charcha Kendra. He has actively participated and also conducted excavations and explorations in the different parts of India.

He received Professor Sudhir Ranjan Das Memorial Prize for the best paper entitled 'Rajgir an Epicenter of Jaina Art Tradition in Eastern India: An Observation', presented at the 72nd session of the Indian History Congress, Punjabi University, Patiala, 2011, in the section on Archaeology (v).

In 2015 he received Jaina Purattava Perana Award for the contribution in the field of Jain Art and Archaeology in eastern India from the Shri Bharatvarshiya Digamber Jain (T.S.) Mahasabha, New Delhi and 2018 he also received the Sanaskriti Sanrakshyak Award for the protected and conservation the Jaina Heritage in Eastern from the Shri Bharatvarshiya Digamber Jain (T.S.) Mahasabha, Ranchi Branch. In 2020 he received the prestigious title of Purattva Sanaskriti Sanbardhak from the Shri Bharatvarshiya Digamber Jain (T.S.) Mahasabha, New Delhi and Kolkata.

Introduction of Jaina Antiquities from West Bengal

In the eastern part of the Indian sub-continent, the territory of ancient Bengal is a potential zone for the study of the growth and development of Jainism. Several attempts have been made to study the historicity of Jainism and its impacts and relevance in the Indian society and regional studies on Jainism have also been carried out in several parts of India. A region-based research on Jainism with respect to ancient Bengal is also a desideratum. Some books have been written by historians on Buddhism in ancient Bengal; however, it is very unfortunate that no such interest has been forthcoming with respect to Jainism in Bengal though, the influence of the Jainism in the formation of the Bengali culture was more significant than that of the Buddhism.

The author has attempted to investigate each and every nook and corner of the study area during his field surveys from 2011 to 2016 so as to bring to light archaeological sites/settlements which have some form of Jaina association, be it in the form of detached stray sculptures, ruins of temples or extant architectural remains, etc. As a result, it was possible to get a comprehensive picture about several aspects of Jainism in ancient Bengal vis-a-vis its gradual development and the features of Jaina art and iconography as well as temple architecture.

There was a prevalent idea among scholars that Jaina antiquities of ancient Bengal exist exclusively in the western and north-eastern parts of ancient Bengal (Radha and Varendra regions). However, the present investigations show that, in addition to the abovementioned areas, the Bhagirathi basin, including the alluvial plains and the coastal areas of study area, also has a fair share of Jaina antiquities. A good number of new archaeological sites/settlements in this region have been documented during my research project. New Jaina antiquities have been found in four different archaeological contexts i.e. i). Abandoned extant temples or structural ruins containing Jaina sculptural specimens along with habitational remains; ii). Modern temples containing Jaina sculptural specimens (in amalgamated contexts); iii). Jaina sculptural/architectural fragments either beneath the trees with indistinct contexts or in ancient habitational complexes and iv). Jaina sculptural/architectural remains presently part of the museum collections with unknown provenances or recovered from ponds. A details list of the archaeological sites/settlements of ancient Bengal is given below.

List of the sites/settlements found in four different archaeological contexts :

Sl. No.	Different archaeological contexts	Name of the Sites/Settlements
1.	Abandoned extant temples or structural ruins containing Jaina sculptural specimens along with habitational remains	Purulia district : Pakbirra, Chharra, Deuli, Telkupi, Banda, Kotra (Gajpur), Bhavanipur, Palma, Deulbhira (Haraktore), Lakhara, Nangtir Than, Tatari, Mudidhi, Senera, Chalka, Arsha, Chakolta
		Bankur district : Bahulara, Dharapat, Harnasra, Ambikanagar and Deulbhira, Barkola, Chitgiri and Kendua
		Bardhaman district: Sat Deuliya and Punchra
		West Midnapur district: Jinsar
2.	Modern temples containing Jaina sculptural specimens (in amalgamated contexts).	Purulia district : Laulara, Dhadki, Paruda, Badra, Baramoshya, Bhasardanga, Manbazar, Kurmasol, Mahara, Sonadaha, Sashandihi, Suisa, Surulia, Golamara, Sitalpur, Karcha, Bhangra, Anai jambad, Sakra/Sankra & Nadiha
		Bankura district: Muninagar, Penara, Dwarika Kumbhasthal, Sihar/Shihar, Sonamukhi, Chuyamosne, Radhamohanpur, Pakhanna, Hadal-Narayanpur, Biharinath hill, Jorda, Rudra, Kechanda, Satpatta, and Simlapal.

		Bardhaman District : Gohagram and Sirarai, Masagram, Baladihi/Beladihi and Kudo
		West Midnapur District : Marandighi, Kesiari, Uttarraybar, Manoharpur and Ayodhyabar.
		South Twenty Four Parganas District : Karanjali-Katabeniya.
		Birbhum District : Mallarpur.
		Hooghly District : Triveni.
3.	Jaina sculptural/architectural fragments either beneath the trees with indistinct contexts or in ancient habitational complexes	Purulia District : Paruldiha, Dakakendu, Bandoan, Ulda, Herbona, Basudevpur, Bansgarh, Sasandihi, Sirgi, Rajnoagarh, Khelaicandirthan, Podlara, Hatuyara, Hatmura, Pabrapahari, Bauridi, Ladhurka, Lalpur, Tadgram, Raksatpur, Sanka, Badra and Mangaldiha.
		Bankura District : Saldha, Kotulpur, Bhagalpur, Madanpur/Jaynagar, Hat Asuria, Patashpur, Tiluri, Balarampur, Namo Kechanda /Choto, Kechanda, Jiorda, Sulgi, Paresnath, Chiada/Navachiada, Ramnagar, Layek Para, Ghotra, Lakshmisagar and Alkadhara.
		Bardhaman District: Barakar, Domahania/Domani, Kaitara
		Murshidabad District : Hukrahat
		Paschim Midnapur District : Parihati, Hirapari, Tetulia Bhumjan, Lacchipur-Nepura Kiyarchand and Sat Deula.
		Birbhum District : Ghurisha, Baragram, Dwarka and Labra.
4.	Jaina sculptural/architectural remains presently part of the museum collections with unknown provenances or recovered from ponds	Jaina images of Kushtarh, Pakbirra, Chharra, Palma is presently displayed in the Haripada Sahitya Mandir, Purulia, Vangiya Sahitya Parisad Museum, Vishnupur, Bankura, West Bengal State Archaeological Museum, Behala, Kolkata and Patna Museum, Bihar. An image of Tirthankara Mahavira, which originally hailed from Palma, is presently displayed in the Museum of Indian Art, Berlin. reported an image of Tirthankara Rsabhanatha from Gadh Jaypur of Purulia district. This image is at present displayed in the Asutosh Museum of Indian Art, Calcutta University. Ramkrishna Mission of Purulia district also displayed some Jaina images which were collected from the different area of the present district, though the concerned labels dose not bear the actual locations. An image of Tirthankara Parsvanath was recovered from Deulbhira, Bankura district and presently in the collection of Indian Museum, Kolkata.

In the present study area, The Jaina Tirthankaras images were found both in the kayotsarga as well as dhyanasana posture. These Tirthankaras images are found in the following varieties:

1. Single depiction of Tirthankara image
2. Dvi-tirthika image
3. Panca-tirthika image
4. Caubisi image
5. Tirthankara with Planetary deities
 - Planetary deities depicted on the pedestal
 - Planetary deities depicted on both sides of the Tirthankaras
 - Planetary deities depicted on both the back-slab and the pedestal
6. Tirthankara with Dikpalas
 - Dikpalas depicted on both sides of the Tirthankaras
 - Dikpalas depicted on top of the back-slab
7. Tirthankara with miniature Tirthankaras and Planetary deities/Dikpalas or both.

It is apparent from the collected database that the most popular Tirthankaras are Rsabhanatha (Plate. 1) Parsvanatha (Plate. 2) and Mahavira (Plate. 3), however, the images of Candraprava (Plate. 4) and Santinatha (Plate. 5) are also found in good numbers. The present study also brought to notice the sculptures of Ajitanatha (Plate. 6), Sambhavanatha, Padmaprabhu, Suvidhinatha, Vasupujya (Plate. 7), Vimalanatha, Dharmanatha, Mallinatha and Neminatha (Plate. 8) from the present study area.



Plate.1. Tirthankara Rsabhanatha image from Pakbirra, Purulia District.



Plate.2. Tirthankara Parsvanatha image from Ani-Jambad, Purulia District.



Plate.3. Tirthankara Mahaviraimage from Tatari, Purulia District.



Plate.4. Tirthankara Candraprava image from Lakhra, Purulia District.



Plate.5. Tirthankara Santinatha image from Dhadki, Purulia District.



Plate.6. Tirthankara Ajitanatha image from Khatra, Bankura District.



Plate.7. Tirthankara Vasupujya, presently displayed in the Ramkrishna Mission, Purulia District.



Plate.8. Tirthankara Neminatha image from Barmesya, Purulia District.

Before this study only one Dvi-Tirthika type of Jaina Tirthankaras image was reported from the area, however, this study helps to find out five more sculptures of this varieties (Plate. 9). In this group the image from the museum of Ramkrishna Mission of Purulia town is quite unique and it bears the depiction of eight planetary deities in the pedestal.



Plate.10. Tirthankara Rsabhanatha image from Karcha, Purulia District.

Depiction of planetary deities in the Jaina Tirthankara images is a common feature in the Jaina images of present study area is concerned and earlier reported shows that the eight or nine planetary deities mainly depicted on both the side of the main Tirthankara image or in the pedestal of the Tirthankara. However, the recent study shows that there is another variation regarding the representation of the planetary deities in the Jaina Tirthankara images. The Rsabhanatha image from Karcha decorated with nine planetary deities but among these nine the first two deities (Surya and Soma) are depicted on the both side of Tirthankara and the remaining seven images are depicted in the pedestal of the Tirthankara (Plate. 10).

In some Tirthankara images the position and posture of the planetary deities are also differ. The newly reported image of Tirthankara of Rsabhanatha from Pakbirra shows the eight planetary deities arranged in two horizontal rows of two each on either side of the Jina on the edge of the projected part of the back-slab (Plate. 11). This type of placement of Joytiska-devas is really unique and unusual in Jaina images of the present study area are concerned. These on the dexter side appear to be Surya, Mangal, Brhaspati and Sani; while those on the sinistert side are Soma, Budha, Sukra and Rahu. All grahas are seated on visvapadmas and show individual iconographic features. Just above these planetary deities the projected part of the back-slab of the image reveals two miniature Tirthankaras on the each side of the mulanayaka. Four miniature Tirthankaras are standing in kayotsarga posture with their respective lanchanas depicted on their lotus seats.

It is also mentioned here that not only the Tirthankara images but also images of Yakshi Ambika, the Yakshi of twenty second Tirthankara Neminatha was very important and popular in this entire region and more than 10 images of Yakshi Ambika (Plate. 12 & 13) were reported as well as documented from the different parts of ancient Bengal. In the present study area Yaksa and Yaksini figures are



Plate.9. Dvi-Tirthika type of Jaina Tirthankara image from Dwarka, Birbhum District.



Plate.11. Tirthankara Rsabhanatha image from Pakbirra, Purulia District.



Plate.12. Yakshi Ambika image from Hatmura, Purulia District



Plate.13. Yakshi Ambika image from Suisa, Purulia District.



Plate.14. Tirthankara Rsabhanatha image alongwith Yaksa and Yaksini figures from Sitalpur, Purulia District.

not found engraved along with the mula-nayaka, while in other parts of the country this tradition was quite popular. During the present survey it was noticed that in only two cases Yaksa and Yaksini figures are engraved on the pedestal of the Tirthankara images, i.e. the Rsabhanatha image from Sitalpur (Plate. 14) and Punchra.

In case of Rsabhanatha image of Sat Deulia in the Bardhaman district some unusual depiction of Yaksa and Yaksini was noticed. The pedestal of the Rsabhanatha image is very important (Plate. 15). Just below the two devotees a male figure is depicted standing in abhanga posture. He has a seven hooded snake canopy over his head and holds an umbrella for protecting the lord with his two hands. This is probably the image of Dharanendra, Yaksa of twenty third Tirthankara Parsvanatha. Left side of the pedestal a female figure is carved. The image is identifying as the figure of Ambika, Yaksi of twenty second Tirthankara Neminatha. She is standing in abhanga posture on double-petalled lotus pedestal. This figure is also badly damaged. She is holding a frolicking little child very realistically rendered (who is her younger son Prabhankara according to Jaina tradition) with her left hand. In her right arm she possibly holds the branch of a mango tree, unfortunately, this is broken now. A male attendant (who is her elder son Subhankara according to Jaina tradition) stands in cross legged posture to her right side. The goddess wears a diaphanous sari fastened by an ornamented girdle with an elaborate centre piece and profuse jewellery. Above the goddess is a sprawling mango tree. Representation of these two figures (Dharanendra & Ambika) in the pedestal of the Rsabhanatha image is very much unusual and obviously unparallel with the other Jaina images of West Bengal as well as other parts of eastern India are concerned. Like the other Tirthankara images Rsabhanatha has Yaksa and Yaksi known as Gomukha and Cakresvari. However, instead of Yaksa Gomukha and Yaksi Cakresvari here Yaksa Dharanendra and Yaksi Ambika is present. These depictions show that Yaksa Dharanendra Yaksi Ambika had a special position of veneration as well as Tirthankara Neminatha and Tirthankara Parsvanatha are also very much popular.

The depiction of devotees in namaskaramudra is commonly found in Jaina images of the present study area. However, in two cases both from the site of Pakbirra, eight devotees or donors are carved in this posture in the pedestal of the Jaina images. This iconographic feature may indicate that in some cases all the family members were jointly involved in the donation of Jaina images, i.e. a 'family donation' (Plate. 16). The characteristics of the site lead us to postulate that perhaps the Jaina establishment at Pakbirra and the area in and around had developed in to a well-known pilgrimage centre during the early medieval period.



Plate.17. Details of the pedestal of Tirthankara Mallinatha image from Ramkrishna Mission, Purulia District.



Plate.15. Tirthankara Rsabhanatha image associated with Yaksa Dharanendra & Yaksi Ambika from Sat Deulia, Bardhaman District.



Plate.16. Broken image of Tirthankara Rsabhanatha from Pakbirra, Purulia District.

Another interesting aspect related to the Jaina images is the depiction of acaryas. In two cases Jaina acaryas are depicted: in the Tirthankara Mallinatha image from the Ramkrishna Mission (Plate.17), Purulia and the Candraprava image from Tiluri. Depictions of acaryas and monks indicate that in and around these localities the Jaina monastic system had developed and Digambara Jainism had strongly penetrated the local level of society.

Different types of Jaina caumukhas have been documented from the study area, and the caumukha from South 24-Parganas district, West Bengal is unparalleled. This caumukha depicts four Tirthankaras on the four sides of this miniature deul: Rsabhanatha, Neminatha, Parsvanatha and one unidentified Tirthankara (Plate. 18). All the Tirthankaras are depicted standing in kayatosarga posture except Neminatha; he is seated in dhyana-mudra on a lotus seat. Below his lotus seat a female figure is depicted. This image is identified as the image of Ambika, the Yaksini of the twenty-second Tirthankara Neminatha. Another important iconographic feature of the specimen is the representation of planetary deities. The image of Rsabhanatha is flanked by representations of the planetary deities. The eight planetary deities are arranged in two rows of four each on both sides of Rsabhanatha on the pilasters.

Some inscribed Jaina sculptures have been documented and the features of the said inscriptions are in corrupt Sanskrit language, engraved on the pedestal. Interestingly, the inscriptions are characterized by the use of a localized variety of the Gaudi script, which is highly cursive and at times even aberrant. It is likely that the artists who carved the images were entrusted with the task of engraving the epigraph as well, resulting in the use of the essentially cursive version of the script—not the normalized uniform version used by the specially employed karanas (scribes). All the inscriptions record the names of donors, some of them precisely designated as danapati. For example, the image of Tirthankara Parsvanatha from Tumba mentions the name of the 'danapati', i.e. danapati Sanadeva. Contrary to the usual practice, there are instances where the term danapati is suffixed to the name instead of being prefixed. Thus, the ca. 11th- to 12th-century image of Tirthankara Neminatha from Baramoshya reads vejña-danapati, meaning '[This is the donation of the] munificent man Vejña'. Names of lay donors are also found to form such dedicatory inscriptions. On the whole, the names appearing on these images clearly reflect an overarching non-Sanskritic affiliation of the donors, explicitly implying the nature of the local patronage.

The extensive exploration and also the details data analysis also suggest the theory that the Jaina sculptural remains found from different parts of the Radha region of Bengal were products created by the fusion of the art idioms of neighboring areas of the Chhotanagpur plateau region and were laid in an essentially local matrix from which came out this distinct school of a regional tradition and among this art tradition there are some micro level variations also. As a result of these micro level art traditions, the distinct centre of art in the Radha region strengthen its popularity over the so called classical tradition art style in the other parts of eastern Indian is concerned. The regional traditions were guided by powerful local ateliers which were not driven necessarily by the ideas of the plastic art exhibited in the mainstream 'Pala-Sena' idiom of expression. The modeling appears to be softened by the artists in a way that result into, in the sculptural productions of the Radha region, great strength and vigor. The artisans of western Bengal executed their aesthetic skills guided by powerful local ateliers.

The present discourse exhibits the series of discoveries; extensive field work and appropriate data analysis during the course of study helped us to postulate that during the ninth-tenth century onwards Jainism reached its zenith in the plateau region of ancient Bengal as well as the adjoining area. On the other hand Jainism also flourished in the North Bengal area. The eastern fringe area of Chhotanagpur area i.e. Purulia, Bankura, Western part of Bardhaman and Pashim Midnapur remained the nuclei, and the coastal area and the north Bengal act as periphery area in connection with the popularity of Jainism during the early medieval period onwards.



Plate.18. Miniature Caumukha depicting the image of Rsabhanatha along with planetary deities from T. B. S. Museum, South Bishnupur, South 24-Parganas District.

Unpublished Tirthankara Rsabhanatha Sculptures from Pakbirra, Purulia District of West Bengal

The present article is an outcome of an extensive exploration carried out in the different parts of the Purulia district of West Bengal (Majumder 2015; 2014: 1-32, 2016: 236-41; Ray, Chattopadhyay & Majumder 2014-15: 205-36) and during this course of exploration the author has documented the remarkable collection of Jaina sculptural remain of Pakbirra. While doing so, a good number of new Jaina sculptural remains have been documented and in the following pages I have been try to discuss the iconic details of some of these newly documented Jaina sculptural remains from this site.



Plate.1 General view of the Temples of Pakbirra, Purulia district of West Bengal

The site Pakbirra (23°10' N. 86°41' E.) with its rich archaeological relics associated with Jaina ideology (Plate.1) is situated in the Pancha Police Station, about 56 kilometers south-east of Purulia town and is bordered by the district of Bankura on its eastern side. This fair-sized village can be approached, among other alternative routes, by the Purulia-Hura metal road to Bankura more and from there towards Pancha again by motorable road. A sinuous kutchra path which bifurcates from the metal road only 1.5 kilometer west Pancha town leads to the village Pakbirra.

This is a well known archaeological site reported site and the huge sculptural remains of the site are also documented properly. However, during the recent visit of the site author have documented good number of Jaina images which are not earlier reported. Among these newly documented Jaina images six images are identified as the image of Tirthankara Rsabhanatha. These newly documented Rsabhanatha images are iconographically interesting and some of them bear unique iconographic features. Before discussing the details iconic features of the newly documented images of Tirthankara of Rsabhanatha it is necessary to briefly discuss about the potentiality of this site as well as the earlier researches regarding the sculptural wealth of this site.

Periodical visits by the British administrators at the site from the middle half of the nineteenth century have unveiled its prosperous cultural heritage. At the same time, their reports also inform about the gradual deterioration of the site as well as its cultural paraphernalia. The earliest description of the site is provided by Lieutenant R.C. Beavan who in a letter dated 11th March, 1865 addressed to the Asiatic Society of Bengal, reported the antiquarian remains of Pakbirra. He found the remains of several temples, three of which were then standing, albeit in a very dilapidated condition. Two of these were constructed of stone, and one of brick, all three were about 25 feet in height. In a small shed, close to the temples, he noticed a colossal naked male figure, of which he gave a fairly detailed description, and four other “separate figures of apparently the same person, only much smaller”. He also found “the model of a small temple” having a standing figure on each side, and “a few other fragments of stone figures scattered about, chiefly of small size”. The whole area, according to Beavan, could not occupy “more than a couple of acres of ground” and he searched in vain for the traces of any inscriptions or writing of any kind which

might give a clue to the date of these buildings, but could find none". He found a "good-sized tank" in the vicinity and "solitary temples, all in a ruinous condition" in the neighbouring jungle area (Beavan 1865: 66-69). In 1877 the place found its mention in W.W Hunter's report, though it was based on the description, given by Beavan (Hunter 1877: 298-304).

Beglar's report, published in 1878 was based on his tour of this region during 1872-73. It provided the most authentic archaeological record of the site. He has left us a graphic account of the site. In his report, Beglar recorded the existence of a total of twenty one temples of which thirteen were of stone and the remaining were brick-built, most of them being in ruins. He also refers to the numerous Jaina sculptures which are collected within a long shed. According to him, the principal object of attention here is a colossal naked figure, with the lotus as symbol on the pedestal. In his words the temples of Pakbirra:

Out of the 21 temples, which Beglar (1878: 193-4) saw as well as mentioned, at present there are only three extant temples and all of them have been renovated.

"A large brick temple, the only one standing, of brick; faces east, and has its doorway of the usual overlapping type, and without the stone still cutting up its height into a doorway proper and an illuminating window;.....there is no interior roof to the cell, the pyramidal hollow of the tower being open to the sanctum; there is no object of worship inside.

To the north of this stands a line of four stone temples, three still standing, one broken; these are of the usual single cell-pattern, and the doorway is not cut into two portions; these then, as well as the brick one just noticed, were single-cell temple, but at some subsequent period mandapas were added to them;.....all these temples face north.

North of this is another, but irregular, line of temples, five in number; of these, two are of stone and three are of brick, the latter all ruined; of the stone ones, one is standing.

North of is another line of four temples, three of stone and one of brick, all in ruins

Due east of the brick temple, which has been noticed as still standing, are two mounds, evidently the remains of two other brick temples. To the south of this line of temples is another line of three stone temples, all in ruins".

Regarding the decoration as well as other aspects of these temples he stated that :

"The ornamentation of the stone temples is confined to plain mouldings in the lower part; the façade is quite plain, but entire, showing that they were originally intended for single-cell temples without mandapas in front.....temples all stood on a large stone-paved platform.....There are some tanks close to the temples; one, a large one, had stone ghats and revetments once, now in ruins.....The material of all the stone temples noticed is a moderately fine sandstone, carefully cut and set without cement; the workmanship is plain, but good; the pillars, that were afterwards added to support the roofs of the mahamandapa, are plain, with square ends and octagonal shafts".

He also excavated 'a mound of ruins' and it yielded 'five Buddhist sculptures of late age'. Besides, he also documented numerous Jaina sculptures and a few specimens of votive Chaitya which were then placed under a shed. He noted that "It occupies the site of a large temple of which the foundations still exist" (Beglar 1878: 193).

Beglar's report is quite relevant in understand the actual scenario of the site as well as the ruins. He seems to have been totally confused between Buddhist and Jaina sculptures, in so far as no Buddhist sculptures have been found at Pakbirra. The 'votive chaitya' of his report is clearly a miniature Jaina caurmukha shrine (pratimasarvatobhadrika) and the image containing male and female figures under a tree are none other than those of Jaina tutelary couple (Adimithuna Murti). Beside these, Beglar's report is of immense value in reconstructing the total history of the site.

In 1887, the Public Works Department published a 'revised list of monuments' wherein the relics of Pakbirra found its due place. However, in spite of elucidating the relevance of the site, no precautionary measures were taken to protect its cultural heritage. The above statement is certainly proved by the report of T. Bloch. He visited the site in 1903 and documented the fragments of four stone and one brick temples. He wrote that 'especially the brick temple has suffered very badly during the last thirty years, and only a small tottering fragment of its spire is still standing' (Bloch 1903: 14). However, the credit of identifying a few sculptures at Pakbirra correctly must go to him, which were earlier identified as Buddhist sculptures by Beglar. Bloch opined that these sculptures are ascribable to that of the Jaina pantheon.

Subsequently, visits by Adris Banerji in 1942 led to the documentation of a few sculptural specimens but no definite information about the site is available in his report (Banerji 1942: 43-47). There is no doubt that the condition of the site further worsened and this is quite clear from McCutcheon's report of 1961. He clearly stated the ruinous condition of the site. In his words "Today only three temples are still standing, all of them in a badly ruined condition, having lost most of their facing stones....the large brick temple, which was still standing in his (Beglar's) day.... is now a mere mound" (McCutcheon 1961: 38).

In order to conserve the three standing triratha single-celled temples of the site, an effort was made by the Directorate of Archaeology, Government of West Bengal during the field seasons of 1976-79. Accordingly, the temples were repaired and reconstructed by the authority. In 1982, the site was surveyed by Dilip K. Chakrabarti. He wrote:

"two stone temples (each about 6m high) are still standing but otherwise the site is much dilapidated and even the ruins mentioned by the early authors are no longer traceable.....The site now may be said to be under the general protection of the people who more or less keep an eye on the loose sculptures the bulk of which has been transferred to a pucca shed and a mud hut. Some images are lying outside." (Chakrabarti 1987: 353).

In 1986 a detailed study on the iconography of the remaining forty eight sculptural specimens of the site along with a few fragmented pieces of architectural members/ indistinct objects, ascribable to the Jaina pantheon was made by Bhattacharya, Mitra and Bhowmick. Their report also included an elaborative description of the art style as evidenced from the sculptural specimens. (Bhattacharyya et al, 1986)

Therefore, the database available in form of reports (as discussed here) by several authorities and scholars clearly suggests the gradual deterioration of the site as well as its heritage and also signifies the inattentive roles played by the former to conserve the same.

Iconographic Details of the Newly Documented Tirthankara Rsabhanatha Images :

The newly documented Jaina images of Tirthankara of Rsabhanatha are iconographically important. Among these six images one is Pancatirthika type, one is Pancatirthika along with Planetary deities type and remaining four are Caubisi type.

A. Pancatirthika type of Tirthankara Rsabhanatha image :

This is a very small and recently found image of Tirthankara of Rsabhanatha from the temple mound at Pakbirra (Plate.2). The image of Tirthankara is made of quartzite schist and measure 36 cm x 25 cm x 5 cm. Jina standing in kayotsarga posture on a double-petalled lotus placed on a pancaratha pedestal. The mulanayaka wears a jata-mukuta with curls falling down the sides of the head and over the shoulders. From the circular sirascakra with plain edges adorning the Jina's head issue two flowering



Plate.2 Pancatirthika type of Tirthankara Rsabhanatha image

branches with two tiny rosettes above, surmounted by a chatra flanked by two garland-bearing vidyadharas. The usual male cauri-bearers on individual lotus-pedestals flank the Jina. At the sides of the back-slab are miniature figures of four Tirthankaras, two on either side. The bull lanchana is clearly discernible in the pancaratha pedestal.

B. Pancatirthika along with Planetary deities type of Tirthankara Rsabhanatha image :

This is really newly type of Tirthankara of Rsabhanatha image and it measures 66 x 40 x 6 cm (Plate.3). The figure of the Jina is carved out on a rectangular back-slab with projected side frames. On the edge of the projected part of the back-slab are eight planetary deities arranged in two horizontal rows of two each on either side of the Jina. This type of placement of Joytiska-devas is really unique and unusual in Jaina images of the present study area are concerned. These on the dexter side appear to be Surya, Mangal, Brhaspati and Sani; while those on the sinistert side are Soma, Budha, Sukra and Rahu. All grahas are seated on visvapadmas and show individual iconographic features. Surya, the Sun god, holds two lotuses in his two hands and the remaining six planetary deities holds a water pot in their left hand and right hand is in varada mudra. The remaining one Rahu appears as a large, bearded face without lower portion of body holding a crescent in his hands. Just above these planetary deities the projected part of the back-slab of the image reveals two miniature Tirthankaras on the each side of the mulanayaka. Four miniature Tirthankaras are standing in kayotsarga posture with their respective lanchanas depicted on their lotus seats. The mulanayaka is in the usual kayotsarga posture on a double-petalled lotus-pedestal placed on a triratha pedestal. The bull lanchana of the Tirthankara is neatly carved in the central projection of the pedestal, while two crouching lions occupy the adjoining rathas. Jina is attended by two very small male cauri-bearers wearing lower garments and different ornaments. They stand in abhanga posture on pedestals and their left hands are in katyavalambita posture while the right hands hold fly-whisks. The mulanayaka obviously devoid of any worldly attire, has elongated ear-lobes, and wears an elegant jatajuta with kesa-vallari falling down the sides of the head and over the shoulders. Significantly, the modelling of the Jina is so stiff that it does not depict the fingers touching the thighs. The hands of the Jina simply hang down. A simple sirascakra adorns the head of the saviour. Above the sirascakra is the depiction of a tri-linear chatra flanked by two vidyadharas holding long garlands besides the divine hands playing on the drum and cymbals.



Plate.3 Pancatirthika along with Planetary deities type of Tirthankara Rsabhanatha image

C. Caubisi type of Tirthankara Rsabhanatha images :

In this group four image are newly documented. Among the four images one image is presently kept in the temple no II at the site (Plate.4). The image measures 126 x 62 x 16 cm and is made of chlorite stone. In this image the mulanayaka stands in kayotsarga posture on a double-petalled lotus placed on a triratha pedestal. The body of mulanayaka shows his svelte form with the arms hanging down vertically along the torso while the finger tips touch the thighs on either side. The Jina is flanked on both sides by stout male cauri-bearers standing on pedestals. Their left hands are in katyavalambita posture while the right hands hold a fly-whisk. The pedestal of the image is of considerable interest. A stylized lotus creeper with scroll leaves and buds occupies the centre of the pedestal below which there is the decorated bull. The bull is flanked by a male and a female devotee kneeling in namaskaramudra and facing the lanchana. Two crouching lions facing opposite directions are depicted on either end of the pedestal. The Jina has elongated ear-lobes and



Plate.4 Caubisi type of Tirthankara
Rsabhanatha image



Plate.5 Caubisi type of Tirthankara
Rsabhanatha image



Plate.6 Caubisi type of Tirthankara
Rsabhanatha image



Plate.7 Caubisi type of Tirthankara
Rsabhanatha image

wears an elegant jatajuta with kesa-vallari falling down the sides of the head and over the shoulders. The elaborate ovoidal sirascakra is embellished with rows of beads and leafy edges. Above it is a tri-linear chatra, flanked by vidyadharas hovering in the conventional representation of clouds. The Jina figure is flanked by pillar like structural appendages surmounted by triangular entities. On the edges of the back-slab, on a projected frame, are miniature figures of twenty-four Tirthankaras arranged in six horizontal rows of two each on either side of the mulanayaka. Like the principal image, they also stand in kayotsarga posture on a double-petalled lotus and their respective lanchanas are carved at the centre of their lotus thrones.

The temporary sculptural shed of the site contain five Rsabhanatha image of this type and the most beautiful one is measures 90 x 45 x 14 cm (Plate.5). The Jina stands in kayotsarga posture on a full blown lotus placed on a saptaratha pedestal and wearing a tall jata-mukuta. In the centre of the pedestal the bull, the lanchana of the Jina, is depicting. The other objects in this pedestal are two pair of devotees in anjalimudra, crouching lions and offering in ratnapatras. The Jina is flanked on both sides by stout male

cauri-bearers. The cauri-bearers wear deeply incised loin cloth and elaborate jewellery. They stand on same pedestals and their left hands are in ka yavalambita posture and the right hands hold a fly-whisk. The back throne of the image consists of posts decorated with mouldings and criss-cross scratched pilasters, supporting a horizontal cross-bar with lightly incised square rhizomes at its ends, above which there are triangular fleurons. The Jina has an ovalod sirascakra behind his head and above the sirascakra and just below the top border of the back-slab is a centrally placed tri-linear chatra flanked by two vidyadharas holding long garlands and a pair of disembodied hands playing on drums and cymbals. The back-slab is relieved with miniature figures of twenty four Tirthankaras in kayotsarga posture arranged in six vertical rows-consisting of three Jinas each on the upper three rows and one each on the remaining three-on either side of the mulanayaka.



Plate.8 Planetary deities type of Tirthankara Rsabhanatha image

The next one is also a beautiful image and measures 109 x 44 x 16 cm (Plate.6). The Jina is in kayotsarga posture, stands on a lotus placed on a pancaratha pedestal which has a bull in the centre flanked by devotees in anjalimudra. On the interior-facets of the pedestal, on either side, is a figure of crouching lion; while the exterior ones has further figures of devotees in anjali. The Saviour is nude, the hair dressed in a tall jatajuta with curls falling down the sides of the head and over the shoulders. On either side are male cauri-bearers wearing short loin cloth and elegant jewellery. In the edge of the back-slab miniature figures of twenty-four Tirthankaras are arranged in four vertical rows of three each on either side of the mulanayaka. Like the principal image, they are also stand on a lotus pedestal and their respective lanchanas are carved at the centre of their thrones.

A less sophisticated Rsabhanatha image of this variety is also housed in the shed. The image (Plate.7) is badly damaged (100 x 48 x 10 cm.) and made of quartzite schist stone. Iconographically this image is very much similar with the earlier image. The usual parikara elements are present including two disembodied hands playing on musical instruments above the vidyadhara couples holding long garlands. The position of the musical instruments, i.e., the drum and the cymbals is altered in this specimen. The pancaratha pedestal of this image is quite interesting. At the centre of this pedestal the bull is present and both the sides of this bull are decorated with floral decorations. The exterior ends of the pedestal are decorated with four devotees in anjalimudra at both the sides.

Except these six images of Rsabhanatha a completely damaged specimen of Rsabhanatha (21 x 68 x 18 cm) sculpture (Plate.8) is also documented from this site and the existence specimen only exhibits the feet of the Jina. In this image the central projection of the pancaratha pedestal has the figure of a bull, lanchana of the Tirthankara flanked by crouching lion. The extreme ratha of the pedestal is decorated with four devotees in anjalimudra at both the sides. The remaining back-slab of the image also exhibits the presence of six planetary deities among the eight. These on the dexter side appear to be Surya, Mangal, Brhaspati and Sani; while those on the sinistert side only Sukra and Rahu are visible. All grahas are seated on visvapadmas and show individual iconographic features.

Observations :

The present study has attempted to discuss about the iconographic details of newly documented Jaina images from Pakbirra, a well known archaeological site of West Bengal. The above database

highlighted that the site Pakbirra is really an important site with rich cultural wealth in form of abandoned Jaina sculptural remains and the temple architecture. However, it is very unfortunate that these rich cultural heritages of the area with such socio-religious significances are now at the edge of decay. From the British period onwards several attempts have been taken by the authorities to conserve its identity with no substantial results. Let's have a look on the degree of deterioration, from which the site of Pakbirra has gone through. It is quite clear from the above database that number temples of Pakbirra, recorded by Beglar reduced to only three temples within hundred and thirty years. Intriguingly, in 1987 Bhattacharyya, Mitra and Bhowmick have documented forty eight sculptural specimens whereas the site now contains only thirty to thirty five sculptural specimens and architectural members. It clearly hints towards the rapid degree of decay of the cultural heritage of the site. There is no doubt that every visits of the authorities (since the time of Beavan) at the site were meant for undertaking some preservation/conservation measures. In spite of that, the steady process of dissolution could not be prevented. Without denigrating the authorities who were on the charge of this heritage management activity, it is my duty to highlight certain issues.

According to the local villagers whenever they dug this mound they unearthed complete or fragmented Jaina sculptural remains. However, till today this mound is not excavated and any type of protection is not taken to save this huge archaeological ruins. These plenty number of archaeological ruins are open to local villagers and the smugglers. Therefore it is my plea to the authority/authorities for taking necessary steps in order to protect the remaining heritage of the site and its vicinity.

In connection with the above discussed newly documented Jaina images, all of them are on stylistic and iconographic grounds may be assigned to the period between the eleventh and the thirteenth centuries CE. These images exhibit some new iconographic elements. Among them the arrangements of miniature Jaina Tirthankara images as well as the placement of planetary deities in the back-slab of the main image are really unusual. In most of the cases devotees or donors are depicted in the pedestal of the above discussed images which is also not frequently engraved in the Jaina images of this site as well as the other sites of this region are concerned. In two cases eight devotees or donors are carved in anjalimudra in the pedestal of the Jaina images and these features are really interesting. This feature indicates that some cases all the family members were jointly involved to donate some Jaina images i.e. 'Family Donation' and the site lead us to postulate that perhaps the Jaina establishment at Pakbirra had grown in to a well known pilgrimage centre during the early medieval period. This depiction also indicates that Jainism was strongly penetrated in the local label of the radha region of Bengal.

The site deserves proper scientific clearances to unearth the rich cultural heritage of the site and the details documentation of Jaina antiquarian remains is necessary to record the remaining heritage of the site. The successful implementation of such working strategies will protect the further decay of this site as well as established this site as one of the prominent Jaina heritage centre in eastern Indian context.

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Jaina Sculptural Heritage of Balarampur (Purulia district, West Bengal) : Recent Explorations

Balarampur (23° 05-48" N to 86° 13-05" E.) is one of the important blocks of the Purulia district, located about 32 km southwest from the district headquarters and 60 km north east from Jamshedpur. The area essentially forms an extension of the Chhotanagpur Plateau region, parceled out from the erstwhile Manbhum district and characterized by a hilly western part and an open upland eastern part (Chakrabarti 1993: 116). This region is hardly visible in epigraphic and textual sources. However, from the ancient times, the region formed one of the potential resource-bearing regions containing minerals, metals and forest products etc. Human groups involved in the procurement networks between the plateau and the plain played an important role for the expansion of religious settlements in this tract. Amongst these groups, the Jaina sects appear to have predominated, as indicated by the available archaeological evidence from the region, primarily in the form of regular occurrences of sculptural material. It seems that by the tenth century CE, the region became a vibrant zone inhabited by Jaina communities. Archaeological vestiges of the region include abandoned temple complexes, architectural members and sculptural remains. Among these records, the Jaina sculptural remains are abundant and their occurrences substantiate the fact that the region abounds in Jaina heritage and it was a thriving Jaina centre of the early medieval period. On the other hand, Brahmanism took a back seat from this region, though this religious ideology was also flourishing in the region, as evidences discussed below seem to indicate.

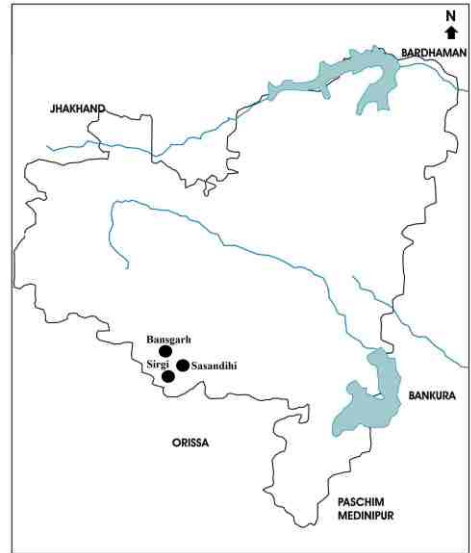


Plate.1 District map of Purulia showing the sites

The present paper is based on a recent exploration when we were able to document a number of sculptural remains from the Balarampur Block of the Purulia district (Plate.1). Among the sculptural remains most of the specimens are associated with the Jainism, besides one damaged Visnu image. Thus, the present paper is an attempt to explore the sculptural heritage of the eastern fringe areas of the Chhotanagpur Plateau, by presenting a case study on newly discovered sculptural remains from the archaeological sites of the Balarampur region. The present study mainly promises to highlight the following issues: 1) to briefly discuss the iconographic details of the newly documented sculptural remains from the region under study; 2) to discuss about the archaeological potentiality of the newly identified archaeological sites/settlements; 3) to trace the lost Jaina settlements and their remnants in this region and trace their association with the other contemporary archaeological sites/settlements of region, having connection with Jaina ideology, if any and 4) to search for logical explanations behind the presence of Brhmanical sculptural material in an otherwise Jaina milieu.

Archaeological sites and sculptural remains :

A. Bansgarh: The site is the headquarters of this Block and is a large village situated about 1 km southeast of Balarampur town, along the Barabazar-Balarampur road. The southern section of the present village stands over the ruins of an earlier settlement. In this locality there is a large tank, which is presumably ancient. On the left bank of this tank, a low structural mound scattered with brickbats is clearly visible. The nature of the mound indicates that this might have been a temple site. However, during our

recent survey in this village we have documented some sculptural specimens from two separate localities. The image of Tirthankara Rsabhanatha rests under a Neem tree, behind the house of Haripada Mohanti. The other Tirthankara image, along with an image of Visnu, is presently kept in the Durga temple of the village. Both the cases these images are worshiped as a Brahmanical deities. According to the local villagers, some fragmented as well as complete Jaina images were also kept in the Siva temple near to the Durga temple. However, during the renovation of the temple these images were displaced and presently non-traceable.

1. The Tirthankara Rsabhanatha (Plate.2) image from Bansgarh is partially weathered and measures 100x52x16 cm. This image is made of chlorite stone. The Jina is in kayotsarga posture and stands on a full blown lotus placed on a pancaratha pedestal. The mulanayaka, devoid of any worldly attire, has elongated earlobes and wears an elegant jatajuta with kesa-vallari falling down the sides of the head and over the shoulders. The elaborate ovoidal sirascakra is embellished with beads and flame-tongued border devices. A beautiful lotus is depicted on either side of the sirascakra. The top of the back slab is crowned with a tri-liner chatra, each smaller than one below. The tri-liner chatra is flanked by the divine hands playing on drums and cymbals. The garland bearers are also neatly depicted just below the divine hands playing musical instruments. The Tirthankara is attended by the usual two fly-whisk bearers. They wear deeply incised loin cloths and elaborate jewellery and stand in dvi-bhanga pose. They



Plate.2 Tirthankara Rsabhanatha from Bansgarh

- hold a flywhisk in their right hands and their left hands are in ka yavalambita posture. The noteworthy features of this image are the three-tiered almost conical head-gear of the male cauri-bearers and their figures are flanked by pillar like structural appendages surmounted by triangular fleurons, which are not commonly observed in case of cauri-bearers. At the sides of the back-slab and on a projected frame, miniature figures of twenty-four Tirthankaras are arranged in four horizontal rows of three each on either side of the mulanayaka. The centre of the pancaratha pedestal of the image is decorated with the bull, flanked by the kneeling devotees in anjalimudra in both the sides. At both ends of the pedestal a crouching lion is depicted.

2. Tirthankara Candraprabha (Plate.3) image of Bansgarh is presently kept in the Durga temple of this village. The image is an example of good quality of craftsmanship and measures 47 cm x 25 cm x 10 cm. In this image the mulanayaka stands in kayotsarga posture on a double-petalled lotus placed on a triratha pedestal. The centre of the pedestal is adorned with the lanchana of Candraprabha i.e., the crescent moon which is flanked by a male and a female devotee kneeling in namaskaramudra. Both the corners of this pedestal are decorated with two crouching. This is a pancatirthika type of image. The edge of the back-slab is relieved with miniature figures of four Jainas in kayotsarga posture, two in either side of the mulanayaka. The important thing of this image is except the mulanayaka the artist also depict the Tirthankara Candraprabha as one of the four miniature Jaina present in



Plate.3 Tirthankara Candraprabha from Bansgarh

the lower left side of the main image. The other miniatures Tirthankara are Rsabhanatha, Santinatha and Ajitanatha. Their respective lanchana is carved on the small pedestal placed below them. The facial portion of the mulanayaka is partially defaced. The Jaina has elongated ear-lobes and his hair is arranged in schematic curls with a prominent usnisa. An ovoidal sirascakra with leafed edges adorns the head of the Saviour. Above the sirascakra is a damaged tri-linear chatra flanked by disembodied hands playing on musical instruments and two vidyadharas holding long garlands. The back of the throne consists of posts decorated with mouldings and criss-cross scratched pilasters, supporting a horizontal cross-bar with lightly incised square rhizomes at its ends, above which there are triangular foliated plaques. The deity is flanked by two attendants who are sparsely clad and elegantly jewelled. Their left hands are in katyavalambita posture and the right hands hold fly-whisks.

B. Sasandihi : This is a small tribal oriented village located on the left side of the Balarampur -Purulia railway tract and only 2 km north of Balarampur railway station. In the outskirts of this village, there is place of worship locally known as Buro Thakur Tala and the main image under worship is the image of Tirthankara Rsabhanatha. In this case also the Jaina image worshiped as Brahmanical deity.

1. The image of Tirthankara Rsabhanatha (Plate.4) exhibits a high quality of craftsmanship, though the faces of the mulanayaka and the cauri-bearers are badly damaged. The image is measures 100 x 46 x 15 cm. In this image the Jaina is in kayotsarga and samapadasthanaka postures and stands on a full blown lotus placed on a pancaratha pedestal. The depictions of the elongated ear-lobes, jatajuta and the kesa-vallari are quite prominent of the mulanayaka. The ovoidal prabha is embellished with beads and flame-tongued border devices and has a flowering twig on its either side. An elliptical sirascakra with leafed edge adorns the head of the Saviour. On the edges of the back-slab, on a projected frame, miniature figures of twenty-four Tirthankaras are arranged in four horizontal rows of three each on either side of the mulanayaka. Like the principal image, they also stand in kayotsarga posture on a plain pedestal and their respective lanchanas are carved at the centre of their thrones. Just below these twenty-four Tirthankaras nine planetary deities are depicts on both the sides of the mulanayaka. Those on the dexter appear to be Mangala, Budha, Sukra and Sani, while those on sinister are, Surya, Soma, Brhaspati, Rahu and Ketu. The bull, lanchana of the Jina is carved at the centre of the panc-aratha pedestal and flanked by two devotees in anjalimudra. Both the ends of the pedestal there is the depiction of a crouching lion.



Plate.4 Tirthankara Rsabhanatha from Sasandihi

C. Sirgi : About 3km west of Sasandihi there is another important archaeological site known as Sirgi. At the centre of the site, known as Devasthan or Gram-Devatar Sthan, is scattered with the fragmentary pieces of sculptural specimens and architectural members, most of which are assignable to Jaina religious ideology. Among these sculptural remains we documented a Jaina astapadatirtha along with a caumukha.

1. Astapadatirtha (Plate.5 A) is one of the unique varieties of Jaina sculpture ever found from West Bengal. Till today only four astapadatirthas have been reported from the West Bengal. The chlorite

stone stele (astapadatirtha) is curvilinear at the top being 55 cm in height and 25 cm in breadth. The patta contains 108 miniature figures of Jaina Tirthankaras in kayotsarga posture arranged in seven terraces, besides a seated central figurine of Rsabhanatha. The figure of the principal deity is placed just below the first row of miniature Tirthankaras of the patta along the breadth of the second and third ledges. Here the weathered figure of Rsabhanatha is shown seated in dhyanasana posture on a full blown lotus pedestal and is adorned by a jatamukuta. Below his lotus seat is shown his lanchana, the bull. Each of the seven terraces is bordered by a band in relief. The number of Tirthankaras in each register as well as their dimension varies. The lowest register of this patta is beneath the soil; as a result of this it is very difficult to study the pedestal portion of this patta properly. The details numbers of Tirthankaras in each terraces is given below:



Plate.5 A & B Astapada tirtha and caumukha from Sirgi

No. of ledge	No. of Tirthanankaras
1	12
2	12 (6+6)
3	12 (6+6)
4	18
5	18
6	18
7	18

The present patta possesses enough resemblances to four other specimens i.e., documented from Sat Deuliya in the Burdwan district (with 148 miniature figures of Jaina Tirthankaras) (Dasgupta 1973: 130-32), from Pakbirra in the district of Purulia (with 360 miniature figures of Jaina Tirthankaras) (Bhattacharyya, Mitra & Bhowmick 1986: 149-150), from Khatra region (Sub Divisional Office of Khatra) in the district of Bankura (with 123/ 124 miniature figures of Jaina Tirthankaras) (Chattopadhyay, Acharya & Majumder 2010:87) and from Badra in the district of Purulia (with 360 miniature figures of Jaina Tirthankaras) (Majumder 2014: 8-9). The specimen from Sat Deuliya has been identified as an early representation of astapadatirtha by P.C Dasgupta.

2. The specimen of chaumukha or chaturmukha shows a miniature shrine of Orissan rekha deul style. Chaumukha is a miniature shrine-like object representing the Tirthankaras in each of the four faces. It is a very popular votive object among the Jainas. Chaumukhas are in fact an essential accompaniment of Jaina monastic establishments and are variously known as chaumukha/ chaumukhi or chaturmukha or sarvatobhadra pratima.

The present chaumukha (Plate.5 B) is a superb artistic specimen and it measures 46 x 20 cm. It has a tri ratha plan. The four cardinal sides have images of the Tirthankaras Rsabhanatha, Parsvanatha and Santinatha and Mahavira. The Tirthankaras stand in kayotsarga posture on a small lotus pedestal under

trefoil arches and are flanked by attendants on both sides. The lotus pedestal of the Tirthankaras consists of their respective lanchhana. The gandi has three divisions. The shikhara is decorated with horizontal bands rising in receding steps and the central portion is carved with khura-shaped mouldings. The top of the shrine is decorated by an amalakashila and was most probably surmounted by perhaps a kalasa which is now lost.

In the foregoing pages we have analyzed our data to achieve a clearer picture of archaeological sites and their sculptural remains. It is quite clear from the above data that these evidences, ascribable to the Jaina pantheon, are well connected with the growth of Jainism and the spread of Jaina settlements, rituals and their relationship with the sculptural art of the said region. It is quite obvious that such concentration of Jaina heritage is not restricted to these particular sites. There are some other sites/settlements associated with Jaina ideology in an around the Balarampur block region likes Palma, Ulda, Bandoan, Dakakendu, Chakolta, Sonadaha, Basudevpur, Deuli, Suisa and etc. It is also worth mentioning here that during our survey in this area we documented some Brahmanical sculptural specimens, mainly Visnu images. The presence of these Visnu images including the present one indicates that though Jainism was very much popular in the area, Vaisnavism also simultaneously marked its presence in the religious life of the people of the region. The presence of astapadatirtha and a caumukha from Sirgi lead us to postulate that during the early medieval period this region had grown into one of the important Jaina pilgrim centers in this region like the other sites (Majumder 2015: 33). The Visnu image from the present study area is also very unique and this typical form is not very popular in this district as well as other parts of West Bengal. The Visnu image discussed herein represent some distinctive peculiarities which are conspicuously absent in the Visnu sculptures found from in other parts of West Bengal. The supple and pliable body delineated with consummate skill of the sculptors of the Pala school of art are lacking in these sculptures, thereby forming a distinct tradition.

Sculptures briefly described and discussed above are on stylistic and iconographic grounds may be assigned to the period between the eleventh and the thirteenth centuries CE. These, including the other stupendous sculptural remains from this district as well as other parts of the radha region of Bengal, were products created by the fusion of the art idioms of neighboring areas of the Chhotanagpur plateau region and were laid in an essentially local matrix from which came out this distinct school of a regional tradition. This regional tradition was guided by powerful local ateliers which were not driven necessarily by the ideas of the plastic art exhibited in the mainstream 'Pala-Sena' idiom of expression. The modeling appears to be softened by the artists in a way that result into, in the sculptural productions of the radha region, great strength and vigour. The artists/sculptors of this region might not have been aware about the excellence of the 'Pala-Sena' art form, but they became perfectionists in their own way.

The work thus shows, in the form of a case study, that firstly that the western sectors of West Bengal deserve more careful archaeological investigation in order of understanding the nature and pattern of distribution of early medieval sites and of locating the regional cultural and artistic identities; secondly, it indicates that such micro-regional case studies are expected to throw welcome light on the nature of linkages witnessed by the different religious and ideological orders within a given local tradition.

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Jaina Antiquities from Bauridi: An Iconographic Observation

During the course of explorations in this district authore came across a large number of archaeological sites yielding old habitation remains as well as sculptural and architectural fragments (Majumder 2015; Ray, S, R. K. Chattopadhyay & S. Majumder, 2014-15: 205-36 and Majumder 2017). Most of the sites are associated with Jaina ideologies which underwent socio-religious transformation under the influence of the Brahmanical mode of appreciation. In the present paper author try to discuss the archaeological contexts and iconic details of some Jaina sculptural specimens from Bauridi. This site is archaeologically very potential and documented sculptural remains along with architectural remains. Most of the earlier works while investigating individual sculptural specimens, a temple or group of temples, have often ignored not only the archaeological context of their findings but also comparative stylistic study with reference to other contemporary Jaina remains found at other sites. Often, while reporting the Jaina images from this district, they have placed them within the early medieval/medieval time bracket without suggesting the stages of stylistic development.

Sites and their Archaeological Assemblages :



Plate.1 Jaina icons from Bauridi



Plate.2 Low structural mound of Bauridi, from Bauridi

Bauridi : The present village, Bauridi is a large village and situated under the jurisdiction of the Hura Police Station and is about 3 to 4 km from the Ladhurka temple complex, which is another important site in this region and also discuss in the present paper (Majumder 2017). In a recently constructed Siva temple opposite a Primary School of this village we recorded five Jaina icons, of which four are Tirthankara icons and the fifth one is an image of Ambika (Plate.1). It is evident that the temple has been constructed on a low structural mound (Plate.2) which has the scattered ruins of a remarkable ancient temple. The local villagers claim that they frequently find fragmentary Jaina sculptural and architectural remains from different parts of this mound. We also recorded two Siva lingas from the eastern part of this mound. The temple site itself is locally known as Bhairavathan and this village was earlier known as Haralia-dih.

Details of Sculptures :

1. The image of Tirthankara Candraprabha is damaged and only the lower portion (below the waist) of the image is extant (Plate.3). It reveals the Jina standing in stiff kayotsarga posture on a double-petalled lotus seat placed on pancaratha pedestal. A stylized lotus creeper with scrolled leaves and buds occupies the centre of the pedestal. The centre lower projected portions of the pedestal contain the crescent moon, identifying the cinha of the Jina and the remaining portion decorated with

geometrical motifs. Stylized representations of crouching lions occupies the both the side of decorated lotus creeper. A male and a female devotee kneeling in namaskara mudra along with ratna – patras heaped with offering are placed on the remaining portions of the pedestal. The Jina is flanked on both sides by stout male cauri-bearers. Unfortunately, the left side cauri-bearer is completely damaged and the face of the right side cauri-bearer is mutilated. The cauri-bearer wear deeply incised loin cloth and elaborate jewellery. They stand on lotus pedestals and their left hands are in katyavalambita posture and the right hands hold a fly-whisk. This is a caubisi type of image. However, the edges of the back stele, on a projected frame, is relieved with twelve – figures of miniature Tirthankaras arranged in three vertical rows of two each on either side of the mulanayaka. Like the principal image, they also stand in kayotsarga posture on a lotus pedestal and their respective lanchanas are carved at the centre of their thrones. They have a plain oval shaped halo. On the basis of their respective lanchanas the twelve – figures of miniature Tirthankaras are identifiable. Right side of the mulanayaka the Tirthankaras are Vimalanatha, Anantanatha, Kunthanatha, Aranatha, Naminatha and Neminatha (top to bottom). On the left side the Tirthankaras are Dharmanatha, Santinatha, Mallinatha, Munisuvrata, Parsvanatha and Mahavira. The existing portion of the present image shows that the mulanayaka bears a svelte figure and the carving of the image is very sophisticated. The arms of the Jina hang down vertically along the stiff torso and the finger tips touch the thigh on either side.



Plate.3 Image of Tirthankara Candraprabha, from Bauridi

2. Among the three images of Rsabhanatha, comparatively well preserved specimen is made of chlorite stone and measures 88 cm x 47 cm x 15 cm (Plate.4). Visually, it is quite schematic and rigid and the plastic tendencies are minimal. The Jina is standing in kayotsarga posture on a double-petalled lotus placed on a pancaratha pedestal. The bull lanchana of the mulanayaka, is neatly carved on the centre of the pedestal and placed between two crouching lions. A male and a female devotee in namaskara mudra (folded hands) occupies the both the end of the pedestal. The upper portion of the back stele of the image is completely lost and the face of the Tirthankara is slightly mutilated. The mulanayaka obviously devoid of any worldly attire, has elongated ear-lobes, and most probably wears an elegant jatajuta. The kesa-vallari of the Jian is falling down the sides of the head and over the shoulders. An almost circular sirascakra with leafed edges adorns the head of the saviour. The Jina is flanked on both sides by stout male partially damaged cauri-bearers. They wear deeply incised loin cloths and elaborate jewellery and both of them have plain, small oval shaped halos. Obviously, the modulation of surfaces apparent from the drapery and jewellery are restricted to these parikara elements. These cauri-bearers stand in dvi-bhanga pose and holding a fly-whisk in their right hands and left hands are in katyavalambita posture. The back throne of the image consists of posts



Plate.4 Image of Tirthankara Rsabhanatha, from Bauridi

decorated with mouldings and criss-cross scratched pilasters, supporting a horizontal cross-bar with lightly incised square rhizomes at its ends, above which there are triangular foliated plaques. On the projected part of the back stele there are eight planets (Joytiska-devas) arranged in a vertical row of four on either side of the Jina. Unfortunately, only six planetary deities with bad stage of preservation presently exist. These on the dexter side appear to be Mangal, Brhaspati and Sani; while those on sinister side are Budha, Sukra and Rahu. The image of Surya and Soma are completely lost here. All these figures are seated on high visvapadmas (except Rahu) and show individual iconographic features. The figures of the planetary deities are not possible to study with minute iconic details due to their defaced condition except the Sani, Sukra and Rahu. Sani (Saturn) is clearly distinguished by his peculiar sitting pose and the staff with a roundish top. On the left side Sukra is depicted just above the Rahu. In this image the defaced planetary deity Sukra seated in samparyankasana and his right hand is damaged and left hand is resting over his thigh and holding kamandalu. According to the Jaina conical texts Sukra is the ruler of the south- Eastern region and teacher of Demons. None of the Jaina texts refer to the terrific form of un-auspicious planetary deity Rahu who has only been referred to as ruler of south-Western. In the present sculpture the bust portion of the Rahu with his robust like head is visible and his hands are in the tarpana mudra same as in the Brahmanical Navagraha sculptures. In the present image the organization of space evident from the entire composition is remarkable as well as static. Elaborations in the back-slab are kept to a minimum.

3. The second image of Rsabhanatha (Plate.5) is measures 86 cm x 60 cm x 18 cm and the head of the mulanayaka along with the upper part of almost rectangular stele is completely missing. The Jina stands on a lotus placed on a pancaratha pedestal having a bull flanked by stylized representations of crouching lions in the central part. The right side corner of the pedestal is occupied by the kneeling donor couple while the other side decorated with a ratna-patra heaped with offerings. Though the head of the image is missing however, some hair locks of the Jina is visible. He is attended by two stiff and robust looking cauri-bearers, profusely bejeweled, with their left hands in katyavalambita posture and the right hands holding camaras. They are wearing short almost transparent lower garments and simple ornaments including armlets, wristlets and ekavali. The Jina figure is flanked by pillar like structural appendages surmounted by triangular entities. This is a caubisi type of image. On the edge of the back-slab, on a projected frame, are miniature figures of twenty-four Tirthankaras (presently only twenty exist) arranged in six vertical rows of two each on the either side of the mulanayaka. Like the principle image they also stand in kayotsarga posture with their respective lanchanas carved below each on a small lotus throne.
4. The third image of Rsabhanatha (Plate.6) is very much similar with the earlier image. This is also a damage specimen; only the lower portion (below the abdomen) of the image exists, which is measuring 88 cm x 68 cm x 19 cm. The remaining portion of the edge of the back – slab is relieved with twelve-figures of miniature Jinas arranged in three vertical rows of two each on either side. Like the principle image they also stand in kayotsarga posture with their respective lanchanas carved



Plate.5 Image of Tirthankara Rsabhanatha, from Bauridi

below each on a small lotus throne. The surviving portion of the body of mulanayaka shows his natural body and the arms of the Jina hang down vertically along the torso and the finger tips touch the thigh on either side. In this image the mulanayaka stands in kayotsarga posture on a on a double-petalled lotus placed on a pancaratha pedestal. The Jina is flanked on both sides by stout male cauri-bearers stands on double-petalled lotus placed on same pedestal. They wear deeply incised loin cloths and elaborate jewellery. Obviously, the modulation of surfaces apparent from the drapery and jewellery are restricted to these parikara elements. These cauri-bearers stand on lotus pedestals and their left hands are in katyavalambita posture and the right hands hold a fly-whisk. The pedestal of the image is of considerable iconographic interest. A stylized lotus creeper with scroll leaves and buds occupies the centre of the pedestal below, under which there is a decorated bull, the identifying cinha of the Jina. The bull is flanked by a male and a female devotee kneeling in namaskara mudra. Two lions crouching in opposite direction occupies the both the end of the pedestal.



Plate.6 Image of Tirthankara Rsabhanatha, from Bauridi

5. Like the other images of this collection the image of Ambika, Yakshi of Tirthankara Neminatha, is also damaged (Plate.7). In this image only the lower portion (below the abdomen) of the deity is surviving and its measures 77 cm x 57 cm x 17 cm. The bejeweled goddess stands in graceful abhanga posture on a double-petalled lotus placed on a pancaratha pedestal. She is holding a frolicking little child, who is her younger son Prabhankara, with her left hand. In her right arm she possibly holding the branch of a mango tree, unfortunately this is broken now. A male attendant, who is her elder son Subhakara, stands in cross leg posture to her right side and holding a punthi in his left arm-pit. The goddess wears a diaphanous sari fastened by an ornamented girdle and profuse jewellery. Some parts of her long scarf falling on her both side. She wears multi-stranded armlets, mekhala, ratnopavita, etc. Left side of the damaged stele of the deity consist a lady cauri-bearer. The projected part of the pedestal below reveals a



Plate.7 Image of Yakshi Ambika, from Bauridi

lion, the vahana of the Yakshi. The stylized lion is flanked by a male and a female devotee kneeling in namaskara mudra. Iconographically the present image of Ambika is more or less similar with the Ambika images from Pakbirra. On the basis of stylistic ground and iconographic features the above discuss Jian images are belongs to c. 10th to 12th century CE.

Except these above mention Jaina images some broken architectural parts are scattered in the nearby area of the modern temple and according to the local villagers they collected these type of structural remains from this mound. These sculptural relics along with the architectural ruins indicate that there must be a huge Jaina temple during the early medieval period. This site needs proper scientific excavation to known the hidden history of this site.

Observations :

In the foregoing pages we have analyzed our data to achieve a clearer picture of archaeological site and its sculptural remains. It is quite clear from the above data that these evidences, ascribable to the Jaina pantheon, are well connected with the growth of Jainism and the spread of Jaina settlements, rituals and their relationship with the sculptural art of the said region. It is quite obvious that such concentration of Jaina heritage is not restricted to these particular sites. There are some other sites/settlements associated with Jaina ideology in an around this region.

Sculptures briefly described and discussed above are on stylistic and iconographic grounds may be assigned to the period between the eleventh and the twelfth centuries CE. These, including the other stupendous sculptural remains from this district as well as other parts of the radha region of Bengal, were products created by the fusion of the art idioms of neighboring areas of the Chhotanagpur plateau region and were laid in an essentially local matrix from which came out this distinct school of a regional tradition.

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Sculptures Beyond the Context: A Note on Jaina Antiquities from Kansabati River Valley, District Bankura, West Bengal

A large number of archaeological sites yielding old habitation remains as well as sculptural fragments reported in the recent time from the Kansabati river valley area which is located in the south eastern region of the district of Bankura. In the Sub Divisional Office of Khatra fourteen sculptural specimens of different religious ideologies were kept. The collection was made plausibly in between the year of 2008 and 2009 by the administrative officers of Khatra Sub-division from the nearby area of Kansabati River valley. Among these fourteen sculptural specimens six specimens are belong to the Jaina ideology. Except these Jaina images there are several villages along this river valley from where author reported Jaina antiquities among these archaeological sites the village Satpatta which lies south of the P.S. headquarter of Raipur is one of them and exhibits good numbers of Jaina sculptural remains, suggest that Satpatta was one of the prominent Jaina pilgrimage center in this river valley during the early medieval period.

Satpatta lies south of the Police Station headquarter of Raipur. It can be reached along a country road about 3 kms long, running east from Mandankuli on the Raipur-Silda road. In the centre of the village is a ruined temple and a modern temple was constructed in front of this ruined structure. This modern temple contains some remarkable Jaina sculptural remains which were originally found from the ruined temple complex (Chattopadhyay 2010: 165). These Jaina sculptural remains suggest that the site had some earlier association with the Jaina ideology.

Jaina sculptural remains from Sub Divisional Office of Khatra:

In the Sub-division office of Khatra six Jaina sculptural remains kept which were collected from the nearby region. The first specimen (95x50x9 cm) is a fine piece of sculpture made of a schist variety of rocks, the locally available raw materials. Iconographically, the specimen has affiliation with the other Tirthankara images found from eastern India in general. The principal figure shows the representation of Rsabhanatha, standing in Kayotsarga posture on a double petalled lotus placed on a tri-ratha pedestal which is carved with a bull, the lanchana of the Jina. Over the head of the Jina is seen the parasol whereas the hair of the principal deity is dressed into a tall jatamukuta with curls falling down along the sides of the head and over the shoulders. On either side stand male cauri-bearers wearing lower garments, jatamukuta and very simple ornaments. The upper portion of the stele of the image on both sides is embellished with the figurines of flying gandharvas. The edge of the back stele contains the miniature representations of twenty-four Tirthankaras in standing posture with each three figurines arranged in one column, set one above the other in altogether eight rows. (Plate. 1)



Plate.1. Rsabhanatha image from Sub Divisional Office of Khatra

The second specimen (86x 42x 5 cm) made of same raw materials and by following similar idiom of art style depicts the image of Rsabhanatha standing in kayotsarga posture on full blown lotus placed on a panca-ratha pedestal. The plinth contains the lancana of the Jina, i.e, bull flanked by four kneeling donors relieved on each ratha. On either side of the principal deity appears standing bejewelled attendant figures with their left hands probably in katyavalambita posture and the right hands holding camaras, while above, on each side of the halo, is seen flying vidyadharas hovering in the clouds. The Jina has elongated earlobes and wears a shapely jatajuta with kesa-vallari falling by the sides of his head over the shoulders. Above the head a beautifully carved three tiered parasol is recognizable. On each side of the back stele, the representations of twenty-four Tirthankaras are depicted with three figurines in one column set altogether in eight rows of which two bottom rows on the right hand side are completely abraded due to the effects of weathering. (Plate. 2)



Plate 2. Rsabhanatha image from Sub Divisional Office of Khatra



Plate 3. Santinatha image from Sub Divisional Office of Khatra

The third specimen (84x52x5 cm) stands in kayotsarga pose on a double-petalled lotus with the figures of avanga chamara bearer on its either side. (Plate. 3) It is impossible to delineate the facial expression of the deity and to give details about the stele of the image as its upper portion is totally missing. The cognizance carved on the pedestal seems to be the representation of a deer (?), on the basis of which the image must be ascribable to the sixteenth Tirthankara Santinatha. On the edge of the back-slab are four planetary deities (Jyotiska-devas) arranged in a vertical row of two on either side of the principal deity. Assumedly, the specimen originally accommodated the figurines of all the eight planetary deities. As the upper portion of the specimen is broken, at present it does not carry any signs of the figural depictions of the remaining four Jyotiska-devas. The figures of Brhaspati and Sani are depicted on the right side of the mula-nayaka; while the images of Sukra and Rahu are on other

side of the central figure. In this image Brhaspati and Sukra both hold water pots and Sani is carved with his peculiar seating posture. He is holding a distinctive staff (khakkara). Rahu is shown frontally with his voluminous head and peculiar hair dress. His hands are in tarpanamudra.

The fourth specimen of Tirthankara made of a sandstone variety of rocks is remarkable for its elegant facial expression and curly hair dress. The Jina, in its usual kayotsarga posture is seen standing on a thrown carved with double petalled lotus pedestal. The lanchana / vahana-elephant appear below the lotus and hence it could be identified as Ajitanatha. On

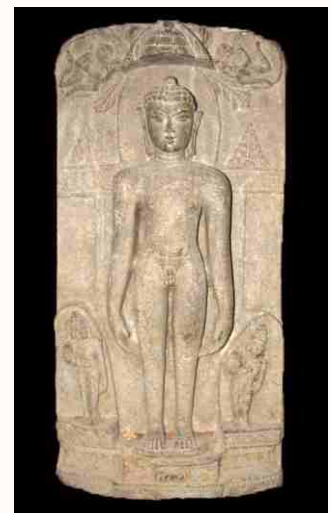


Plate 4. Ajitanatha image from Sub Divisional Office of Khatra

the either side of his legs are standing attendants wearing usual ornaments. Over the head of the principal deity is a canopy of a succession of gradually diminishing chhatra (umbrella) flanked by a flying couple possibly gandharvas/ vidhyadharas holding garlands. The back stele of the icons is devoid of elaborate embellishment. (Plate. 4)

The specimen of Jaina Tutelary couple/ Jaina parents (44 cm x 41 cm x 3 cm) shows the depiction of a male and female in a princely attire sitting in possibly arddhapariyanka posture under a tree (only stem portion still survives) on a full blown lotus, placed on a tri-ratha pedestal. However, it is very difficult to record the iconographic details of the sculptures because of its abraded condition. The female figure holds a child on her lap though the attribute held by the male figure is difficult to identify. The male figure is attired in a short dhoti and wears profuse jewellery comprising armlets, keyura, multi-stranded necklace, anklets and ratnopavita. The female is dressed in a diaphanous lower garment coming down to the ankles, and is bejewelled in the same fashion as the male. Her hair is arranged in an elegant bun resting on her shoulder. It is also impossible to outline the iconographic features of the seated Jina figure on the top, generally depicted on this kind of images as the upper portion of the specimen is broken. The central projection of the tri-ratha pedestal below bears two interesting figures riding on horses. The outer-facets of the right side of pedestal are embellished with figures of a male and a female devotee in anjali-mudra and in the left side one male figure in riding horse. (Plate. 5)



Plate.5. Jaina Tutelary couple image from Sub Divisional Office of Khatra

One unique sculptural specimen (Plate. 6) in this collection is carved on a rectangular stele of chlorite stone. In the present situation, it is found to contain 123/ 124 miniature figures of Jaina Tirthankaras in Kayotsarga posture arranged in eight terraces and one pedestal, besides a seated central figurine of Rsabhanatha. The figure of the principal deity is placed on the top of the stele along the breadth of the first and second ledges. Here he is shown seated in Dhyanasana posture on a full blown lotus pedestal and is adorned by a Jatamukuta. Due to the effects of weathering it is difficult to locate the lancana of the image if it is at all present. The pedestal i.e., the ninth register of the specimen is carved with the figurines of kneeling devotees in anjali mudra on the either side of the six standing Jinas.



Plate.6. Astapadatirtha image from Sub Divisional Office of Khatra

The numbers of Jinas as reconstructed from present situation on each ledge from the top are following

No of ledge	No of Tirthanakaras
1	8
2	12
3	16

4	16
5	16
6	18
7	16
8	15 + 1 ?
9th ledge/ pedestal	6

Jaina sculptural remains from Satpatta:

During our exploration in the village of Satpatta we documented different Jaina Tirthankara sculptures (four images of Rsabhanatha, three images of Parsvanatha and one unidentified image) along with one Jaina Yakshi sculpture, which are presently plaqued on the right side wall of the modern temple. Detailed iconographic descriptions of these images are given below.

1. Among the four images of Rsabhanatha, the well preserved specimen is made of chlorite stone and measures 87 cm x 40 cm (Plate.7). Visually, it is quite schematic and rigid and the plastic tendencies are minimal. The Jina is standing in kayotsarga posture on a double-petalled lotus placed on a pancaratha pedestal. The bull lanchana is neatly carved on the centre of the pedestal along with two devotees in namaskara mudra (folded hands). At both ends of the pedestal a crouching lion is depicted. The mulanayaka obviously devoid of any worldly attire, has elongated ear-lobes, and wears an elegant jatajuta with kesa-vallari falling down the sides of the head and over the shoulders. A almost circular sirascakra with leafed edges adorns the head of the saviour. Above the sirascakra a trilinear chatra is found which is flanked by two vidyadharas holding long garlands and just above them are two disembodied hands playing drums. The Jina is flanked on both sides by stout male cauri-bearers. They wear deeply incised loin cloths and elaborate jewellery and both of them have plain, small oval shaped halos. These cauri-bearers stand on lotus pedestals and their left hands are in katyavalambita posture and the right hands hold a fly-whisk. This is a caubisi type of image. On the edges of the back stele, on a projected frame, miniature figures of twenty-four Tirthankaras arranged in four vertical rows of three each on either side of the mulanayaka are depicted. Like the principal image, they also stand in kayotsarga posture on a plain pedestal and their respective lanchanas are carved at the centre of their thrones. The recessed portion of the back slab reveals a cross – bar on which are triangular plaques embellished with kumbhas placed one above the other from which pallavas emerge in a triangular shape. Stylistically, the image may be assignable to c. 11th century CE.
2. The second specimen (of Rsabhanatha) is also made of the same stone as the previous one and measures 155 cm x 65 cm (Plate.8). The image is badly eroded. In this image the Jina is in kayotsarga and samapadaasthanaka postures and stands on a full blown lotus placed on a pancaratha pedestal. The centre of the pedestal has a bull, the lanchana of the mulanayaka, placed between two crouching



Plate.7. Rsabhanatha image from Satpatta

lions and flanked by a male and a female devotee kneeling in namaskara mudra. The principle Jina wears an inelegant jatajuta with kesavallari falling down the side of its head and over the shoulders. An ovoidal sirascakra embellished with rows of beads and leaves at the edge has been carved. Above it is a trilinear chatra, slightly damaged, and flanked by vidyadharas hovering in the conventional representation of clouds. In this image, both the hands of the Jina hang parallel to the body and the finger tips touch the thigh of the Jina. The legs are separated by a seemingly parallel distance. On either side of the mulanayaka stand sensitively modelled camaradharas with their left hands in katyavalambita posture and the right hands holding a fly-whisk. They stand on a lotus placed on the same pedestal. The mulanayaka is placed against the background of a distinctly carved temple. The remaining part of the back slab is decorated with some miniature shrines.

3. The third specimen (of Rsabhanatha) is similar to the others. It is made of chlorite stone and measures 100 cm x 50 cm (Plate.9). This is a caubisi type of image. In the edge of the back-slab are depicted the miniature figures of twenty-four Tirthankaras arranged in six vertical rows of two each on either side of the mulanayaka. They are in kayotsarga posture over a plain pedestal. Their respective cognizances are also carved in this pedestal. In the space between the mulanayaka and the rows of miniatures Tirthankaras, a pillar like frame has been carved. This frame is surmounted by pidha like architectural members. This elaborate composition looks like a temple niche in which the main Tirthankara figure was carved. This entire sculptural specimen is visually dominated by the carvings of architectural features and of course the Jina. The depiction of such a structure in this sculpture perhaps reflect the fact that such types of architectural units were also used in Jaina temples. This particular icon is quite damaged and it is difficult to delineate its precise iconographic details.

In this image the Jina stands on a full blown lotus placed on a pancaratha pedestal. The central ratha of the pedestal bears the lanchana of the Jina, bull, placed between the two crouching lions. Remaining portions of the pedestal depict the ratna-patras heaped with offerings and in the left side a devotee in namaskara mudra occupies the blank space. Above the architectural motifs a drummer is depicted and he is flanked on either side by a vidhyadhara. The Jina has stylized jatajuta with kesa-vallari falling down the sides of its head and over its shoulder. The back slab also reveals the male cauri-bearers flanking the Jina at the lower corners. These cauri-bearers stand on lotus pedestals and their left hands are in katyavalambita posture and the right hands hold a fly-whisk. On stylistic grounds, this image is assignable to c. 11th-12th century CE.



Plate.8. Rsabhanatha image from Satpatta



Plate.9. Rsabhanatha image from Satpatta

4. The fourth icon in our repertory of Rsabhanatha images from Satpatta measures 115 cm x 55 cm (Plate.10) and is made of the same variety of chlorite stone encountered in the previous images. In this image the Jina stands in kayotsarga posture on a double-petalled lotus placed on a pancaratha pedestal. The image is quite damaged especially the upper part of the stele portion. A significant part of the stele has been devoted to a not so well carved miniature pidha type temple. The Jina wears a tall jata-mukuta and is provided with an ovoidal sirascakra embellished with rows of beads. The middle of the stele contains the depictions of planetary deities in two vertical rows of two each on either side of the mulanayaka. The planetary deities are separated from each other by carved pilasters. The back slab also reveals two male cauri-bearers flanking the Jina. These profusely bejewelled cauri-bearers stand in avanga posture and their left hands are in katyavalambita posture while the right hands hold a fly-whisk. On the centre of the pancaratha pedestal below there is a bull, the lanchana of the Jina, placed between two crouching lions.



Plate.10. Rsabhanatha image from Satpatta

5. Three images of Parsvanatha have been found from Satpatta. The largest one measures 100 cm x 50 cm (Plate.11) and is made of black basalt. In this sculptural specimen, Parsvanatha, the mulanayaka, stands in kayotsarga posture on a double-petalled lotus-pedestal under a canopy of seven snake hoods. The Jina is flanked on both sides by snake coils. The outline of the snake-hood reminds one of an umbrella and this variety of snake-hood has also been depicted in the Parsvanatha icon of Harmasra. In contrast, the snake-hood canopy of Parsvanatha images found from the Vishnupur region, has a towering character. The pedestal of the present image is triratha and a Naga couple with their inter-coiled tails springs gracefully almost rhythmically from the centre projection of the pedestal just below the feet of the Jina. This inter-coiled Naga motif has been repeatedly depicted in the majority of the Parsvanatha images found from various sites in eastern India (like eastern Orissa, the Chhotanagpur plateau and parts of Purulia) (DAS 1997: 95-105). The Naga holds a water-vessel while the Nagi holds some indistinct implements. The centre of the pedestal has a mangala-kalasa and two crouching lions facing in opposite direction occupy the facets/projections adjacent to the centre. The remaining projections of the pedestal are left blank. The Jina is attended by two male cauri-bearers wearing succinct lower garments and different ornaments like necklaces, keyura, kundala, and a conical jata like crown. They stand in dvi-vanga posture on pedestals and their left hands are in katyavalambita posture while the right hands hold fly-whisks. The Jina's face is more or less damaged. On the edge of the back slab are carved four images of Tirthankara in kayotsarga posture with their respective lanchanas depicted on a slightly raised



Plate.11. Parsvanatha image from Satpatta

pedestal below them. The upper part of the stele contains the usual vidyadhara, the pratiharyas of heavenly hands playing on musical instruments, and a projected tiered chatra surmounting the snake-hood.



**Plate.12. Parsvanatha
image from Satpatta**



**Plate.13. Parsvanatha
image from Satpatta**

6. Two Parsvanatha images made of chlorite stone and measuring 45 cm x 25 cm, 70 cm x 35 cm (Plate.12) have been plaqued side by side on the right wall of the modern temple mentioned earlier. In each case, the depictions and other iconographic details are the same. The Jina stands in kayotsarga posture on a lotus-seat under the canopy of a seven-hooded serpent. A naga-couple with their hands folded and inter-coiled tails springs from both sides of the attendants. The edge of the stele is carved with four Tirthankaras in kayotsarga postures, arranged in pairs on each side of the Jina. The style of execution in each case is also the same. However, the smaller specimen of 45 cm x 25 cm (Plate.13) exhibits a finer craftsmanship than its bigger counterpart. Stylistically, these are assignable to c. 12th century CE.
7. An unidentified Jaina image has been documented from Satpatta. The lower part of the image is broken. The extant image measures 75 cm x 45 cm and is plaqued on the north wall of the temple of Satpatta. The Jina stands in Kayotsarga posture on a lotus-pedestal. He has usnisa on its head and is flanked by two attendants. Miniature figures of Tirthankaras are carved along the edge of the stele. These miniature figures are however quite indistinct. This image, made of chlorite stone, is a fine piece of sculpture assumedly belonging to c. 12th century CE.
8. An image of Jaina Yakshi Ambika was reported from this site during our exploration. The Devi image is defaced and abraded. It is made of chlorite stone and measures 45 cm x 19 cm (Plate.14). The coiffure of the goddess depicts a stylized Kavari and she wears a long sari like garment and other usual ornaments. With tribhanga pose she is standing under the foliage of a mango-tree or Kalpataru. Above the branches of the tree is a seated Jina in dhyana mudra. She holds a frolicking little child (her younger son Prabhankara) with her left hand.



**Plate.14. Ambika image
from Satpatta**

Her right arm, once possibly holding a branch of a mango tree (amralumbi), is broken at elbow. A tiny figure of a lion is depicted on the pedestal. A similar Ambika image is presently in the collection of the Vishnupur Sahitya Parishad Museum, Vishnupur.

The present study region, i.e., a part of the Kansavati valley with its unique geo-physical bearing, natural resources and the distribution of population and above all its material remains in the form of empirical archaeological database, prompted us to gauge its archaeological significance in a non-conventional way. By a non-conventional way, it is implied that the existing researches hardly provided any scope for the reconstruction of the past of this region by following the traditional nomenclatures, employed in defining its archaeological sequences. At the same time, the retrieved database obviously traces the history of mankind which definitely touches upon each and every step of its cultural evolution. The chronocultural identity of the region may be traced since the arrival of the Palaeolithic hunter-gatherers. Subsequently, the village formation and their association with farming is also confirmed with the distribution of BRW associated EVF sites. Apparently, Satpatta is one of the representative settlement of such a growth. The early medieval period, i.e., the period between the 10th to the 13th centuries CE was the period of temple building and sculpture making on a large scale. The region had already a well established tradition of metal working as evident from the early village farming (EVF) phases of Tulsipur, Kumardanga, etc. This tradition along with the established infrastructure of mineral and forest products exploitation had effected a particular status to the region so far as the procurement network from the historical period is concerned. If one considers the metal-working Sarak community who still inhabit this region, one may find a clear instance of ethnographic data in support of the long tradition of indigenous metal-working in this region. The Jaina settlers came in pursuit of trade and metal working and during the early medieval period they were also the patrons of the monumental features, i.e., temple building etc. The term Satpatta, i.e., the name of the village, has possibly an administrative connotation since the early medieval period. Unfortunately, further investigations in this direction is a desideratum since what is clearly apparent is the fact that Satpatta is a big village with diverse working groups involved in different subsistence strategies. The propagators of Jainism may have been linked with these diverse working groups. A similar nexus between the propagators and followers of the Jaina faith with the diverse working groups had also been effected in the Vishnupur region (discussed elsewhere).

As against the earlier archaeological explorations in the Satpatta region (especially since the early eighties) the present explorations resulted in unraveling what is possibly the entire repertoire of Jaina sculptural remains, all of which were contextually documented. The first author had also not provided a detailed survey of the above sculptural remains in his publication on Bankura. The present explorations confirmed that all the Jaina sculptures found from this village itself, the structural mound associated with a religious centre, secular habitation remains and above all the diverse population groups of this village, all these factors can be linked with the spread of the Jaina ideology. Therefore, it may not be unwise to say that this particular village was a part of the overall spread and development of Jaina beliefs and practices in this southwestern part of the district of Bankura and most probably flourished as one of the important Jaina pilgrimage center during the early medieval period. Stylistically, all the sculptures discussed above, are assignable to a period starting from the 10th century CE to the 13th century CE.

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Jaina Vestiges from Asansol Sub-division of Burdwan District, West Bengal

The eastern fringe areas of the Chhotanagpur plateau covering the modern districts of Purulia, Bankura and western part of Burdwan (Asansol sub division) of West Bengal and substantial parts of the Jharkhand. The region has a long cultural sequence from the prehistoric times to the early/late medieval period, though its cultural heritage received special momentum (with the radiation of sites, construction activities of temples, installation of icons etc.) with the arrival of political lineages and religious ideologies during the early medieval period. In this region the main river is Damodar and along this river valley there are several numbers of archaeological sites yielding old habitational remains as well as sculptural and architectural fragments. Among those sites most of them are associated with Jaina relics (both sculptures and architectures). Interestingly, the impressive array of Jaina sculptures and architectural members in this area verify the fact that in and around the region abounds in Jaina heritage and it was a thriving Jaina centre at least for a considerable time of the early medieval period. This Jaina identity is perhaps the most significant aspect to envision the socio-cultural framework of the historical period of the present study area is concerned.

The present paper is an attempt to explore the Jaina cultural heritage of the eastern fringe areas of the Chhotanagpur Plateau, by presenting a case study on newly discovered Jaina antiquities from the Jaina sites in the Asansol Sub-division of Burdwan District, West Bengal. The present study mainly promises to highlight two fold objectives i.e., 1) to briefly discuss about the newly documented Jaina sculptural remains from the present study region (Asansol sub-division, Burdwan district, West Bengal); 2) to discuss the iconographic details of present discovered Jaina images as well as earlier images from the present study area and also briefly refer to the several scholars viewpoints regarding these sites, assemblages and their socio-cultural conditions during the early medieval period.

The present study region was a part of the ancient geographical unit of Radha¹. Regarding the Jaina connection in regions comprising ancient Bengal, it was in an around fifth century BC that Jainism spread in Bengal particularly in the Radha tract under the leadership of the twenty fourth Tirthankara Mahavira. Several archaeological discoveries, in 20th and 21st centuries by several British administrators and later by Indian scholars, confirm that the Radha tract was strongly associated with Jaina ideologies from a long period of time (1st century CE to 12th -13th century CE). It may therefore be assumed that the region was frequented by Jaina monks and also by the Jaina traders, at least till the 12th-13th. As a result of these factors we get a large number of early medieval Jaina stone images along with extant temples in a number of sites of ancient Radha².

Contexts and Contains of the Sites :

During the present exploration in the eastern fringe of Chhotanagpur plateau we were able to identify a large numbers of archaeological sites along with sculptural and architectural remains. These archaeological remains can be dated to the 9th to 13th century CE or the early medieval period and are overwhelmingly associated with Jaina ideologies. Among of these sites some Jaina sites are presently endangered.

Punchra/Pachhra (23° 46' - 19.40"N – 87 ° 00' - 04.87" E) : is a large village situated about one km north-west of Kelejora in the Barabani block of the Asansol sub-division of Burdwan district of West Bengal. The archaeological potentiality of the site was first brought to public notice by a daily news paper

and later on a comprehensive works on the archeological relics of the said village was done by C. Gupta³. In her works she highlights the geo-political scenario of the region during the post gupta or early medieval period. She also described the sculptural remains of the sites along with other archaeological assemblages. Recently Sharmi Chakraborty⁴ has mentioned the present site very briefly in her work and wrongly identified some images. However, the present site needs farther investigation to study its Jaina association and also the iconic details of the Jaina images recorded during the present survey.

Recent survey at the site resulted in the documentation of a considerable numbers of Jaina sculptural specimens now kept in five different locales of the village and at its outskirts.

Major concentration of habitational remains at the central part of the village which is known as (a) Sasthitala: The spot is named after the seat of a grama devta in the form of folk goddess - Sasthi (a popular female folk deity). In this place five stone images are fixed in the wall (Plate. 1). Among these five defaced stone images two sculptures of Jaina Tirthankars and other are Visnu images [two specimens of Snake hooded Visnu or Lokesvara Visnu (55 x 42 cm) (103 x 72 cm) and one Visnu image (50 x 37 cm)].



Plate. 1. Sculptural Remains of Sasthitala: Punchra/Pachhra

These two Jaina images in the present complex are very bad stage of preservation. Both of them are unidentified and they made grey stone and measured 61 cm x 43 cm and 58 cm x 36 cm. In the first image the Jina is standing in kayotsarga posture (Plate.2). The lower portion of the Jina and the pedestal of the image are totally missing. The mulanayaka obviously devoid of any worldly attire, has elongated ear-lobes, pronounced protruding eye-balls, and his hair is arranged in schematic curls with a prominent usnisa. The ovoidal prabha is embellished with beads and flame-tongued border devices and has a flowering twig on its either side. Above the sirascakra a trilinear chatra is found which is flanked by two vidyadharas holding long garlands and just above them are two disembodied hands playing drums. The recessed portion of the back slab reveals a cross – bar on which are triangular plaques embellished with kumbhas placed one above the other from which pallavas emerge in a triangular shape. The Jina is flanked on both sides by stout male cauri-bearers. The left side cauri-bearer of the Jina is completely damaged. They wear deeply incised loin cloths and elaborate jewellery and both of them have plain, small oval shaped halos. These cauri-bearers stand on lotus pedestals and their left hands are in katyavalambita posture and the right hands hold a fly-whisk. On the edge of the back slab are carved four images of Tirthankara in kayotsarga posture with their respective lanchanas depicted on a slightly raised pedestal below them. The remaining Jaina image is

totally smashed and the details of the image is very difficult to describe. Stylistically, both the images are assignable to c. 11th - 12th century CE. In this compound there is a broken head made of black stone and most probably it is a head of a Tirthankara image (Plate.3).



Plate. 2. Jaina Tirthankara Image



Plate. 3. Head of a Tirthankara Image

(b) Sivasthan : The place is situated at the south-western part of the village generally identified as a religious center presently associated with Brahmanical worship. However, the mix up assemblages (associated with Brahmanical, Buddhist, and Jaina ideologies) in this complex is very difficult to identify the place as belonging to a particular religious ideology. The scattered pieces of architectural members, bricks and stone slabs show that there was an abandoned temple complex. A group of altogether eight (both broken and extant) sculptural specimens are now kept on a modern brick platform (which has considerably disturbed the context of earlier structure) at the spot. Of these specimens one image Jaina yaksi Ambika (33 x 38 x 5 cm), one broken image of a Jaina Tutelary Couple (54 x 37 x 7 cm), pedestal of Jaina Tirthankara Adinatha (20 x 38 x 5.5 cm) and one single specimen of snake hooded Visnu or Lokesvara Visnu (70 x 54 x 10 cm) are easily recognizable (Plate.4).



Plate. 4. Sculptural Remains from Sivasthan: Punchra/Pachhra

The image of Ambika (Plate.5) is highly corroded and very difficult to mention the iconographic details of the deity. However, the Jaina Tutelary Couple image is broken into two pieces (Plate. 6) and is made of grey coloured stone. In the lower portion of the present sculptural fragment depicts the couple sits in ardha-paryankasana posture on a double petalled lotus-pedestal. The male figure sits on the right, with the right hand held in abhaya-mudra and his left hand holds some indistinct object. He wears a dhoti reaching well below the knee, and elaborate jewellery comprising bracelets, armlets and beaded necklace. The female figure holds some indistinct object in her left hand while her right hand is in varada-mudra. The female is attired in a diaphanous lower garment reaching down to her ankles and is bejewelled in the same elaborate fashion as the male, except that a short crown adorns her head. Her hair is arranged in an elegant bun resting on her shoulder. Upper portion of the present image shows a miniature figure of Jina is seated in dhayanasana above the branches of the tree. The lanchana of the Jina is not clearly visible. Vidyadharas can be seen on the top of almost square back-slab, and also a drum and a pair of cymbals struck by disembodied hands. The broken pedestal of Jaina Tirthankara Rsabhanatha (Plate. 7) is very unique. In this damaged pedestal a bull is seen at the centre. Both the corner of the pedestal depicts the yaksha (Gomukha) and yakshi (Cakresvari) of the Tirthankara Rsabhanatha. This is a typical style of the Jaina art of central India which is not commonly found in the Jaina sculptural art tradition of Bengal.



Plate. 5. Image of Ambika



Plate. 6. Image of Jaina Tutelary Couple



Plate. 7. Broken Pedestal of Jaina Tirthankara Rsabhanatha

(c) Rajapara : Recent survey at the site resulted in the documentation of a small stone structure probably the part of a temple (Plate. 8) and two extant sculptural specimens (94 x 70 x 6 cm, 142 x 70 x 6 cm), on an elevated mound. It is difficult to identify these sculptures due its mutilated conditions. It is quite evident that the principal figures are seated in dhyana posture.



Plate. 8. Small Stone Structure Probably the Part of a Temple

(d) Manasatala : This is another cult spot for the goddess Manasa. Here, the upper portion of a Jaina Tirthankara image (87 x 90 x 8 cm) has been documented (Plate. 9). It is quite apparent that this remaining portion forms the part of a large sculptural specimen. Due to its abraded condition, the iconographic details are difficult to discern though the depiction of two planetary deities on the stele is evident. Among these two images one image could be identified as Rahu, because of his large head.⁵



Plate. 9. Unidentified Jaina Tirthankara Image

Besides this image, three other Jaina sculptural specimens are plastered on one slab very close to the earlier spot. Of these, one is a headless damaged specimen of a Jaina Tirthankara, a broken part of a Jaina patta (23 x 26 x 8 cm) and probably remaining one is the image of Jaina Tutelary Couple. This Jaina patta is known as Jaina Astapadatirtha image (Plate. 10). Astapadatirtha is one of the unique varieties of Jain sculpture ever found from West Bengal. Till today only two Astapadatirthas have been reported from the West Bengal. This is carved on a rectangular stele of chlorite stone. The image is highly abraded and regularly local people worship this image and they use oil and sindur. As a result one of the finest specimens of Jaina antiquity is gradually losing its importance. In the present situation, it is found to contain 36 miniature figures of Jaina Tirthankaras in kayotsarga posture arranged in seven terraces, besides a seated figure of Rsabhanatha. The figure of the Jaina Tirthankara Rsabhanatha is placed on the top of this stele. He is shown seated in dhyanasana posture on a lotus pedestal and is adorned by a jatamukuta.



Plate. 10. Jaina Patta or Astapadatirtha Image

(e) Bhagavan Mahavira Digambara Jaina Sarak High School : At the outskirts of the village a Jaina school has the collection of five sculptural specimens (Plate. 11) of Jaina faith, which are said to be collected from the different localities of Punchra. The collection is represented by the remains of an Astapadatirtha (26 x 28 x 4 cm), one Jaina Chaumukha (35 x 20 cm), four broken parts of sculptural specimens and one terracotta image of a Jina (9 x 11 x 2 cm). The Jaina Astapadatirtha image is iconographically similar with the earlier Astapadatirtha image documented from Manasatala localities.

The present patta possesses enough resemblances to two other specimens one collected from Sat Deuliya in the Burdwan district (with 148 Jina figurines)⁶ and another from Pakbirra in the district of Purulia (with 360 Jina figurines)⁷. The specimen from Sat Deuliya has been identified as an early representation of Astapada tirtha by P.C Dasgupta. In this context it is worthwhile to mention that U.P Shah in his works on Jaina iconography postulated the incidence behind the creation of such sculptures⁸.

Iconographically the miniature Caturmukha shrine is quite unique. It is a look likes a miniature pidha deul. Four side of the shrine Tirthankaras are seated and standing in dhyanasana and kayotsarga under niches formed by pilasters. The Tirthankara figures are not identifiable due to their abraded respective cognizance. The gandi portion of the shrine has three pidhas with intervening recesses. The pidhas are decorated with horizontal bands. The top portion of the shrine is damaged. These caumukhas are also known as Sarvatobhadra-Pratima i.e. auspicious from all sides. Caumukhas are in fact an essential accompaniment of Jaina monastic establishments.

However, whatever conceived in our mind from the recorded database that the settlement of the site of Punchra apparently germinated during the early village farming phases. This settlement in later period must have radiated in its surrounding areas hence it has a long settlement history. The modern habitation virtually stands on the older structural and non structural mounds. As a result, it is difficult to ascertain the original parts of the settlement and the orientation of settlement spread in the later period. The sculptural specimens and habitation remains which have been recorded from the site, it is quite clear that Punchra is an ancient settlement site. During early medieval period this site witnessed some different kind of religious activities and among them Jaina religion was much stronger than other religious ideologies. The documented sculptures remains from the site also strengthen this view. The present day demographic situation of the site also suggested that a substantial section of the present day population of the village is represented by the Jaina 'Sarak'⁹ community. They were traditional metal workers and the present study area is an integral part of a wider region involved in an ancient procurement network that actually bridged this metal working zone (substantial section of Purulia, Bankura – parts of ancient Radha) with the settlements in the Gangetic valley. The available archaeological database indicates the popularity of Jainism in the present site.

Barakar (23° 44' - 07.89"N – 86° 48' - 46.93" E): The site on the bank of the river Barakar includes the localities of Begunia, Lona, Manberia and several small nearby coal mining areas within its sphere. To its west is located the hilly ranges of Panchet and Maithan. The archaeological significance of the site is attested by the presence of the Siddesvara Temple complex at Begunia. Among the temples located here, one bears two inscriptions containing 11½ lines and 21 lines respectively. Here, it is to be mentioned that recent survey at the site has brought to light several sculptural specimens mostly associated with Saiva and Sakta ideologies.



Plate. 11. Collection of Five Jaina Sculptural Specimens

However, the present survey documented a highly abraded image of Ambika, yaksi of Tirthankara Neminatha from the vicinity of the temple premises, just close to the bank of a small pond (Plate. 12). The bejeweled goddess stands in graceful abhaya pose holding a frolicking little child (her younger son Prabhankara) with her left hand. Her right hand is damaged and most probably she holding the branch of a mango tree. The pedestal portion of the image is smashed. She wears a diaphanous sari fastened by an ornamented girdle and profuse jewellery. The back stele of the image is without decoration, which is very interesting. The image made of light black stone and measured 138 x 60 x 10 cm. The image may be assignable to 11th to 12th century C.E. Among the Brahmanical sculptures, the single representation of Jaina yaksi image indicates that the nearby area of Barakar region must have associated with Jainism during the early medieval period.



Plate. 12. Image of Ambika



Plate. 13. Highly Abraded Jaina Tirthankara image

Domahania/Domani (23° 42' - 36.62"N – 86° 59' - 84" E): It is a large and ancient settlement near Asansol. The modern habitation is lying on the older one as indicated by the stray occurrences of earlier habitation debris found inside the locality. Recent survey has resulted in the documentation of a medieval/pre-modern brick temple. About 1 ½ km away from this village a low mound on the bank of a pond Chandana yielded the evidence of an abandoned temple structure (Plate.. 9). This is attested by the remains of a few sculptural specimens and architectural members like three Amalakas (70 cm, 69cm and 76 cm in diameter), one extant specimen of kalasa scattered on the surface. Among the sculptural remains one is a seated image of highly abraded Jaina Tirthankara image (Plate. 13). It is interesting to note that, a small stream flowing by the side of the mound enhanced the significance of the site. In all probability the presence of the ruined structure and the easy

availability of flowing water may have induced some tribal communities to perform their ritual at the site sometimes during the late medieval/ pre-modern period. This is confirmed by a particular arrangement of stones and architectural members suggesting the practice of some rituals by the said communities.

A metal Jaina Tirthankara image was discovered from the village and the image presently displayed in the Burdwan University Museum¹⁰, Burdwan district of West Bengal. In this sculptural specimen, the mulanayaka, stands in samapadaasthanaka posture and kayotsarga gesture on a single-petalled lotus-pedestal. The image is made of brass metal and measured 23 cm x 5 cm. This is an image of Tirthankara Rsabhanatha (Plate. 14) and his cognizance depict in the centre of the pedestal. Discoveries of the ruined temple remains and Jaina sculptural specimens suggest that the site has a relation with Jaina ideologies during the early medieval period.



Plate. 14. Image of Tirthankara Rsabhanatha

Churulia (23° 42' 36.62"N – 86° 59' 84" E): The site is situated on the left bank of the river Ajay and about 14 km north west of Asansol city. Archaeological evidences of the site are represented by some architectural members, among them one is (85 x 15 x 15 cm) showing the depiction of a Jain Tirthankara (Parsvanatha) in dhyana posture, now preserved in the Collection of Nazrul Academy (Plate. 15). The architectural fragments of the present site directly show the association with Jain ideologies during the early medieval period. It may not be unwise to mention that the presence of door jams and other architectural members and stone pillars suggests the monumental character of the settlement both in respect of power and religion. All these features are substantial enough to understand the Jain affiliation of the site though before making any comments in this regards further investigation is a desideratum.



Plate. 15. Architectural Member showing the depiction of Jain Tirthankara Parsvanatha

Observations :

In the foregoing pages exploratory data has been used to get a coherent picture about the context of Jainism in the eastern fringe of Chhotanagpur Plateau region. The present study though preliminary in nature, but it has attempted to investigate the cultural heritage of a region during the early medieval and medieval times along with its regional identity and the contribution of Jain religious tradition in the area by presenting a case study. The present study highlights the following points :

1. The detail iconographic features of the newly discovered Jaina images from different sites of Asansol sub-division have been discussed. The iconoplastic art tradition of this region has some difference with the other part of Burdwan district. In the study area sculptural specimens are not well finished and the body proportions are not realistic. Stylistically, the sculptures are similar to those reported from Cheliyama, Banda, Satri of Purulia and Tiluri and Biharinatha in Bankura districts. Apparently these might have been received local patronage.
2. In and around the present study area we were able to lockets a few mounds. Apparently these were early medieval habitation and structural mounds. In absence of excavation it will be really difficult to conceptualize the settlement parameters of the region concerned and its possible association with Jainism.
3. The above discussion shows that the Punchra and its surrounding region witnessed the spread of Jainism before the arrival of the Brahmanical mode of religious belief and practices which has been neglected by the previous researchers.

The search for the identity of the present study area leads us to believe that this region reflects yet another micro-zone of the eastern fringe area of the Chhotanagpur plateau. In spite of being an integral part of the settlement dynamics of Burdwan or of the extension of the Chhotanagpur plateau this area apparently exhibited a different line of development, guided by its innate potentialities and Jainism must have played an important role for the growth and development of these settlements along the Ajay and Damodar river valleys of West Bengal. The present paper is a stepping stone to further researches in this direction and future works will certainly elaborate the Jaina context/connection in the concerned micro-region.

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श्री भारतवर्षीय दिगम्बर जैन तीर्थ संरक्षिणी महासभा बंगाल जैनक्षेत्र पुरुलिया में बलिप्रथा एक अश्रुपूरित विवेचना



बंगाल के पुरुलिया जिले में १२० से भी ज्यादा स्थानों में दिगंबर जैन मंदिर एवं प्रतिमाओं के भग्नावशेष चारों तरफ बिखरे पड़े हुए हैं। जिसके अवलोकन मात्र से मन द्रवित हो जाता है। श्री दिग. जैन तीर्थ संरक्षिणी महासभा इस क्षेत्र में पिछले ३० वर्षों से कार्य कर रही है।

महासभा से पूर्व जैन समाज द्वारा देख रेख--महासभा से पहले साहू शांतिप्रसादजी जैन ने १९७० में एवं जैन समाज के महान कार्यकर्ता वेद्यनाथजी सरावगी एवं रांची के रायबहादुर हरकचंदजी पांड्या के परिवार ने भी पुरुलिया जिले में जैन धर्म संबंधी जो मूर्तियाँ, मंदिर एवं भग्नावशेष पड़े थे, उसके जीर्णोद्धार का कार्य शुरू किया था। इन सभी के द्वारा लग्नतापूर्वक कार्य किए जाने के बाद भी समस्या ज्यों की त्यों बनी रही।

आदिवासियों द्वारा मूर्तियों पर अधिकार--यहाँ सबसे बड़ी परेशानी की बात यह है कि यहाँ के जो आदिवासी एवं ग्रामवासी हैं वे अपना अधिकार रखते हुए इन दिगंबर जैन प्रतिमाओं को भैरवनाथ या भैरवबाबा के नाम से पूजा करते हैं एवं करीब १० स्थानों पर बलि प्रथा आज तक भी लागू है। इस संदर्भ पर काफी प्रयास किया गया है।

समय-समय पर साधु संतों एवं सरकारी प्रतिनिधियों का आगमन एवं निवारण- परम पूज्य भट्टारक श्री वीरसेनजी स्वामी पुरुलिया के पाकवीरा ग्राम में आकर २ महीने से ज्यादा समय तक रहे थे और उन्होंने उन ग्रामवासियों को विस्तृत तरीके से काफी समझाया था और उन्हीं के कहने से कुछ दिनों के लिए बलि प्रथा रोक दी गई थी। इसके पश्चात सरकार के प्रतिनिधियों द्वारा ग्रामवासियों को समझाने का प्रयास किया गया। परंतु ग्रामवासी इस बात को स्वीकार करने के लिए तैयार नहीं हुए। पुरुलिया के अंदर में पाकवीरा का जो क्षेत्र है, इसकी जानकारी बंगाल के पुरातत्त्व विभाग ने सन् १९६० में लगाया था, जिससे पता चला कि उस समय उस क्षेत्र में करीब ५० प्रतिमाएँ एवं १० छोटे-छोटे जिनालय थे। बंगाल सरकार ने कुछ प्रतिमाओं को एकत्रित करके एक शालिका (शेड) बना करके उसके भीतर प्रतिमाओं को विराजमान किया एवं वहीं पर साढ़े आठ फीट की भगवान पदमप्रभु की प्रतिमा को भी विराजमान किया गया।

अश्रुपूरित दुःखद जटिल समस्या- ग्रामवासी दुर्गा पूजा के अवसर पर अष्टमी और नवमी के दिन उसी स्थान पर आकर सिंदूर से प्रतिमाओं को पोतकर जानवरों की बलि दिया करते थे। ममता बनर्जी की सरकार बनने के पश्चात् ममता बनर्जी ने उसी स्थान के लिए ८५ लाख का अनुदान दिया और इस अनुदान राशि को खर्च करके तीनों मंदिरों को संरक्षित किया गया एवं चारों तरफ घेरा दीवार (बाउंड्री वॉल) लगा करके, पदमप्रभु भगवान की प्रतिमा जो टीन के शेड के अंदर थी, उसको बाहर लाकर विराजमान कर दिया गया। वहाँ एक चबूतरा बना दिया गया अब वहाँ पर शेड के अंदर जो बलि लगती थी, अब वह बलि दुर्गा अष्टमी और नवमी को खुले स्थान में लग रही है। परम पूज्य १०८ आचार्य संभवसागरजी महाराज पाकवीरा ग्राम के मंदिरों के दर्शन करने हेतु गए थे और उन्होंने भी ३ दिन तक वहाँ पर निवास किया था, महासभा द्वारा वहाँ पर एक संग्रहालय एवं चार कमरे का निर्माण करवाया हुआ था। महाराजश्री ने ग्रामवासियों को समझाने का एवं बलि प्रथा को बंद करने का बहुत प्रयास किया। साथ ही सरकार भी चाहती है कि बलि प्रथा पूर्ण रूप से बंद हो जाए। परंतु सबसे दुःख की एवं अश्रुपूरित बात है कि यह एक जटिल और सबसे बड़ी समस्या बन गई है कि ग्रामवासियों के सामने चाहे वो सरकारी प्रतिनिधि हों या बुद्धिजीवी हों सभी निरुत्तर हो जाते हैं।

महासभा द्वारा जीर्णोद्धार की प्रतिक्रिया- महासभा ने पुरुलिया जिले में ३० स्थानों पर जहाँ-जहाँ प्रतिमाएँ पेड़ों के नीचे, मकान की दीवारों पर एवं इधर-उधर बिखरी हुई पड़ी थीं एवं अन्य जगहों पर जीर्ण-शीर्ण अवस्था में पड़ी हुई थीं, इन सभी प्रतिमाओं को विनयपूर्वक उसी जगह एक ओर विराजमान करके छोटे-छोटे मंदिर बनाकर संरक्षित किया है। महासभा अभी भी इस कार्य को कर रही है और आगे भी निभाती रहेगी। जहाँ तक बंगाल में जो स्थिति है उस स्थिति का १२० स्थानों पर हमें उन मूर्तियों की जानकारी प्राप्त हो चुकी है। हम निरंतर इस जीर्णोद्धार कार्य में लगे हुए हैं। हमारी महासभा की बंगाल प्रांत की जो टीम (मंडली) है, उसके अध्यक्ष निर्मल पुष्पा बिन्दायका हैं, कार्याध्यक्ष सुनील कुमार पहाड़िया, महामंत्री मनीष गंगवाल, मंत्री सनत कुमार छाबड़ा, कोषाध्यक्ष मनोज कासलीवाल एवं पुरातत्त्व संयोजक दिनेश कुमार गंगवाल हैं। ये ऐन-केन-प्रकारेण पूर्वक पूरा प्रयास कर रहे हैं कि बलि प्रथा पूर्ण रूप से बंद हो। मैं समस्त भारतवर्ष के वकील, न्यायाधीश, प्रबुद्ध लोग जिनकी शासन में चलती है, उन सभी श्रेष्ठ महानुभावों से विनयपूर्वक अनुरोध करता हूँ कि बंगाल के इन १० स्थानों पर जो बलि प्रथा चल रही है, उसका अवरोध करने में, भारतीय दण्ड संहिता की धारा ४२८ एवं ४२९ के अनुसार बलि प्रथा पर रोक का प्रावधान है, जिसके तहत इसे पूर्णरूप से रोका जा सकता है। सबसे बड़ी बात है कि ये प्रतिमाएँ जैनधर्म से संबंधित हैं और पुरातत्त्व विभाग के अनुसार ये हमारी धरोहर हैं और हम अपनी धरोहर पर कैसे बलि प्रथा को क्रियान्वित होने दे सकते हैं। जबकि ये सब हमारी जानकारी में है, और जानकारी में रहते हुए हम अगर इसे बढ़ावा देते हैं तो हम सभी पाप के भागी हुए। उन सभी लोगों से, जिनका प्रशासनिक दबदबा है, समस्त भारतवर्ष की जैन समाज से मेरा निवेदन है कि जहाँ- जहाँ भी बलि चढ़ रही है, उन सभी स्थानों पर बलि प्रथा को शीघ्रतिशीघ्र रोक जाय। जिससे किसी का भला तो हो ही नहीं सकता। अहिंसा ही परम धर्म है। समस्त जैन समाज सहयोग प्रदान करें।

इसी विनम्र निवेदन के साथ...

राजकुमार जैन सेठी
महामंत्री

कमल कुमार जैन रांवका
वरिष्ठ संयुक्त महामंत्री

पुरुलिया जिले में तीर्थ संरक्षिणी महासभा द्वारा किये गये जीर्णोद्धार की लिस्ट 31 अगस्त 2021 तक

स्थान का नाम	दातार का नाम
01. पाकबीरा	तीर्थ संरक्षिणी महासभा पश्चिम बंगाल एवं बंगाल सरकार के सहयोग से कार्य हो रहा है।
02. बारहमसिया	श्री मूलचन्द जी बगड़ा, विजयनगर
03. भाष्करडांगा	श्री अनिल कुमार अजित कुमार बड़जात्या, कोलकाता
04. लखारा	(1) श्री धर्मचन्द पवन कुमार जी मोदी, कोलकाता
05. लखारा	(2) श्री पुखराज जी पाण्ड्या, गोरखपुर
06. मान बाजार	श्रीमती बंदना जी जैन, कोटा
07. भाखड़ा	सेठी ट्रस्ट गुवाहाटी
08. आड़सा	श्रीमती सोना देवी सेठी चैरिटेबल ट्रस्ट, श्री विनोद कुमार जी सेठी, डीमापुर (नागालैण्ड)
09. आड़सा	श्री रामचन्द्र आशीष कुमार सेठी, डीमापुर
10. सरगी	श्रीमती सोना देवी सेठी चैरिटेबल ट्रस्ट, श्री विनोद कुमार जी सेठी, डीमापुर (नागालैण्ड)
11. बांसगढ़	दिगम्बर जैन समाज, डीमापुर
12. बेलकुड़ी	श्री हनुमान प्रसाद जी बड़जात्या, करीमगंज, आसाम
13. छोटा बलरामपुर	श्री राजकुमार, अभिषेक एवं परिचित सेठी, कोलकाता
14. हरियालीडीह	श्री तेजसरमेशलाल जैन, धूले (महा.)
15. बड़गर	श्रीमती सुलोचना देवी पहाड़िया, गुवाहाटी
16. पूंजा	श्री महावीर बगड़ा, विजयनगर, आसाम
17. पोलमा	(1) श्री दिगम्बर जैन महिला समाज डीमापुर
18. पोलमा	(2) श्री दिगम्बर जैन महिला संगठन नलबाड़ी, आसाम
19. छर्वा	श्री विनोद किरण काला, कोलकाता
20. चालका	श्री दिगम्बर जैन समाज, इम्फाल
21. टुईसामा	सेठी ट्रस्ट, गुवाहाटी
22. रक्षतपुर	श्री बिमल जी गोधा, सिल्चर
23. देवली	जीर्णोद्धार हो गया
24. सनेरा	द्वारा श्री पी.सी. जैन, रोहित कुमार जैन एवं इन्दिरानगर, लखनऊ की जैन समाज द्वारा
25. बाईकाटा	श्री दिगम्बर जैन वीर महिला समिति, नलबाड़ी
26. पंचेत पहाड़	जमीन खरीद कर बाउड्री, पिलर लगा दिया है। द्वारा श्री पुखराज पाण्ड्या, गोरखपुर एवं श्री हुलासचंद जी सेठी तिनसुकिया
27. टुनकुरी	महिला महासभा (पश्चिम बंगाल)
28. हारूप	द्वारा श्री रामचन्द्र आशीष कुमार सेठी, दिल्ली
29. साका	श्रीमती मुन्नी देवी गंगवाल, सिल्चर
30. राजनैगढ़	श्रीमती सोना देवी चैरिटेबल ट्रस्ट, डीमापुर
31. सुरुलिया	जीर्णोद्धार कार्य हो रहा है।
32. हुडा	जीर्णोद्धार कार्य हो रहा है।
33. उल्टा	जीर्णोद्धार कार्य हो रहा है।
34. बड़ा बाजार	जीर्णोद्धार कार्य हो रहा है।
35. टुम्बा भाटड़ा	जीर्णोद्धार कार्य हो गया है।
36. काटा पत्थर	श्री इन्द्रचंद श्याम सुन्दर पहाड़िया, बोकारो (झारखण्ड)