

CHAPTER THREE

RELIGIOUS IMAGES AND SACRED OBJECTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE JAINA TEMPLE

The architectural structures which form the focus of this survey on Jaina temples have been constructed for and are used by image-worshipping Jainas (*mūrti-pūjaka*), in whose temple buildings religious images provide the primary centre of ritual attention.[1] This chapter acts as an introduction to Jaina sculpture and iconography. As the main areas of enquiry in this study are, however, the characteristic layout and ritual use of sacred space in the architecture of the Jaina temple, issues surrounding the sacred objects venerated in Jainism will only be dealt with briefly. Ample studies dealing with early Jaina images, iconography and the stylistic development of Jaina sculpture are available.[2] The emphasis in this concise introduction will be on those sculptural representations, and groups of Jinas and divinities, which today are regularly found in Jaina temples throughout India and which will be referred to again in the following core chapters on the architectural material.

The most important and common objects of veneration in a Jaina temple are figural representations of the Jinas or Tīrthaṅkaras, the twenty-four fully-enlightened teachers, who through the practice of harsh austerities have broken the bonds of *karma* and have reached the highest knowledge of *kevala-jñāna*. Nonetheless, a large number of divinities of various kinds have emerged during the development of Jainism. Initially, they appear to have acted mainly as attendants of the fordmakers. However, over time some of them were provided with a developed cult of their own but remain in a position which is subordinate to that of the fully-enlightened Jinas.[3] Other sacred elements venerated in a Jaina religious context are honoured teachers, sacred scripture and abstract symbolic representations of Jaina concepts or beings. The need to accommodate large numbers of diverse sacred beings and other religious objects in the Jaina temple has decisively influenced its architectural shape (Fig. 3).

JAINA SACRED IMAGES

1. Questions Concerning the Veneration of Images in Jainism

The practice of installing religious icons for private and public worship is of considerable antiquity in South Asia. Amongst the earliest surviving figural representations are sculptures from the Indus Valley culture, some of which have been interpreted as Jaina statues.[4] From a dogmatic and philosophical viewpoint, the veneration of images presents a problem for Jainas and Buddhists alike. Neither the Buddha, nor Mahāvīra, advised their followers to venerate representations of themselves or those of gods and goddesses. Both denied the existence of a creator god who fashioned the universe. Consequently, image-worship is not regarded

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1 Questions concerning the veneration of images have been much debated by the Jainas. Possibly also influenced by Islamic tendencies, various non image-worshipping factions were formed during the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries. Because the assembly halls and meditation rooms of these groups, referred to as *sthānak*s, are devoid of iconic representations and follow a logic which is entirely different from temples centring around figural representations, these will not be analysed in this study.

2 Important studies on Jaina iconography have, for example, been conducted by Bhattacharya (1974 [1939]), Shah (1955), Nagar (1999) and Bruhn (1969). For other publications relating to the subject, see the detailed bibliography at the end of this publication.

3 Nagar 1999: 72.

4 For further information on these early sculptural representations, see the section in this chapter, entitled "The Beginnings of Jaina Sculptural Art."

Mūrti of Pārśvanātha from Lodruva, whose body has been coated with silver foil. (Plate 147)

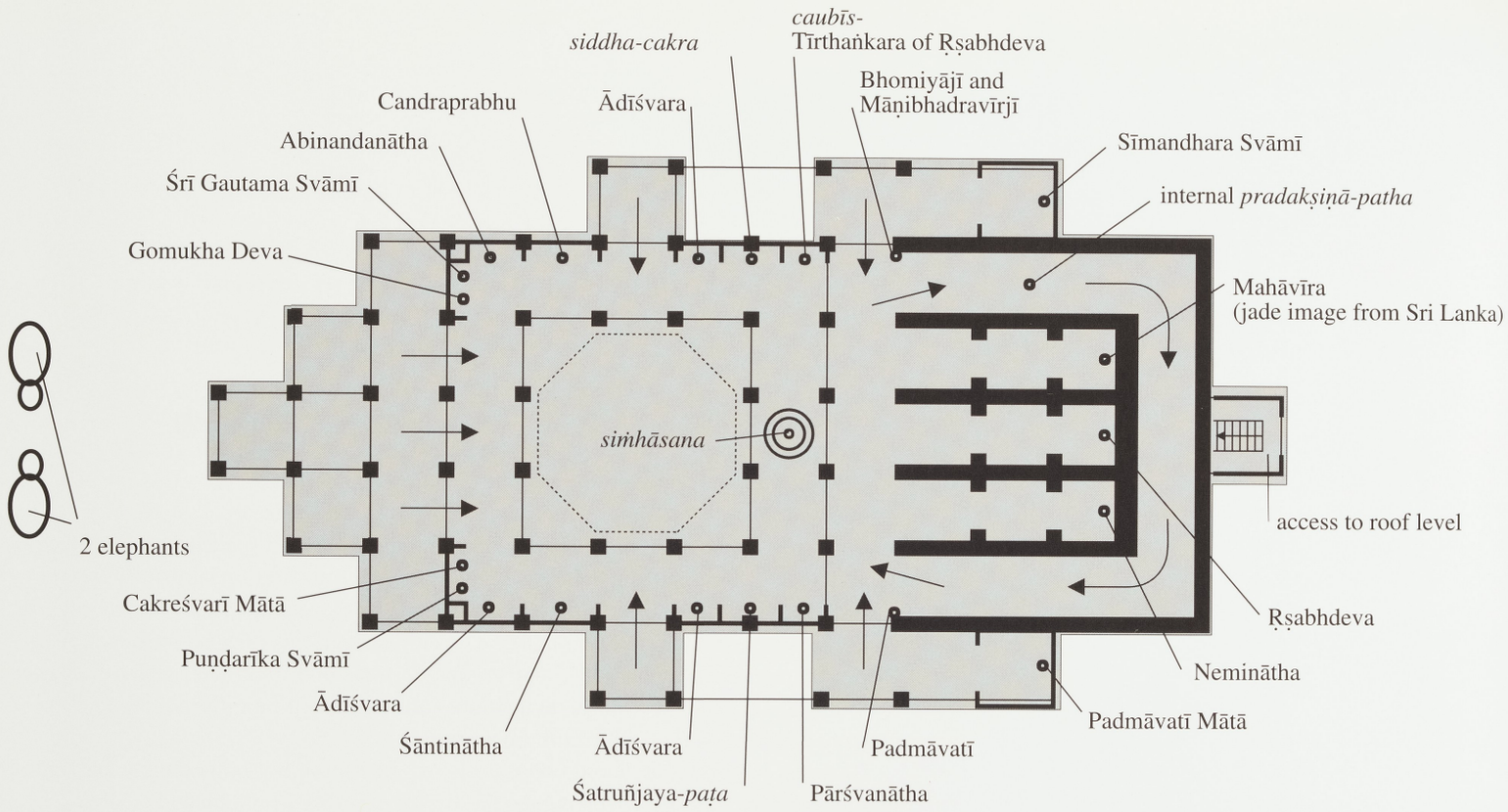

Fig. 3 The Ādinātha Temple at Kulpak houses a large number of Jinas, their honoured disciples and attendants, as well as gods, goddesses, guardians of the temple complex, depictions of venerated pilgrimage places and abstract symbolic representations.

necessary for the attainment of enlightenment in Jainism.[5] It appears, however, that religious images were venerated from the very beginning of the Jaina religion, as the new converts to Jainism were accustomed to worshipping natural spirits, such as *yakṣa*s, *yakṣī*s, *nāga*s and sacred trees (*caitya-vṛkṣa*s).[6] These seem to have been integrated into the religious practices of the new religion and to have been given specific meanings in a Jaina context. This eased the way for new followers to join the Jaina community without abandoning their old practices, and undermined the adoration of non-Jaina elements.[7] It is also believed that the pure and ascetic teachings of the Jinas might have been perceived as too abstract, and the detached passionless Jinas as well as the entirely formless *siddha*s as too unreachable, to provide followers with the needed spiritual support. Devotees might have felt a wish to preserve the memory of their enlightened teachers by establishing sculpted images, and by preserving them close to the places where they lived.[8] First and foremost, however, Jaina icons have been interpreted as representations and symbols of the ideal qualities of the Jinas, and as models to be followed by the community.[9] They are not portraits of individual Tīrthaṅkaras in the way we consider portraiture in the West, but are representations of the qualities born by enlightened beings more generally. Today, the veneration of sculptural representations of the Jinas is considered part of the correct religious behaviour of image-worshipping Jainas, who regard the making of offerings to sacred statues an act of religious giving.

In addition to images of the fully-enlightened exemplars of the Tīrthaṅkaras, and natural spirits such as *yakṣa*s, *yakṣī*s, *nāga*s and sacred trees, a whole series of divinities were admitted to the Jaina religion. As in Jainism, gods and goddesses are not considered to have reached enlightenment and are subject to birth and death just as human beings, they are regarded as subordinate in position to the Jinas. Even monks are considered to be located hierarchically higher than the gods.[10] In stories and legends, many of the divinities have closely been connected with the lives of the Jinas. Dhāraṇendra and Padmāvatī, for example, are linked to the life story of Pārśvanātha. Gods and goddesses appear to have been part of the Jaina faith from early on in its development, at least from the first centuries of the Christian era. Their

5 On this issue, see Shah (1975a: 477).

6 Most of these early venerated beings and objects represent spirits of nature and the animal world.

7 Shah 1955: 41; Nagar 1999: 385.

8 On this topic, see also Nagar (1999: 29).

9 A longer discussion of this issue can be found in Shah (1955: 40).

10 Malvania 1975: 2.

number seems to have expanded considerably after the Gupta period, when Tantrism and the veneration of Tantric deities gained considerably in popularity. However, it is interesting to observe that counter-movements, criticising the emphasis on image veneration, existed from an early age. Kundakunda's reform movement of the second and third centuries CE, for instance, propagated a shift away from an increasing emphasis on ritual and the veneration of images, and stressed the idea that religious truth was to be found inside the worshippers themselves.[11]

2. The Beginnings of Jaina Sculptural Art

As is the case with Hinduism and Buddhism, in Jainism the first beginnings of the creation and veneration of figural imagery are unknown. It has been suggested that certain representations of standing naked images, excavated in the Indus Valley and dating from the third millennium BCE, can possibly be identified as Jaina icons.[12] However, this seems more to be based on the wish of the Jaina community to provide the present cult of image veneration amongst the *mūrti-pūjaka* sects with a legitimisation and continuity, and of art historians ever looking for the earliest and oldest sculpture of a kind, than on factual evidence. Even with respect to the naked and headless torso displaying the typical Mauryan polish, which was unearthed in the excavations at Lohanipur near Patna in Bihar, and which has been dated to the third century BCE, its identification as a Tīrthaṅkara cannot be proven with certainty.[13] Jaina legend recounts that Bharata installed an image of his deceased father Ṛṣabhanātha on Mount Śatruñjaya. A story about a lifetime image of Mahāvīra (*jīvanta-svāmi-pratimā*), carved from sandalwood, still persists to the present day, although Mahāvīra and his *gaṇadhara*s are not known to have visited images or shrines of the Tīrthaṅkaras.[14] According to the account in the *Āvaśyaka-cūrṇī*, the wooden portrait-sculpture of Mahāvīra was first installed at Moruka in Sindhu-Sauvira, at Ujjain, and then taken to Vidisha, with a replacement of it kept at Patan (Vītabhayapattana).[15] This seems to indicate that the sandalwood statue might have served as a prototype for later images.[16] Similar wooden and terracotta sculptures of *yakṣa*s might have provided the first models for figural representations of the Jinas. As all of these early icons, however, have been lost, no concrete evidence for the precise beginnings of a cult of image creation and veneration in Jainism can be supplied at the present time.

Clear sculptural, architectural and inscriptional evidence for the installation and veneration of Jaina sculptural images from the second century BCE, however, can be provided from the site of Kaṅkālī-ṭīlā outside the city of Mathura. In addition to figural representations, a large number of *āyāga-paṭa*s, votive tablets, also known as *śila-paṭa*s, have been unearthed at the site. The carved stones are votive offerings, meant for the worship of the Jinas, which were placed on altars (*vedī*s) below trees.[17] Two inscribed Jina icons, dating from about 550 CE, were unearthed at Akota as part of a large hoard of bronze statues. Other early Jaina sculptures come from Chausa, near Buxur in Bihar.[18] Larger numbers of Jaina images appear to have been created during the Gupta period, when the identities of the individual Tīrthaṅkaras and their emblems were further developed.

124. White marble image of a Jina from the Candraprabhu Temple at Jaisalmer.



11 The main issues of Kundakunda's philosophy has, for instance, been discussed in Dundas (1992: 91-94).

12 Figural representations in yogic postures adorning seals and a naked male torso from Harappa have been utilised to argue for this early age of Jaina images. See Lannoy (1974: 10), Jaini (1990: 33), Craven (1987: 22), as well as the discussion in Shah (1974: 87; 1999: 109) with regards to similarities between the style of Indus Valley sculptures and ancient Jaina images.

13 Similar doubts have been expressed by Shah (1975a: 465; 1999: 109), Craven (1987: 43) and Dundas (1992: 174).

14 On this issue, see also Shah (1975b: 50; 1975a: 465-466). Noteworthy, however, is the fact that we have references to Mahāvīra and his followers visiting *yakṣa* shrines.

15 For further information, refer to the writings by Shah (1974: 86-87; 1999: 110) and Nagar (1999: 28).

16 Shah 1975a: 466.

17 A more detailed discussion of *āyāga-paṭa*s and their associated cult can be found in Shah (1975a: 481-482).

18 Shah 1975a: 466; 1999: 84.

The *Āgama*s have references to Jaina images, the *śāśvata-Jina-pratimā*s, which are installed on the peaks of mountains located on island continents such as Nandīśvara-dvīpa, and in various heavens. However, they do not refer to the practice of image creation in the human world.[19] Certain Jaina iconographical features can already be deduced from the *Aṅga*s and the *Upāṅga*s, but more precise information on an iconographical canon including iconometry in Jainism occur only in Varāhamihira's text, the *Bṛhat-sāṁhitā* and in the *Mānasāra*.[20]

Religio-theoretical texts also provide information on the material out of which Jaina icons, locally referred to as *mūrti*, *bimba* or *pratimā*, can be fashioned. Important for the making of all religious objects, as well as the construction of temple buildings, is the identification of an auspicious time and the choice of flawless materials. Noteworthy are the clear differences and numerous contradictions between various manuals and between theoretical texts and actual practice. According to the *Pratiṣṭhā-pāṭha*, the use of clay, plaster and wood are prohibited as materials for icons.[21] Literary sources, however, suggest that in the past Jaina images were regularly made of wood and clay.[22] Most Jaina icons available to us today are made of stone. This can be marble, available in different colours and textures, sandstone, limestone, granite, or any other natural stone available to the sculptors (*śilpi*s) (Plate 124). The availability of a certain kind of stone in a particular region has frequently led to the production of large numbers of statues in this material. Red sandstone was the main medium for sculptors at Mathura, whereas marble is the most common stone used for sculpting in the area of Rajasthan. However, in other cases images have been commissioned and ordered from far away places and transported over long distances. The aim was usually to obtain an image made by a renowned artist, and to differentiate a statue from local sculptures in terms of material, style, rarity and its resulting preciousness. According to the *Pratiṣṭhā-sāra-saṅgraha* (3, 77), stones of white, red, black and green colour are the most suitable for the fashioning of Jaina images.[23]

In addition to stone representations, Jaina *pratimā*s have regularly been cast in metal (Plate 125). According to certain texts, however, the use of bronze and lead should be restricted.[24] Metal *mūrti*s can be found in all parts of India and are particularly popular in the south. Not only metal representations of the Tīrthaṅkaras, but of divinities and of religious symbols venerated in a Jaina temple context, are common (Plate 126). The large majority of metal statues have been made of bronze, although brass too is common as a material. Particularly well-known are *pañca-dhātu* images, made of an alloy of five different metals.[25] Metal figures have been gilt, and particularly precious examples can entirely be made of gold. Silver and copper representations exist but are relatively rare. However, Jaina sculptures which combine metals of different colours, such as bronze statues with inlaid silver eyes or crowns, or a *śrīvatsa* and auspicious marks inlaid in copper, are very common (Plate 127).

Smaller precious images have been carved out of costly semi-precious stones, gems, crystal and ivory. From about the fifteenth century onwards, sculptures adorning Jaina temple architecture have also been fashioned in stucco and then painted.[26] As has been mentioned in

125. Metal representation of Cintāmaṇī Pārśvanātha from the Ajitanātha Temple at Sirohi.



19 On this issue, see, for example, the *Jīvajīv-ābhigama-sūtra* (139) and the analysis of this text in Shah (1975a: 472).

20 This is with reference to the *Bṛhat-sāṁhitā* 58, 45. This has been discussed in Shah (1975a: 465-467).

21 See the *Pratiṣṭhā-pāṭha* (69) and the discussion of this subject in Sharma (1974: xviii) and Nagar (1999: 65).

22 The story of a lifetime image of Mahāvīra, carved from sandalwood and known as *jīvanta-svāmi-pratimā*, has been mentioned earlier in this chapter.

23 See the *Pratiṣṭhā-sāra-saṅgraha* 3, 77 (Sharma 1974: xviii-xix; Nagar 1999: 66).

24 This is based on Vardhamāna Sūri's *Ācāra-dinakara*. This text, however, allows the use of wood for making religious icons, which according to the *Pratiṣṭhā-pāṭha* (69) should be avoided (Sharma 1974: xviii; Nagar 1999: 65). This indicates contradictions between certain treatises.

25 An image of this kind, representing Mahāvīra is enshrined in the upper chamber of the Śāntinātha Temple in the fort of Jaisalmer, Rajasthan. With respect to *pañca-dhātu* images, a passage concerning injunctions on the selection of materials for the creation of Jaina images in the *Ācāra-dinakara* is noteworthy. According to this text, Jaina sculptures should not be made of led or tin, and not of a mixture of metals, such as bronze or brass (Shah 1975a: 471).

26 Photographs of stucco sculptures adorning Jaina temples have been reproduced in the following



126. Metal representations of Jinas, Bāhubali, *yakṣa*s and *yakṣī*s, and of cosmological representations are venerated in the Ādinātha Digambara Temple in Ponnur.

the previous chapter, in rare cases, sacred images can be made of more unusual substances, such as sand or mud mixed with milk or ghee. Although this is not common practice, it usually imbues the icons with particular importance and rarity.

Jaina sculptures are canonically installed in a complex ritual, referred to as *pratiṣṭhā-mahotsava*, or by its short form *pratiṣṭhā.* The complex installation ceremonies need to be carried out over a series of days. During the first part, usually lasting three days, the five exalted ones, the *pañca-parameṣṭhin,* are venerated. This is followed by scenic performances of the *pañca-kalyāṇa.* As a consequence, the celebrations surrounding the installation of a sacred statue are known as *pañca-kalyāṇa-pratiṣṭhā-mahotsava*. The five auspicious events in the life of a Jina have to be re-enacted in order to provide the image with an auspicious history and to associate it with the life and deeds of the saintly teacher it represents. If the sculpture is too large and heavy to be carried to different locations in a town or village for the performance of these different events, a small replacement figure made of metal can be used as a replacement. After the image has lived through the different important stages of a Jina's life, the figure is believed to be imbued with sacred forces and can be placed in the image chamber of a Jaina temple. A statue which has been formally installed has to be venerated on a daily basis.[27]

It should be noted that Jaina sculptures can generally either be immovable, *sthāpanā* or *pratiṣṭhit*, meaning fixed or permanently installed in a shrine, or that they can be movable. The first type of image is usually made of stone, relatively large and firmly installed in the *garbha-gṛha* of a temple. The second kind of religious figure is usually made of metal, and used in daily rituals. The ceremonies conducted on these ritual images, referred to as *vidhi-nāyaka*s, are believed to apply themselves to the larger *mūla-nāyaka*, the main figure in the central shrine of the temple. Larger Jaina temples often have sculptures, resembling those of Tīrthaṅkaras, known as *maṅgal-mūrti*s. These are usually either placed in niches surrounding the *prāsāda* of a temple, or have been integrated into the *śikhara* tower above the shrine. *maṅgal-mūrti*s have not formally been consecrated and are therefore simply seen as decorations, without ritual significance.[28]

127. Representation of Sumatinātha from the Sumatinātha Temple at Margaon, indicating the combination of metals of different colours.



chapter on architecture, Chapter Four.

27 The rite of image installation has been described and documented in great detail in Fischer & Jain (1974/5: 35-44).

28 In the Śaṅkeśvara Temple at Jiravala and the Mahāvīra Temple at Bamanvad, *maṅgal-mūrti*s adorn the outer walls of the shrine. In the Śāntinātha Temple at Sanderav, they can be found in this position, but also on the outside of the closed hall. The Pāvāpurī Jala Mandir at Sadri is an example in which such unconsecrated images have been placed in niches in the *śikhara* tower of the temple. All examples mentioned here are from Rajasthan.

1. General Characteristics of Statues of the Jinas

Although the Tīrthaṅkaras are human and not divine beings, a fact reiterated repeatedly by Jaina scripture, at least laypeople often invest them with superhuman characteristics. By having attained complete omniscience, a condition so glorious and difficult to reach, that they clearly stand out from the Jaina community, this view and evaluation of the Jinas is not surprising.[29] Because of their heroic and exceptional characteristics and attributes, and because a Tīrthaṅkara is believed to be born with a special body resembling a diamond (*vajra*) in firmness and shine, sculptural representations of the Jinas follow strongly idealised artistic conventions.[30] This is also based on the belief that a fully-enlightened Tīrthaṅkara has not just reached spiritual perfection but has an ideal physical physiognomy. There are hardly any visual differences between the twenty-four individual Jinas as all have reached the same state, an idealised condition in which they cease to be separate personalities and become representative of one and the same ideal. In Jainism, *karmic* matter is believed to determine and shape the individual, and once human bodies have been relieved of this ritually polluting substance, they are believed all to become exactly the same.[31]

Sculptural representations of the Jinas follow the artistic conventions associated with images of the mythical world ruler, the *cakravartin* (world ruler, universal emperor) or *mahā-puruṣa* (great man).[32] Adhering to the ideal of the universal emperor, Tīrthaṅkaras are depicted

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29 This issue has been discussed in Jaini (1990: 3, 34). The tendency to regard the Jinas as superhuman appears to be more strongly developed amongst Digambaras than Śvetāmbara groups. According to Digambara Jainism, the enlightened Tīrthaṅkara is completely free from all the defects of human existence. He does not experience any human emotions such as fear and hunger any longer, has ceased to sleep and speak, and is as such entirely liberated from human desires and bodily needs (Jaini 1990: 34-45).

30 Jinas are believed to requires such a tough kind of adamantine body in order to tolerate the extreme physical austerities necessary to reach full enlightenment and Jinahood (Jaini 1990: 3).

31 Zimmer 1983: 55.

32 The *cakravartin* ideal can also be found in Buddhism, where it is described in Buddhist texts and has been given visual shape in iconography and sculpture. Note also the alternative spelling for *cakravartin*, which is *cakravartī*.

128. Standing Jina statue from Vidisha, exhibiting a slender and youthful body.

129. Mahāvīra *mūrti* from the Jala Mandir at Sadri, displaying a shaven head.

130. Jina image from Kundalpur with rings of curly hair.











131. Sculpture of Ṛṣabhanātha from Kausambi with an auspicious mark carved onto the open palm of the hand.

132. Small marble Jina from Mandu with a metal implant in its chest, representing the *śrīvatsa* mark.

with idealised slender and well-proportioned, athletic, youthful bodies (Plate 128).[33] Although most texts on iconography prescribe shaven heads for Jina *bimba*s, a feature widely followed in Jaina sculptures (Plate 129), others are more closely related to conventions associated with Buddha figures, and display curly hair (Plate 130).[34] The Jina images display a calm and inward-looking meditational expression on their faces. The perfectly formed physique of the Jinas has been coupled with a series of auspicious marks, the *mahā-puruṣa-lakṣaṇa*s, identifying the Jina as a *cakravartin*. Amongst those aspects which can be depicted in sculptural form and translated into visual components are emblems found on the soles of the feet, on the palms of the hands, and the *śrīvatsa*, a rhizome mark positioned on the chest (Plates 131, 132).[35] The *śrīvatsa*-mark has been introduced in the Jaina art of the Kuṣāṇa period.[36] It has usually been described as a sign of spiritual and physical purity. Jina images in the south, however, are less likely to bear a *śrīvatsa* mark. One of the most frequently mentioned emblematic marks of the Jina as *cakravartin* are the wheels imprinted on his feet.[37] Although these emblems are commonly described in literature, they are relatively rarely depicted in association with figural representations of the Jinas or their venerated foot imprints. The latter are simplified representations of the sacred statues, in

33 According to the *Pratiṣṭhā-pāda* (151-152), a Tīrthaṅkara should neither be depicted as an old man nor as a boy. He should be portrayed with a youthful body (Sharma 1974: xx; Nagar 1999: 67).

34 Various Jaina texts on art and architecture, such as the *Mānasāra* (LV, 71-95), which refer to the iconography of Jina images, describe them as shaven headed but also as having a top-knot, an *uṣṇiṣa* (Shah 1975a: 467, 468). The *Aupapātika-sūtra*, an *Upāṅga-āgama* text, however, describes Mahāvīra as having dark and thick hair arranged in schematic curls (*pradakṣiṇā-vartta*) (Shah 1975a: 474-475). In practice, examples of sculpted images of Tīrthaṅkaras which bear hair on their heads, can be seen relatively often. It is also part of the iconography of Ṛṣabhdeva, to be depicted with long hair. This peculiar feature will be explained later in this chapter. Many religio-philosophical texts, however, prescribe that not just the head, but the entire body of the Jina should be represented without any hair. Examples are, for instance, the *Mānasāra*, the *Pratiṣṭhā-sāra-saṅgraha*, the *Pratiṣṭhā-pāṭha*. For further information on these texts, see Nagar (1999: 66-69).

35 See the ideal descriptions of Mahāvīra's body in the *Aupapātika-sūtra*, the *Ratna-gotra-vibhāga* and the *Vasudeva-hiṇḍi* (ca. fifth century CE) (Shah 1975a: 474, 476). Vasunandi Saiddhāntika in his *Pratiṣṭhā-sāra-saṅgraha* (c. 12th c. CE), describes Jina images as having a swastika inscribed on their chest (Deo 1995: 13).

36 Shah 1975a: 474.

37 Dundas narrates a story relating to Mahāvīra in which an astrologer, skilled in recognising the auspicious marks associated with a *cakravartin*, notices the imprints which Mahāvīra walking along the Ganges has left in the wet clay. His footprints display a wheel (Dundas 1992: 31-32).







133. Prominent life lines have been carved onto the foot imprints (*pādukā*s) of Candraprabhu on Droṇagiri.

134. Flower representations in high relief adorn the soles of Neminātha's footprints at Bamanvad.

135. Open lotus flower supporting the venerated foot imprints of a Jina on Mount Tuṅgī.

136. A row of white marble *pādukā*s runs along one side of the Pārśvanātha Temple complex at Khaniyan.



which simply their foot imprints are venerated. These are known by a variety of names, such as *pādukā*s, *pādukā-śila*s or *caraṇa*s. In connection with the latter, the reason might be the wish to differentiate the sacred Jaina foot imprints from those created and venerated by Buddhists and Vaiṣṇavas. Jaina versions are more likely to show the individual life lines of the Jina, or to be adorned with lotus flowers (Plates 133, 134). Lotus representations also often support the venerated foot imprints, visualising their sacredness and purity (Plate 135). Footprints which are representative of the Jinas have been carved in stone and are venerated at sacred sites and inside Jaina temples throughout India. It is noteworthy that following the introduction of Islam into India, an increase in the creation and veneration of more symbolic representations of the Jinas, such as the sacred *pādukā*s, and finally the formation of non image-worshipping groups, can be noticed (Plate 136).[38] Texts on Jaina iconography describe further auspicious emblems marked on the soles of the feet of the Tīrthaṅkaras. Amongst others they list elements such as a conch (*śaṅkha*), a disc (*cakra*), a goad (*aṅkuśa*), a lotus (*padma*), an umbrella (*chatra*) and barley corns (*yava*).[39] These and other elements are said to adorn the palms of the Jinas hands.[40] As both the Buddha and the Jina are *cakravartin*s, and follow the prescriptions set aside for such exalted figures, there are certain similarities between figural representations of the enlightened beings of these two major religious groups. Some Jaina images have a slight protuberance (*uṣṇiṣa*) indicated on the top of their head (Plate 137), however, they do not usually have a third eye (*ūrṇā*) marked on their foreheads. The latter is commonly associated with representations of the Buddha.[41] On the other side, it is rare for Buddha representations to have a *śrīvatsa* mark on the chest, whilst this can be associated with various images of Hindu gods.[42] Especially during the early period of image creation, when canons relating to the representation of icons were still being assembled and formed, differentiations between Buddhist and Jaina statues can at times be hard to distinguish.

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38 For further information on these and other issues relating to Islamic influences on Jaina art and architecture, see Hegewald (2007b and forthcoming: f).

39 See, for example, the *Pratiṣṭhā-sāra-saṅgraha*, composed by Vasunandi Saiddhāntika (Shah 1975a: 468). Shah translates *yava* as 'oat[s].' According to Monier Williams, it means 'barley corns,' but "probably meant any kind of grain or corn yielding flower or meal" (Monier Williams 1993: 847).

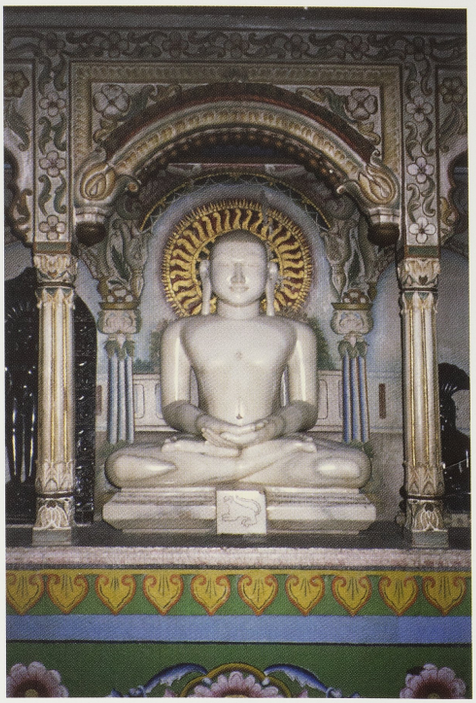
40 According to the *Aupapātika-sūtra*, the palms of a Jina display amongst others representations of the moon, the sun, a conch, a wheel (*cakra*) and a swastika (Shah 1975a: 475).

41 Only a few early Jaina images showing an *ūrṇā* and a developed *uṣṇiṣa* are known so far (Shah 1975a: 475). These generally date from the Kuṣāṇa period (Deo 1995: 18). The features of the third eye and the top knot become less pronounced the more distinct Jaina iconography becomes over the centuries, and vanish entirely by the Gupta period. This expresses a conscious move away from Buddhist imagery towards the development of a more distinct and clearly identifiable sculptural style. An alternative spelling for '*uṣṇiṣa*' is '*uṣṇīṣa*.'

42 In Buddha images, the *śrīvatsa* mark can be found on the soles of the feet, as the chest is usually covered with a garment. The symbol itself appears to have derived from Śrī, also known as Lakṣmī, and is found on the chest of her consort, Viṣṇu. The Jainas probably took over the emblem from Viṣṇu in order to provide the Jinas with the status of Viṣṇu-*puruṣottama*. For a more detailed discussion of this issue, see Shah (1975a: 492) and Nagar (1999: 409).







137. Jina statue from Gwalior, having a pronounced protuberance (*uṣṇiṣa*) at the apex of his head.

138. Neminātha sculpture from Vaibhāra Hill at Rajgir, the earliest preserved dated Jaina image bearing a *lāñchana* mark.

139. A lion, identifying this sculpture as a representation of Mahāvīra, has been carved onto the pedestal supporting a seated sculpture from Bavangaja.

140. An elephant depiction at the bottom of this standing *mūrti* from Kausambi classifies the statue as a representation of Ajitanātha.

It is even more difficult during this early period of iconic image making, to differentiate between representations of the individual twenty-four fordmakers. Only a few iconographic features associated with certain Tīrthaṅkaras, such as the hooded snakes sheltering images of Pārśvanātha and Supārśvanātha, and the long hair associated with the Tīrthaṅkara Ṛṣabhanātha, allow the identification of sculptural representations of certain fordmakers. Because of this difficulty, emblems of cognisance (*lāñchanas*) associated with all twenty-four Jinas were introduced after the Kuṣāṇa age, probably in the early phase of the Gupta period.[43] The earliest known and datable image which bears a *lāñchana* mark, is a stone sculpture of Neminātha, set into a niche in the lower shrine of the Old Jaina Temple on the summit of Vaibhāra Hill at Rajgir (Plate 138). The image bears a Gupta inscription on the basis of which it has been dated to about CE 375-413.[44] The characterising sign associated with each Jina reflects a distinctive detail in the life story of that particular being.[45] The symbol is usually represented on the seat of the statue, or on the pedestal below it (Plates 139, 140).[46] Slight differences exist between the lists of *lāñchanas* used by the two sects of Jainism and sometimes, on a more local level, even between various traditions within one group.[47] For the most popular and common fordmakers, however, the imagery has been fixed and seems to be universally accepted by Jainas throughout India.



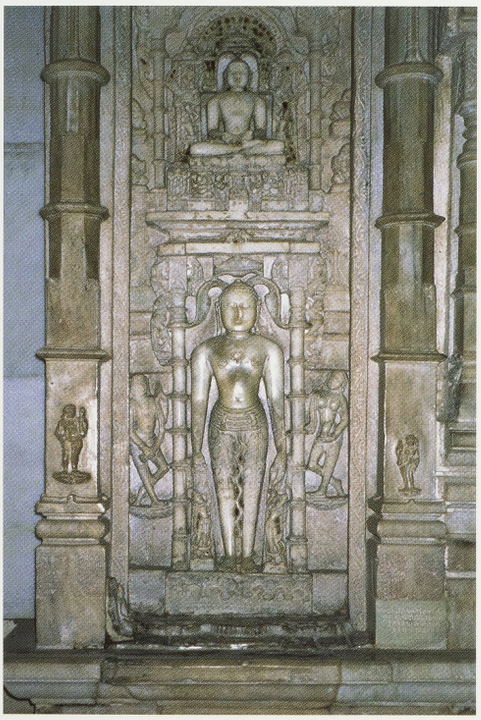
43 Before the introduction of the *lāñchana* marks, the Jinas seem to have been differentiated by their associated initiation (*dīkṣā*) or enlightenment trees (Shah 1955: 74). This is based on the belief that Jinas-to-be renounce worldly life and then the world below certain trees. See the lists provided in Shah (1955: 76) and in Deo (1995: 15-17). Although today the term *lāñchana* is widely used to refer to the cognisance of the Jinas, they are also known as *cinha* (*cihna*), meaning 'mark.' In Karnataka, for instance, the earliest textual reference listing the *lāñchanas* of all twenty-four Tīrthaṅkaras, is to be found in the Māghaṇandyācārya's *Śāstra-sārasa-muccaya-ṭīku*, dating from 1206 CE (Settar 1975: 25).

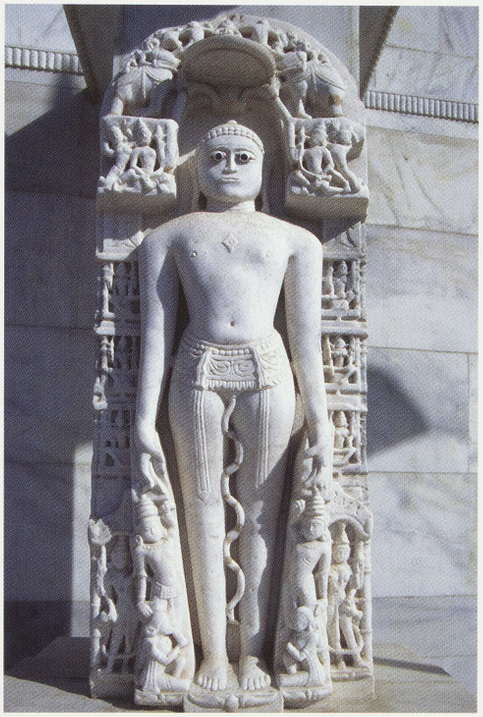
44 Chand, 1928: 125; Shah 1955: fig. 18.

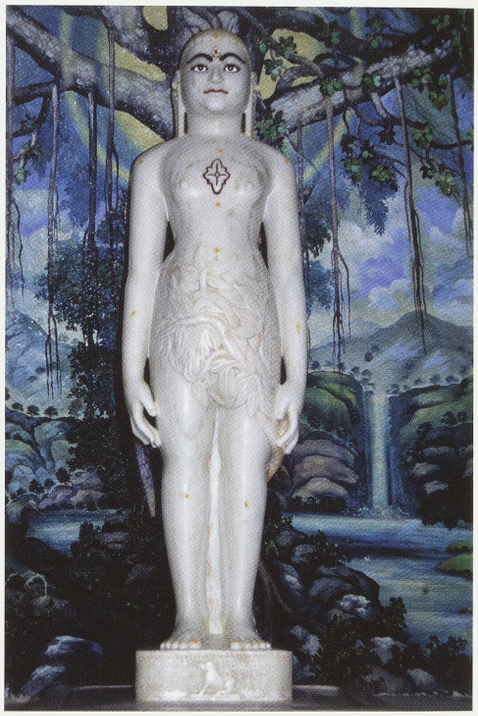
45 Zimmer 1983: 55.

46 The *lāñchana* mark is usually positioned in the centre of the pedestal, below the *pāda-pīṭha*, with the attendant *yakṣa* and *yakṣī* located on the right and left sides respectively (Shah 1975a: 470).

47 Whereas the Śvetāmbaras associate Anantanātha with the falcon, the Digambaras connect him with the image of the bear. In Śvetāmbara imagery, Śītalanātha is recognised by the *śrīvatsa* mark, whilst in a Digambara context, depending on the tradition, he is either identified by the swastika (*Tiloya-paṇṇatti*) or the *śrī-druma* (*Pratiṣṭhā-sāroddhāra*). Another Jina where such differences have occurred, is Aranātha, whose cognisance in a Śvetāmbara context is the *nandyāvarta* and amongst the Digambaras it is the fish. For further information, see Shah (1975a: 469) and Appendix II at the end of this book.







141. Śvetāmbara sculptures are depicted wearing a simple loincloth (*dhotī*). This pilaster from the Neminātha Temple at Kumbharia shows a seated and a standing representation.

142. Standing Śvetāmbara figure from Sirohi dressed with a simple cloth tied around its hips.

143. Representation of an unusual *dhotī* made of leafs, garmenting an image of Mahāvīra at Bamanvad.

144. *Opposite top left* Jinas adorned with crowns and jewellery, venerated inside the first floor shrine of the Śvetāmbara Sumatinātha Temple at Margaon.

145. *Opposite top right* Black Pārśvanātha sculpture from Sadri, which has been adorned with auspicious marks (*alaṅkāra*s) of saffron-coloured sandalwood paste.

146. *Opposite bottom* Permanent metal knobs mark the position of the *alaṅkāra*s on a group of marble images in the Pārśvanātha Temple at Varkana.

Although representations of different fordmakers do not vary very much, there is a clear difference between sculptural representations of Jinas created for Śvetāmbara and Digambara worship. This has largely to do with their disagreement on the appropriate way to dress for a Jaina monk. Sculptures of the Jinas, which are representations of perfected Jaina ascetics who have reached the Jaina ideal of *kevala-jñāna* and as such act as ideals and models for the community, clearly reflect this sectarian divide. The earliest surviving Jaina images from sites such as Mathura and Chausa available to us today, are represented naked (*nirvastra*), and the question about dress appears to have gained more vigour during the time of the second council at Vallabhi, held in 453 CE. The first sculptural representation known to us, which depicts a Jina wearing a lower garment, is a statue of Ṛṣabhanātha from the fifth century CE which comes from Akota in Gujarat. From the sixth century, more examples of garmented Jinas are available, for example, from the site of Vallabhi.[48] With regards to seated images, the differentiation is not so pronounced, but standing Śvetāmbara images are shown wearing a simple cloth, a *dhotī*, wrapped around the hips of the figure (Plates 141, 142). An unusual image at Bamanvad shows Mahāvīra with a loincloth of leaves (Plate 143). However, it is not only the dressing of images, either through representations of carved garments or through the fixing of actual pieces of cloth to the sculptures, which make Śvetāmbara sculptures unfit for Digambara temple use. It is also the fact that Śvetāmbara Jainas adorn their figural representations with jewellery and crowns, to give them the appearance of kings (Plate 144).[49] Furthermore, Śvetāmbaras paint auspicious marks (*alaṅkāra*s) onto the bodies of Jina sculptures, which signify clothes and render them unsuitable for Digambara worship (Plate 145). The auspicious marks can be in the form of permanent metal knobs, inserted into the stone of the sculptures (Plate 146). Some statues are clad in silver foil (Plate 147), and on the occasion of religious festivals, silver plated shields, resembling body armour, are strapped onto stone images for decorative purposes (Plates 148, 149). Such metal covers can be gilt or made entirely of gold and many have been decorated with precious stones (Plate 150). Consequently, the heavily ornamented and decorated sculptures appear to be made of metal, and reflect the light of flames and lamps lit inside the image chambers or moved in front of the images in the ritual of *ārati*. Some images, such as the figure of Ādinātha facing east in the Ādinātha Temple at Ranakpur, wear such 'silver clothes,' as they are commonly called, on

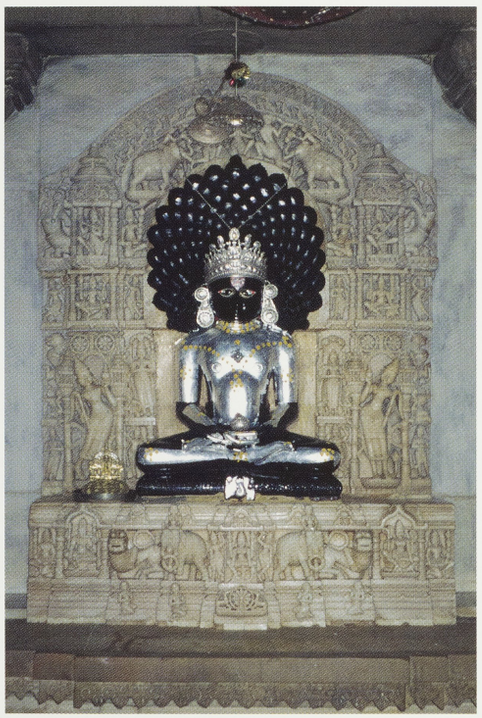
48 Shah 1974b: 134-135.

49 The image of Ādinātha in the Vimala-vasahī on Mount Abu has eyes inlayed with jewels and on special festival days it is decorated with a necklace of diamonds, which he refers to as 'brilliants' (Bhandarkar 1920: 16).




श्री सावलीया पार्श्वनाथजी


श्री सुमतिनाथजी





147. *Mūrti* of Pārśvanātha from Lodruva, whose body has been coated with silver foil.

148. Metal cover made of silver belonging to the main image of Ādinātha at Ranakpur.

149. Pārśvanātha icon from Patan wearing a silver shield, flower decorations and a golden image frame.

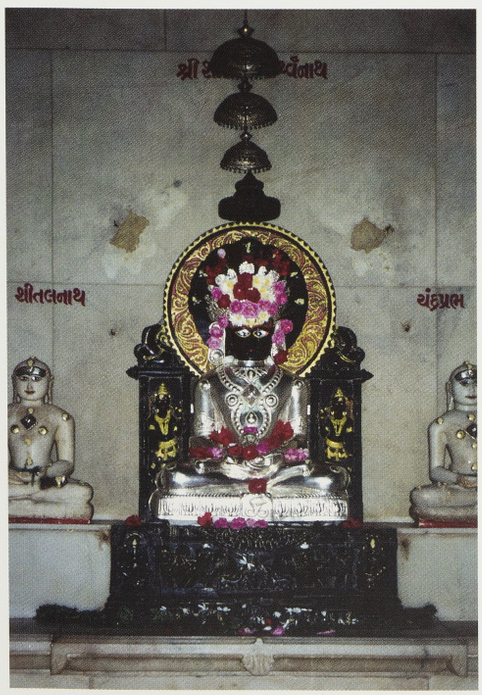
150. Metal cover made of gold and decorated with precious stones dressing the main icon in the Ajitanātha Temple at Sirohi.

151. Unadorned seated Digambara sculptures from the Baṛā Jaina Temple at Jabalpur.

a daily basis. The metal shields are taken off and cleaned every morning as part of the daily *pūjā* ceremony. In contrast, Digambara Jinas are represented naked and the sculptures are not adorned or decorated (Plates 151, 152). Both parties of Jainas feel strongly about the issue of dress and it is an almost violent act and strong religious statement, when after having taken over a site from the Digambaras, Śvetāmbaras adorn and clothe the images, as this makes any further veneration on the side of the Digambaras impossible in the future.[50]

A significant compromise or means of circumnavigating the problem of dress with regards to the joint veneration of the same religious object, has been reached on Mount Paraśnātha, the famous mountain site at which twenty of the twenty-four Jinas are believed

50 Such an instance occurred when the Śvetāmbaras won the right to the control of Mount Girnār and took over the temples and images from the Digambara Jainas. For more detailed information on this case, see Dundas (1992: 46).













152. Naked standing Digambara image from the roof shrine of the Śaṅkha Basti at Lakshmeshvar, bearing no crown or ornaments.

153. Representations of the stylised and highly-idealised Jinas display slender proportions with long extremities as seen in this example from Vidisha.

154. Statue of Mahāvīra surrounded by further representations (*parikara*) from the Pārśvanātha Triple Temple on Mount Droṇagiri.

to have reached enlightenment. At this site, the temples and small shrines all contain non-figural representations of the Tīrthaṅkaras in the form of *pādukā* foot imprints. This allows followers of both groups to venerate the representations in all the temples at the site. The close connection between Jaina ascetics and idealised sculptural representations of them also becomes obvious in the initiation ceremony (*dīkṣā*) performed for new Śvetāmbara monks. After they have taken the five great vows, their bodies are painted with auspicious symbols, reflecting the practice of decorating Śvetāmbara images in a temple context.[51]

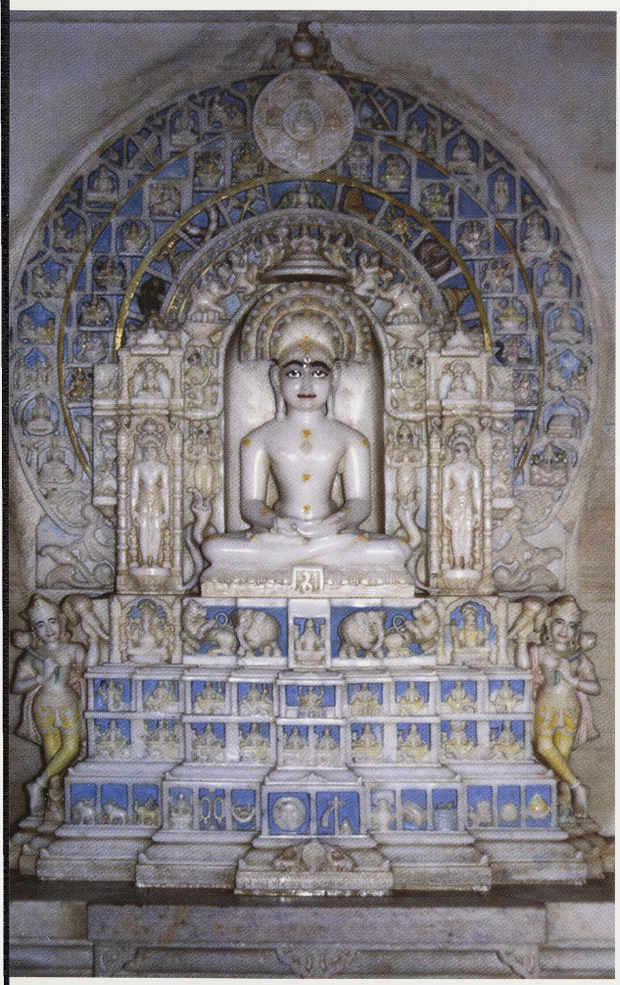
Sculptural representations of the Tīrthaṅkaras are divided into two major postures. The first is a seated position with the legs crossed. This is referred to as *padmā-sana*, *paryaṅkā-sana* or *yogā-sana* posture.[52] The hands are held in a meditation position, resting in the lap, known as *dhyāna-mudrā* or as *yoga-mudrā*. In the second position, the images stand motionless with their arms hanging down their sides in the posture of abandonment. This is known as *kāyotsarga* or *khadgā-sana*.[53] The hand gesture of standing Jina sculptures is referred to as *jina-mudrā*.[54] Seated Tīrthaṅkaras should be positioned on a lion pedestal or throne (*siṁhāsana*). All Jinas can be represented in either of the two main postures. No other hand gestures (*mudrā*s) are common with representations of the fully-enlightened teachers, clearly differentiating them from the variety of *mudrā*s available for images of the Buddha and representations of various Hindu divinities. Different kinds of hand gestures are only found in connection with the *gaṇadhara*s and Jaina divinities. *Mudrā*s usually indicate some action, which the divinity is engaged in, while the Jinas are motionless, have abandoned all activities and are entirely detached from this world. The bodies of the Tīrthaṅkaras are always erect, and in standing representations, the legs are uniformly straight. The arms of standing representations are meant to be long, to reach down to the knees but not to touch the sides of the legs. Long and slender proportions are characteristic of statues of the Tīrthaṅkaras (Plate 153), a feature prescribed for representations of *cakravartin*s in general. Although iconographic texts associate specific

51 Dundas has written in more detail on this issue (1992: 134, 157).

52 Seated images from the south can also be depicted in *ardha-padmā-sana*, with one leg hanging down. Seated representations from the north of India are usually cross legged in full *padmā-sana* (Shah 1975a: 468).

53 An alternative spelling for '*khadgā-sana*' is '*khaḍgā-sana*.' Both the seated and the standing postures are yogic in nature. There are no reclining Tīrthaṅkara images, as there are of the Buddha in *parinirvāṇa,* or of Viṣṇu Nārāyaṇa (Śeṣaśāyin). The *kāyotsarga* posture is part of the six obligatory actions. See Chapter Two in this publication and Dundas (1992: 148).

54 Nagar 1999: 408.



155. Complex sculptural assemblage, representing large numbers of divine beings surrounding a central image of Pārśvanātha at Bamanvad.

colours with individual Jinas, the stone or material used for the sculptures does not usually reflect their respective personal colour.[55] The colour of the stone used for the icons can therefore not usually be taken as a means of identifying a specific Tīrthaṅkara.

In more complex figural depictions of the Tīrthaṅkaras, the central Jina is frequently surrounded by a large number of iconographic elements and attendants. These are referred to as *prātihāryas* and create complex sculptural compositions known as the *parikara* of a Jina.[56] *Parikaras* are image-frames, consisting of a series of subsidiary figures. Jaina religious texts mention thirty-four supernatural qualities (*atiśayas*) associated with the Tīrthaṅkaras. A smaller number of these have been grouped as the eight chief qualities or accompanying attendants of a Jina, the *aṣṭa-mahā-pratihāryas*. These consist of his enlightenment tree or an *aśoka* tree, a lion throne (*siṁhāsana*), a triple-umbrella (*chatra-traya*), a radiating lustre surrounding the head of the Tīrthaṅkara,[57] drum-beaters, garland-bearers (*mālā-vidyā-dharas*),[58] flywhisk-bearers (*caurī-dharas*)[59] and heavenly musicians.[60] Furthermore, a full image-frame, a *parikara-lakṣṇa*, should include a *makara-toraṇa* above, two flanking elephants, and a *kalpa-vṛkṣa*. One also regularly finds representations of *yakṣas* and *yakṣīs*, usually positioned in the lower tiers of the composition, *vidhyā-dharas* and other demi-gods, beautiful heavenly minstrels (*gandharvas*), snakes (*nāgas*), and sages or ascetics, such as Nārada, surrounding the formal seated or standing central icon of the Jina (Plates 154, 155).

Sculptural representations of the Jinas have not only been treated in isolation or surrounded by minor deities and attendants in the form of a *parikara*. There are examples where multiple statues of the Tīrthaṅkara have been combined in one sculpture. Particularly common are fourfold images, in which four adorsed figural representations of a fordmaker, seated or standing, face the cardinal directions (Plate 156). Two terms are commonly used to describe such arrangements. *Caturkmukha* is the Sanskrit term, and *caumukhā* comes from Gujarati. This type of quadruple image, the earliest extent examples of which date from the Kuṣāṇa period, appear to have developed from *caitya-vṛkṣas* and the veneration of trees. The latter two aspects will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter. It appears to have been common practice to place four figural representations or four carved panels, so-called *śila-paṭas*, below sacred trees. Ample representations of *caturmukha* images still depict a stylised version of the sacred tree in the centre. In later examples, the tree has usually been omitted, and the sculptural block often appear less compact, displaying individual images seated on or attached to a central pedestal (Plate 157). In Jainism, the theme of a seated fourfold image facing the cardinal directions is connected with the mythical preaching auditorium of the Tīrthaṅkaras, the *samavasaraṇa*, which the gods construct for the first sermon of each Jina. In *samavasaraṇas* too a connection with the *caitya-vṛkṣa* has frequently been preserved, and representations of trees regularly shelter the fourfold image at the apex of the stylised teaching auditorium. When found in a *samavasaraṇa* context, the four images all represent one and the same fordmaker, as according to the story, the gods create three replicas of the central Jina. The gods multiply the figure of the Tīrthaṅkara about to deliver his teachings, in order for him to face the audience of listeners in the four directions.[61] In representations of *caturmukha-pratimās* outside of a *samavasaraṇa* context, however, it is more common for the four images to represent different Jinas. This feature can already be noticed in the earliest available examples from Kaṅkālī-ṭīlā Hill at Mathura, where at least Pārśvanātha with his hood and Ṛṣabhanātha with his long hair can be identified as distinct characters. Frequently one finds Ādinātha,

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55 The *Rūpa-maṇḍana* and the *Aparājita-pṛcchā* list the associated colours of the Jinas. Padmaprabha and Vasupūjya should be red, Candraprabhu and Puṣpadanta should be white, Neminātha and Munisuvrata should be of black complexion, Mallinātha and Pārśvanātha should be blue, while all other Jinas should have a golden hue. For additional information, lack of clarity in some instances and also some contradictory listings, see Sharma (1974: xxi-xxii) and Nagar (1999: 68 and 70).

56 See also Shah (1975a: 486) and Nagar (1999: 28) on this subject.

57 This is either known as '*divya-dhvani*' or as '*bhā-maṇḍala*.'

58 These represent the heavenly shower of flowers (*deva-dundubhī*).

59 The *caurī-dharas* are alternatively known as *cāmara-dharas*.

60 For further details on the *aṣṭa-mahā-pratihāryas*, consult Bhattacharya (1974: 19-20, 31) and Shah (1975b: 51-56).

61 This and further issues surrounding the first teaching of a Tīrthaṅkara has been discussed in more detail in the previous chapter.

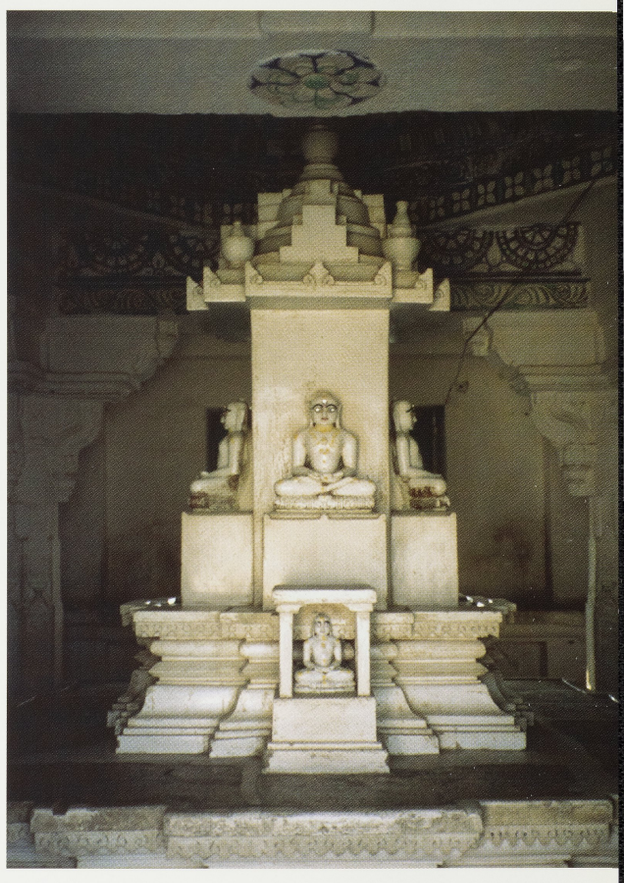
Neminātha, Pārśvanātha and Mahāvīra combined in one sculpture. Inscriptions placed on the pedestals of these early *caturmukha* arrangements refer to them as *sarvatobhadrikā-pratimā*s.[62] When found in isolation, fourfold images in a Digambara context, often consist of four standing representations of Jinas. *Caturmukha* images have also been associated with *māna-stambha*s, which will be discussed in the following chapter on the architecture of developed Jaina temple complexes. *Māna-stambha*s are part of *samavasaraṇa* arrangements and of Jaina temples more generally, particularly in a Digambara context. Although today, quadruple images are usually only found in an open pavilion at the tip of the pillars, the *Ādi-purāṇa* of Jinasena describes four images arranged around the base of the pillars.[63] This is a feature still to be found, at least in the south of India. Although the majority of *caturmukha* images are made of stone, there are representations of this motif in metal. Paintings of *caturmukha-pratimā*s either depict the arrangement form the side or from above, as if painted from a bird's eye view.

Common are joint representations of all the twenty-four Jinas, the *caubīs* Tīrthaṅkara, carved onto one panel. Officially, these are known as *caturviṁśati-jina-paṭa*, and in brief simply as *caturviṁśati*. The colloquial term used for them is *caubīsī*. Amongst the largest number of such multi-image representations are composite arrangements of one thousand Tīrthaṅkaras, known as *sahasra-kūṭa*.[64] The *sahasra-kūṭa* is usually represented three dimensionally, in the shape of a pyramid, a cone, or a straight-sided block, with miniature representations of Jinas arranged in rising tiers on all sides.



156. *Caturmukha* image, consisting of four addorsed seated Jinas, facing the cardinal directions.

157. A modern four-faced sculptural constellation in the Ṛṣabhdeva Temple at Kankroli.



2. The Iconography of the Twenty-Four Tīrthaṅkaras

Since all Jinas discover the same truth and relate the same teachings, there is no hierarchical difference between the Jinas of one world age. Many Jaina temples throughout India have large numbers of images of all fordmakers, and all twenty-four Jinas have been treated as *mūla-nāyaka*, the central religious image, of larger temple complexes. However, certain Tīrthaṅkaras are more popular than others. These have more temples dedicated to them, and even if not as *mūla-nāyaka*, they are regularly present as subsidiary images in many other Jaina temple constructions. Particularly prevalent throughout India are statues of and temples dedicated to Ādinātha, Pārśvanātha and Mahāvīra, but also Neminātha plays an important role in a Jaina temple context. Much rarer, for instance, are major temple constructions dedicated to Puṣpadanta, Vimalanātha, Aranātha or Naminātha. Whilst certain Tīrthaṅkaras are generally popular, one can note more localised preferences, often explained through a specific link an individual fordmaker has with a particular site or region. A good example is Varanasi, venerated by Jainas as the birthplace of Supārśvanātha and Pārśvanātha. Consequently, a large number of temples at the site has been dedicated to the seventh and the twenty-third Tīrthaṅkaras. For the same reason, there are abundant temples and shrines devoted to Candraprabhu at Candrapuri, to Neminātha at Shauripur, and to Sambhavanātha at Shravasti, all three located in Uttar Pradesh.

The same tendency can be observed with regard to sites associated with the other four auspicious events in the life of a Jina. Especially venerated and frequently associated with the construction of complex architectural structures are the places of enlightenment and death of a fordmaker. Sanctified through the auspicious event of *kevala-jñāna*, all the Jaina temples on the summit of Mandar Hill are dedicated to Vāsupūjyajī.[65] Similarly, the main temple on

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62 Shah 1975a: 483-485.

63 A longer discussion of the relevant section in the *Ādi-purāṇa* can be found in Shah (1975a: 484).

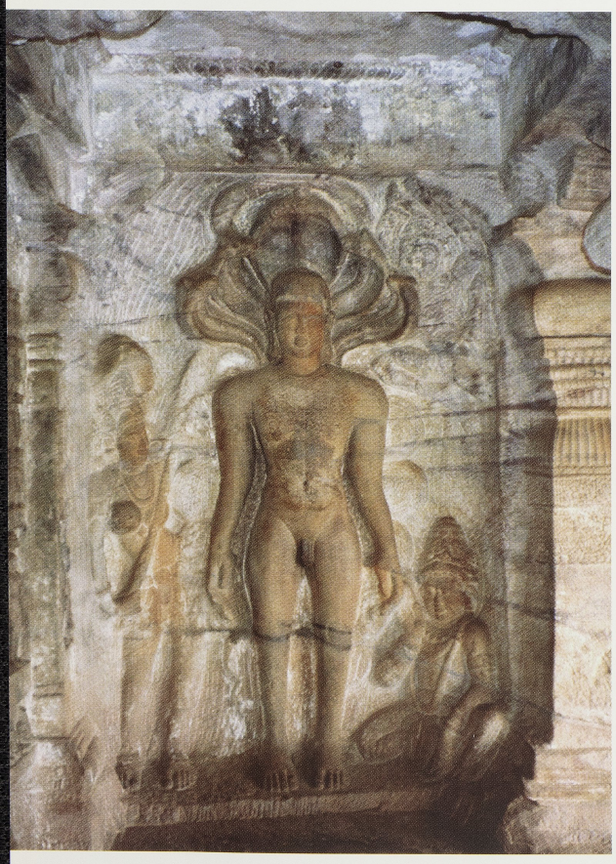
64 The even number one thousand is relatively rare in sacred numerology with one thousand and one or one thousand and eight being generally perceived as more auspicious in a South Asian context. Possibly, the vastness of the number one thousand was used to indicate the enormous number of Jinas, more than a sacred number as such. Shah also points out that the number might relate to the one thousand sacred peaks described in Jaina cosmographical accounts (1975a: 485).

65 Mandar Hill is considered to be the enlightenment site of Vāsupūjyajī. All temples and also a cave located on this sacred hill are dedicated to Vāsupūjyasvāmī. The cave is believed to be the meditation place of the Jina and the exact spot where he reached omniscience. Although Mandar Hill is an important and widely recognised pilgrimage place, other Jaina texts name Campapuri in Uttar Pradesh as the place of Vāsupūjyajī's *nirvāṇa*. For additional details, see Jindal (1988: 233) and Moeller (1974: 149).



158. Representation of Ṛṣabhanātha from Kausambi with long hair falling onto his shoulders.

159. Standing representation of Pārśvanātha sheltered by the hooded snake from the Jaina cave at Badami.



Mount Paraśnātha belongs to Pārśvanātha, and associated with the three important events of enlightenment, first preaching and death, the temple buildings at Pavapuri commemorate the final phase of Mahāvīra's earthly life.

In other cases, however, the connection is less clear and might merely express the individual preference of a donor, the wish of a particular local teacher, or simply a fashion associated with a specific Jina. Hastinapur in Haryana is considered to be the birthplace of Śāntinātha, Kunthunātha and Aranātha. As a result, several temples there are dedicated to Śāntinātha, and a triple-shrined temple has been dedicated to the set of the three Tīrthaṅkaras. Nevertheless, however, shrines housing images of Mahāvīra as their *mūla-nāyaka*, are still most common at the site of Hastinapur. It is noteworthy that in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, Candraprabhu and Śāntinātha are equally if not more popular than the four most frequently chosen Jinas (Ādinātha, Pārśvanātha, Mahāvīra and Neminātha). Common amongst Digambara temples in the south of India are representations of Anantanātha, whereas in the coastal region of Karnataka in particular, one regularly finds temples dedicated to Mallinātha. He is frequently flanked by representations of Aranātha and Munisuvrata.[66] This combination, as well as individual images of these three fordmakers, are not particularly popular in other regions of the subcontinent, and seem to indicate a sectarian as well as a regional preference. Images of Ādinātha, Pārśvanātha, Mahāvīra and Neminātha are already known from the early sculptures at Mathura and their popularity can be explained in various ways.[67]

Ādinātha means the 'first' or the 'primordial lord,' also translated as the 'lord of the beginning.' He is the first Jina of every world era, and Jainas consider him to be the founder of the Jaina community in each world age. Other names used to refer to him are Ādīśvara, Ādeśvara, Ṛṣabha, Ṛṣabhanātha or Ṛṣabhdeva. According to the Jaina tradition, he was born at Ayodhya and reached enlightenment on the summit of Mount Aṣṭāpada, usually equated with Mount Kailāśa.[68] His emblem of cognisance is the bull (*vṛ̣ṣa*). This has been related to the first dream, which Ādinātha's mother had prior to the conception of her child, which showed a bull. Consequently, her son was named Ṛṣabha, meaning 'lord of the bull' (from *vṛ̣ṣa*).[69] Ādinātha was married to two wives, Sunandā and Sumaṅgalā, who bore him sons called Bharata and Bāhubali, respectively. Bharata is an important figure with regards to Jaina temple constructions as he is credited with having erected the first temple on the summit of Mount Kailāśa in commemoration of the enlightenment and death of his father at this sacred site. Bāhubali, alternatively known as Gommaṭa or Gommaṭeśvara, is especially popular amongst Digambara Jainas, who erect colossal images of the naked ascetic at many of their pilgrimage centres, especially in the south of India.[70] The images refer to a particular instance in which, after a dispute over the right to rule their fathers kingdom, Bāhubali renounced his worldly life and entered deep mediations. Ṛṣabhanātha is one of the few Jinas who even before the introduction of signs of cognisance could be identified through the long and curly hair usually associated with sculptural representations of this fordmaker. The long hair is either represented falling onto his shoulders or down his back (Plate 158). Various narratives aim at explaining this iconographic anomaly. Although mention of his locks has been linked to descriptions of a sage with long hair (*keśin-muni*), mentioned in the *Ṛg-veda*, and to the Hindu god Śiva, who has long hair and who also rides a bull (*nandi*), other stories relate to the god Indra, who allegedly asked Ṛṣabha to allow some locks of hair to remain on his head when pulling out his hair during his *dīkṣā* ceremony.[71] Ādinātha has not only been linked to Śiva, but also to Viṣṇu.

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66 Particularly noteworthy is the Caturmkha Basti at Karkal, which, following a *caturmukha* layout, has four sets of the three images, Aranātha, Mallinātha and Munisuvrata, facing the cardinal points of direction.

67 Amongst the early Jaina images from the Kuṣāṇa centre of Mathura are also representations of Sambhavanātha and Munisuvrata (Nagar 1999: 72).

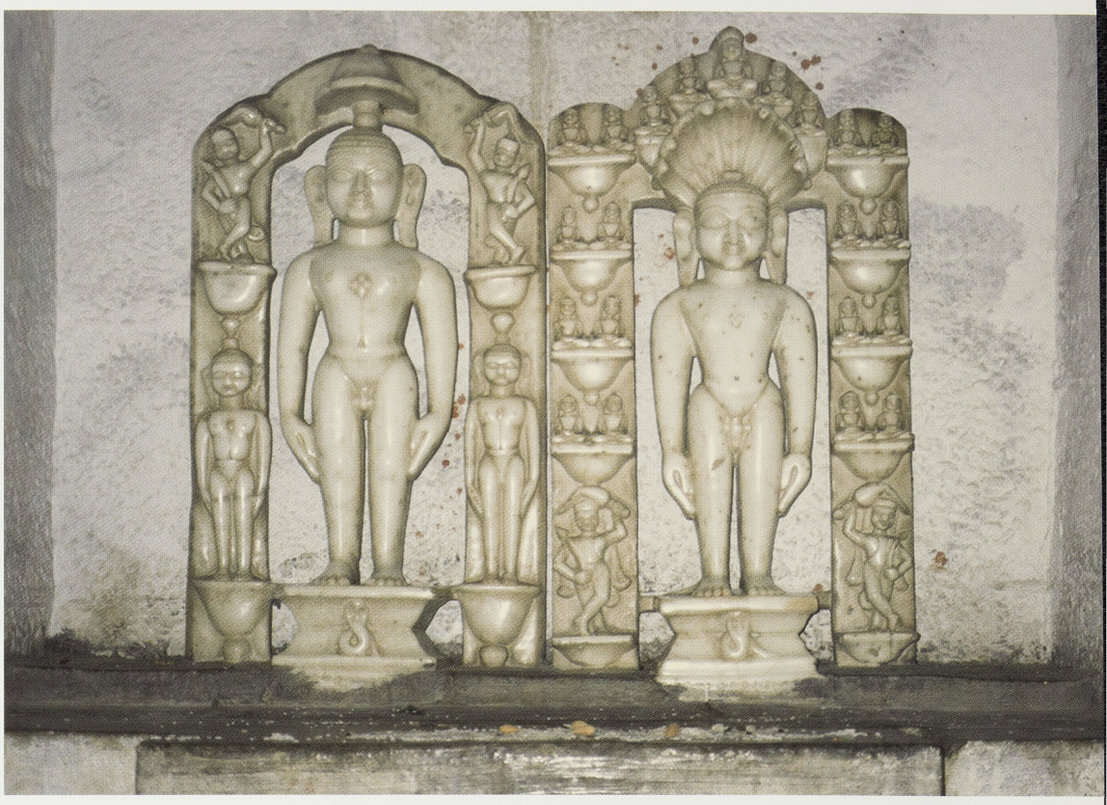
68 Further details can be obtained from Jaini (1990: 32) and Nagar (1999: 74).

69 Nagar 1999: 73; Zimmer 1983: 55.

70 Although colossal representations of Gommaṭeśvara are particularly common and widespread in the South of the subcontinent, they have also been erected in other parts of India. Examples can be seen at Taranaga in Gujarat and at Kumbhoj in Maharashtra. There are, however, also large-scale standing representations of Jinas, such as the tall sculpture of Mahāvīra located in a separate complex behind the Pārśvanātha Temple compound on the summit of Cūlagiri outside Jaipur.

71 For further information relating to this issue refer to Dundas (1992: 34-35) and Nagar (1999: 74).

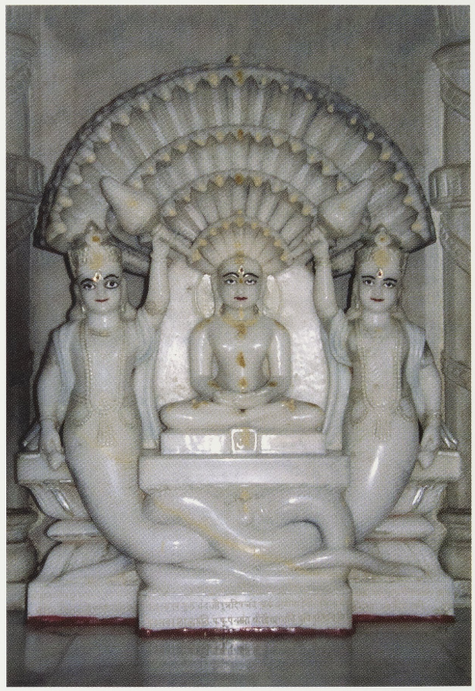




160. The coiled body of the snake is visible on the back plate behind this image of Pārśvanātha from Anjaneri.

161. Two representations of Pārśvanātha from Muktāgiri, one with and one without the hood of multiple snake heads.

162. Representation of Sahasra-phaṇa Pārśvanātha, sheltered by one thousand snake heads, from the Kīrtti-stambha Temple at Jalor.



The cult of Ādinātha was so popular amongst the Jainas and became so well-known in India during the medieval period, that he was included as a minor incarnation (*aṃśāvatāra*) of Viṣṇu in the Hindu *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*.[72]

Pārśvanātha is believed to have been a historical personality, and in Western historical terms, is considered to be the founder of an earlier form of Jainism, which was further refined by Mahāvīra.[73] In Jaina devotional terms, Pārśvanātha is one of the most popular fordmakers of the Jaina pantheon. Despite the knowledge that the Jinas are entirely detached from this world and cannot interfere in the day to day lives of humans, popular Jaina conviction supports the belief that Pārśvanātha is able to remove obstacles and to have the capacity to save people. Consequently, he is regarded as one of the most approachable of the Jinas. Upon closer examination, it often turns out to be his guardian deities who actually act, but many images of Pārśvanātha throughout the country are still considered to be invested with special qualities.[74] Particularly potent images are often replicated all over India and allow Jains settled in distant parts of the country to partake in their sacred powers. One example is a representation of Pārśvanātha at Shankeshvar, a small town in Gujarat, which is regarded as having particular strength. Consequently, representations of Śaṅkeśvara Pārśvanātha can be found in Jaina temples throughout India. Pañcāsara Pārśvanātha illustrates a similar case.

The historical Pārśvanātha is believed to have been born in Varanasi a place where he lived and taught. The twenty-third Tīrthaṅkara is believed to have reached enlightenment on Mount Paraśnātha in Bihar. Pārśvanātha's associated mark of cognisance is the serpent (*nāga*) or more precisely the cobra (*phaṇi*). In addition to his snake symbol, carved on the pedestal of sculptural representations, icons of Pārśvanātha are usually depicted sheltered by a

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Because of the possible link of Ādinātha to the *Ṛg-veda*, Jainas have long argued for the historicity of Ādinātha (Jaini 1990: 32-33; Dundas 1992: 34).

72 For the link to the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*, see Jaini (1990: 32), Golchha (1992: 254) and Nagar (1999: 351). A detailed discussion of sculptural images, narrative friezes and of representations of Ādinātha in Jaina paintings, see Nagar (1999: 74 ff).

73 Dates usually suggested for the life of the historical Pārśvanātha are 817 BCE for his birth and 717 BCE for his death (Nagar 1999: 134).

74 Further details can be found in Dundas (1992: 29, 181).



163. Panel depicting Padmāvatī Devī in her lotus incarnation, lifting Pārśvanātha from the threatening flood waters.

164. Modern interpretation in concrete from the monastic garden complex at Campapuri, depicting the attack on Pārśvanātha involving an aeroplane.



hooded *nāga* (Plate 159). In this respect the images are similar to those of Supārśvanātha, also associated with a snake-hood overhead. In some instances, the coils of the snake are visible behind the body of the Jina (Plate 160). Not all statues of Pārśvanātha, however, depict the hooded *nāga* sheltering the enlightened being (Plate 161).[75] Other images depict not simply the usual seven or nine snake-heads but display a canopy of one-thousand *nāga* heads, then usually referred to as Sahasra-phaṇa Pārśvanātha (Plate 162).

The presence of snake imagery in Jaina iconography might indicate the assimilation of pre-Jaina popular forms of *nāga* veneration, common throughout India at the time and still in vogue amongst Jainas today.[76] While images of Pārśvanātha sheltered by a canopy of cobra's hoods are known already from the first centuries CE, different versions of a narrative explaining the relationship between Pārśvanātha and the snake appear in literary form only from about the eighth century. The stories referring to this iconographic feature relate to a previous life of Pārśvanātha. During this life, he is said to have saved a serpent which a *brāhmaṇ* ascetic was offering in a sacrificial fire. In his last incarnation, as twenty-third Jina, Pārśvanātha is believed to have been deeply involved in meditation when he was violently attacked by a demonic reincarnation of the earlier *brāhmaṇ*, taking revenge. This time the snake, reborn as a powerful cobra personified as prince Dhāraṇendra (or Dhāraṇa), is said to have come to the rescue of Pārśvanātha, by sheltering him under his spread out hood. In another version of the story, it is Dhāraṇendra who is said to have protected Pārśvanātha in his meditation against the blistering sun and who then disabled the former *brāhmaṇ* ascetic Kaṭha in his *āsura* reincarnation, then known by the name of Meghamālin. A third group of stories relating to Pārśvanātha and Dhāraṇendra is especially noteworthy as it involves either the goddess Lakṣmī or Padmāvatī, who are both playing considerable roles in the Jaina religion and in temple architecture. In these versions of the narrative, the meditating Pārśvanātha is endangered by a heavy storm with torrential rains caused by his enemy, now reborn as a god. To his rescue came the serpent-king Dhāraṇendra and his wife, reborn as the goddess Lakṣmī or Padmāvatī. In a former life, Pārśvanātha's adversary, who in this version of the story is called Saṁvara, had killed the snake couple. Pārśvanātha had tried to save them and when they were dying had comforted them and taught them the Jaina path to salvation, which had let to their auspicious rebirth as divine beings. In this set of stories, the two divine serpents are described as having appeared from the underworld, flanked the meditating Pārśvanātha and opened up their hoods to protect him. In one version of the narrative, Padmāvatī Devī assumed the form of a lotus flower and raised Pārśvanātha above threatening flood waters (Plate 163). A well-known circular stone panel in the Ādinātha Temple at Rankapur depicts a related story, in which it is a snake king (*nāga-rāja*) miraculously rescuing Parshvantha from the deluge. As a consequence, Pārśvanātha managed to reach final *kevala-jñāna*. Although a multitude of early representations, for instance from Ellora, depict this theme, there are also modern interpretations of the story as can be seen in the garden of the Jaina complex at Campapuri in Bihar (Plate 164).[77] Based on this cycle of stories, figural representations usually show Pārśvanātha protected by a hooded snake, and iconographically associate him with Dhāraṇendra in the form of his *yakṣa*. In Jaina temples in India, Dhāraṇendra is, however, more frequently represented in connection with Padmāvatī then with Lakṣmī, as can be seen in the hall of the Padmāvatī Temple at Nadol in Rajasthan.

Mahāvīra is the final Tīrthaṅkara of our present cycle and the twenty-fourth fordmaker of the Jaina pantheon. Ample stories relate to the previous lives of Mahāvīra and the period before his birth as the twenty-fourth Jina. An important theme, for instance, is the transfer of the embryo from the womb of a *brāhmaṇ* to a *kṣatriya*. According to Śvetāmbara Jainas, Mahāvīra was born in the village of Kundagrama near Vaishali, whilst Digambaras hold Kundalpur near Nalanda sacred as his birthplace. His given name was Vardhamāna but he is better known as

75 Examples of figures of Pārśvanātha without snake imagery can, for example, be seen on Mount Muktagiri and in the City Basti in Mysore, in Karnataka.

76 The integration of earlier snake cults is also known from a Buddhist context, where in one story, the Buddha is sheltered by the snake Mucalinda.

77 For the different versions of the legend, see Dundas (1992: 29, 241 f.n. 31), Burgess (1884: 279), Nagar (1999: 134-136) and Zimmer (1983: 57-59). A further story relating a snake to the life story of a Tīrthaṅkara describes how Mahāvīra as a child courageously tamed a terrifying serpent through his peaceful nature (Jaini 1990: 10-11).

Mahāvīra, an epithet meaning 'great man' or 'hero,' which was attributed to him later in his life. Other names used to refer to him include Nāṭaputta, Vīra, Ativīra and Sanmati.[78] Mahāvīra is believed to have been a historical personality, who lived, travelled and preached in Bihar at the same time as the historical Sidhhārtha Gautama, the founder of Buddhism.[79] Mahāvīra is supposed to have reached enlightenment, delivered his first formal teachings, died and been cremated at Pavapuri in Bihar. Religious teachings narrate that he remained in this world for exactly seventy-two years. Seventy-two, which is three times twenty-four, is considered an auspicious numeral. The emblematic symbol associated with Mahāvīra is the lion (*siṁha*).

Relatively common are depictions and icons of Neminātha, who is known under the name of Ariṣṭanemi as well. Especially in Jaina literature written in the Kannada language, descriptions of this Tīrthaṅkara figure prominently.[80] For Neminātha's life we also have a certain amount of historical evidence. This indicates that he might have been a contemporary of Kṛṣṇa, as far as this Hindu god too can be considered a historical personality.[81] Neminātha is supposed to have been a cousin of Kṛṣṇa and his stepbrother Balarāma.[82] Expressing closer ties with the Vaiṣṇava than with the Śaiva strains of Hinduism, it is noteworthy that Neminātha, like Kṛṣṇa, is described as having a dark complexion (*śyāma*).[83] Neminātha's cognisance is the conch (*śaṅkha*), an emblem also closely associated with Viṣṇu and his iconography. An event from before his renunciation, which is often depicted in Jaina paintings, is Neminātha's marriage.[84] Neminātha is believed either to have been born in Shauripur or in Dwarka. Three important events (*kalyāṇa-traya*) in his life—renunciation, omniscience and final liberation—are all believed to have taken place on Mount Girnār in the Shaurashtra region of Gujarat, a site particularly sacred to Neminātha.[85]

Whereas in connection with Neminātha, a relationship with Hinduism and more particularly with Kṛṣṇa has been established, the Jina Naminātha, the twenty-first in the line of the Tīrthaṅkaras, also exists in a Buddhist context.[86] The personality of Mallinātha, the nineteenth fordmaker, breaches a different divide. Digambaras do not believe in the deliverance of women and adamantly hold on to the male personality of this fully-enlightened being. Śvetāmbaras, however, consider Mallinātha to be female. Consequently, they employ this Jinas as proof of the capacity of women to gain enlightenment from within a female body.[87] All representations of Jinas look very much the same as they have reached the same state of liberation. For this reason, also Śvetāmbara depictions of Malli do not usually stress the female characteristics of her body. A rare example, however, of a Śvetāmbara sculpture showing Malli as a naked female seated ascetic with round breasts and a long twisted tail of hair down her back is housed in the State Museum of Lucknow. The stone sculpture dates from the tenth to eleventh centuries CE

165. Representation from Badnavar showing Jinakuśala Sūri, one of the four revered *dādā-gurus*.



78 On Mahāvīra's names, see also Nagar (1999: 37, 150).

79 Mahāvīra's exact date of birth has been much debated with Śvetāmbaras and Digambaras offering different dates based on their individual interpretations of historical events and their religious texts. The dates usually suggested by Śvetāmbaras are 599 BCE for Mahāvīra's birth, and 527 BCE for his death (Dundas 1992: 21; Nagar 1999: 148, 150).

80 Nagar 1999: 127.

81 Further details on this connection can be found in Jaini (1990: 33).

82 For the stories of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma in Jainism, see Dhaky & Moorti (2001: 5) and Nagar (1999: 48).

83 Information on Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva connections with Jainism can be found in Dundas (1992: 202), and those relating to the complexion of Neminātha in Nagar (1999: 127).

84 There is a prominent painting depicting this topic, decorating the *raṅga-maṇḍapa* ceiling of the Ādinātha Temple at Narlai in Rajasthan. The ceiling painting depicts all the different animals and people attending the procession and the wedding ceremony.

85 Dhaky & Moorti 2001: 5.

86 Dundas 1992: 241, f.n. 45.

87 According to Digambara Jainas, the body of a women is not strong, *vajra*-like, enough to resist the harsh austerities necessary to gain enlightenment. It has also been considered unfit for women to wander around naked, making it impossible for Digambara nuns to practice the full abandonment of all possessions such as their clothes. For the discussion of the wider issue of women's deliverance and the identity of the Jina Mallinātha, see Jaini (1990: 40, f.n. 93) and Shah (1975a: 470-471).



166. *Dādā-guru* pavilion placed inside one of the halls of the Ṛṣabhdeva Temple at Jaisalmer.

167. Representation of an honoured deceased teacher in a satellite shrine of the Śvetāmbara temple at Bakara Road.



and comes from Unnav in Uttar Pradesh.[88] Śāntinātha, as is clear from his given name, is considered the personification of peace, and as such blends in well with Jaina philosophy and ethical thought.[89]

In recent centuries, some modern Jaina movements have tended to widen the list of core Tīrthaṅkaras. This has been achieved by adding new names and personalities which certain subgroups of Jainas believe have been successful in reaching full enlightenment. The controversial issue here is that our age is considered to be a period of decline, in which according to traditional Jaina belief, full enlightenment cannot be attained on earth. The explanation offered for this phenomenon is, that these Jinas have allegedly reached enlightenment outside the region of Bharata, usually in the area of Mahā-videha. This is possible, as time in that part of the Jaina cosmos is regarded as stable and not subject to upward or downward movements of the wheel of time. One of the most popular Tīrthaṅkaras, considered by some to have preached Jainism in the middle world during our world age, is Sīmandhara, additinally known as Sīmandhara Svāmī. While according to Devasena, Kundakunda received his teachings from Sīmandhara, his cult is not very well developed amongst Digambara Jainas.[90] Kharatara Gaccha Jainas seem to have been amongst the first to honour Sīmandhara Svāmī, and increasingly other Śvetāmbara Jainas have started to pay reverence to him through the construction of temples. This is exemplified by the large structure erected in his name at Mehsana in Gujarat. More common, however, are smaller representations of Sīmandhara, found in temples dedicated to different major Jina, or minor shrines in which special homage is paid to Sīmandhara Svāmī. Examples from the various regions of India will be discussed in the following regional chapters. Sīmandhara's importance and popularity reflects the wish and hope for a pure and enlightened being, acting as a guide for devotees, who is living in what is regarded as a corrupt and decaying time in which deliverance cannot be reached.

THE VENERATION OF DECEASED ASCETICS

Only the Tīrthaṅkaras have gained full enlightenment and preached the Jaina path to salvation. However, other deceased ascetic teachers too are venerated in a Jaina context. Held in particular high esteem, at least by certain Śvetāmbara followers, are the *dādā-gurus*. However, also other well-known monks and popular Jaina ascetics, have been invested with particular religious significance, and have after their death developed into objects of worship and veneration in a Jaina context.

1. The Dādā-Gurus

The Śvetāmbara Kharatara Gaccha, which is particularly popular in north-western and central India, has developed a set of four sanctified medieval teachers, the *dādā-gurus* or *dādā-guru-devas*. Literally, *dādā* means 'paternal grandfather' and consequently a *dādā-guru* is a senior male spiritual guide. These preceptors are the four *ācāryas* of the Kharatara Gaccha, namely Jinadatta Sūri (1075-1154 CE), Jinacandra Sūri Maṇidhārī (1140-1166 CE), Jinakuśala Sūri (1280-1332) (Plate 165) and Jinacandra Sūri II (1541-1613 CE). Although they have not attained full *kevala-jñāna*, they are honoured as important Jaina personalities. The respect paid to them and the power attributed to these teachers stems from the belief that they protected and preserved, but at the same time reformed the Jaina religion, and that through the performance of miracles, they converted others to Jainism.[91]

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88 For photographic representations and further information on this sculpture, see Pal (1994: 139).

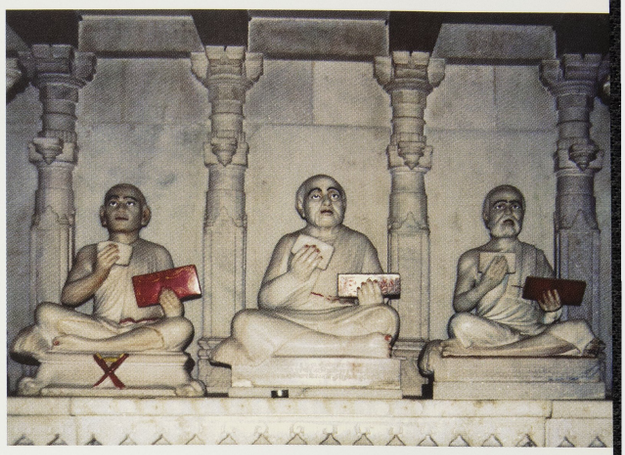
89 For information on the biographical data and the symbols of cognisance relating to other Jinas not mentioned in this short introduction, refer to the chart at the end of this study (Appendixes I-III) and also the writings by Shah (1955), Jaini (1990), Nagar (1999) and Dundas (1992).

90 Amongst the Digambaras, it is mainly followers of the Kānjī Svāmī Panth, who venerate Sīmandhara Svāmī. Kānjī Svāmī and the present spiritual head of the movement, Campabahen Mātājī, allege to have been present in Mahā-videha when Kundakunda received his teachings. This true doctrine is believed to have consequently been passed down directly from Kundakunda to Kānjī Svāmī (Dundas 1992: 230-231).

91 Further details on this set of teachers can be obtained from Babb (1998: 111).

Most temples constructed by members of the Kharatara Gaccha house either abstract or figural representations of one or several *dādā-guru*s. The deceased monks have clearly been differentiated from statues of the Jinas, by wearing a fuller garment, which covers one shoulder, by holding a book, representing the knowledge and teachings of the ascetics, and by having a peacock brush (*oghā*), signifying *ahiṃsā*. Some statues depict the mouth-shield (*muh-patti*), with which Jainas regularly cover their mouths at least when in contact with sacred objects.[92]

Temples which have either exclusively, or at least principally, been built for the veneration of these deceased *ācārya*s, are known as *dādā-bāṛī*s (gardens of the Dādā). They can either be simple pavilions or proper temple structures. Often, small pavilions dedicated to the *dādā*s have been constructed inside larger temple buildings (Plate 166). Because *dādā-guru* shrines focus on the commemoration of the deceased teachers, they should not be regarded as temples but as mortuary structures.[93] From this point of view, it is not surprising that their design often resembles that of cenotaphs. Actual practice, however, often equates these deceased teachers with other sanctified beings and modern *dādā-guru* shrines frequently follow a similar logic and spatial layout as Jaina temples. Some *dādā-bāṛī*s have been raised on the actual site where one of the four distinguished ascetics died and was cremated. This is the case with main *dādā-bāṛī* at Ajmer, venerated as the place where Jinadatta Sūri's last obsequies were carried out, and with that in Merauhli, south of Delhi, the place of Jinacandra Sūri Maṇidhārī's *samādhi*.[94] Other structures simply commemorate the teachers, honour and celebrate their life's work, and are not specifically connected with a specific event in their lives. For instance at Ronahi, one of the four octagonal corner shrines of the Śvetāmbara Dharmanātha Temple has been dedicated to Śrī Maṇidhārī Jinacandra Sūrijī. Other edifices commemorating the *dādā-guru*s, such as one half of the double temple arrangement at Samrat Chowk in Sholapur, dedicated to Śrī Kuśala Guru, will be discussed in more detail in the following discussion of the architectural material.



168. Group of three venerated teachers in the Guru Mandir at Jalor.



169. Digambara representations of deceased *guru*s in the Pārśvanātha Temple at Bhelupura in Varanasi.



170. Images of *sūri*s worshipped on the first floor level of the Ādīśvara Temple at Sadri.

2. Sādhus, Sādhvīs, Sūris, Munis, Mātās and Mahārājas

The canonised group of four Kharatara Gaccha *dādā-guru*s are the best known figures in the cult of deceased ascetic teachers. However, there are many other more recent monks and nuns, variably referred to as *muni*s, *sādhu*s, *sādhvī*s, *sūri*s, *mātā*s or *mahārāja*s, whose worship illustrates a Jaina tendency to honour and venerate great living or recently deceased teachers from the ascetic community. In order to remember and honour these teachers, sculptural representations are frequently created and placed in subsidiary shrines or commemorative pavilions (Plate 167). In these formalised settings, the local saints and teachers are often referred to as *dādā*s and raised onto the same level as these recognised medieval saints. In many places, the veneration of local saints has become more common and widespread than the worship of the official set of four Kharatara Gaccha spiritual teachers.

Also these more recent saints have often been grouped in sets of three or four (Plate 168). Representations of deceased ascetics are more common amongst Śvetāmbaras, although Digambara examples exist (Plate 169). In their iconography, the sculptures of other deceased Jaina ascetics are very similar to the *dādā-guru*s discussed above. The majority are seated, and whilst those of a Śvetāmbara provenance are dressed, those from a Digambara background are depicted naked. The seated images hold books and usually have their hands held either in *abhaya-mudrā*, the gesture of granting absence of fear, or in *dhyāna-mudrā*, the gesture of meditation (Plate 170).[95] The Jaina ascetics are regarded as exemplary individuals who through their life and attitude embody extreme asceticism, and the moral and ethical concepts underlying

92 On this issue, see Babb (1998: 206 f.n. 23) and the previous chapter on the Jaina religion.

93 For a discussion of this issue, see also Babb (1998: 111).

94 In 1992, a complex sequence of halls was constructed in Merauhli on the side of the main temple building. This hall contains a small cenotaph-like pavilion, commemorating the *samādhi* of Śrī Maṇidhārī Jinacandra Sūrijī and as such has no proper image chamber as a straight-forward Jaina temple would have.

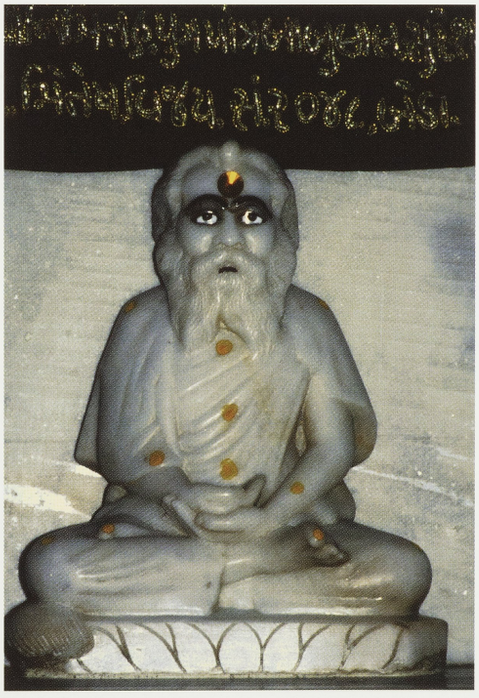
95 Other popular hand positions common with representations of *dādā-guru*s are *vara-mudrā* (*varada-mudrā*), the gesture of giving and blessing, and *namaskāra-mudrā* (*añjali-mudrā*), the gesture of greeting and devotion.

171. 172. Sculptures depicting the Digambara Śrī Śānti Sāgar Mahārāja at Pavapuri, and the Śvetāmbara Śrī Hita Vijayajī Mahārāja at Ghanerao.





173. 174. Portraits of Śrī Yogi-rāja Vijaya Śānti Sūrīśvarjī Mahārāja Sāgar enshrined in temples at Bamanvad and Margaon respectively.





175. Plaster images of venerated monks and a nun at the pilgrimage site of Pushpagiri.



the Jaina religion. In contrast to representations of the fully-enlightened Jinas, which are very alike and aim at representing an ideal state and not an individual person, images of the four *dādā-gurus* are usually more individualised. Contemporary statues of Jaina ascetics, created in the past five or ten years, frequently aim even more strongly at creating individual portraits of the deceased. Some of the images are depicted having pronounced beards, individual hair cuts or boldly shaven heads, are represented wearing glasses or displaying particular individual features. These recent images, if carved in stone, formed out of clay or caste in plaster, represent the creation of a school of portraiture, which so far has been relatively unknown in a Jaina context, at least in a temple environment where these modern images are venerated (Plates 171, 172). There is a tradition of more individualised representations of donors and patrons in Jaina art, but these are not part of temple ritual and they are not worshipped. Due to their recognisable individual features, more recent sculptural images of one and the same saint at different sites can often be recognised. This is the case with Śrī Yogi-rāja Vijaya Śānti Sūrīśvarjī Mahārāja Sāgar, who gained enlightenment on the sacred hill of Mount Bāmaṇavāḍjī at Bamanvad. His figure enshrined in one section of a double temple on this hill in Rajasthan, and that venerated in the Jaina temple at Margaon in Goa, for example, clearly depict one and the same individual (Plates 173, 174). Noteworthy is that amongst these recently deceased saints, represented and venerated at many Jaina sites, also female teachers figure more prominently than they have in the past (Plate 175).

Images of important teachers and saints have been installed at pilgrimage places throughout India, but they do not usually form the main focus of worship. Even at the *mokṣa-sthāna* of Kundakunda Ācārya, on the summit of Ponnur Hill in Tamil Nadu, it is not a figural representation of this important reformer and mythic figure from the Digambara sect, but only his *pādukās* set below a major figural image of Mahāvīra, which are venerated. There are figural representations of Kundakunda, enshrined in a small temple and an open pavilion at the foot of the hill and in the village of Ponnur respectively (Plate 176). However, it is generally more common for deceased teachers to be venerated in the form of their footprints. Multiple examples can be seen at pilgrimage sites throughout India. Sometimes these have been accommodated inside separate open pavilions, usually referred to as *caraṇa* or as *chatrī*. This can be seen at the foot of Bāhubali Hill. In other instances, several such open structures have been grouped in small clusters, lining pilgrimage paths or filling temple squares, as can be seen at Nenagiri in Madhya Pradesh. Portrait-like images of saints have usually been enshrined in individual pavilions or in small side-chapels surrounding temple complexes. A good example is the walled temple complex on the summit of Cūlagiri at Khaniya outside Jaipur. The often life-size images can be so realistic that when entering a dark chamber housing such a representation from the bright sunlight outside, they can temporarily convey the impression of an authentic living presence. As such, the modern portraits of deceased saintly teachers are notably different from the lifeless and abstract representations of the fully-liberated Tīrthaṅkaras.

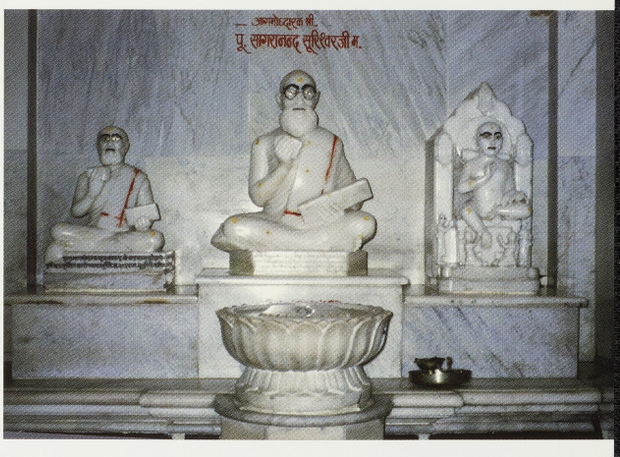


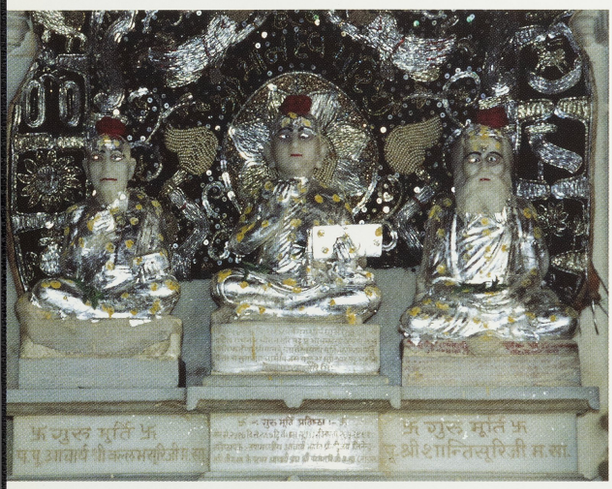
176. Representation of Kundakunda, installed in a pavilion in Ponnur village.



177. In a Jaina temple at Tirunelveli, Rājendra Sūrīśvarjī Mahārāja (right) is venerated on almost equal terms with Gautama Svāmī and Śaṅkeśvara Pārśvanātha.

178. Yellow dots of sandalwood paste have been applied to the central image of Śrī Pūjya Sāgarānand Sūrīśvarjī Mahārāja at Mandu.





179. The three *sūri*s housed in the Neminātha Temple at Nadol have been adorned with silver foil, sandal paste and freshly cut flowers, similar to the worship of the Jinas.

In recent temple constructions, it is noticeable that images of deceased but not fully-liberated teachers are often treated almost with equal reverence as representations of the Jinas. At Bakara Road, Bamanvad and Narlai, images of ascetics have been enshrined in one part of a double or triple temple, where the part housing the recent saint is equal in size to that housing the Jinas. At Tirunelveli, the image of Rājendra Sūrīśvarjī Mahārāja forms one part of a triptych, displaying further images of Gautama Svāmī and Śaṅkeśvara Pārśvanātha (Plate 177). There are two more representations of this saint located on the two levels of this temple. In certain cases, similarities with the Jinas can also be noticed in the ritual associated with the deceased saints. Śvetāmbara images of ascetic teachers often bear auspicious marks which have been applied to their bodies in sandal paste, and some of them are adorned with shiny silver paper and fresh flowers, similar to the veneration of the fully-enlightened Jinas (Plates 178, 179).

Living ascetics, particularly monks, are also venerated by the lay community in a similar way. Ascetics are considered living embodiments of the Jaina teachings and are honoured by circumambulating them and by touching their feet (Plate 180). This is also part of the ritual involved in the offering of food and lodgings to a monk.[96] The practice of venerating living mendicants is even practiced by those groups of Jainas who do not worship artistic representations of them and who reject the importance of temples as religious *tīrtha*s.

Although not an initiated monk and therefore not an official teacher, the mythic Śrīmad Rājacandra, has become invested with special religious significance and is honoured in countless temples not just in India (Plate 181).[97] Rājacandra, who was born Raichand Bhāī Mehta in 1867, lived in Gujarat. He was influenced by Kundakunda's theory on the purity and true nature of the human soul, and was critical of overt ritual activities and over emphasised

96 Dundas 1992: 151-152.

97 An image chamber dedicated to the Digambara Śrīmad Rājacandra is part of the Jaina temple in Leicester, Great Britain, and a niche in the Śvetāmbara-Digambara Jaina Temple in Toronto displays an almost life-size photograph of him.

180. Laypeople venerating a living Digambara ascetic at Shravanabelgola by circumambulating him and touching his feet.

sectarian divisions. Śrīmad Rājacandra is remembered in particular for his association with the young Mahātmā Gandhi, on whom he is said to have left a great impression. Shrines dedicated to Rājacandra usually display photos of him, taken close to the end of his life. Although his body is emaciated through constant fasting, his eyes sparkle and are full of life.[98] Again, spaces dedicated to the memory of Śrīmad Rājacandra should technically not be considered as temples, but as funerary or commemorative structures. Most representations of him, usually in the form of photographs, however, have been displayed inside large Jaina temples, housing additional statues of Jinas and Jaina gods and goddesses, and no strict differentiation is being made.

3. The Gaṇadharas

The *gaṇa*s or *gaṇadhara*s are the supporters of the Jinas, who after the Tīrthaṅkaras have achieved full *kevala-jñāna* and delivered their first formal discourse, instigate the creation of the Jaina community. In a Digmabara context, the *gaṇa*s are also credited with translating the divine sound representing the Jina's first teachings.[99] The *gaṇadhara*s are enlightened beings, *kevalin*s, but in contrast to the Tīrthaṅkaras, the former still require a teacher.[100] Although the inaccessible and perfected Jinas can at times appear remote, and their liberated state unreachable to their devotees, their humane and fallible disciples, the *gaṇadhara*s, can be approached more directly and asked to help in times of crisis. Most Jaina texts mention eleven *gaṇadhara*s, who as heads of groups of monks were each responsible for the guidance of several hundred *muni*s.[101] In art, they are rarely represented as a complete set. Already in the early sculptures from Mathura, *gaṇadhara*s have regularly been depicted to the right and left of Jina statues. Some are shown paying reverence to the Tīrthaṅkara, while others hold fly-whisks (*caurī*s). At sacred Mount Bāmaṇavāḍjī in Rajasthan, six *gaṇadhara*s are venerated in individual open-sided pavilions.

Most important amongst the *gaṇadhara*s and regularly depicted in Jaina art, are three main disciples. These are Sudharma,[102] Jambū and Indrabhūti Gautama, usually simply

98 For further information on Śrīmad Rājacandra and his life, see Dundas (1992: 224-227).

99 Additional details on the function of the *gaṇadhara*s can be found in the introduction to Jainism in Chapter Two.

100 This is according to Bhadrabāhu's *Avashyaka-niryukti* (657). See also the discussion in Dundas (1992: 33).

101 On this issue, see von Glasenapp (1999: 39) and also Appendix VI at the end of this book.

102 In Jaina literature, 'Sudharma' is also spelled 'Sudharmā,' and alternatively known as Sudharman.



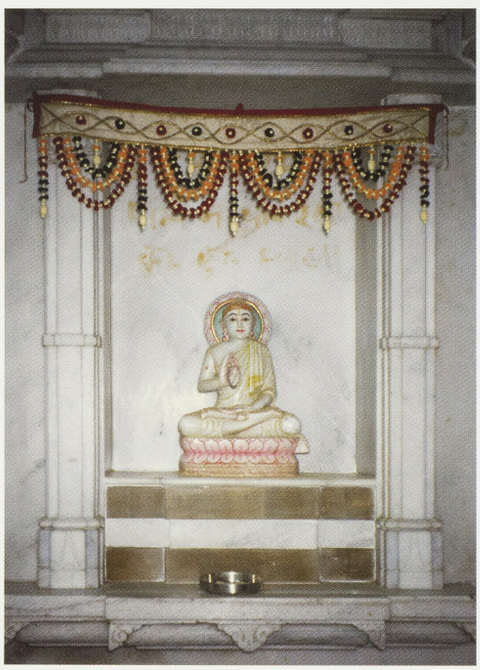
181. Life-size photographic representation of Śrīmad Rājacandra on display in a Jaina temple in Toronto.

182. Image of the *gaṇadhara* Sudharma Svāmī in the Pāvāpurī Jala Mandir at Sadri.

183. The *gaṇadhara* Gautama is venerated in a niche in the hall of the Neminātha Temple at Cuttack.

184. Auspicious marks have been applied to this representation of Gautama Svāmī*gaṇadhara* at Margaon.







referred to as Gautama. Sudharma has particular importance for the Śvetāmbaras, as they trace the descent of their ascetic lineage from him (Plate 182). Jambū's special significance stems from being the last individual to have reached deliverance in this world age. Particularly common are references to and depictions of Gautama (Plate 183). He is believed to have gained omniscience on the same night, only a few hours after Mahāvīra's death. Consequently, he is closely associated with his master and venerated actively.[103] The attainment of enlightenment by these two important personalities represents the main events which are celebrated by Jainas during the Dīvālī festival.[104] In the Jala Mandir at Pavapuri, Mahāvīra is flanked by *pādukā*s of his two main disciples, Indrabhūti Gautama and Sudharma Svāmī. Although the latter temple marks the actual site where these auspicious events are believed to have taken place, the same group of three is regularly found in Jaina shrines throughout India. A further example is housed on the first floor level of the triple-storeyed Jaina temple at Hastinapur in Haryana.

By the medieval period, Gautama gained increasingly in importance, especially amongst the Śvetāmbaras, with the earliest dated image of him dating from 1277 CE.[105] Gautama is usually represented as a round, chubby character, which relates to a story in the legendary Jaina history of the world, known both as the *Deeds of the Sixty-three Illustrious Men* or as the *Universal History*. In this narrative, Gautama is said to have preached about the importance of fasting. As his own physiognomy, however, did not reflect his teachings, he was teased by his audience.[106] In another narrative, Gautama is associated with the miraculous increase of a very small amount of food, which allowed him to feed a large group of monks. Because of this account, Mahāvīra's chief disciple has generally been associated with wealth and prosperity and is therefore venerated intensely by members of the Jaina business and trading community. On the day of Gautama's enlightenment in November, coinciding with the Jaina New Year, businessmen write Gautama's name on the first page of their new account books in order to honour the *gaṇadhara* and in hope of a miraculous increase of their own fortunes.[107] In a different context, Gautama has been associated with the sacred Mount Aṣṭāpada where allegedly, he visited the enlightenment site of Ṛṣabhdeva.[108] The veneration of Gautama has been described as an early precedent for the *dādā-guru* cult.[109]

Although the discussion above has focussed on the identification of individual and clearly recognisable *gaṇadhara*s, representations of them have at times been treated as a general genre. In these instances, separate images have not been named individually, but are

103 Dundas 1992: 33.

104 Jaini 1990: 38.

105 For further information, see Dundas (1992: 34).

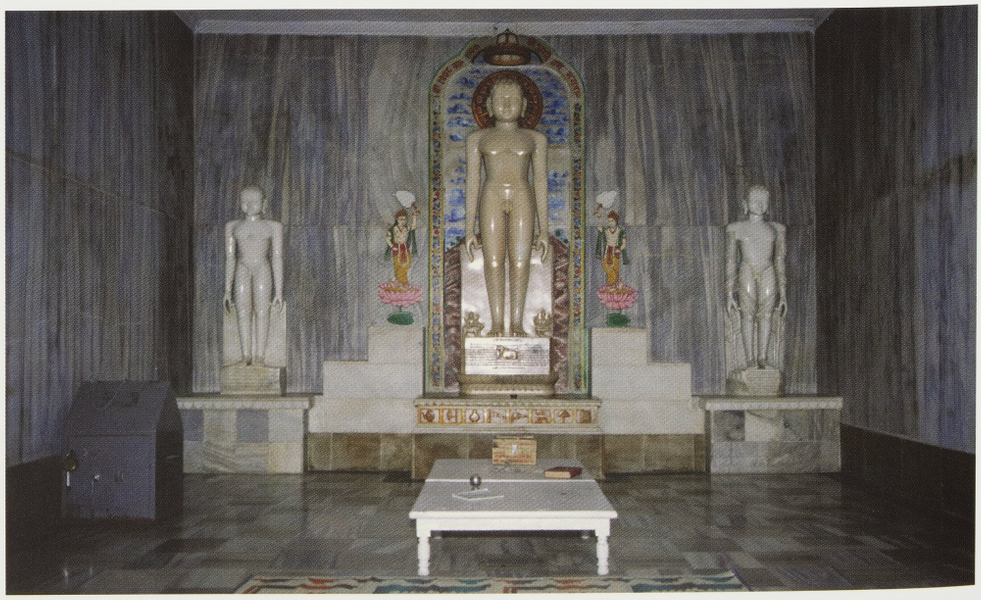
106 The full story has been narrated in Dundas (1992: 34).

107 Dundas 1992: 34, 186.

108 Further details on this myth can be found in Dundas (1992: 33).

109 Babb 1998: 206, f.n. 22.

185. Underground shrine below the temple on Cūlagiri, accommodating a central sculpture of Ādinātha flanked by his two sons Bāhubali (right) and Bharata.



186. *Opposite* Milk is poured over the colossal Bāhubali figure at Shravanabelgola as part of the Mahā-mastak-ābhiṣeka in 2006.

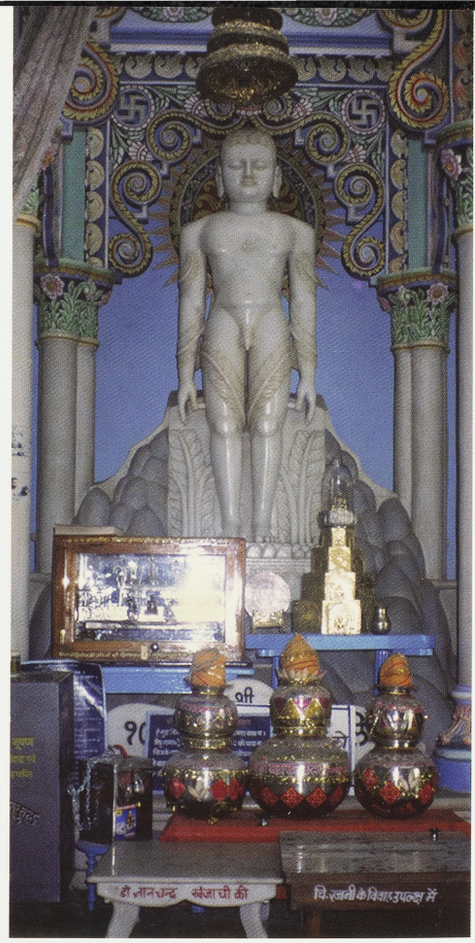




187. Free-standing Gommaṭeśvara image at Kumbhoj, with visual representation of the concept of *ahiṃsā* on its pedestal.



188. Monumental statues of Bāhubali are particularly common in Karnataka, at places such as Karkal.



189. Large-scale representation of Gommaṭeśvara in one of the first floor image chambers of the Jaina temple complex at Seoni.

simply referred to as '*gaṇadhara*.' Similar to statues of the Jinas and the *dādā*s, *gaṇadhara*s too can have auspicious marks in sandal paste applied to their statues, expressing their sacred and elevated nature (Plate 184).

4. Images of Gommaṭeśvara

Another important figure in the context of the veneration of deceased teachers, who is considered to be an image of the ideal Jaina ascetic and a model for the community, is Bāhubali. He is commonly venerated in popular Jainism, and is also known as Gommaṭa or Gommaṭeśvara.[110] Bāhubali is supposed to have been the son of the first Tīrthaṅkara Ādinātha, born to his wife Sunandā. Earlier, a second wife, Sumaṅgalā had born him a son, called Bharata. A well-known story, transmitted in a multitude of forms and facets, narrates a conflict between the two sons. When Ṛṣabha as king of Ayodhya decided to withdraw from worldly life and to become a Jaina monk, he divided his kingdom between his male descendants. Bharata was not satisfied with his part of the kingdom, desired to rule over the entire territory, and demanded the share of his younger brother Bāhubali too. When he, however, refused to abdicate from his portion, the two engaged themselves in a series of contests. Bāhubali managed to subdue his elder brother Bharata, but in the very moment of victory, he realised the impermanence of worldly influence and mundane possession, and voluntarily renounced his royal life. Due to the close relationship between the brothers, the two are often represented side by side. This can be seen in the Digambara Sambhavanātha Temple at Shravasti and in the underground shrine room of the Cūlagiri Temple near Jaipur (Plate 185). Even in the form of the more abstract *pādukā*s, the two brother have often been represented side by side, as in the Śrī Bharat-Bāhubali Tunk Temple at Ayodhya.

According to Jaina religious mythology, having renounced his worldly life, Bāhubali remained standing motionless in *kāyotsarga* posture for an entire year and consequently conquered all human desires and limitations and became the first human being of this era to reach full enlightenment.[111] Although Bāhubali never taught the Jaina path to salvation, and is as such distinct from the status of the Jinas, at least Digambaras treat him almost like

191. *Opposite bottom* Monumental rock-cut representation of Ādinātha carved onto a hill site below sacred Mount Cūlagiri at Bavangaja.

110 There are alternative spellings for Bāhubali as Bāhubalī, and for Gommaṭeśvara as Gomaṭeśvara.

111 For a more detailed narration of the entire story, see, for instance, Dundas (1992: 103).



190. Monumental Jina images have been carved out of the living rock below the fort of Gwalior.

a Tīrthaṅkara and conduct elaborate ablution rituals to regularly reconsecrate the large-scale statues of the ascetic. Although the best-known ritual of this kind happens at Shravanabelgola, Mahā-mastak-ābhiṣeka ceremonies are preformed at many other places (Plate 186).

Representations of the naked standing ascetic, overgrown with plants and creepers, with snakes around his legs, and ant or termite hills at his feet, are particularly common in a Digambara context. Early rock-cut examples, already exhibiting many typical iconographic features, can be seen in the Jaina caves at Ellora and Badami. Digambaras throughout India erect monumental free-standing images of Ādinātha's enlightened son. Although prominent examples can be seen at Taranga and Sirohi in the north-west, at Arrah and Dhanupura in the east,[112] and at Pisanhariki Mariya and Kumbhoj in central India (Plate 187), monumental representations of Bāhubali are most common in the south of the country. Large-scale open-air representations of the mediating Bāhubali are particularly common in Karnataka. In addition to images at well-known centres such as Shravanabelgola, Venur and Karkal (Plate 188), others are found at places such as Dharmasthala and Gomateshvara, a religious site not far from Mysore. The best-known examples are hypaethral in nature, however, smaller examples are also venerated inside shrine rooms (Plate 189).

The impressive nature of the monumental sculptures of the standing ascetics have such a popular appeal, that colossal representations of the Jinas have been erected at religious sites throughout the subcontinent. Although those below the fort of Gwalior and on Cūlagiri at Bhavangaja, have been carved out of the natural rock of the local cliffs (Plates 190, 191), others have been carved out of enormous blocks of stone, transported to pilgrimage sites and then raised there. Examples of the latter case can be seen at Hastinapur in Haryana, on Cūlagiri near Jaipur and at Gudar in Madhya Pradesh (Plate 192). More unusual is a monumental seated image of Ṛṣabhdeva erected in a park near the river at Ayodhya. Representations of Bharata on his own are relatively rare. One example, a well-known sculpture of him, measuring about two metres in height and dating from the Gaṅgā period, stands on Candragiri. This is the hill facing the large Bāhubali statue at Shravanabelgola.



112 The standing image of Bāhubali at Dhanupura near Arrah in Bihar allegedly is the earliest sculpture of the famous ascetic raised in the north of the country. The image was erected in 1937. It is contained in a pavilion and has steps flanking its sides. These can be used for the periodic *abhiṣeka* of the tall figure. Similar step constructions can also be seen on the sides of the colossal image of Vāsupūjyajī, raised in a similar pavilion at Campapuri, also in Bihar.





192. A row of Jina colossi have been arranged on the main square in the village of Gudar.

193. Image of Ṛṣabhanātha at Kankroli with the *yakṣa* and *yakṣī* depicted at the base of the pedestal.

194. Close-up view of the *yakṣa* seated on the right side of the image chamber in Cave 33 at Ellora.



ASSOCIATED DIVINITIES OF THE TĪRTHAṄKARAS

The Jinas, represented in countless images installed in Jaina temples throughout India, have broken all ties with the world of man and cannot react to the prayers of devotees. Therefore, requests for help, as well as more mundane wishes are usually directed to the *dādā-gurus*, but also to the many divinities which are part of the Jaina religion. Zimmer wrote, and this has been repeated by others, that Jaina art is comparatively uncomplicated.[113] The following, however, will show that in actual fact, the opposite is the case. Even though Jainism focuses on the veneration of the fully-enlightened Jinas, it has a multitude of gods, goddesses and divine beings which have been grouped according to various different sets of associated divinities, assistants and protectors. Their iconography, associated consorts and vehicles (*vāhanas*) are complex and display a large amount of diversity between different sects and subgroups. In Jainism, gods and goddess are considered subordinate to the fully-enlightened Jinas, as divinities live in heaven but are mortal and as such still subject to the cycle of rebirth. Only through full enlightenment, the cycle of *saṃsāra* can be broken.

There is evidence for the veneration of *yakṣas* and goddesses in Jainism already from an early age. Jaina representations of these survive at least from the Kuṣāṇa age. Especially after the Gupta period, however, the Jaina pantheon seems to have grown considerably, or at least to have become more formalised. From the early medieval period Tantric elements, as well as divinities and religious concepts also associated with Hinduism, were integrated into the Jaina iconographic scheme. A large number of new religious texts on ritual and on Jaina icons and their iconography (*pratiṣṭhā* texts) were composed during this period.[114] According to the legendary Jaina history of the world, the so-called *Universal History*, the supposedly divine *Vedas* of the Hindus were allegedly composed by Bharata, the first Jaina universal emperor of this world-era, and both Rāma and Kṛṣṇa are portrayed as Jaina laymen.[115] In the same context, the five Pāṇḍavas are said to have reached liberation on the summit of the sacred Jaina mountain Śatruñjaya.[116] The practice of absorbing elements form other religious groups into one's own belief structures, however, is not unique to the Jainas. During the early

113 See Zimmer (1983: 14) and writers such as Deo (1995: 11), repeating his original statement.

114 For a list and discussion of these later Jaina religious text, describing a wider Jaina pantheon of gods and associated divine beings, as well as the incorporation of originally Hindu ritual aspects into the Jaina context, see Shah (1975a: 476).

115 Nagar 1999: 352-353; Dundas 1992: 11.

116 Dhaky & Moorti 2001: 5.



195. Framed recesses in the facade of the rock-cut caves at Gwalior house representations of the associated *yakṣa* and *yakṣī* of the enshrined Jina.

Buddhist period, many pre-Buddhist folk divinities and fertility goddesses were integrated into the still forming new religion and during later periods, the subsequent forms of Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna Buddhism integrated many Hindu divinities into their elaborate and ever expanding pantheon. Gaṇeśa (Gaṇapati), for instance, is such a popular divinity, that he is venerated in Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism.[117] This feature can also be observed in Hinduism, where the historical Buddha has been absorbed as one of the ten *avatāra*s of Viṣṇu, and the Jaina Tīrthaṅkara Ṛṣabhanātha has been transformed into a minor incarnation of this Hindu god.[118]

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117 Images of Jaina Gaṇeśas are more common amongst Śvetāmbara than Digambara Jainas. The earliest surviving sculptures of the god date from the eleventh to twelfth centuries (Nagar 1999: 357-358). Representations can be seen on the Jaina temple at Osian and on the door-lintel of the main Śāntinātha Temple at Nadol, where it has been combined with a representation of a Jina. A noteworthy example of a centralised miniature shrine with four doorways, having representations of Gaṇeśa on all four lintels, is housed in the *nālī-maṇḍapa* above the steps leading into the Padmaprabhu Temple at Nadol, Rajasthan.

118 Adding another similar case, Sharma points out that according to the *Śiva-purāṇa*, Ṛṣabha is



196. Stone slabs with carvings of the *yakṣa* and *yakṣī* of Anantanātha have been positioned in the front hall of the temple at Lakshmeshvar.





197. A row of *yakṣī*s dressed in shiny garments are venerated in the hall of the Ādinātha Temple at Thachur.

198. Śvetāmbara representation of Gomukha Yakṣa riding an elephant.

199. Digambara version of Gomukha Yakṣa seated on a bull.



Reasons for the integration of more devotional elements into what might originally have been a more abstract and theoretical religion, may lie in the fact that representations of the twenty-four Tīrthaṅkaras succeeded in acting as models for the community, but not in providing all devotees with the personal contact and guidance they required. Entirely free from desires and passions, the fully-enlightened Jinas are so detached from this world that they cannot be reached in prayers and invocations and they cannot come to the rescue of their troubled followers. Therefore, a large number of more popular elements, either derived from folk religions and nature cults, or from earlier forms of what we today call Hinduism, were absorbed into Jaina religious practice. Recent research, conducted in the areas of Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu indicate, that these assimilations may have taken place much earlier than originally believed, and that devotional elements should be considered much more as original Jaina elements than simply as later borrowings from Hinduism. This latest scholarship appears to indicate, that a purely theoretical and abstract early Jaina religion might never have existed. *Yakṣa* and *yakṣī* cults are part of Vedic practices and are older than the formation of either Jainism or Hinduism, and goddesses were part of Jainism from an early age, at least from the first centuries of the Christian era.[119]

1. Vyantara-Devatās and Other Jaina Divinities

Śāsana-Devatās (Yakṣas and Yakṣīs)

Sculptural representations of the Jinas have frequently been surrounded by images of attendants, worshippers and guardians. Especially common are depictions of the *yakṣa* and the *yakṣī* (*yakṣīni*), associated with each of the twenty-four Tīrthaṅkaras as attendants, devotees and protectors. In sculptural art, *yakṣas and yakṣīs* are regularly shown flanking central statues, with the male *yakṣa* positioned towards the right and the female *yakṣī* at the left side of the fordmaker (Plates 193, 194). It is also common to find individual sculptural representations of these demi-gods set into small niches in the facades of caves, or in the halls of structural temples (Plate 195). In the south it is common for stone slabs with such representations to flank the entrance to the central shrine (Plate 196). In these cases, the associated *śāsana-devatā*s of the main Jina housed inside the shrine guard the entrance to the temple or main

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referred to as one of the *yogā-vatāra*s of Śiva (1974: xii).

119 See also the discussion in Dundas (1992: 182).





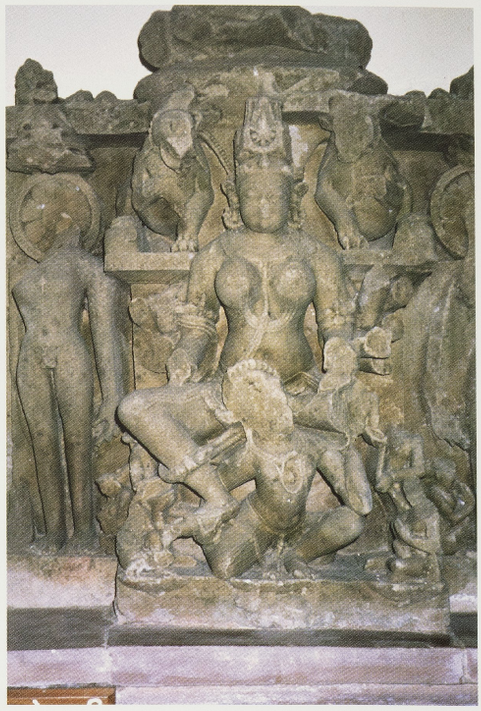


image chamber. Individual stone carvings or bronze statues of the *yakṣa*s and *yakṣī*s are rarely found inside the main *garbha-gṛha*, although in the south of India, this can be seen. However, in these cases the arrangement is usually less formal and the image chambers contain many other representations in addition to the *mūla-nāyaka*. It is more common, however, to find such images assembled in the halls of Jaina temples (Plate 197).

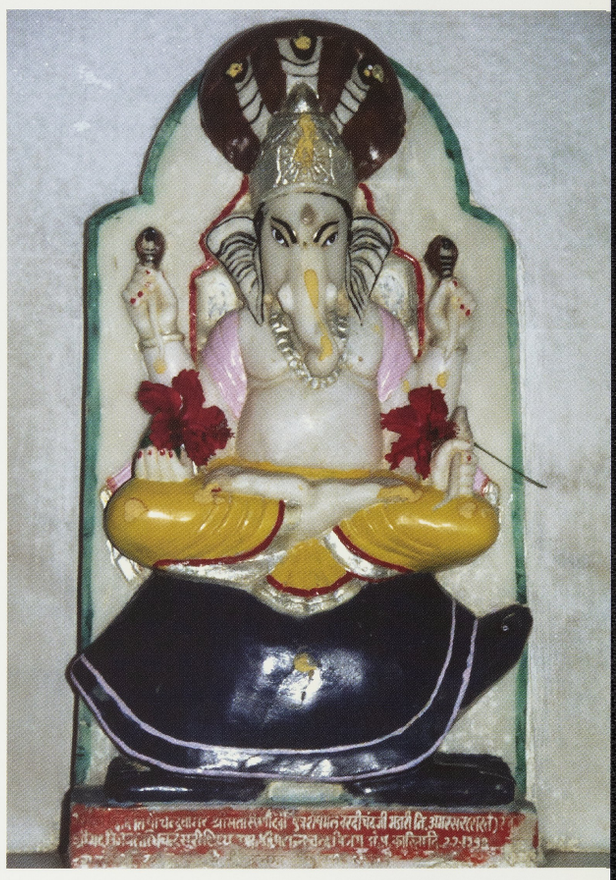
In the subcontinent, the veneration of *yakṣa*s and *yakṣī*s is of great antiquity, and the ancient literature of Hindus, Buddhists and Jainas is abundant with references to *yakṣa*s and other natural spirits.[120] In this respect the iconography of many of these minor divinities is noteworthy, as several *yakṣa*s are depicted with animal heads, have animal *lāñchana*s or are associated with prominent *vāhana*s in animal form. These elements may be remnants of earlier associations with nature cults. At least in northern India, Gomukha Yakṣa, also known as Vṛṣabha Yakṣa, is, as indicated in his name, usually represented with the head of a bull or an ox.[121] According to the Śvetāmbaras, this *yakṣa* rides an elephant (Plate 198), whilst Digambaras usually depict him seated on a bull (Plate 199). Representations depicting him with an animal head are more common in north and central India, although in the south, his images bear all other standard iconographical features but more commonly in association with a human head. Such variations, however, can also be found within the region of north and central India (Plates 200, 201). Gomukha Yakṣa's associated *yakṣī* is Cakreśvarī (Apraticakra). Her mount is a bird called *garuḍa*, usually translated as eagle (Plate 202). Further popular *yakṣa*s with animal heads are Pārśva Yakṣa, bearing the head of an elephant and riding a tortoise (Plate 203), and the Digambara Śyāma Yakṣa, bearing the head of a boar and riding a bird. There are, however, considerable differences in the names and the iconographical features of Śvetāmbara and Digambara *yakṣa*s and *yakṣī*s, often with some further local variations (see Appendix V).

It is difficult to pinpoint when exactly the *yakṣa*s and *yakṣī*s were integrated into the Jaina pantheon, but the names and attributes of many of them indicate a possible *Brāhmaṇical* origin.[122] There are many representations of *yakṣa*s in the early sculptural remains at Mathura, dating from the first centuries of our era, and in the carvings of the Jaina caves at Ellora. The standardisation and firm association of these attendants with specific Jinas, however, seems

200. 201. Representations of Gomukha Yakṣa depicted with animal and human heads.

202. Image of the *yakṣī* Cakreśvarī from a sculpted panel at Khajuraho.

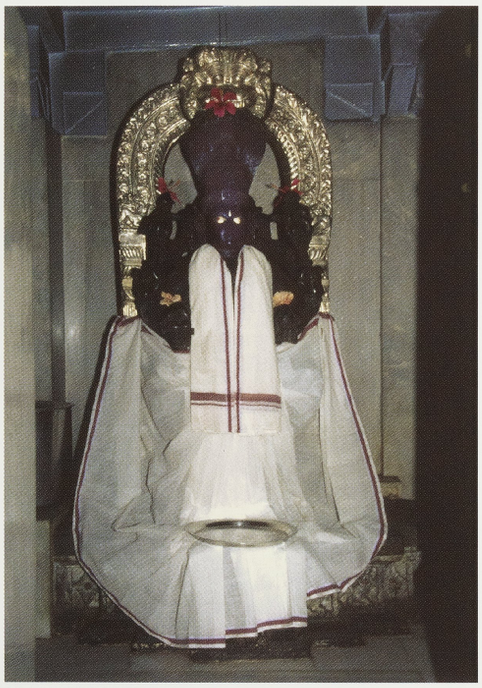
203. Pārśva Yakṣa is usually depicted with the head of an elephant, riding on a tortoise.



120 Amongst these nature spirits, snake divinities (*nāga*s), *apsarā*s and *gandharva*s figure especially prominently (Shah 1987: 205).

121 In the south of India, and especially in the modern state of Karnataka, it is more common to find this *yakṣa* represented with a human face (Nagar 1999: 74).

122 Nagar 1999: 187.







204. Pārśvanātha's *yakṣa*, Pārśva Yakṣa or Dharṇendra, from the temple at Shrirangapatnam.

205. Sculpture of Padmāvatī, the *yakṣī* of Pārśvanātha, from his temple at Penukonda.

206. Elaborately dressed figure of Padmāvatī from the Śāntinātha Temple at Ratnagiri.

207. Two Padmāvatī representations from the Pārśvanātha Temple at Penukonda (see 205 for third image).

208. At Humcha, Padmāvatī Yakṣī forms the centre of veneration and is surrounded by an evolved ritual.

to be an even later concept. For Ambikā Yakṣī, for instance, no literary or archaeological evidence has been discovered so far to indicate her introduction into Jaina worship before the sixth century CE.[123] The full pantheon of twenty-four associated *yakṣa*s and *yakṣī*s seems only to have emerged towards the end of the first half of the eighth century CE (see Appendix IV for a full list).[124]

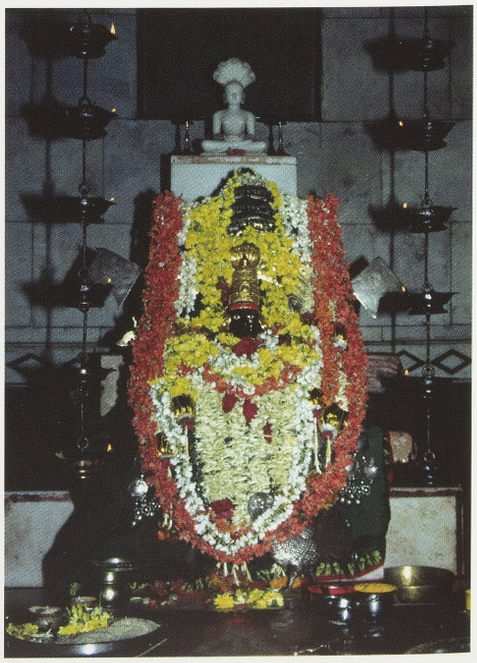
Coomaraswamy, in his groundbreaking study on *yakṣa*s, showed that the terms *yakṣa* and *deva* or *devatā* were originally virtually synonymous.[125] Though today, some theoretical texts differentiate between the two, in popular worship and terminology they are often treated

123 This issue has been discussed in Shah (1974b: 136). An alternative spelling for Ambikā is Aṁbikā.

124 Dundas 1992: 182.

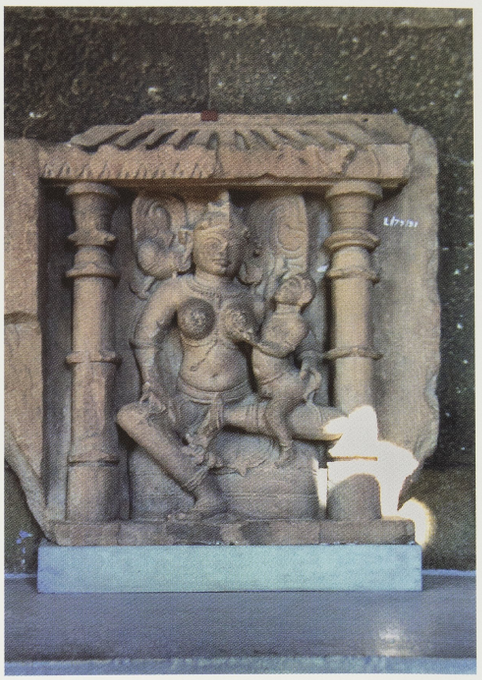
125 See the well-known study by Coomaraswamy (1980) and also later interpretations of his writings, for example, in Shah (1987: 205).











209. Representation of Ambikā Mātā from Dharmasthala, depicted with two of her children.

210. 211. More common depictions of the standing or seated *yakṣī* Ambikā portrayed with only a single baby.

212. Ambikā and child at Ellora, seated below a mango tree on the *yakṣī*'s lion *vāhana.*

as one and the same. In Jainism, the *yakṣa*s and *yakṣī*s of the Tīrthaṅkaras are alternatively referred to as *upāśaka*s or *śāsana-devatā*s, protector or tutelary divinities of the Jaina religion and community (*śāsana*) and of the sacred places (*kṣetra*s) of their associated Jinas.[126]

As the four Jinas, Ādinātha, Pārśvanātha, Mahāvīra and Neminātha, are particularly popular throughout the subcontinent, their *śāsana-devatā*s too have regularly been represented in art. Ādinātha is associated with Gomukha Yakṣa and Cakreśvarī Yakṣī, Pārśvanātha with Pārśva Yakṣa, also known as Dharṇendra (Plate 204) and Padmāvatī Yakṣī, Mahāvīra with Mātaṅga Yakṣa and Siddhāyikā Yakṣī, and Neminātha with Gomedha Yakṣa and Ambikā Yakṣī. In the south, Aṁbikā is more commonly referred to as Kuṣamāṇḍinī Yakṣī.[127] Amongst these last mentioned sets, the *yakṣa* and *yakṣī* associated with Mahāvīra are probably least common and more rarely depicted in art.

Whereas during the early period of the development of *yakṣa* imagery, the *śāsana-devatā*s were merely treated as demi-gods and attendant spirits, a cult providing them with more significance and an independent status as saviours, developed from about the late Gupta period. As part of this development, also *śāsana-devatā*s not associated with such prominent and popular Jinas, developed a more independent nature and are commonly venerated and depicted in isolation from their associated Jinas. Brahma, the *yakṣa* associated with Śītalanātha, and Jvālāmālinī (Bhṛkuṭi), the *yakṣī* of Candraprabha, gained particular importance in the south of the subcontinent.[128] Brahma, then commonly referred to as Brahmadeva or Brahmadeva Yakṣa, developed into the archetypal guardian of the temple compound, a *kśetra-pāla*.[129] This illustrates a more general tendency, where *yakṣa*s and *yakṣī*s have also been absorbed as part of other groups of gods, protectors and guardians. The *śāsana-devatā*s appear to have gained such importance with Jaina followers, because they are closely associated with the enlightened Jinas, clearly positioned at the apex of the Jaina pantheon, but are more approachable. Their ability to listen to the devotees, to grant requests and to offer protection is signalled in their hand gestures, the *mudrā*s. While images of the Tīrthaṅkaras are only shown in *dhyāna-mudrā*, the meditation gesture, indicating an unreachable withdrawal from our world, *yakṣa*s are depicted in a variety of hand positions, such as *vara* or *abhaya-mudrā*. The readiness to act and to defend the religion and its followers are clearly indicated in the weapons they carry.



126 On this matter, see also Nagar (1999: 314) and Shah (1975a: 473; 1987: 215).

127 See Nagar (1999: 71). For Siddhāyikā and Kuṣamāṇḍinī Yakṣī we have the following alternative spellings: Siddhidāyikā and Kuṣmāṇḍī.

128 For Brahma Yakṣa, two spellings are common: Brahma and Brahmā.

129 Further details on the role of this *yakṣa* as *kśetra-pāla*, are provided in the next section entitled '*Kṣetra-Pālas and Dvāra-Pālas*.'





213. Modern representations of Ambikā from Gajpantha, omitting the child but preserving her identifying lion vehicle.

214. A wall painting at Nadol depicts Ambikā coming to the rescue of sailors at sea who are threatened by a demon.

215. In the Jvālāmālinī Temple at Narasimharajapura, this *yakṣī* is venerated as the central icon.



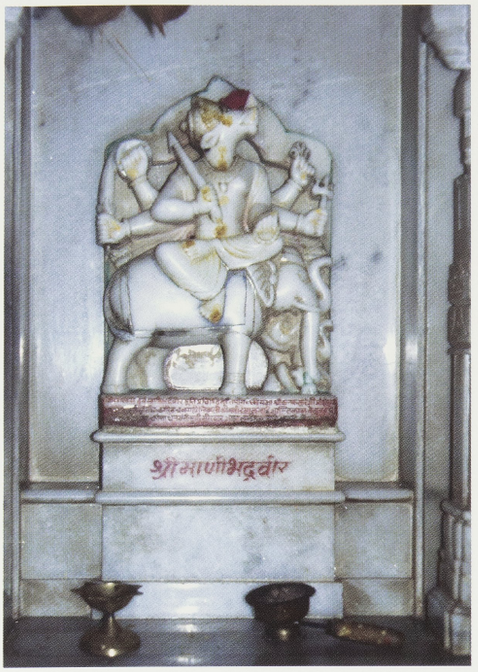
From about the tenth century, the cult of the veneration of *yakṣī*s as tutelary goddesses of the Jaina faith, reached a level almost to rival the importance of the Jinas. Especially popular became Padmāvatī and Ambikā, who are equally popular in the north and in the south of the country. However, in southern India, Ambikā is better known as Kuṣamāṇḍinī or as Dharma Devī. Padmāvatī is the *yakṣī* of Pārśvanātha and the role she plays in protecting the twenty-third Jina has already been narrated earlier in this chapter. Her associated colour is gold and she rides a snake which has the head of a cock. She is usually depicted with four arms. Those on the right hold a lotus and a rosary and those on the left hold a fruit and a rein (Plate 205). The image of her cock-headed snake *vāhana*, usually positioned on the throne of the sculptures, is often covered by the elaborate silk and brocade saris, which *yakṣī* statues are commonly draped with (Plate 206). Padmāvatī is so popular, that many temples have several images of this particular *yakṣī*. The Pārśvanātha Temple at Penukonda displays three prominent images of this *śāsana-devī* (Plate 207). In the Padmāvatī Temple at Humcha, this *yakṣī* is not a minor, but the main object of veneration with a developed cult of her own (Plate 208).

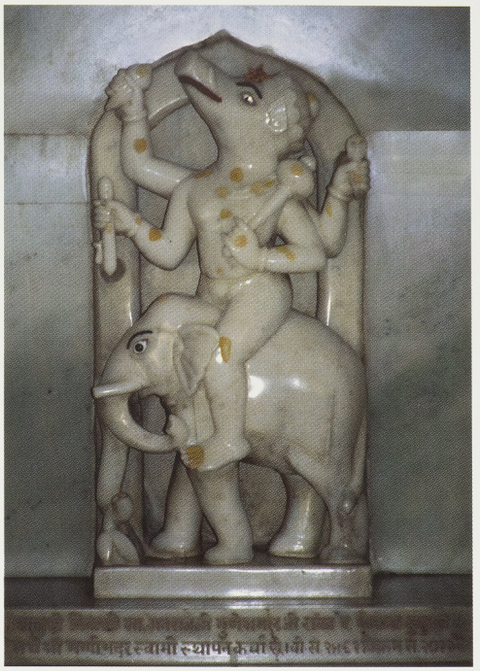
Ambikā Mātā, meaning the 'little mother' is usually depicted with a bunch of mangoes and one or two children (Plate 209). Despite the fact that most texts on iconography mention the presence of two children, most surviving sculptural examples only depict one child on the mother's left side. When represented in standing posture, the baby is shown supported on the mother's hip and when seated it is depicted resting on her lap (Plates 210, 211). The attributes of mango and child identify her as the mother who attracted the anger of her *brāhmaṇ* husband when she converted to Jainism. Expelled from her home, she had to live off nature, such as mangoes, and died fleeing her husband who followed her after he had realised the mistake he had made. In many sculpted panels, the branches of a mango tree are shown sheltering the figures from behind. Ambikā's vehicle, the lion, is regularly represented below the mother (Plate 212). In other sculptures, particularly in central and southern India, mangoes and the child are omitted and the *yakṣī* is only identified by her lion *vāhana* (Plate 213). In her south Indian form as Kuṣamāṇḍinī, she is regarded as the tutelary goddess of Shravanabelgola.[130] In Tamil Nadu, Kuṣamāṇḍinī is usually referred to as Dharma Devī. She is generally known as the protectoress of the people and many wall paintings adorning temple buildings, depict her heroic deeds (Plate 214). Although less common in the north, there is a separate small Ambikā Devī Temple at Sadri in Rajasthan.[131]

References to the *yakṣī*s as *devī*s or *mātā*s, are especially common in the southern states of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, where these female elements play a particularly important

130 For the story explaining her association with this particular site, see Dundas (1992: 193).

131 It is more common for *yakṣī* worship in the north to be integrated into temples of the Jinas.







role in temple ritual. In this part of India, the *yakṣī*s and goddesses frequently have temple buildings, as large as those dedicated to the Jinas, erected in their own names. A good example is the Kuṣamāṇḍinī Temple at Narasimharajapura. *Yakṣī* or *devī* temples are also widespread in Andhra Pradesh, exemplified by the Maṅgala Devī Temple at Kulpak. Kuṣamāṇḍinī (Ambikā), Padmāvatī and Jvālāmālinī in particular, acquired higher significance in Tantric Jaina rituals, with entire temple buildings dedicated to their veneration (Plate 215).[132] In contrast to their Hindu counterparts, the Jaina goddesses are unmarried. They are benevolent and vegetarian, and represent the Jaina ideal of non-violence.[133]

*Yakṣī*s and *yakṣa*s have been included as one class in the group of eight *vyantara-devatā*s.[134] Besides the twenty-four male *yakṣa*s associated with their respective Tīrthaṅkaras, the

132 Shah has also written on this issue (1987: 221).

133 This issue has also been discussed in Dundas (1992: 182).

134 See Nagar (1999: 187) and Shah (1975a: 487). Some texts use the following alternative spelling for *vyantara-devatā*: *vyāntara-devatā*.

216. 217. Sculptures from Jaina temples in Chennai and Ghanerao, representing the *yakṣa* Māṇibhadra.

218. Brahma Yakṣa Kṣetra-pāla seated on an elephant, from a carved pillar at Melsittamur.

219. Brahmadeva riding a horse, venerated in the Pārśvanātha Temple at Penukonda.

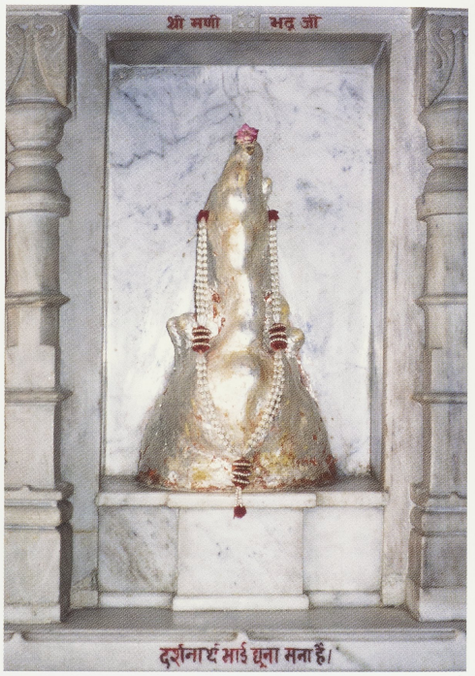
220. Brahma dressed in sacred clothes and flanked by two *yakṣī*s in the hall of the Ādinātha Temple at Odalavadi.









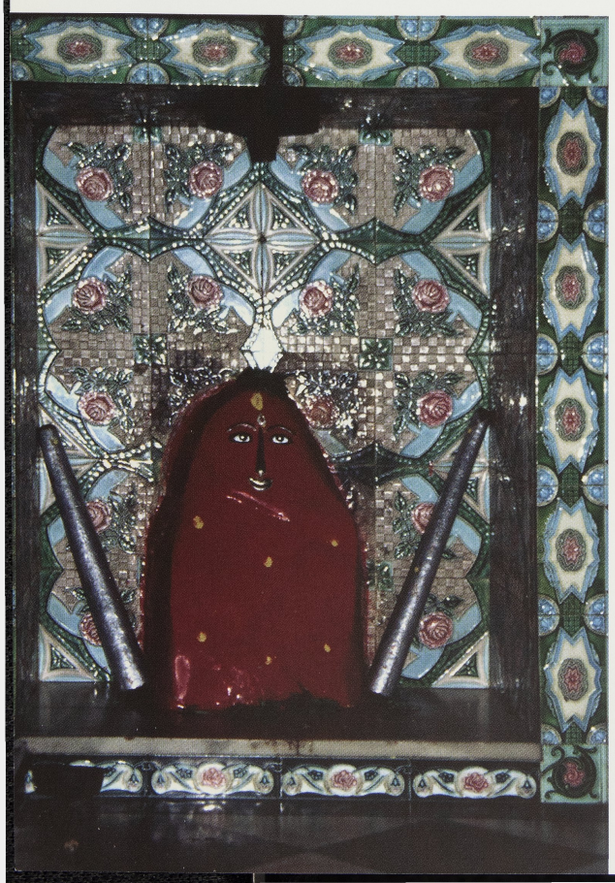


221. Representation of the *kṣetra-pāla* Māṇibhadra or Iṣṭhāk Deva on the outer wall of the main Jaina temple at Varkana.

222. Image of Iṣṭhāk Deva at Ranakpur, which has been clad in silver foil and decorated with flowers and auspicious marks applied in sandalwood paste.

223. The *kṣetra-pāla* Māṇibhadra at Hastinapur, depicted in aniconic form.

224. At Narlai, eyes have been applied to the basically non-figural rock representing the *kṣetra-pāla*.



Bhagavatī-sūtra and the *Tattvārtha-bhāṣya* list a further eighteen *yakṣa*s.[135] *Yakṣa*s as a group are represented by thirteen leaders, with the two principal ones being Pūrṇabhadra and Māṇibhadra. In Jaina literature, these have been described as two Indras and as the heads of the demi-gods. Early *yakṣa* images from Mathura and Gwalior frequently depict the potbellied *yakṣa* Māṇibhadra. In the Mahābhārata, he is described as the *yakṣa-rāja*, the king or leader of all *yakṣa*s.[136] His iconography is identical with that of Gomukha Yakṣa, who has been discussed above (Plates 216, 217). As a consequence, their names too are exchangeable to a certain extent, but the context will dictate a preference for one or the other. Māṇibhadra is regarded as the patron and protector of merchants and their guilds, and since the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries, he is the tutelary deity of the Śvetāmbara Tapā Gaccha in particular.[137] Gomukha Yakṣa (Māṇibhadra) as well as Brahma Yakṣa, alternatively referred to as Brahmadeva, have also been classified as *kṣetra-pāla*s, a group of protectors which will be discussed in more detail in the following section.

Kṣetra-Pālas and Dvāra-Pālas

*Kṣetra-pāla*s are the guardians of sacred temple compounds. Jaina religious complexes have typically been protected by high and solid walls, and also their religious and metaphysical defences have usually been well-developed. Especially popular in southern India is Brahma Kṣetra-pāla, commonly referred to as Brahmadeva or Brahmadeva Yakṣa. Represented in symbolic form or depicted in figural shape, and then usually housed in a small shrine or raised at the apex of tall pillars, visual representations of Brahma are commonly associated with sacred *kṣetra*s.[138] In his function as protector of the sacred compound, Brahma is no longer exclusively linked to the Jina Śītalanātha, with whom he is associated as his guardian attendant or *yakṣa*. As *kṣetra-pāla*, he guards any sacred temple area. Brahma can either be seated on a lotus or an elephant (Plate 218). In the south, however, he is usually associated with a horse and is often portrayed riding one (Plate 219). Because of their sacredness and associated might, images of Brahma have regularly been painted in the auspicious colour orange. As with other *yakṣa*s, statues of Brahmadeva too are often dressed in cloth garments and changed on a regular basis (Plate 220).

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135 Further details on this can be obtained from Nagar (1999: 187-190).

136 See, for instance, *Mahābhārata* 5.192.44, and the analysis in Nagar (1999: 189).

137 Nagar 1999: 189, 191; Dundas 1992: 175.

138 In this connection, see also the discussion of *brahma-stambha*s in the following chapter on architecture, and Hegewald (forthcoming: h).





225. 226. Two representations of the *kṣetra-pāla* Bhairava with a dog, from the temple complex at Melsittamur.

The *kṣetra-pāla* Māṇibhadra, alternatively known as Māṇibhadra Deva or Māṇibhadra Vīr, is simultaneously a *yakṣa*. Iconographic texts associate him with an elephant as his *vāhana*. Māṇibhadra is more common amongst Śvetāmbara Jainas and therefore more popular in the north, although neither Brahma nor Māṇibhadra are exclusive to any one region or sect. In the area of north-western India in particular, Māṇibhadra is commonly referred to as Adhiṣṭhāk Deva, Iṣṭhāk Deva or Śrī Īṣṭa Deva Mahārāja. He is usually bearded and bears the severed head of an enemy in his lower left hand (Plate 221). Figural representations of him are commonly positioned on the outside of Jaina temples. In order to stress the presence of this particularly important protector on the facades of often heavily embellished temple walls, his statues have frequently been decorated. They can be painted in orange, be adorned with flowers and sandalwood paste, or be clad in highly reflective silver foil. Images of this kind are particularly common in Rajasthan (Plate 222). Where statues of Iṣṭhāk Deva have been singled out, small wooden steps have regularly been constructed below the images in order to allow devotees to reach, adorn and venerate them.[139] Despite his developed iconography, this *kṣetra-pāla* can

227. Characteristic image of Nākoḍā Bhairava from the Ātmānanda Jaina Bhavana in Sadri.

228. Nākoḍā Bhairava sculpture enshrined in a niche in the hall of the Śvetāmbara temple at Margaon.

229. One of four aniconic representations of Bhairavjī, housed in the lower image chamber of the Śvetāmbara Gāṁv Mandir at Pavapuri.

139 This is the case in the Cintāmaṇī Pārśvanātha Temple at Sadri in Rajasthan.











230. The *kṣetra-pāla* by the name of Bhomiyājī, 'lord of the earth,' is shown emerging from a hill, illustrated by an image from Bamanvad.

231. Bhomiyājī is closely associated with sacred Mount Śikharjī and often represented as if surfacing from a *tīrtha-paṭa* representing the site as may be seen in the Dādā Baṛā Jaina Temple at Delhi.

also be represented in aniconic form. In this case, a naturally shaped stone which has either been painted intensely orange or red, or which has been wrapped in silver or shiny red paper, usually symbolises this temple guardian (Plate 223). However, because such representations are often perceived as being too abstract, eyes have regularly been applied to the shapeless stones to provide them at least with hints of anthropomorphic features (Plate 224).

Another *kṣetra-pāla*, regularly associated with Jaina temples, is Bhairava. He appears to have been integrated into the Jaina pantheon by about the eleventh or twelfth centuries, as exemplified by several examples from Khajuraho.[140] Possibly influenced by his *Brāhmaṇical* counterpart, he is usually represented with a large dog. Depictions of him can be seen in the sixteen-pillared hall and in a separate Bhairava shrine, both located in the Pārśvanātha Temple complex at Melsittamur (Plates 225, 226). Particularly popular amongst Marwari Śvetāmbara Jainas is the *kṣetra-pāla* in his form as Nākoḍā Bhairava. The cult originates in a small village near Jodhpur in Rajasthan. In this particular appearance, the figural representations are only portrayed from the head down to the waste, and seem to emerge from a pedestal below (Plate 227). Representations of this *kṣetra-pāla* can be enshrined in small niches in the hall or in the outer walls of temples. At large religious sites, separate shrines have been constructed to house Nākoḍā Bhairavas. Examples are found on sacred Mount Bāmaṇavādjī and at Bhakara Road, both in Rajasthan. Wherever Śvetāmbara Jainas have migrated, they have taken statues of Nākoḍā Bhairava, and have installed them at their sacred places of worship (Plate 228).

140 Nagar 1999: 374.





232. 233. Stone and metal panels from Sadri and Narlai respectively, depicting the protective force of the *kṣetra-pāla* Ghaṇṭākarṇa Vīr.





234.-236. Generic representations of the temple guardian in the form of naturally shaped painted stones, displaying varying degrees of anthropomorphism as seen at Varanasi, Amminabhavi and Ujjain.

Noteworthy is that the veneration of this form of Bhairava seems to be particularly, if not exclusively developed amongst women.[141] Also in association with this specific temple guardian, aniconic representations in the form of naturally shaped rocks are common. The Śvetāmbara Gāṁv Mandir at Pavapuri, for instance, enshrines four so-called Bhairavjīs in the lower image chamber at the entrance to the temple. All four stones have been wrapped in silver foil and are locally described as the '*rākṣasa*s of lord *bhagavāna*' (Plate 229).

A further popular form of the *kṣetra-pāla* is Bhomiyājī or Bhūmiyājī, the 'lord of the earth.' This *kṣetra-pāla* is the personified energy of the sacred ground, and of Mount Śikharjī in particular. For that reason, artistic representations usually show the simplified shape of a hill. They have either a human being emerging from the summit of the rock, as can be seen in a small temple at Bamanvad (Plate 230), or they have a head marked on what looks almost like a *tīrtha-paṭa* of the sacred hill site in Bihar. The latter can be seen in the Jaina temple at Mehrauli in Delhi (Plate 231). Noteworthy is the close iconographic resemblance between this and other *kṣetra-pāla*s, with images of the Hindu god Śiva.[142]

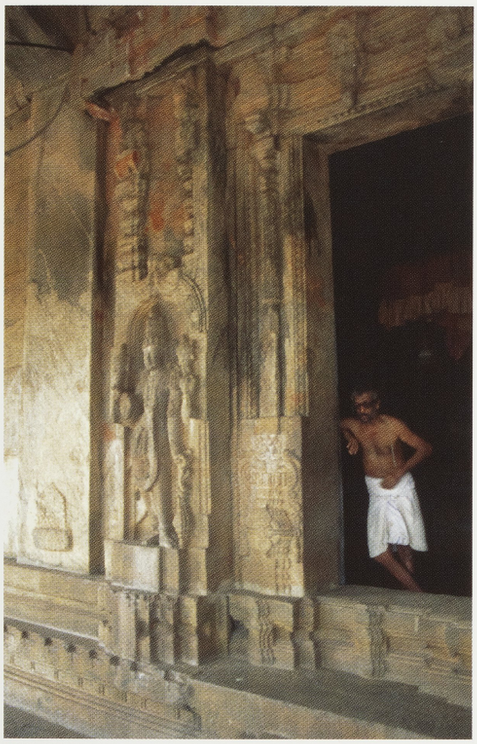
Common are also representations of the *kṣetra-pāla* Ghaṇṭākarṇa Vīr or Ghaṇṭākarṇa Mahā-vīra. He is often wrongly referred to as Ghaṇṭākarṇa Mahāvīra and associated with the twenty-fourth Tīrthaṅkara. The 'great bow-shooting hero,' however, is not a Jina, but a guardian of the temple compound. With his arrow, he drives away the evil threatening the sacred precinct (Plates 232, 233). Ghaṇṭākarṇa Vīr is associated with the emblem of the bell, which creates auspicious sounds, that fill the universe.

The close connection between the different forms of the *kṣetra-pāla* becomes particularly clear in examples where several different names and titles have been combined with regards to one being. A good example is the *kṣetra-pāla* of the Sudarśana Temple at Patna, locally referred to as Ādhiṣṭhāyak Deva Śrī Bhomīyājī Mahārāja. In other instances, the images are simply referred to as *kṣetra-pāla*s, not naming a specific form. Figural representations of the *kṣetra-pāla* often bear clubs as protective weapons. Generic representations of the temple guardian are usually in the form of naturally shaped stones, painted bright orange, and showing varying degrees of anthropomorphism through the addition of eyes and mouths, which have been painted or glued onto the stones (Plates 234-236).

Whereas *kṣetra-pāla*s are guardians of the entire sacred compound, *dvāra-pāla*s are more specifically door guardians. Doors and thresholds more generally, are points where areas of varying sanctity and purity border one another. Specific care must therefore be applied to these transitional points, and polluting elements must be prevented from entering the sacred temple sphere. Consequently, larger temple complexes with series of ever increasing sacred areas frequently have several sets of *dvāra-pāla*s. These statues of temple watchmen flank consecutive doorways. *Dvāra-pāla*s are usually human in shape, but have at times been provided with fantastic and demonic features. They can either be carved (Plates 237, 238) or

141 When conducting fieldwork on Jainism in Goa, local male Jaina informants told me that at least these days, only women worship Nākoḍājī.

142 Also Dundas remarks that "the elaboration of a full-scale Jain iconography of guardian gods and goddesses shows extensive Śaiva influence" (1992: 200).





237. 238. Carved representations of door guardians (*dvāra-pāla*s) from Karkal and Humcha.

painted onto the sides of doorways (Plate 239). A more modern interpretation of *dvāra-pāla*s, in the form of soldiers in uniforms bearing rifles, can be seen at many Jaina sites. Examples are the *dvāra-pāla*s flanking the door of the Supārśvanātha Temple at Narlai in Rajasthan,[143] the Triple Temple at Ramtek in Maharashtra (Plate 240), and the gateway of the Pārśvanātha Basti at Venur.

239. At Melsittamur, painted *dvāra-pāla*s guard the entrance to the sacred temple interior.



Dika-Pālas and Nāgas

The concept of the guardians of the world or the directions of space, known locally either as the *dika-pāla*s, *loka-pāla*s or *vāstu-devatā*s, has been integrated into Śvetāmbara and Digambara Jaina iconography and ritual. Jaina texts usually list Indra (east), Agni (south-east), Yama (south), Nairṭa (south-west),[144] Varuṇa (west), Vāyu (north-west), Kubera (north) and Īśāna (north-east) as guardians of the four quarters and the four intermediate regions. Indra, who rides an elephant, also plays an important role in Jainism in other respects. After the birth of a Jina, Indra provides the *kevalin* with his first bath on the summit of Mount Meru. Yama, guarding the southern direction, is the lord of death. He judges the merit of the deceased and is represented as riding a male buffalo. In Jaina iconography, the *dika-pāla* Varuṇa's mount is a fish, or a dolphin more specifically. When counted as one of the *yakṣa*s, however, he is connected with the bull as his vehicle. Kubera, who is said to ride on a human being, is considered the king of the *yakṣa*s and the guardian of sacred Mount Kailāśa.[145] Whereas the Digambaras only accept eight *dika-pāla*s (*aṣṭa-dika-pāla*s), Śvetāmbaras add another two as protectors of the upper and lower (*pātāla*) regions; these are Brahma and Nāga (snake), at times called Vāsukī, respectively.[146] It is interesting to note that in Digambara Jaina temple architecture, representations of Brahma, treated primarily as *kṣetra-pāla*, are commonly raised at the apex of tall pillars, as if entrusting this figure after all with guarding the upper regions of space. When referred to as the *aṣṭa-dika-pāla*s in a Digambara Jaina context, however,

143 The Supārśvanātha Temple at Narlai is also noteworthy for bearing representations of angels instead of flying *apsarā*s.

144 A common alternative spelling for Nairṭa is Nairṛti.

145 Nagar 1999: 382.

146 See Bhattacharya (1974: 115) and Nagar (1999: 376, 384). As has been discussed earlier in this chapter, Brahma is not only a *dika-pāla*. He is also a *yakṣa* and a *kṣetra-pāla*, indicating the interconnected nature of many of the categories of sacred beings discussed here.

the concept is usually treated in a more abstract way. Like Hindu temples in the south, their Jaina counterparts are regularly surrounded by eight small carved stones, at times fashioned in a lotus shape, which have been positioned around the main temple structures, inside the protected space of the inner enclosure wall. Examples from a Jaina context can be seen at many sites in central and coastal Karnataka (Plate 241). As part of image installation or *pratiṣṭhā* ceremonies, the influence of the *dika-pāla*s is invoked to guarantee the auspicious workings of the new image and the temple as a whole.[147]

Another group of *vyantara* gods which are commonly venerated in a Jaina temple context, and which will be mentioned again in connection with open-air and small roofed shrines in the following chapter, are snakes. In India, they are usually known as *nāga*s, although religious texts at times refer to them as *mahoraga*s. As guardians of the nether region, the *nāga*s belong, at least in a Śvetāmbara context, also to the group of *dika-pāla*s.[148] Snake worship, similar to the veneration of the *yakṣa*s and of other nature-related spirits, has a long tradition in south Asia and predates the establishment of classical Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. It has to be assumed, that the practice of natural cults was continued by the early converts to Jainism and that it never ceased to play an important role within the newly-established religion. Serpents are generally considered to be the guardians of the treasures of the underworld, and are closely linked to fertility. Snakes have been given specific Jaina religious significance, by linking them to Pārśvanātha and Supārśvanātha, who are represented with canopies of snake hoods. Particularly with regards to Pārśvanātha, there is a wealth of stories describing the role played by the snake king Dhāraṇendra and by his serpent wife Padmāvatī. Consequently, countless Jaina temples throughout India have snake representations and small discretely delineated areas in the temple compounds, where these divinities are venerated. In the north, snake symbolism is today often more symbolic in nature, and serpent designs are regularly used in a more decorative way (Plate 242). In the south, however, snake stones, known as *nāga-kal*s or *nāga-śila*s, are commonly arranged below trees, along the compound walls of temples, and housed in small shrines and in the halls of major temple structures, where they still form an important part of Jaina temple ritual (Plate 243). Because of the auspicious nature of snakes, the sighting or more permanent association of living serpents with temple areas too has often been documented in artistic shape by carving representations of serpents onto temple walls (Plate 244).

147 Additional information on this ceremony and the role played in it by the *dika-pāla*s can be found in Cort (2001: 3-4).

148 See the discussion above and also Nagar (1999: 384).

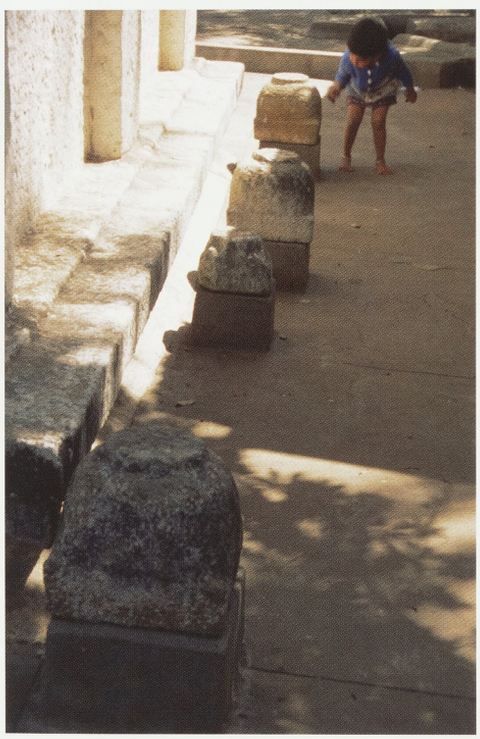


240. Modern interpretation of *dvāra-pāla*s in the form of soldiers in uniforms with rifles flank the entrance to the Triple Temple at Ramtek.

241. Eight small carved stones surrounding the Ādinātha Temple at Shrirangapatnam represent the *aṣṭa-dika-pāla*s.

242. Stone panel adorned with an abstract serpent design, venerated in the entrance porch of the Pārśvanātha Temple at Varkana.

243. Carved snake stone, worshipped in a small shrine in the temple complex at Shrirangapatnam.









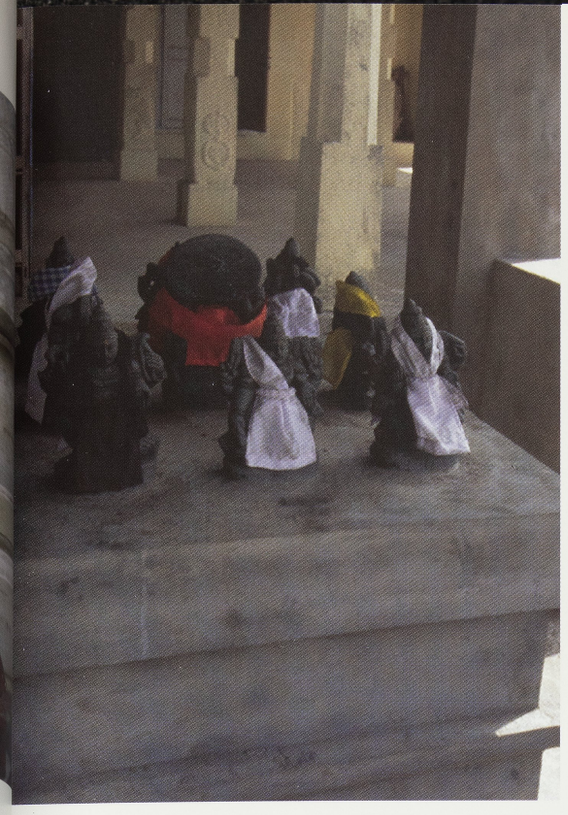
244. According to local legend, a living snake is closely associated with the Śāntinātha Temple at Sanderav, a connection which has also been portrayed in a representation adorning the temple structure.

Not part of the official set of the *vyantara-devatā*s, but similarly related to cosmic interpretations of space, are the *nava-graha*s, the nine planetary divinities. In Jainism, this group of gods is also referred to as the *jyotiṣ-devatā*s or the *jyotiṣka-devatā*s. Originally, they only numbered eight.[149] This set of divinities too has been entrusted with guarding the directions of space. The sun (Sūrya) has traditionally been associated with the east and Digambaras regard him as the leader of all planets. The moon (Candra), associated with the north-west, is considered the ruler of the stars. Mars (Maṅgala), the son of the earth, is believed to guard the southern direction. In addition to Mercury (Buddha), Jupiter (Bṛhaspati), Venus (Śukra) and Saturn (Śani), have been added Rāhu and Ketu. The *nava-graha*s are very popular with Jainas, who venerate them in a number of different contexts. At the beginning of an image installation ceremony, the nine planets are invoked and pacified through prayers. This aims at unblocking any negative influence the stars might have had on the auspicious workings of the temple and

149 At that time, Rāhu and Ketu were counted as one planet. Refer to Nagar (1999: 367-373) for further details.



245. The nine planetary divinities (*nava-graha*) have been carved to adorn a lintel in the Pārśvanātha Temple at Khajuraho.





246. 247. Three-dimensional representations of the nine celestial gods in Jaina temples at Ponnur and Venkundram.

on the icons contained within it.[150] Throughout India, the *nava-graha*s are commonly depicted on the carved lintels leading to the *garbha-gṛha*s of Jaina temples. Striking examples can be seen in the Jaina temples at Khajuraho (Plate 245), and at Deogarh and Ghanerao. From about the tenth century CE, their representations regularly decorate the pedestals or the sides of more developed Tīrthaṅkara representations. More unusual in a Jaina context is the veneration of the planetary divinities in the shape of nine small three-dimensional figural representations, which have been positioned on a square, or more rarely a circular pedestal. These are usually to be found in the porches, halls or subsidiary shrines of Jaina complexes. Most of these small three-dimensional representations are found in Jaina temples in Tamil Nadu (Plates 246, 247).

2. Female Divinities

*Yakṣī*s are not the only female elements venerated in a Jaina religious context. There are large numbers of goddesses, many of which are also known from a Hindu background. Consequently, it has often been suggested that these Jaina goddesses were originally Hindu and that they were only later integrated into the Jaina religion, where they were grouped into various categories of female deities.[151] However, as Hinduism and Jainism have coexisted and interacted over centuries, it is difficult to pinpoint or prove the first occurrence of an iconographic feature or the veneration of a particular divinity. Noteworthy in this respect is that the oldest preserved dated sculpture of the goddess Sarasvatī is not Hindu, but has through an inscription been identified as a Jaina statue.[152]

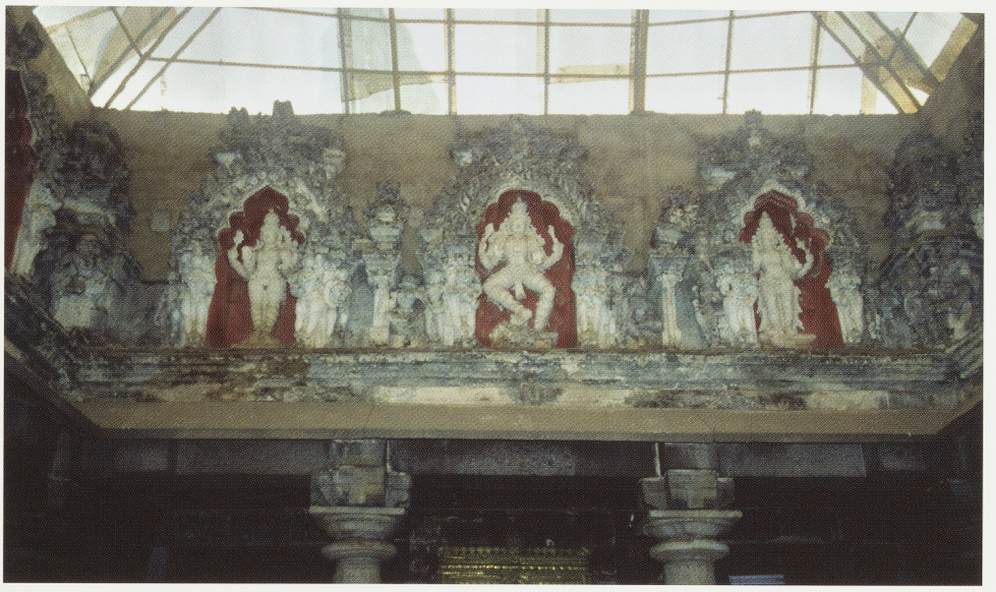
In addition to Jaina goddesses sculpted in the round and venerated in the *garbha-gṛha*s and niches of temples, representations of them are regularly found positioned above doorways leading into Jaina temples. Images of female deities regularly adorn religious edifices other than temples, such as compound gateways, *dharmaśālā*s and *maṭha*s (Plates 248, 249). Prominent in a Jaina temple context are also various Tantric goddesses, referred to as *kula-*

150 On *pratiṣṭhā* ceremonies, see also Cort (2001: 3).

151 The influence Hindu divinities and sacred elements might have had on Jainism, has been discussed in the introduction to the section entitled "Associated Divinities of the Tīrthaṅkaras" earlier in this chapter, and in Dundas (1992: 200).

152 This sculpture was discovered at Mathura and dates from CE 132. See Leoshko (1999: 336-337), Shah (1999: 113), Dundas (1992: 183) and Nagar (1999: 317-318) for additional information on this specific image.





248. 249. Female Jaina divinities have been chosen as motives to decorate the lintel of the gateway in Annigeri and the parapet of the courtyard in the Jaina *maṭha* at Shravanabelgola.

*devī*s. These are only venerated with *mantra*s.[153] The group of *kula-devī*s include, for instance, the *vidyā-devī*s, Lakṣmī, alternatively known simply as Śrī, the *aṣṭa-mātṛkā*s, and the mothers of the Jinas, all figures regularly found in Jaina temples throughout India.

The Vidyā-Devīs (Śruta-Devīs, Mahā-Vidyās)

The *vidyā-devī*s, also known as *śruta-devī*s, are the goddesses of learning and knowledge. They are considered to be the guardians of the arts and sciences, and their veneration is believed to generate knowledge in the devotee.[154] A similar group of female divinities exists in Hinduism, but in a Jaina context, they are more numerous and have a more developed iconography. In Jaina temples, *vidyā-devī*s regularly adorn the carved struts of elaborately decorated domed ceilings. In this context, one often finds groups of eight or twelve divinities of this kind (Plates 250, 251). In Jainism, the goddesses of knowledge are especially popular in a Śvetāmbara context, where since about the ninth century CE, they are represented in a group of sixteen (Plate 252).[155] The *vidyā-devī*s, then usually in association with a central Jina, adorn flat ceiling sections or other carved temple panels (Plate 253). Later texts on Jaina iconography, referring to them as the *mahā-vidyā*s, expanded their number to forty-eight thousand. A number of such vastness might have very little to do with actual practice, but makes an important statement on the popularity and significance of this group of goddesses.

The presiding divinity of the *mahā-vidyā*s is Sarasvatī or Śruta-devī. In its plural form, the latter name can be applied to the entire group of divinities, then called the *śruta-devī*s.[156] Sarasvatī is the tutelary divinity of the Jaina scriptures and regarded as the goddess of wisdom and intelligence. Consequently, she is depicted holding a sacred book. In another hand, she is usually shown carrying a musical instrument, a *vīṇā*. Sarasvatī is depicted seated on a lotus or a bird, variably identified as a goose, a swan or a peacock (Plate 254). Special celebrations are conducted in honour of Sarasvatī on the festival of Jñāna-pañcamī, when sacred books are venerated and restored.[157] As pointed out above, the oldest surviving image of the goddess known at present comes from a Jaina context from Mathura and dates from the early first century CE. There is a certain amount of overlay in the names listed as *yakṣī*s and Jaina *vidyā-devī*s. This further illustrates the point of permeability with regards to groups of gods and other divine entities, already made above with respect to male beings venerated in a Jaina context.[158]

250. 251. *Opposite* Domed ceilings adorned with eight goddess of learning and knowledge (*vidyā-devī*s) at Palitana, and with twelve at Sadri.

153 The term *kula-devī* has also been used for tutelary and family divinities. For a brief discussion of the veneration of Tantric goddesses, see Nagar (1999: 30, 314).

154 Bhattacharya 1974: 122-123.

155 Additional information on these goddesses can be found in Nagar (1999: 319-20).

156 Nagar 1999: 314.

157 Bhattacharya 1974: 122.

158 For instance, Kālī, Mahā-kālī, Cakreśvarī and Jvālāmālinī, are names of goddesses used either by the Śvetāmbaras or the Digamabras in their lists of *yakṣī*s as well as in those of the *vidyā-devī*s.







252. Particularly widespread are groups of sixteen goddesses of learning as can be seen in the large Jaina temple in the fort of Chitor.

253. A seated Jina, surrounded by the *vidyā-devī*s, has been carved onto a flat ceiling panel in the Śāntināth Temple at Kumbharia.



Lakṣmī and Jaina Mithuna Couples

Already a considerable number of Jaina gods and goddesses have been mentioned for whom, at least in the past, a possible *Brāhmaṇical* origin has been suggested. Whilst some seem to have been part of the Jaina religion from the very beginning, others appear to have been integrated into the religion from about the eighth century CE.[159] These were given specifically Jaina meanings in their new religious context. Indra, for instance, came to play an important role in the birth ceremonies associated with the Jina and in the symbolism of the *meru*. Brahma, the godhead of the *Brāhmaṇical* trinity, functions in Jainism as a *yakṣa*, a *kṣetra-pāla* and a *dika-pāla*, and the stories of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa were adopted and appropriated by the Jainas. These are just a few examples of a very large number of gods and goddesses which also exist in Hinduism and which gained importance with the Jainas during the medieval period.[160]

A female Jaina divinity, which has a strong *Brāhmaṇical* counterpart, is the goddess Lakṣmī. Images representing her are very common in a Jaina temple context. According to Jaina mythology, Mahāvīra's mother Triśalā had a series of dreams in one of which she saw an image of Śrī, another name for the goddess Lakṣmī. As the list of the Jina's mother's dreams already occur in the *Kalpa-sūtra*, the integration of Śrī into the Jaina religion seems to be of considerable age. *Pūjā* to Lakṣmī Devī stands at the centre of the Jaina Dīvālī festival, where the goddess is venerated in particular for her ability to generate prosperity. Lakṣmī, the Jaina goddess of wealth is commonly depicted seated on an open lotus flower (Plate 255). However, in Jainism, she can also be seated on an elephant.[161] Statues of this goddess have regularly been placed above doors leading into Jaina temples. This is particularly common in the south of the country. Positioned above thresholds, Lakṣmī is often flanked by elephants anointing her with water, in her form as *gaja-lakṣmī* (Plate 256). The earliest extent representations of a Jaina *gaja-lakṣmī* come from the Kuṣāṇa art of Mathura.[162] In cases of double-layered door frames, one often encounters a Jina icon on the lower lintel, and one with a representation of Lakṣmī above. This indicates clearly, that such temples were not simply converted from Hindu use, but that the imagery involving the goddess Lakṣmī was part of the original Jaina conception (Plate 257).

159 Dundas 1992: 200.

160 Details on these and other divinities can be found in Nagar (1999: 350-366).

161 Varying iconographic descriptions of Lakṣmī have been studied and described in Bhattacharya (1974: 136).

162 Deo 1995: 23.



254. Ceiling panel showing Sarasvatī, the presiding divinity of the *vidyā-devī*s,riding on a bird.



255. Representation of Lakṣmī Devī, seated on an open lotus flower, positioned on the roof of the monastic guesthouse at Jalor.

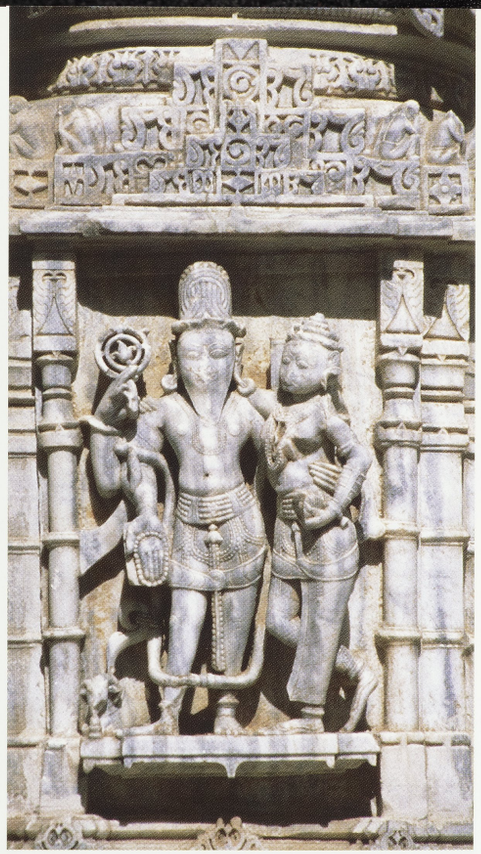
256. Jaina example of Lakṣmī lustrated by two elephants (*gaja-lakṣmī*) in a temple on Vindhyagiri at Shravanabelgola.





257. Double-layered door frame in the Jala Temple at Sadri, combining representations of a seated Jina (below) with the *gaja-lakṣmī* motif (above).





258. 259. Divine couples (*mithuna*) in quiet embrace adorn the outer walls of temples at Jaisalmer and Mirpur.

Although Jainism has frequently been portrayed as an extreme ascetic and bloodless religion, there are many representations of loving couples decorating Jaina temples throughout India. As in a Hindu context, the Jaina images are referred to as *mithuna*s or as *daṁpati-yugala*s. There are some depictions which simply show gods and their consorts in gentle embrace (Plates 258, 259), however, others are more sexually explicit. Prominent examples adorn the outer walls of the Pārśvanātha Temple at Ranakpur, the Pārśvanātha Temple (no. II) at Ramtek (Plates 260, 261), and the base of the *māna-stambha* at Humcha, Karnataka. In a Jaina context, such depictions are less common than on Hindu or Himalayan Buddhist temples, but are prominent enough to be investigated more seriously. Unfortunately, no detailed study examining their occurrence, development and specific Jaina meaning have been conducted so far. In this context, however, it is noteworthy that Dundas, discussing descriptions of the divine in Jaina texts states that Jainas, like Hindus and Muslims, frequently employed marital





260. 261. More explicit sexual scenes decorate the Jaina temples at Ranakpur and Ramtek.

and sexual imagery in their metaphors.[163] In this sense, Jaina images of couples in intimate embrace, might also be interpreted as the union of opposites, or the becoming one with one's true self, one's pure *jīva* or *paramātmā* (supreme soul).

ABSTRACT, EMBLEMATIC AND SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATIONS

In addition to the figural images discussed above, there are other items of worship, venerated in a Jain context, which are more abstract, emblematic or symbolic in nature. However, as even the figural sculptures of Jinas act more as ideal representations of an aggregate of perfected supreme qualities and not as portraits of individuals with whom the worshipper can communicate, the difference between iconic and more symbolic representations venerated in Jaina temples is not that pronounced, at least not on a qualitative level. Many of the items discussed in the following paragraphs incorporate figural images into their design and translate sacred sounds (*mantra*s) or abstract concepts and teachings into more tangible, visual shape. A comparable concept is expressed by the veneration of sacred texts in a Jaina temple context.

1. Āyāga-Paṭas, Aṣṭa-Maṅgala and Sacred Dreams

Tablets of Homage

The earliest surviving examples of symbolic representations from a Jaina context are the *āyāga-paṭa*s, so-called tablets of homage. Large numbers of these ornamental slabs, also referred to as *śila* or *śila-paṭa*,[164] have been excavated at Mathura and at sites in the surrounding area. Most of them have been dated to the late Śuṅga and the early Kuṣāṇa periods and come from the excavations at Kaṅkālī-ṭīlā outside the city of Mathura. The tablets were meant for the worship of the Jinas. The practice seems to have been derived from earlier cults such as the veneration of *nāga*s and *yakṣa*s. The *āyāga-paṭa*s were placed on platforms (*siṁhāsana*) below sacred *caitya* trees. The stone plaques, either rectangular or octagonal in shape, are decorated with abstract, animal and human designs. In the middle of the carved stone tablets is usually a central element, either a Jina, a *yakṣa* or an abstract object, such as a wheel, a pair of fish or a swastika (*svastika*), surrounded by more decorative symbolic elements. Many of them bear dedicatory inscriptions. Fascinating with regards to this largely architectural study is, that elements such as pillars topped by *dharma-cakra*s or by figural elements, usually elephants, are already represented in the carvings on the *āyāga-paṭa*s, and might indicate the early introduction of these architectural elements into Jaina religious practice.[165] With the construction of more permanent and architecturally defined temple structures, the practice of carving tablets of homage and of placing them below sacred trees appears to have gone out of fashion. The tradition of venerating symbolic plaques, however, has continued in modern Jainism in a variety of forms.

The Aṣṭa-Maṅgala

The *aṣṭa-maṅgala*, the eight auspicious objects or symbols of the Jaina religion, have been venerated by both major sects since the beginning of Jaina ritual worship. Evidence for their adoration stretches back over the past two thousand years.[166] According to the Śvetāmbara *Aupapātika-sūtra,* the eight auspicious images include the swastika (*svastika*) and *śrīvatsa* symbols, the *nandyāvarta* diagram,[167] a powder flask (*vardhamānaka*), a throne (*bhadrāsana*), a full vase (*pūrṇa-kalaśa*), a mirror (*darpaṇa*) and either a single or a pair of fish (*matsya*)

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163 For further information refer to the discussion in Dundas (1992: 94).

164 Common alternative spellings are *śilā-paṭa* or *śilā-paṭṭa*.

165 More information can be found in Shah (1955: 77-84 ;1975a: 481-2).

166 See Cort (2001: 4) and for a representation of the eight symbols, see Ghosh (1975: plate 312 B).

167 According to the fourteenth-century Śvetāmbara text, the *Ācāra-dinakara*, the *nandyāvarta* symbol with its nine points stands for the nine treasures (*nidhi*s) (Shah 1975a: 492).

(Plate 262).[168] The Digambara set of *aṣṭa-maṅgala*, following the *Tiloya-paṇṇatti*, also includes the *kalaśa* and the *darpaṇa,* but otherwise consists of a vessel (*bhṛṅgāra*), a flywhisk (*cāmara*), a banner (*dhvaja*), a fan (*vyajana*) a parasol (*chatra*) and an auspicious seat (*supratiṣṭha*).[169] All are symbols of religious authority and auspiciousness in Jainism.

The *aṣṭa-maṅgala* have regularly been depicted on the *āyāga-paṭa*s, where one of the symbols usually represents the central motif of a tablet. In this early context, however, their number has not yet been limited to eight.[170] Further early representations of these images can be seen in the Jaina group of the Bāvā-Pyārā Caves at Junagad. In this instance, the symbols of the *aṣṭa-maṅgala* have been depicted above the doorways of caves, dating from about the second century CE.[171] According to the canonical works, the *aṣṭa-maṅgala* used to decorate the upper section of architraves and ramparts as well as the platforms of *caitya-vṛkṣa*s.[172] In north and central India, the symbols have often been embossed into the metal coverings of offering stools. In a south Indian temple context, it is more common to find them decorating offering slabs made of stone, locally referred to as *bali-pīṭha* or *bali-paṭa*.[173] An open pillared hall in the temple complex at Melsittamur, used for festival processions, has the eight auspicious marks engraved onto the sides of the central pillars. They have been painted on paper and cloth *paṭa*s, and embroidered onto temple hangings and parapet decorations (Plate 263). In contemporary Jaina temples, the symbols of the *aṣṭa-maṅgala* have been used to decorate offering tables, positioned in front of the central and sometimes also of side shrines of the Tīrthaṅkaras. The low and often very long tables are either made entirely of metal or consist of a wooden structure covered with metal sheeting. The symbols have usually been embossed into the metal. Metal plates or trays, commonly made of silver, and used for offerings in temple rituals have been engraved with the same ornaments. Similar silver dishes, displaying the eight auspicious symbols, are venerated inside shrines in the form of sacred diagrams.

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168 For a comprehensive list of the symbols and their possible interpretation, see, for example, Shah (1975a: 489, 492). Terms used in certain texts instead of *matsya* for fish, are: *matsya-yuma* and *mīna-yugala*.

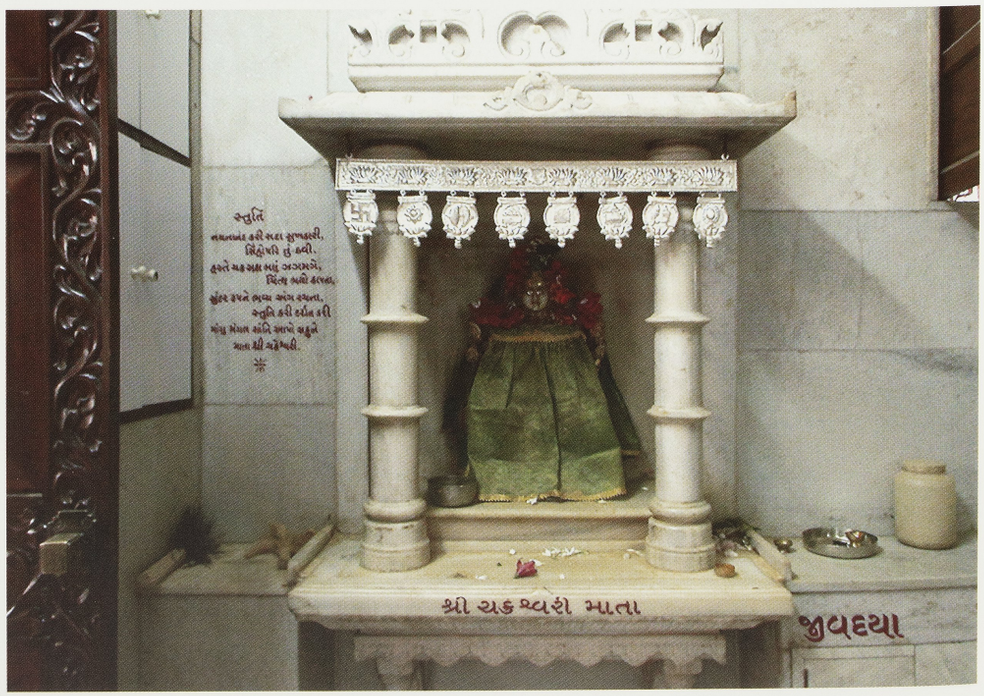
169 See Shah (1975a: 492). He quotes the *Tiloya-paṇṇatti* (4, 738, I).

170 Although the symbols of the *aṣṭa-maṅgala* are already present on the early *āyāga-paṭa*s from Mathura, the number of represented images and symbols is much larger than eight. This issue has been discussed in Shah (1975a: 482, 484, 491 and f.n. 5) and Dundas (1992: 174).

171 Dhaky & Moorti 2001: 4.

172 This has, for instance, been discussed in Shah (1955: 109; 1975a: 490).

173 See Shah (1955: 108, 111; 1975a: 490) and the discussion of offering stones in the following chapter on the developed Jaina temple complex and its additional architectural and sculptural elements.



262. Hanging metal garland with representations of the *aṣṭa-maṅgala* in a Śvetāmbara Jaina Temple in Mumbai.

In all the examples mentioned so far, the *aṣṭa-maṅgala* have merely been used as decoration for other ritual objects. South Indian Jaina temples, however, regularly have free-standing sets of sculptural representations of the eight Digambara symbols (Plate 264). The eight individual images have usually been fitted onto metal or wooden sticks, and supported on small conical feet. Most of these representations are about half a metre in height and have either been arranged in the centre or on one side of the hall immediately in front of the main image chamber of a temple (Plate 265).

The Dreams of the Jina's Mother

Representations of the dreams, which the mother of a Tīrthaṅkara sees at the time of conception, are venerated as auspicious symbols in Jaina temples.[174] The belief in propitious dreams and their interpretation are of great antiquity in South Asia and have been associated with the mothers of important figures other than Tīrthaṅkaras. Mahāvīra himself is described as seeing a set of ten auspicious dreams before his attainment of enlightenment.[175] Primarily venerated and regularly represented in Jaina art, however, are the dreams of the Jina's mother. According to the Śvetāmbara lists, there are fourteen, and according to the Digmabara tradition sixteen dreams.

In Jaina art, these have been represented in symbolic form. Although early *Kalpa-sūtra* miniatures represent the dreams individually, as separate items, other paintings in the same collection depict them as a complete set.[176] Groups of fourteen or sixteen dreams have been painted on the walls of Jaina temples, as is exemplified by the beautiful murals in red and gold showing a set of sixteen dreams in the central shrine of the Digamabra Meru Temple in Old Delhi (Plate 266). The same motives have been embroidered onto temple hangings in cloth, incised onto offering tables and plates, used to decorate wooden book-covers, and carved onto stone panels.[177] Carvings of the dreams have often been positioned above doorways leading to the *garbha-gṛha*s of Jaina temples. Many such lintels survive, for instance, at the Jaina temples at Khajuraho (Plate 267).[178]

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174 For a more detailed discussion of these dreams, see Chapter Two, "Introduction to Jainism."

175 Additional information can be obtained from Shah (1955: 105, 107-108).

176 Descriptions and analyses of specific painted examples can be found in Shah (1955: 106; 1975a: 488).

177 On this issues, see also Shah (1955: 106; 1975a: 490).

178 Whereas some of these lintels have been moved to the local archaeological museum, others survive in situ, as can be seen in the Śāntināth Jaina Temple.



263. In the Sumatināth Temple at Margaon, the signs of the *aṣṭa-maṅgala* have been embroidered onto a temple hanging.

264. The set of eight auspicious symbols (*aṣṭa-maṅgala*) according to the Digambara canon.

265. In the hall of the Pārśvanāth Temple in Venkundram, three-dimensional representations of the *aṣṭa-maṅgala* are worshipped.







266. Paintings inside the Digamabra Meru Temple in Old Delhi depict the sixteen auspicious dreams the mother of a Jina sees at the time of conception.

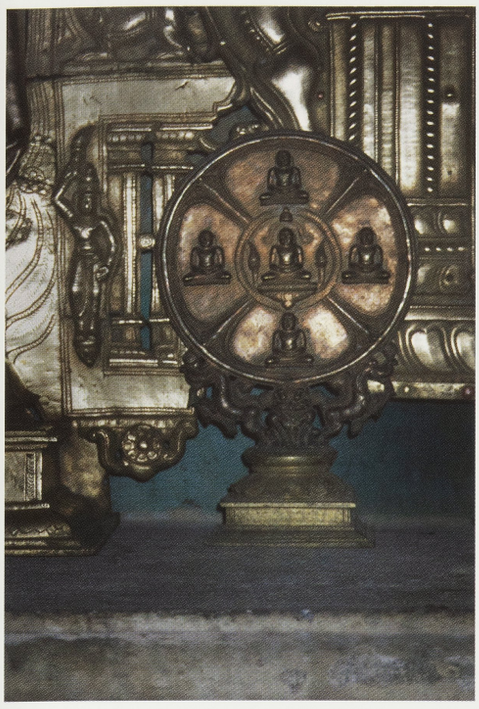
2. Pañca-Parameṣṭhin and Siddha-Cakra (Nava-Devatā)

Other abstract representations more strongly incorporate figural elements into their schematised layout. A very common symbolic representation of this kind is associated with the *pañca-parameṣṭhin*s, the 'five supreme ones.' These consist of the *arhat*s, the *siddha*s, the *ācārya*s, the *upādhyāya*s and the *sādhu*s. The *arhat*s are the twenty-four Tīrthaṅkaras, who still have a human body. Their perfectly liberated and disembodied souls (*kevalin*s), are referred to as *siddha*s. The *ācārya*s are the heads of a particular group of monks, nuns, and their devotees (a *gaṇa*, or a *gaccha* or a *kula*), and the *upādhyāya*s are monks who teach the scriptures to others and are responsible for the spiritual development of their followers. Finally, the *sādhu*s are ordinary monks.[179] This group of five venerated ones is invoked in the highest incantation,

267. Carved lintel from a temple at Khajuraho depicting the sixteen dreams.

179 Further information on these different categories can be obtained from Shah (1975a: 477).









268. Diagram in the Pārśvanātha Temple at Venkundram, representing the 'five supreme ones' (*pañca-parameṣṭhin*).

269. A Śvetāmbara *siddha-cakra,* combining the *pañca-parameṣṭhin*s with four open lotus flowers, displayed in the Padmaprabhu Temple at Nadol.

270. Carved and painted marble panel of a *siddha-cakra* from the Śāntinātha Temple at Sanderav.

the most important spell (*mantra*) of the Jainas, know by a multitude of different names, such as the *navakāra-mantra*, the *namaskāra-mantra*, the *pañca-namaskāra* (five homages) and in colloquial Gujarati as the *nokār-mantra*.[180]

Translated into Jaina art, the five elements of the *mantra* have been arranged in diagrammatic form in the shape of an open lotus or a *patera* flower (Plate 268). A figural representation of a seated *arhat* is positioned at the centre. This is either surrounded by four or eight petals. In case of eight leafs, those in the four cardinal points of direction bear seated representations of the other four dignitaries of the *pañca-parameṣṭhin*s, with the other four petals either left empty or decorated with more neutral designs. Despite the fact that the set of five exalted ones appear to have had a significant religious importance attached to them from early on in the religion's development, artistic representations of this standardised group arranged in the form of a diagram are not yet known from the works of the early Mathuran artists.[181]

Later on in the development, and this is again difficult to associate with a precise date due to the scarcity of the available material, four more items were added and represented on the remaining petals of the lotus flower. The earliest textual references relating to these additional items date from the early centuries of the Christian era.[182] The four new elements represent more abstract ideas, and are symbolic of the four essentials needed to reach enlightenment. The Śvetāmbaras added symbolic representations of the doctrinal concepts of right knowledge (*jñāna*), right faith (*darśana*), right conduct (*cāritra*) and right penance (*tapas*) to their original set of five. Although there are instances where the four elements have all simply been symbolised by open lotus flowers (Plate 269), it is more common for the names of these concepts to have been written on the relevant flower petals. This is the case in a metal example from the Baroda Museum.[183] Many similar representations carved in marble are displayed in Jaina temples throughout India (Plate 270). The Digambaras added four symbols representing objects of worship to the set of the original five glorious ones. These are the Jina image (*caitya*), the Jaina temple (*caityā-laya*), scripture (*śruta*) and the wheel of law (*dharma-cakra*). In Digambara art, these aspects have usually been represented

180 For the distinct use of the diverse terms, see also Shah (1975a: 478), Dundas (1992: 71) and Cort (2001: xi).

181 This issue has also been discussed in Shah (1975a: 479). For further details on the positioning of the specific images, see also Nagar (1999: 47).

182 Shah 1975a: 479.

183 For a representation of the metal example from Baroda, see the publication by Shah (1975a: Plate 309A).



271. Digambara representation of the *nava-devatā* adorning a pillar at Melsittamur.

272. Metal version of the *nava-devatā* from the Ādinātha Temple at Odalavadi.



by a seated Jina, a small Jaina temple, a cross-legged book stand carrying an open book and a representation of the *dharma-cakra* (Plate 271).

The Śvetāmbaras refer to these diagrams of nine sacred elements as *siddha-cakra* or *siddha-cakra-yantra*, meaning 'diagram of the circle of the liberated ones.' In rarer instances, Śvetāmbara Jainas call them *nava-pada*, which translates as 'nine stages.'[184] Digambaras refer to their representations as *nava-devatā*, 'nine glorious ones.' Most traditional Digambara Jaina temples in south India have metal representations of the *pañca-parameṣṭhin* and the *nava-devatā*. The diagrams (*yantras*) are part of Tantric popular Jaina practice. Devotees meditate on the one hundred and eight *guṇas* or qualities of the five supreme ones.[185]

There are ample examples, where either of these diagrams have been carved on stone plaques, cast in metal, or been painted on temple walls, the canvas of ritual hangings and the palm leaf or paper of illustrated manuscripts and large ritual paintings. When cast in metal, the abstract lotus flower framing the arrangement and its associated elements of five or nine figural and abstract representations have usually been mounted on a decorated lotus base. This foot, supporting the flat circular disc above, has often been decorated with a seated lion and representations of mythical animals (Plate 272). Similar depictions have been carved onto temple pillars, as in the sixteen-pillared hall at Melsittamur. In a Śvetāmbara context, most representations have been carved on marble panels which are displayed on the walls of shaded arcades, often in connection with *tīrtha-paṭas*. Other examples have been presented horizontally in small pavilions. Noteworthy examples are in the Neminātha Temple at Nadol and in the Ajitanātha Temple at Sirohi (Plate 273). Other temples have separate chapels, then usually referred to as *siddha-cakra-mandirs*, to house the auspicious symbols. In painting, if on the walls of temples or on paper, the *pañca-parameṣṭhin* and also the other four elements have usually been associated with distinct colours, helping in the identification of the individual elements (Plate 274).[186] The abstract diagrams play an important role in esoteric ritual and in Jaina popular ceremonies where they are employed on a number of auspicious occasions. Tantric Digambara practice knows other related diagrams, such as the *laghu-siddha-cakra* and the *bṛhat-siddha-cakra* which, however, have less developed and standardised iconographic features.[187]

In Jaina art, we also find individual representations of the five elements of the *pañca-parameṣṭhin*. While most of the elements are depicted by standard representations of seated ascetics, depictions of the *siddha* represent a distinct category of Jaina images. *Siddhas* are entirely liberated souls. They are *kevalins*, who are free from all activities and even from the bondage represented by the human body (*aśarīrin*). Strictly speaking, *siddhas* are no beings any longer, but completely free from any embodiment. Therefore, they represented a conundrum to Jaina artists who were meant to depict a state of nothingness achieved by former human beings. Digambara Jaina sculptors developed a unique way to depict this glorious state, by taking a metal plate and cutting out the shape of a figure in the middle. In these stencil-cut representations, the human shape formerly held by the *siddha*, meaning the space once occupied by the human person, is still visible although the figures themselves are body-less, perfect representations of nothingness. It is unclear when the earliest representations of this kind were created. Ample examples, at least from about the fifteenth century, survive in the shrines of the Digambara Jainas in the south of India.

Possibly a unique representation, expressing the abstract concept of the *siddha*, but in a different iconographical form, adorns one of the many carved pillars in the large open hall of the Pārśvanātha Temple at Melsittamur. In this example, various Jinas still represented in human shape, are seen hovering above the ground, expressing their exalted state (Plate 8).

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184 Dundas 1992: 72; Shah 1975a: 478.

185 Shah 1955: 96-103.

186 The *arhat* is depicted white, the *siddha* red, the *ācārya* yellow, the *upādhyāya* blue, and the *sādhu* black in complexion. The other four elements of the Śvetāmbara *siddha-cakra* should be white (Shah 1955: 98-99; 1975a: 478).

187 For Digambara texts referring to and describing these more unusual forms of Tantric diagrams, see Shah (1955: 99; 1975a: 478).

3. Sacred Symbols, Mantras, Yantras and Sacred Manuscripts

Swastika, Open Palm, Lotus, Cosmic Man and Wheel

In the discussion above, closely associated sets of Jaina symbols have been analysed. Many of these have also been treated in isolation and there are other representations not mentioned so far, which are regularly encountered in a Jaina temple context. Because these symbols are perceived as being so closely associated with and so representative of Jainism, they are often found as prominent markers at the entrances to Jaina temples. In this location, they act as clear indicators to someone approaching the temple, that the building or the site more generally, is of Jaina denomination.

One symbol, frequently employed as a signal of Jaina identity, is the ancient sign of the swastika (Plate 275). Already known from the Harappan Civilisation, it is a pan-Indian symbol of auspiciousness. According to the Śvetāmbara *Ācāra-dinakara*, dating from the fourteenth century, the swastika emblem signifies *svasti* or *śānti*, meaning peace. According to conventional Jaina exegesis, the four corners of the swastika are believed to represent the four main states of existence (human, animal, god and hell-being) and more rarely the four elements



273. Horizontally displayed *siddha-cakra* panel in the Ajitanātha Temple at Sirohi.

274. The painted *siddha-cakra* from the Sumatinātha Temple at Margaon employs distinct colours for the individual elements of the symbol.







275. Auspicious swastika design created out of coloured tiles in a cave on sacred Mount Maṅgī.

276. Carved panels combining the typical Jaina symbols of the swastika, the open palm of the hand, and the cosmic man (*loka-puruṣa*), on Khandagiri at Bhubanesvara.

of the Jaina community (monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen).[188] Cort noted that during his fieldwork amongst Śvetāmbara Jainas in Patan, Gujarat, the four arms of the swastika symbol were described as representations of the four realms of rebirth, namely human, celestial being, hellish being, plant and animal.[189] In Jaina temple *pūjā*, offerings are arranged in the shape of a swastika in combination with further symbolic elements placed above it. These have been analysed in the previous chapter as part of Jaina ritual activities.[190] As a *lāñchana* symbol, the swastika is associated with the Jaina Tīrthaṅkara Supārśvanātha, and is one of the eight auspicious symbols of the *aṣṭa-maṅgala*. The image of the swastika has, however, also commonly been treated in isolation or in association with other individual symbols. Another of the Śvetāmbara *aṣṭa-maṅgala* symbols, the ancient sign of the *nandyāvarta*, has been derived from the swastika and this too can be found by itself.

A further symbol used in a similar way to the swastika, is the image of the open palm of a hand, representing the gesture of fearlessness. In iconography, this positioning of the hands is known as the *abhaya-mudrā*. In the same context representations of lotus flowers, signifying purity and auspiciousness, are frequently found in a Jaina context. Together with the swastika, the open palm and the lotus, one regularly finds representations of the universe in the shape of a human, usually referred to as the cosmic man or *loka-puruṣa*. Representations of this concept have already been discussed as part of Jaina cosmology in Chapter Two (Plate 276). In 1975 the hourglass-shaped image was officially adopted as a common symbol and an emblem of the Jaina religion.[191] Therefore, depictions of the cosmic man are particularly common in modern Jaina temple complexes, where these have regularly been associated with entrance areas of sacred Jaina enclosures and temple structures, and act as prominent markers of Jaina religious identity. In this position, the outer shape of the cosmic man has usually been used to accommodate representations of the other common Jaina images, the open palm and the swastika (Plates 277, 278). As has been pointed out in the religious introduction, Jaina cosmology is distinct from that of other religious groups in India. Through a visual emblem, signifying and representing this distinctive cosmology in Jaina paintings, carvings and architecture, the Jainas attempt to differentiate themselves from other religious groups.[192]

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188 These interpretations have, for example, been discussed in Dundas (1992: 178, 252 f.n. 47.)

189 Cort 2001: 17.

190 For Jaina temple ritual and the laying out of auspicious symbols incorporating the swastika image, see the introduction to Jainism in Chapter Two of this study.

191 Additional information on the official adoption of this symbol can be found in Dundas (1992: 79). As there are also representations of the cosmos in the shape of a woman, the term 'cosmic man,' widely used in the literature, is not always valid.

192 After having presented a lecture on Jaina art at Ohio State University in March 2002, a Jaina couple





277. 278. Symbols of Jaina identity have regularly been displayed at the entrance to Jaina temples and houses, as for example at Sadri and Ratnagiri.

Although closely associated with Buddhist imagery too, the wheel of law, the *dharma-cakra*, is a symbol frequently found in Jaina imagery. Buddhas and Jinas are *cakravartin*s, universal emperors, who are identified by auspicious marks such as the wheel. The symbol of the wheel can already be seen on the *āyāga-paṭa*s from Mathura, and early Jaina sculptures regularly have a wheel decorating the central section of their pedestals. The wheel is either shown from the front, with the rim facing the observer, or from the side, with the spokes displayed in a circle. This is illustrated well by Gupta images from Rajgir, in which the wheel is usually flanked either by two deer or a set of bulls (Plate 279). Bulls in connection with *dharma-cakra*s occur for the first time in the Gupta art of the Jainas and may mythologically be linked to the figure of Ṛṣabhanātha. He is the first Tīrthaṅkara who taught the path to enlightenment and figuratively started the turning of the wheel. The *Ācāra-dinakara* describes the version where the wheel is to be flanked by two deer or antelopes, a form better known from Buddhist iconography.[193] This motif has been employed in the outer decoration of Jaina temples in India and abroad. In the post-Gupta period, one finds the *lāñchana*s of the Jinas flanking the wheel of law in the centre of the image pedestal. In the architectural introduction in the following chapter, wheels will be discussed which have been raised at the apex of pillars. Also all objects used by ascetics, such as alms bowls, whisks or brooms, known locally either as *picchi* or as *picchikā*,[194] as well as sacred books, have in art been employed as religious symbols representing the religious ideal of asceticism which is so central to the Jaina religious path.

279. Gupta statue from Rajgir, displaying the symbol of the wheel in its lower section.



Yantras

A highly sophisticated form of symbol veneration in Jaina temples is associated with the worship of sacred diagrams, referred to as *yantra*s. *Yantra*s are magical signs in the form of abstract geometric diagrams, commonly integrating religious symbols and writings into their design. Various *yantra*s are associated with specific qualities, such as the removal of obstacles, the vanquishing of evil forces and the spreading of non-violence. They are also connected with more mundane desires, such as the invocation of fortune, wealth and education, or the prevention of theft.[195] Auspicious *yantra* designs have at times been carved in stone but

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emerged from the audience and presented me with a pin, decorated with a symbolic representation of the cosmic man. The husband and wife explained that they used to wear this symbol regularly "just as Christians wore a cross." Since the attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York on September 11th 2001, however, they confessed, they had switched to wearing a US flag instead.

193 Shah 1975b: 55; Bhattacharya 1999: 30-31.

194 Roy 1984: 69.

195 See, for instance, *bhaktāmara-yantra*s eight, four and one, as well as numbers fourteen and



280. A sacred diagram (*yantra*), venerated in the Pārśvanātha Temple at Lodruva.

281. Detail of a circular metal plate incised with a sacred *yantra* diagram from Mandu.

are usually incised into metal discs, most commonly made of copper and circular in shape (Plates 280, 281). Together with figural images, these symbolic and often protective ritual implements are kept inside the shrine rooms or *maṇḍapa*s of Jaina temples throughout the subcontinent (Plate 282).

Particularly ancient appears to be the *nandyāvarta-yantra*, a holy symbol already encountered on the *āyāga-paṭa*s carved in the early centuries CE.[196] Especially common in Digambara shrines in south India, is the *śruta-skandha-yantra*. It is a Tantric diagram, usually cast in metal, although also painted versions on paper, cloth and on the walls of temple buildings have been preserved (Plates 283, 284). Metal versions in bronze and brass have been cut out of metal sheets, ornamented and fixed to supports below, allowing the flat metal symbols to stand freely (Plate 285). Whilst most *śruta-skandha-yantra* representations have simply been decorated with lists of the twelve *Āgama*s and the *grantha-pramāṇa* of each of them according to the Digambara tradition, rarer examples display a representation of Śruta-devī, the goddess of learning.[197] Also the *siddha-cakra*, already discussed above, is often listed as a Jaina *yantra*, as are *vardhamāna-vidya-paṭa*s, and the lesser known *śrī-mantra*s and *ṛṣi-maṇḍala-yantra*s.[198]

Just as the *namaskāra* or *pañca-namaskāra-mantra*s were translated into visual shape in the form of the *pañca-parameṣṭhin,* or the extended version in the form of the *siddha-cakra* and the *nava-devatā*, there are other *mantra*s which have been translated into art and are venerated in visual form in a Jaina temple context. These *mantra*s, sacred syllables, words or phrases, are believed by Jaina believers to be charged with sacred energy and if used appropriately to infer auspiciousness. The sacred syllables '*Oṁ*' (*Ūṁ*) and '*hṛṁ*,' for instance, are considered to be filled with religious powers and are believed, when manipulated in the right mythical way, to exercise great influence. The *oṁkāra-mantra* is regarded as being a *sandhi* fusion of the five separate letters 'a,' 'ā,' 's,' 'u' and 'ṁ,' constituting the initial letters of the five revered ones: *arhat*, *ācārya*, *siddha*, *upādhyāyā* and *muni*.[199] Similarly, the

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thirteen respectively (Shri Labdhi-Vikram Guru, no date).

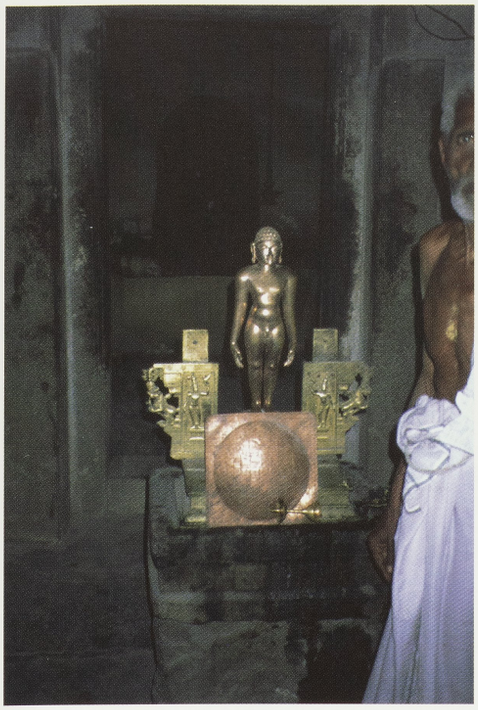
196 Cort 2001: 4.

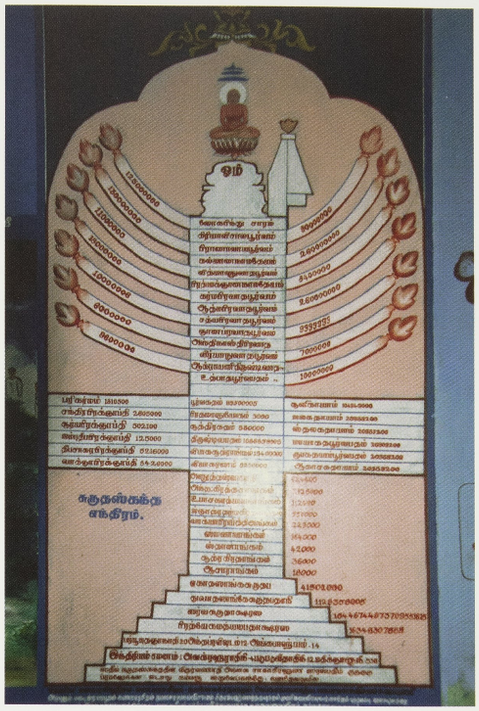
197 Further details on the design of *śruta-skandha-yantra*s can be found in Shah (1975a: 493).

198 See Shah (1975a: 493).

199 For additional details, see the discussion in Burgess (1884: 279).









282. *Yantra* discs are often placed in front of figural images to shield of evil powers, as can be seen in the Neminātha Temple at Tirumalai.

283. 284. At Ponnur, the Tantric *śruta-skandha-yantra* has been painted onto a temple wall, at Melsittamur, it has been carved onto a pillar.

285. Three-dimensional metal example of a *śruta-skandha-yantra* from Thachur.



hṛṁkāra-mantra is said to be composed of the syllables 'ha,' 'ra' and 'i,' which some Jainas believe stand for Pārśvanātha (ha), Dhāraṇendra (ra) and Padmāvatī (i). Consequently, this *mantra* is particularly closely associate with Pārśvanātha.[200] Because of their great popularity, the two auspicious syllables '*Oṁ*' and '*hṛṁ*' are commonly represented in art and venerated in their physical shape in a temple context. In Jaina art, the two sacred sounds are often treated as part of larger arrangements of images and shapes and frequently represent the central element of more complex *yantra*s and ritual circles. They can, however, also be treated in isolation and employed in their own right. Burgess, who travelled in the subcontinent in the late nineteenth century, noted representations of the sacred syllables created in colourful marble inlay in the *maṇḍapa*s of many Jaina temples. Noteworthy with respect to the interpretation of the various letters and syllables involved, and their associated religious meanings, is that in these artistic representations also figural images of the Jinas have regularly been depicted in association with the various parts of the written symbols.[201]

Nowadays, enlarged representations of sacred syllables or sounds represented in writing are frequently painted on the walls of modern Jaina temples throughout India. Such painted representations can either be found at the access points to Jaina compounds, or inside shrines. In the Pārśvanātha Digambara Jaina Temple at Bagalkot in Karnataka, the sacred syllable has been painted onto the wall of the upper image chamber, positioned behind the sculptural representations of the Jinas, which form the focus of attention in this shrine. However, one of the three image chambers of the Triple Temple at Hastinapur in Haryana, harbours exclusively a painted version of the sacred syllable '*Oṁ*' and contains no further ritual objects. In the large internal space of the Dhyāna Maṇḍapa, a meditation temple nearby, the syllable '*Oṁ*' provides the sole object of veneration and contemplation. At other sites, abstract versions of the sacred syllable '*hṛṁ*,' representative of the *hṛṁkāra-yantra*, have been formed three-dimensionally. An example, formed in massive dimensions, is the sculptural representation situated at the sacred pilgrimage site of Pisanhariki Mariya (Plate 286). In front is a water pool and the image of the sacred syllable is reflected on the mirror-like surface of the water.

200 On this issue, refer to the writings by Burgess (1884: 279) and Shah (1975a: 493).

201 In connection with the written symbol '*Oṁ*' one usually finds representations of the *pañca-parameṣṭhin*, while the *hṛṁkāra-mantra* is often depicted surrounded with or decorated by twenty-four Jinas (Burgess 1884: 279; Nagar 1999: 47).



286. Large-scale sculptural representation of a *hṛṁkāra-yantra* erected at Pisanhariki Mariya.

The Veneration of Sacred Scripture

The section above has shown that certain sounds and syllables, potent words and sacred phrases are considered, if employed and venerated in an appropriate fashion, to be invested with religious and supernatural energies. Even the mental recitation or the contemplation of *mantra*s is believed to be powerful enough to cure and ward off evil. Reflection on sacred words constitutes an important part of the system of four objects of contemplation, developed by the Digambara mystic Śubhacandra who lived in the eleventh century.[202] According to Śubhacandra, the aim of Jaina meditation is the penetration of one's own soul, and the contemplation of words in the form of powerful syllables are seen as synopses of the sacred knowledge contained in the Jaina scriptures. From this point of view, it is not surprising that entire holy texts, especially old manuscripts, which have physically been handled by famous monks and teachers, are believed to be invested with the utmost sanctity.

The best known example of the adoration of scripture comes from the sacred *kṣetra* of Mudabidri in Karnataka. Enshrined in a temple at the site are what are considered to be the original palm leaf manuscript of the *Ṣaṭkhaṇḍ-āgama* (scripture of six parts), composed in about the middle of the second century CE, and as such the oldest sacred text of the Digambara Jainas, a copy of the *Kaṣāya-pāhuḍa* (*Kaṣāya-bhṛta*) (treatise on passions) of a similar age, as well as commentaries on both texts. The fact that the manuscripts are treated more as objects of veneration than as sources of information and learning, might partly explain the reluctance of the local authorities to allow their publication.[203] In the same way as the figural representations of the fordmakers and the more abstract representations discussed above, the manuscripts represent important evidence on the history of Jainism. They constitute a physical link with the learned monks, who shaped the Jaina religious tradition. Furthermore, they are considered to be embodiments of Jaina ideals and teachings. In this sense, even modern mass-produced copies of the ancient sacred texts are often enshrined in niches in Jaina temples (Plate 287).

A relatively recent related phenomenon is the construction of so-called *Āgama* temples, dedicated to and holding copies of the sacred Jaina *Āgama*s. Some have sacred texts written on their walls. The Śrī Vardhamāna Jaina Āgama Mandir near Taleti at the foot of

202 Dundas 1992: 145.

203 For further information on these sacred manuscripts from Mudabidri, and disputes about their distribution, see the discussion in Dundas (1992: 55-57).

Mount Śatruñjaya was allegedly started in the fifteenth century, while a large *Āgama mandir*, costing an estimated ten *crore* rupees to construct, was being erected a short distance from the sacred pilgrimage site of Bhamanvad in Rajasthan in 2003. Another noteworthy case is the Digambara Svādhyāya Mandir (self-study temple) at Songadh, a centre of the Kānjī Svāmī Panth. The temple, which represents the most important sacred building at the site, was consecrated in 1937. Its internal walls have been entirely covered with sacred writings from the holy text of Kundakunda's five main treatises.[204] On a smaller scale, Jaina temples have been decorated with prayers which have been painted onto their walls. This seems to be especially common of courtyard house or *havelī* temple constructions. Good examples are the open courtyards of the main temple on the summit of Mount Sonagiri (Plate 288), the covered central spaces of the Pārśvanātha Temple (no. V) at Maidagin in Varanasi, and the Śreyāṃsanātha Temple at Sarnatha.

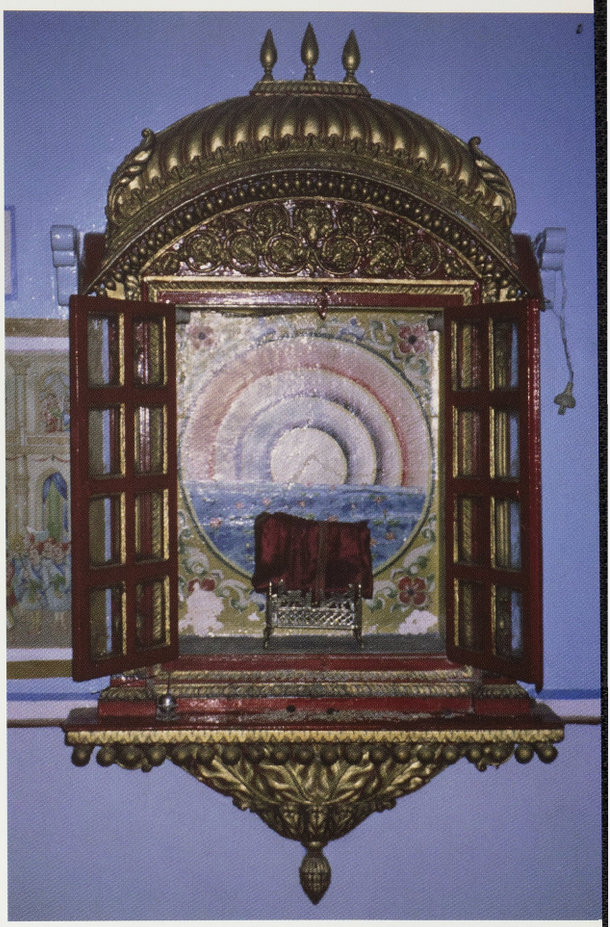
Religious books are seen as sacred objects. However, Dundas has shown that the recitation or reading of Jaina texts, such as the *Kalpa-sūtra* is also considered an act of worship.[205] This is why laypeople will often cover their mouth and nose with a cloth when reciting or reading from sacred texts as part of temple rituals. In addition, religious merit can be gained through the commissioning of sacred writing, the copying of ancient manuscripts, and today even the reprinting of old texts. The cleaning and restoration of ancient manuscripts too are considered meritorious acts. Such auspicious activities in connection with books are particularly common during festival days dedicated to the veneration of the scriptures. These are celebrated by the Śvetāmbaras as Jñāna-pañcamī (knowledge fifth) and as Śruta-pañcamī (scripture fifth) by the Digambara community.[206]

Sacred Jaina texts only prescribe the contemplation of the ideal qualities of the Jinas and of their path to enlightenment. Nevertheless, sculptural representations of the fordmakers and of a large number of other sacred beings and divinities, are commonly venerated in a Jaina religious context. The iconography of the Jinas, their attendants, gods and goddesses, other supernatural beings as well as of more abstract concepts, is exceedingly complex, often displaying pronounced differences between Śvetāmbara and Digambara representations, and further ones between the iconographical traditions of different geographical areas. The venerated statues and abstract symbols introduced in brief in this chapter will be reincountered in the main section of this study, focussing on the architectural material in the various distinct regions of the subcontinent. The need to accommodate large numbers of varied sacred representations and their ever-increasing number through the ritual of *dāna*, explains the need for multiple image chambers and shrines, often arranged on complex superimposed levels, which is so typical of Jaina temple architecture in India. Additional religious objects, such as sacred pillars and altars, as well as ritual paraphernalia used inside the main temple buildings and in subsidiary shrines, will be introduced in the following chapter, analysing the constituent parts of evolved Jaina temple complexes.

204 Dundas 1992: 229.

205 A more detailed discussion of this issue can be found in Dundas (1992: 58).

206 Bhattacharya 1974: 122; Dundas 1992: 72-73, 184-185.



287. Veneration of a sacred scripture in a niche in a Jaina temple at Varanasi.



288. The courtyard of the main temple at the summit of Sonāgiri has been lined with Devanagari writings.