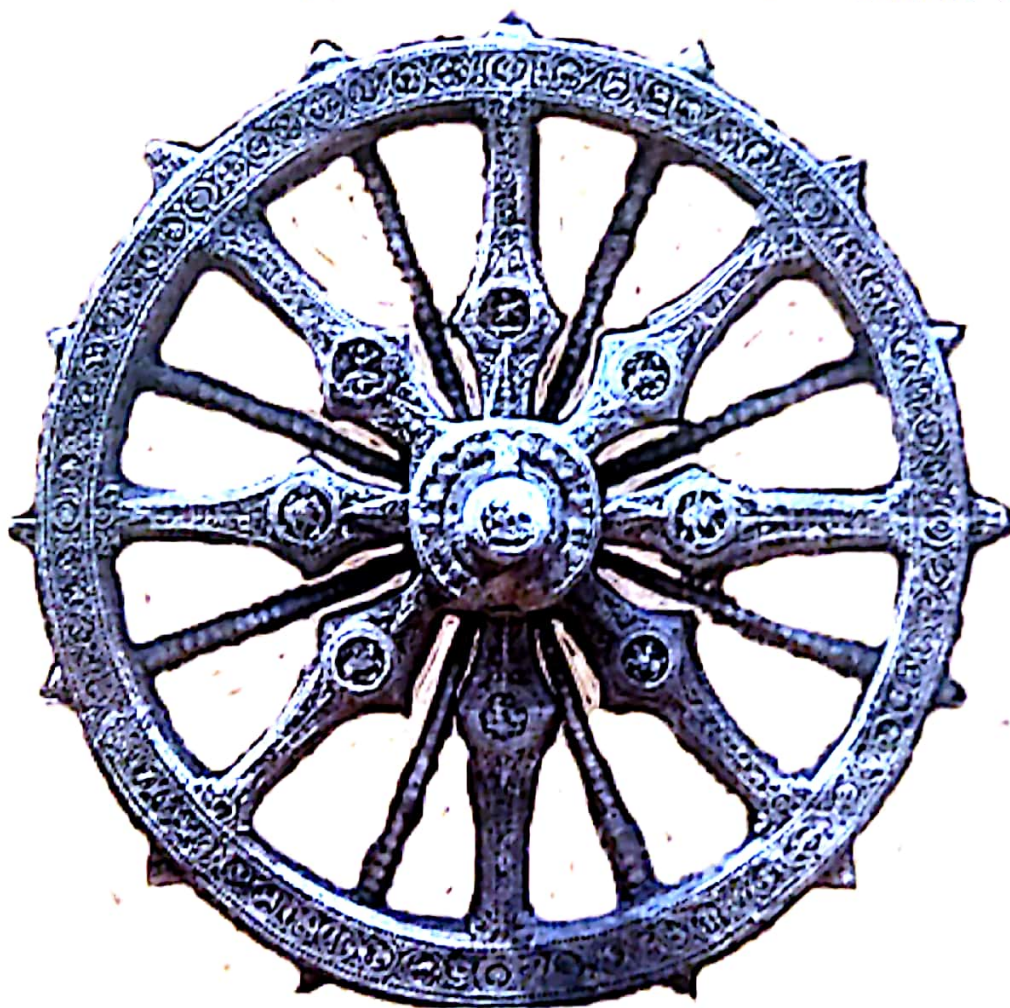


# THE ODISHA HISTORICAL RESEARCH JOURNAL

ISSN NO : 0474-7269



Volume LX No. 1,2,3 & 4

2021-22

ISSN NO : 0474-7269



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**Volume LX No. 1,2,3 & 4**

*Published by :*

**Dr. Bhagyalipi Malla, Superintendent of Museum  
Orissa, Bhubaneswar**

**2021-22**

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## Jaina Images Noticed in Mayurbhanj : A Study

*Arabinda Bose*

Mayurbhanj, located in the extreme north of Odisha is inhabited by many tribal groups. This district lies between  $21^{\circ}17''$  and  $22^{\circ}34''$  north and between  $85^{\circ}40''$  and  $87^{\circ}10''$  east of longitude.<sup>1</sup> The name of the district has a very interesting source of explanation, as the Bhanjas who ruled over the kingdom had peacock as their royal emblem. It is also believed that the two medieval ruling dynasties, i.e., Mayuras of Bonai Mandala and Bhanjas of Khijinga Mandala are said to have effective impacts on the naming it as Mayurbhanj.<sup>2</sup>

Mayurbhanj was a center of different religious cults like Saivism, Saktism and Vaisnavasim. The people here are included as the followers of Jainism too. This is indicated by the discovery of the images of Jaina Tirthankaras like Risavanatha, Santinatha, Parsavanatha and Neminatha from different parts of Maurbhanj.

In Odisha, at an early stage of research, importance was given on the spread of Jainism. The examination of the Hatigumpha inscription and impact of Jainism on the Odishan culture are vividly described by L.N. Sahu. While describing the Jaina art, his basic focus was on the caves of Khandagiri and Udaygiri although he had referred to the images of other parts of Odisha.<sup>3</sup> The three main centres concerned with Jaina activities were Udaygiri and Khandagiri in Bhubaneswar, Podasingdi near Anandpur in Keunjhar district, Subei in Koraput district. It is too difficult to find out the exact date when there was the spread of Jainism in Mayurbhanj. It is believed that Parsavanatha visited Kopakataka and broke his fast in the house of Dhanya. This place is identified with modern Kupari in Balasore district.<sup>4</sup>

Till now no Jaina relics has been discovered in kupari. But the ares near Kupari like Podasindi of Keunjhar, Ada of Balasore, Charampa of Bhadrak and Badasahi are of Mayurbhanj district are rich in Jaina relics. Probably this route have been used for the Jaina Sravakas(Disciple) to enter into Mayurbhanj. Jaina images of Odisha are made up of sandstone or khondolite stone. The examples of Northern Odisha are usually of chlorite or muguni stone.<sup>5</sup> This paper aims at making a micro study of these images found in different parts of Mayurbhanj.

### **Bada Jagannath Temple: Baripada**

The Bada Jagannath Temple built by Raja Vaidyanatha Bhanja in 1575AD which is known from a tablet containing an inscription of the right hand boundary wall of this temple.<sup>6</sup> The temple preserves two seated figures of Parsavanatha (fig. 1&2) worshipped as Ananta in either side of the inner entrance. Instead of the canopy of seven hooded snake they contain nine and thirteen hooded snake canopies over their heads, which is peculiar and not found elsewhere in Odisha. On the chest of the images, bulging diamond like structure is marked. Among other images noticed on the inner part of *Jagamohan* wall are standing images of Parsavanatha and a rare variety of Risavanatha.(fig.3) The Risavanatha image is standing in *kayotasarga* pose on a double- petal lotus. This image contains on its stele the figures of all other *Tithankaras* in standing pose with their respective *lanchanas*. Here Risavanatha has been regarded as *Mulanayaka*. This image is very much identical with the other Risavanatha image found from Subei in Koraput district.<sup>7</sup>

### **Baripada Museum**

In the Baripada Museum two Jaina antiquities are found. One is the image of Risavanatha and the other one is *Chaumukha* which is missing



currently from the Baripada Museum. The Risavanatha image measuring 0.25m x 0.15m is in *Kayatasarga* pose standing on a lotus pedestal made up of khandolite.

The Risavanath image (Fig.4) measuring 0.25m x 0.15m is in *Kayatasarga* pose standing on a lotus pedestal made up of chlorite. The other twenty three Tirthankaras are also carved on the back slab with their symbols. The image is partially eroded with the passage of time. Unfortunately, the Risavanatha image was wrongly identified by the museum as the Mahavira and the museum also mentioned its finding place as unknown. It sometimes misguides the visitors. The image was recovered from Badasahi of Mayurbhanj in 1924.<sup>8</sup> The image of Risavanatha of Baripada Museum is identical with the Risavanatha image of Bada Jagannath Temple of Baripada. The hairstyle is made in the form of *JataMukuta* with locks falling on the shoulder. The other attributes are also present, i.e. cymbals, drum played in hands, tri-liner umbrella, Kevala tree, elliptical halo etc. The *lanchana* bull is partially hided by the wooden pedestal provided by the museum. Perforated *jali* design is also carved on the lower portion of the slab.

The *Chaumukha* preserved in the Baripada Museum has been broken from the upper side. Only the lower portions of the images of the *Tirthankaras* namely, their legs; some parts of the structure and the *Chaumukha* are seen. The images are standing on the *biswapadma*. The *lanchanas* namely bull, deer, half-moon and lion indicate that the *Tirthankarsa* represented here are Risabhanatha, Santinatha, Chandraprabha and Mahavira respectively. The *Chauri* bearers on either side are conspicuous in their absence.<sup>9</sup>

## BadaSahi

### Badhipokhari/ Chandraswa Pokhari

A Jaina Chaumukha image (Fig.5) is seen on the bank of Badhipokhari Pond. This Chaumukha contains the figures of Chandraprabha, Risabhanatha, Ajinatha and parsavanatha within the four sides of it. They are standing in *Kayatasarga* pose along with their lanchanas and Chauribearers<sup>10</sup> On the bottom *Chauri* bearers are noticed, but the *lanchanas* of the Tirthankaras are not clearly visible. It measures 0.50m x 0.17m in height. This *Chaumukha* is locally known as Chandrasena. Similar *Chaumukha* is also found in Kishorepur village in Champagadi near Betonati of Mayurbhanj. At the village of Champagadi of Badasahi (Ranibandha Panchayat), the Neminatha image (fig. 6) is found seated in *yogasana*, depicted with consort Ambika made up of chlorite. Here, she is depicted with her Yaksha Gomedha on a common pedestal. She is in *lalita* pose holding the baby in her laps. The mango tree is shown in the background. The Neminatha figure on the top also flanked by two other miniature Tirthankaras on either side seated in *yogasana* pose and the flying figures with garlands also seen.

### Barudi

Barudi village is located in Badasahi. The four-armed image of Jaina *Sasanadevi* Ambika (fig.7) is worshipped as *Kotasuni* by the villagers. The place is abandoned with terracotta figurines.<sup>11</sup> The figure is seated in *lalitasana*. Her vehicle Lion is depicted on the pedestal. The attributes of the four hands are indistinct due to the coat of vermillion. The child on her lap is missing. Her right leg from the knee is partially broken. The plain pedestal is supported by pillars. Due to the coat of vermillion and dust one may not identify the mango tree which is the conventional feature of *Sasanadevi*.



### Kosali

An image of Parsavanatha(fig.8) is kept inside a newly constructed miniature temple along with an image measuring 1.35m x 0.70m, standing in *Kayotasarga* pose on a double-petal lotus pedestal. He is flanked in either side by the attendants in *tribhanga* pose. A *vidyadhara* is shown on the upper corner on the back slab. His head is shown with serpent canopy of seven hoods. The *kevala* tree has not been visible. On the basis of iconographic features this image can be assigned to the 11<sup>th</sup> century AD.

### Kusmingargh

Kusmingargh is located adjacent to Haripur. There is a platform on which the two Jaina figures (fig. 9) have been enshrined. One is seated in *Padmasana* flanked by two standing attendants, can be identified with Neminatha. Local people worshipped the deity as Kusum *Thakurani*. The lower panel of this slab is depicted with *Yaksha* Gomeda and *Yakshini* Ambika. Branches of mango tree are also seen over the head of Ambika. *Yaksha* Gomeda and *Yakshini* Ambika are flanked by six human figures. Another Jaina image standing in *Kayotsarga* pose is enshrined on a lotus pedestal flanked by two attendants. On the upper part of the figure close by the tri-linear umbrella can also be seen.

### Bodapada

Bodapada is situated on the limits of Pratappur and Haripurgarh. It has been noticed that a female deity(fig.10) is sitting in *lalitasana* on a pedestal flanked by two standing female attendants. Two flying *vidyadhara* holding the *Chattra* ( Jaina tri-linear Umbrella) can also be seen on top of the back slab. It was believed that she is the presiding deity of Haripurgarh. N.N.Vasu and R.P. Mohaparta identified the image with the Buddhist deity *Jagultara* but the presence of the *Chattra* indicates that it is an image of a Jaina *Sasanadevi*.



The images of the *Tirthankaras* were found in different places of Mayurbhanj like Badasahi, Udala, Baripada town etc. The discoveries of different images of *Tirthankaras* in the rural areas of Mayurbhanj indicate the profound impact of Jainism in all over the district. Not only that, the visit of Parsavanatha to Kopakataka, which is identified as Kupari in Balasore district, adjacent to Badasahi block of Mayurbhanj also guides us towards the auspiciousness of that area from the Jaina point of view. Unfortunately no such Jaina relic has been explored in Kupari area. But there is still hope that the future excavation at Kupari will surely reveal the Jaina heritage.

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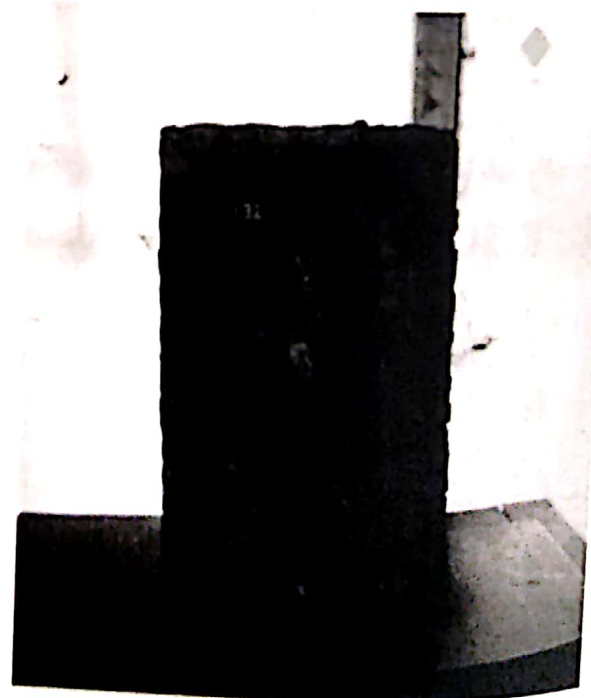
**Fig.1.** Parsavanatha with canopy of thirteen hoods, Bada Jagannath Temple, Baripada.



**Fig.2.** Parsavanatha with nine hoods, Bada Jagannatha Temple, Baripada.



**Fig.3.** Risavanatha, Bada Jagannatha Temple, Baripada.



**Fig.4.** Risavanatha, Baripada, Museum.





**Fig.5** Chaumukha, Badasahi.



**Fig.6.** Neminatha,  
Champagadi, Badasahi



**Fig.7.** Ambika, Barudi, Badasahi



**Fig.8.** Parsavanatha, Kosali, Badasahi



**Fig.9.** Yaksha Gomeda and Yakshini Ambika, Haripur



**Fig.10.** Jaina Sasan Devi, Haripur

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