

## ART AND ARCHITECTURE OF JAIN TEMPLES IN UTTAR PRADESH, INDIA

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### ABSTRACT

India has a deep-rooted culture and civilization going back to 5000 years in history. India's ancient but continuing civilisation has fascinated and mesmerised the world. Highly rich and diverse culture has been a subject of study across the world. A tour of famous Jain temples in Uttar Pradesh, India was made to study the visual philosophy in architecture of temples and idols of Jain sects. During the study a tour of 13 famous Jain pilgrimage places namely, Ahichhatra, Ayodhya Ji, ShriKampila Ji, ShriKakandi, Jain shrine of Kaushambi, ShriChandrapuri, ShriRatnapuri, Varanasi, Singhpuritirth, Shauripuritirth, Jain siddha kshetra of Mathura, Hastinapur-Jamboodweep and ShriRishabhanchal were visited across the Uttar Pradesh province of India. It has been observed that all the studied holy places are unique for their ancient history, architecture of idol and temple. The temples are of deep sense of approbation and the centre for peace and meditation.

**KEYWORDS:** Art, Architecture, Jain Teerthankars, Temples, Uttar Pradesh, India

### INTRODUCTION

The contribution of the Jain art to the mainstream art in India has been considerable. Most of the phases of India art are represented by a Jain version. Jain architecture cannot be accredited with a style of its own, for in the first place it was almost an offshoot of Hindu and Buddhist styles. Initially these temples were mainly carved out of rock faces and the use of bricks was almost negligible. However, in later years Jains started building temple cities on hills based on the concept of 'mountains of immortality'. Jain architecture enriched the whole body of Indian art and architecture. It has also provided certain special forms, symbols etc. The Jainas are justly famous for their patronage to art and architecture. By Jain art and architecture we mean specimens of art and architecture created under the patronage of the Jainas. The earliest historical reference to some forms of Jain art is associated with king Khāravela of Kalinga. The earliest known Jain architecture belongs to the Mauryan period. Excellent Jain architecture and sculpture can be seen in their idols, stupas and temples found in Uttar Pradesh. A number of rock-cut caves have been discovered in Udaigiri and Khandagiri, twin hills in Puri District of Orissa and in Ellora in Maharashtra.

It is generally agreed that originally Brāhmaṇical iconography did not include idol-worship or image-worship. As regards non-Brāhmaṇical iconography, it seems that the introduction of image-worship of the Jainas was earlier than that of the Buddha. In other words, the introduction of image-worship in Jain iconography was probably earlier than that in Buddhist iconography. The emblems of the Tirthankaras are as Rashaba- bull, Ajita- elephant, Sambhava- horse, Abhinandana- ape, Sumati- heron, Padmaprabha- red lotus, Suparsva- swastika, Candraprabha- moon, Suvidhi- dolphin, Sitala-srivatsa (a sign on the breast), Sreyamsa- rhinoceros, Vasupujya- buffalo, Vimala- hog, Ananta- hawk, Dharma- thunderbolt, Santi- antelope, Kunthu- goat, Ara-nandyavarta (a diagram), Malli- jar, Suvrata- tortoise, Nam-, blue

lotus, Aristanemi- conch shell, Parsva- serpent, Mahavira- Lion. The standing attitude in which they are commonly shown exhibits a characteristic, puppet like rigidity that come of- and- denotes- inner absorption. The nakedness of Indian goddesses is that of the fertile, indifferent mother earth, while that of the stark Tirthankaras is ethereal. Composed of some substance that does not derive from, or link one to, the circuit of life, the truly "sky-clad" (digambara) Jaina statue expresses the perfect isolation of the one who has stripped off every bond.

### Characteristics of Important Jain Temples in Uttar Pradesh

#### ShriAhichchhatraTirth

Geographic location: It is near the Ramnagar village of district Bareilly. Various Jain idols and inscriptions found during the land excavations tell us about the historical importance of this place. This place is known for ages for the event that took place while BhagwanParshwanatha attained 'KevalGyan' here through deep 'Tapashcharan'. In the ancient Parshvanath Temple, there are 5 Vedis dedicated to Tikhal Baba (black idol of Lord Parshvanath with engraved footprints), Lord Parshvanath and Lord Chandraprabhu (white statues of Lord Mahavir), Lord Mahaveer (golden statue, Figure 1), Lord Parshvanath (white Idol in khandagasan posture) and a statue of Lord Sheetalnath.



Figure 1: Jain Temple and Idol at Ahichchhatra

#### ShriAyodhyaTirth

Ayodhya is a famous tirthkshetra in Eastern Uttar Pradesh. It is located on Delhi-Luknow-Mughalsarai rail route. It is about 6 kilometers away from Faizabad and 139 kilometers away from Lucknow. There are very ancient temples belonging to different society and culture. For Jains the importance of this place is due to that BhagwanAdinathji adopted diksa at this place. After diksa, many times he came wandering here and his samavasranas were set here. This holy land is the birthplace of Bhahubali, Brahmi, Sundari, King Dashrath, AcharyaPadaliptasurisvarji, King Harishchandra, ShriRamchandra, Achalbhrata, and the ninth Gandhara of Mahavir Swami and others.

There are four temples, two Svetambar's and two Digambar's temples. During 1965 an idol of Bhagawan Rishabhdev 885 centimeters or 31 feet high in Kayotsarga posture in RaiganjDigambar temple a really speculator was installed (Figure 2). There are Tonks of Bhagwananantnath Swami BhagwanAbhinandanNath, Bhagwansheetalnath, BhagwanAjitnath and BhagwanAdinath at Ayodhya. During a digging project undertaken twenty-five years ago, broken idols of Jains were found and it is considered that these pertain to the Maurya period.



**Figure 2: ShriDigamber Jain TirthKshetraAyodhya**

**ShriKampilajiTirth**

The tirthkampilaji (kampilapur) village is situated 10 kilometers away from the nearest railway station kyamganj. This comes under the district Farrukabad of Uttar Pradesh. There are literary references in Jain scriptures of temples, which existed even before 6th century B.C. in Mathura, Kampil and other places. Temple making appears to have its start from North India. Kampil, a small village that has been erased from the memory of the mankind, is actually a very important place from historical and mythological point of view. Two famous pilgrimage centers of Jains religion i.e. the Shwetambar Jains temple, dedicated to the 13th Teerthankar of the Jains & Digambar Jain temple are also situated in Kampil. The idol is nearly 60 centimeters in height and black – colored. This marvelous idol of BhagawanVimlanath is in the Padmasana Posture (a Digambar temple) and the other one in Swetambar temple the idol is 45 centimeters in height having white color of BhagawanVimalnath in the Padmasana posture. It is believed that Draupadi, the daughter of Drupad, the king of Paanchaal, was born in Kampil. The sacrificial alter (Yagyakund) from which Draupadi is believed to have been born from the fire of knowledge, is situated in Kampil till date.



**Figure 3: Lord VimalnathJi in Padmasana Posture at KampilajiTirth**

Two famous pilgrimage centers of Jains religion i.e., the Shwetambar Jain temple, dedicated to the 13th Teerthankar of the Jains & Digambar Jains temple are also situated in Kampil. Apart from these, there are many old temples, which prove the historical & religious importance of Kampil. The idols of this place belong to the Gupta Age.

### Jain Shrines of Kakandi

The village is called Kuhukan (Kakandi) where this temple is situated. Jain's 9<sup>th</sup> Tirthankar Lord Pushpdantji was born here and had his Kalynaka's of chayan, births, diksa here. He took his Diksha in Pushpak-van, meditated for 4 years and went on a fast. Ultimately he attained the true light of knowledge, 'The KewalGyan.

The nearby villages Kukubh and Kakandi stand in ruins today, with several mounds in the vicinity. The local people call them 'Dedara' which represent the Jain Devalaya. The place commands obeisance because four Kalyanaks of BhagwanSuvidhinath, the 9<sup>th</sup> Tirthankar of the set of 24 for the present cycle of time occurred here (Figure 4). A grey colored Manastambh has also been found in the forest is known as Kukubh Van and it is 24 ft. high. King Samudragupta had this Manastambh erected in the year 460 A.D. The present name of this place is Khukkhundu.



**Figure 4: Lord Suvidhinath, the 9<sup>th</sup> Tirthankar at Kakandi**

### 5. Jain Shrines of Kaushambi

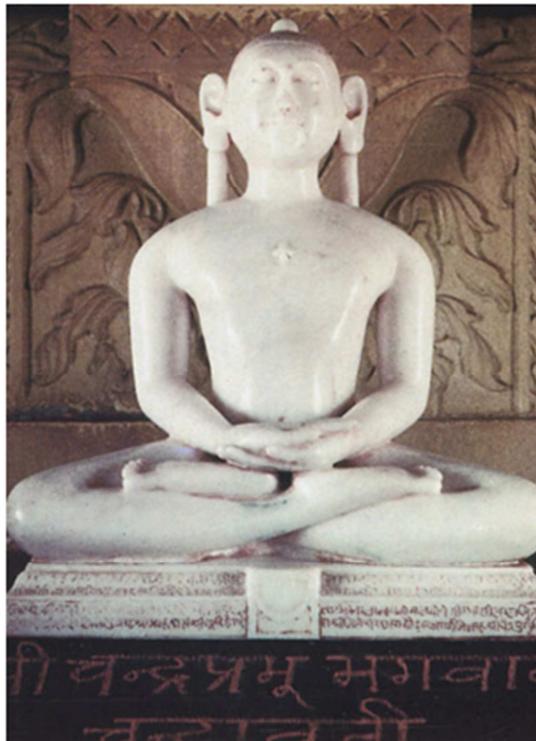
This shrine is located on the northern bank of the Yamuna River some 60 kilometers away from Allahabad in Uttar Pradesh. Ancient Jain scriptures reveal that there had been 16 Mahajanpadas in the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Vats Desh was one such Mahajanpada whose capital was Kaushambi. With the end of the legendary Hastinapur Kingdom, which is believed to have been flooded and destroyed by the river Ganges, the Chandravanshi kings made Kaushambi their capital, 22 of their descendants are said to have ruled from here. The town, however, got its due importance with the presence of the 6<sup>th</sup> Tirthankar Padmaprabhu (Figure 5), who was born here. His Kalynaka's of chayan, births, diksa and 'The KewalGyan' took place here. There is beautiful temple dedicated to Lord Bhagwan Padmaprabhuji. Apart from above many ancient idols were found during excavation, which prove the historical and religious importance of this place.



**Figure 5: Lord Padmaprabhu (6<sup>th</sup> Tirthankar) at Kaushambi Jain Temple**

### **ShriChandrapuriTeerth**

This holy place is on the bank of the river Ganga near the Chandravati village. The nearest railway Kadipur is at a distance of 5 kilometers and Varanasi is at a distance of 23 kilometers. This is the birthplace of BhagwanChandraprabhu the 8<sup>th</sup>Tirthankar. At this holy place, four kalyanak, *Chyavan, Janam, Deeksha* and *Kevalgyan*, took place. Both Shwetambar and Digambar temples are situated at the bank of holy river Ganga. They are adjacent to each other and managed by single trust. ShriChandraprabhBhagwan, Swetvarn idol in padmasan mudra about 45 centimeters in height is placed in each temple (Figure 6). The pilgrim's get enlighten in prayer to Bhagawan, and experience spiritual peace here.



**Figure 6: Lord Chandraprabh at ShriChandrapuriTeerth**

History of this tirth starts from the period of 8<sup>th</sup> Teerthankar Shri Chandraprabh Bhagwan. Once upon a time, King Mahasen was the ruler of this place. On a lucky day his wife Queen Laxmimati has seen a miraculous nightmare giving indications of birth of Teerthankar. Right on that moment, the soul (jeev) of Padmanabh entered in the kukchhi (ovary) of Laxmimati. She gave birth to a son on Poush Krishna 11 in Anuradhanakshatra. As she desired moon (Chandra) during her pregnancy, the newborn child was named As Chandraprabh. He was married in his younger days and after ruling many years he decided to take deeksha. Prabhu took Deeksha after performing Varshidaan with eleven thousand kings on Poush Krishna Teras in Anuradhanakshatra at Sahasamra Van. He came to same place after roaming for three years and started meditation under a Punnag tree. It was here that Prabhu attained Kevalgyan on Falgun Krishna Saptami in Anuradhanakshatra. The Indra along with many other dev has organised samavasaran on this occasion. Many Sashtras & Teerth Malas describe this teerth.

### **Shri Ratnapuri**

It is located on the Ayodhya- Lucknow national highway, to the west of Ayodhya near village Ronahi. Ratnapuri is the birthplace of Lord Dharamnath and the site of his sacred grove. Bhagwan Dharamnath had a Kalyanakas Chyavan, Janam, Tap (Penance) and Gayan (Knowledge) here as such it is called a Kalyanak Kshetra. There is only one small temple in a village Rohini where the idol of Tirthankara Dharamnath of about 25 Centimeters, a very antique one is placed. There are Shwetambar and Digambar temples. The footprints of Bhagwan Shri Dharmnath, blue colored in Shwetambar temples (Figure 7). The white colored idol (90 centimeters) of Bhagwan Shri Dharmnath in padmasanastha in Digambar Jain temples the main attraction of this place.



**Figure 7: Lord Shri Dharmnath in Shwetambar Temple at Ratnapuri**

### **Varanasi (Kashi Banaras)**

According to the Jain traditions, Kashi has the honor of being the birth place of four Tirthankars namely, Bhagwan Suparshavathji, Chandraprabhji, Shreansnathji and Parshvanathji. Where Parshavnathji and Suparshavnathji were born in Varansai, Bhagwan Chandraprabhji was born in Chandrapur about 15 km away from Varanasi. Shree Shreansnathji was born in Singhpur village which is presently known as Sarnath.

### **Bhadaini Jain Pilgrimage**

The birthplace of the 7<sup>th</sup> Tirthankar Sri Suparshavnathji was in 'Bhandani' Muhallah', situated near the banks of the river Ganga. The place is about 1.5 km. Away from Bhelupura and known as the Jainghat'. This place is believed to be very

sacred not only because it was Lord Sri Suparshvanath's birth place, but he had his KalyanakasChyavan, Janam, Tap (Penance) and Gayan (Knowledge) here at present, there is a white coloured 68 cm high idol placed here and worshipped by the shwetambars. On the other hand, a black idol of 46 cm. height is placed here and is worshiped by the believers of Digambar sect (Figure 8).



**Figure 8: Lord Sri Suparshvanath at Jain Digamber Temple, Bhadaini**

### **Bhelupura**

This place is also located near the Varanasi. This is the birthplace of 23<sup>rd</sup> Tirthankar, Lord Sri Parshavnath. This place has a white stature of 60 centimeter height, which is worshipped by the believers of Svetambara sect, and a black idol with a height of 75 centimeters is worshipped by the believers of Digambara sect. These temples are definitely worth seeing. This place is believed to be one of the most sacred places of pilgrimage for the Jain devotees. There are number of other temples belonging to both sects of Jains.

### **Singhpuri Teerth**

Digambar temple is at a distance of 7 kilometers from Varanasi Chhavani station situated at Sarnath crossing. The shwetambar temple is at a distance of 8 kilometers from the station situated in Hiravanpur Village (Figure 9). Nearby Chandravatiteerth is only at a difference of 15 kilometers. This is an ancient place widely known for 4 kalyanak of ShriShreyansnathBhagwan 11th Tirthankar. A huge ashtakod stoop (octagonal pillar) of 103 feet height is still present showing its historical establishment. It is considered to be 2200 years old. The artistic work on it is unmatched.

At present one Shwetambar Jain temple, a Digambar Jain temple, one pillar exists there. The White colored idols of ShriShreyansnathBhagwan in Padmasanastha 30 centimeters in height, (Shwetambar) and the other one Blue coloured idol 75 cms of ShriShreyansnathBhagwan in Padmasanastha, (Digambar) are placed in the temples. Somenath Bodh temple also exists here.

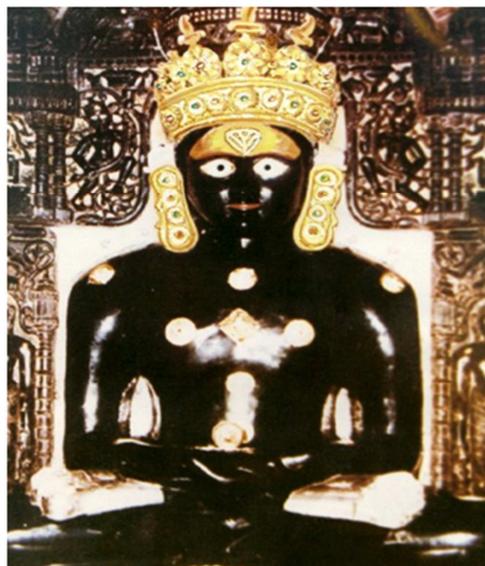


**Figure 9: Shwetambar Jain Temple at Hiravanpur near Varanasi**

### **ShauripurTirth**

The Shauripur village is on the bank of the Yamuna River near to railway station in Agra Fort. It is 2 kilometers from Bateswar, another Jain Tirth. It can also be reached from Ferozabad via Shikohabad. This temple of ShriNeminathBhagwan is located at Shauripur village on the bank of river Yamuna, about 75 kilometers from Agra and 25 kilometers from Shikohabad on the Northern railway (Figure 10). ShriNeminath was born at this place. Since this is the land of Chyavan and birth Kalyanakas of BhagawanNeminath, the twenty-second of the 24Tirthankaras of the present the group, this is known as a holy Kshetra. Moreover, this was the lane of attainment of omniscience and nirvana of many saints. This was also the birthplace of Karna the donor.

In addition to Old Jain DigambarMandir, The Barumatt and 5 Tonks known as panchmathi are very impressive and mentionable. Idols of BhagawanNeminathinpadmasana posture are placed in these temples.



**Figure 10: ShriNeminathBhagwan Located at Shauripur Village near the River Yamuna**

**Jain Siddha Kshetra of Mathura**

Sri Jambu Swami was born in Champa and was the son of a rich man, Seth Rishabhdudd. Even though he was married at the age of 16, he was initiated by Lord Mahavir's disciple Sudhama Swami and lived as a Brahmachari for the rest of his life. After 20 years of hard penance he attained the light of true knowledge and was enlightened at Chaurasi. He is the last KewalGyani of the Jains. A temple has been built here in his memory and dedicated to this holiness. This place is better known as Chawrasi (Figure 11). The present Main temple has TirthankarAjitnath as main deity with charan of Jambuswami adorning the main vedi. After Jambuswami his charan were obtained and later on temple was built and they were placed by Mathura samaj. The mulnayakAjitnathbhagwanpratima is really impressive and very beautiful made of white stone. It was discovered from Gwalior during some excavation work of land. There are 9 more vedis in main temple of Parasnath, Neminath, Mahavirbhagwan. Two special vedis are made here of standing karyotsargs statues of Pratham (first) KevaliBahubali swami and Antim (last) KevaliJambu swami facing each other adding glory and dignity to temple.



**Figure 11: Jambu Swami Digamber Jain Temple, Chaurasi, Mathura**

### **Hastinapur**

According to Jain tradition, Hastinapur was one of the earliest Indian cities like Ayodhya and Kashi and came into existence during the time of Rishabhadeva also known as BhagawanAdinatha (the first tirthankara) whose grandson, Somaprabha, was the first ruler of the place. It is also said to be the birthplace of three Jain tirthankars, Shantinatha, Kunthnnath and Arahamatha. The Buddhists say that this city was the capital of Kururattam. The Mahabharata also gives the early history of the place, the founder of which is generally believed to be King Hastin, fifth in descent from Bharta. It was the capital of the Kauravas and Pandavas. It is said to have extended as far as Barnawa in the west and Puth in the south. At the time of the Mahabharata War it was in the heyday of itsprosperity which, however, began to decline thereafter. The severe floods in the Ganga, which washed away the city, and the transfer of the capital of Kaushambi left in complete obscurity but it was rehabilitated twice within the next few centuries though it never achieved its former glory.

Hastinapur is considered to be the most ancient capital city of India. Though it has been the venue of all the politics related to the mahabharat but it has a history that dates back to the times of BhagawanAdinatha. It is said that after relinquishing his throne BhagawanAdinatha entered the life of an ascetic at this place. The conception, birth, ordaining and enlightenment of Lords Shantinath, Kunthunath and Aranatha had also occurred at this very place.Hastinapur is said to be the birthplace of the TirthankarasShantinath, Kunthunath and Aranatha; their footprints can be seen on a small hill

nearby. Right now there are huge temples of both the Shwetambar and the Digambar sects.

### **Jamboodweep**

With the completion of the Jambu-dweep shrine in 1985, Hastinapur has become a favorite center for studying Jaina cosmology and cosmography, 'Jamboodweep' is a special feature of Hastinapur pilgrimage (Figure 12). It has come up with the inspiration and keen interest of ascetic AryikaJnanmatiji. Apart from Jamboodweep' there are lotus temple, meditation temple and Indradhawaj temples. All these new temples are worth seeing.



**Figure 12: Digamber Jain JambudweepMandir at Hastinapur**

### **RishabhanchalTirth**

This new Jain Pilgrimage centre has been recently established at a village Morta, which is 8 km. away from Ghaziabad and 25 km. from Delhi on the Meerut road. President of India laid down the foundation stone of this teerth on 20th October 1991. The main temple carries the idol of BhagwanShriRishabhDev, which is 4.5 feet tall in white marble, in Padamasan posture. Rishbhanchal is a grand and big temple, having 52-kalash and 81 feet high artistic shikhar and popular as a center of meditation, yoga, worship and human welfare (Figure 13). It is a unique religious place. It is established under the able guidance of Great SadhiviPujjyaBalBramchariniMaaShriKaushalji and is indicative of peace and prosperity for this area. Primary medical services, moral education, yoga and meditation training, library and boarding and lodging facilities are all available here.



**Figure 13: Rishabhanchal Temple at a Village Morta, Ghaziabad**

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