

**Indian Art: Materials, Techniques and Artistic Practices**  
**Prof. Rajarshi Sengupta**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**Indian Institute of Technology – Kanpur**

**Lecture – 10**

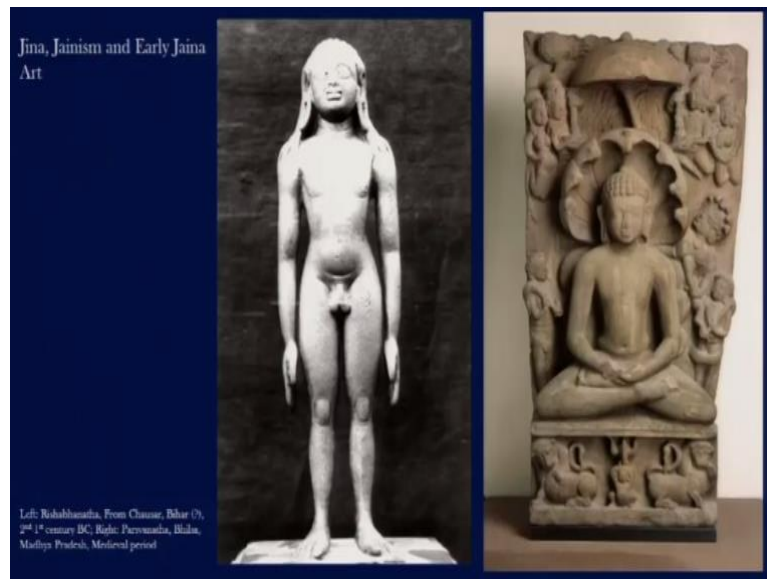
Hello everyone. We will be continuing on our module on the basics of Buddhist and Jain architecture. So far, we have covered the basics of Buddhist architecture in its initial stage and how it had flourished in the Indian subcontinent. And today we will be looking into some of the basics of Jainism, their impact on the sculpture making and architecture making in the Indian subcontinent.

Now, the idea of Jainism and this religion which has been there in the Indian subcontinent and which is believed to be there at least since the 2000 BC. So, it is one of the oldest surviving religions in the Indian subcontinent. However, we do see that these ideas about Jainism that had also their similarities and dissimilarities with what we see in terms of Buddhism. Now, in terms of the Jainism what we find the most important part is this idea of Jina or the liberated one and that is how this entire religion came into a known as Jainism.

So, the Jinas or liberated ones who are free from the cycle of birth and rebirth and they are the ones who know the universal truth. So, for them what we find there is that how the Jinas they have been there, they are aware of these Jinas, they are also known as the tirthankaras. So, they have been there before the birth of Buddha. So, the last tirthankara who was there before the birth of Buddha that was Parshvanath in the 8th century BC.

And then the one who was there who was contemporary of Buddha and there had been accounts in which we find that there had been debates or discussion sessions in which both Buddha and the last of the Jina tirthankaras were present. And so in that particular context we find the Jaina tirthankara who was contemporary of Buddha, the last Jaina tirthankara he was Mahavira.

**(Refer Slide Time: 02:35)**



Jina, Jainism and Early Jaina Art

Left: Rishabhdeva, From Champar, Bihar (7<sup>th</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> century BC). Right: Parsonada, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Medieval period

So, we find that the spread of Jainism, it was in to some extent the early phase of Jainism we find that they had their prominence in the places like in Bihar, in parts of northern and central India and we also see with time that there had been a significant presence of Jainism not only in north and central India, but also in the western India as well as in the southern India. Now, some of the things that we find to be really interesting features as part of the Jaina figures.

For example, the one we have here on screen, and so there is one figure for example that tirthankaras that we have here. So, in that case we have certain particular features of them which are as part of their body and that makes them distinguishable from the other tirthankaras. So, for example all the Jaina tirthankaras we find them to be either seated or in the standing posture in the samabhanga posture in which we find that they are standing vertically.

Straightforward without leaning in any other direction or having any other gesture. So, in that case we find that they are the ones, these Jaina tirthankaras they are represented that way and usually they are represented as nudes. And that is because that we find that there were three of the prime concepts which are the core of the Jaina beliefs and that is to with nonviolence, with abandonment and with nonattachment.

So, we can imagine that how this abandonment, abandonment of the material life and that makes an impact on these figures, that the figures are not associated with any kind of ornaments, they are not associated with royal robes, or any other different kinds of textiles or anything else. They are not attached to any kind of material pleasure that is the reason showing them to be stark nude is part of the larger concept of their ideology.

Also, the idea of nonattachment is something that is very important in the Jaina belief that we find that this the liberated ones or Jinas they were not attached to the material world as well as they were not attached in terms of how the human relations work. So, that is the reason they have been shown as the singular figure who stand tall or if they are seated in a position, they are engaged in the meditative process and they are not attached to anyone else around them.

So, this is some of the ideas that we find that how these overarching themes in Jainism also make their impact on the sculptures that we find from the Jaina context. Now, some of the other things that even though these are some of the basic characteristic features of the Jaina figures we find across the subcontinent, there are also some other things in which we can distinguish one tirthankara from the other, and those are some of the issues that we can see here.

So, for example here we have an image of the tirthankara Rishabhanatha and this particular figure that comes from Chausar in Bihar and that perhaps was made somewhere between second and first century BC. In this one what we find that there are those open locks of hair that is represented on Rishabhanatha. So, these locks of hair are something that is associated with Rishabhanatha and no other tirthankaras.

So, when we see these open locks of hair, then we immediately understand that this is the figure of the tirthankara Rishabhanatha. Then there is also another sign which we find here around this place and that is considered to be the Shrivatsa sign and that is also a very important mark of their divinity in the Jaina context. So, those are some of the signs or the iconographical features that are very much part of the Jaina sculptures.

That make us understand how these sculptures are made in the Jaina context and not in the Buddhist context or in the Hindu context. Now, from there I wanted to show another image that is there on the right side of the screen. Even though this image comes from much later time and that is perhaps from 9th to 10th century AD, but I wanted to show this image to have a sense of how these iconographical traces they work.

So, for example here we have this particular image which looks very similar to how Buddha's image is made. And we have already seen the images of Buddha who seated in this Padmasana position or this cross-legged position in a meditative gesture and then sometimes with the hands

in the abhaya mudra or in the meditative gesture, for example here the way we see it or of course that how there are some of the other signs which also can be confused with the sign of Buddha.

So, for example how the coiled hair that we have here and then there is a bun on the top of his head. So, these marks can also be confused with Buddha, but the thing is that when we see it is also associated with this seven-hooded snake, then we know that this is mark of Parsvanatha. So Parsvanatha was the Jaina tirthankara who was active in the 8th century BC and Rishabhanatha was the one who was the first Jaina tirthankara.

So, what we have here that even though there are some of the signs or even though there are some of the iconographical features which might seem a bit confusing with the Buddhist signs, but this small trace, so for example how each of these Jaina tirthankaras will be associated with each of these signs, for example the matted locks or the seven-hooded snake, those are the ones through which we can understand that these images are made in the Jaina context and not in the Buddhist context.

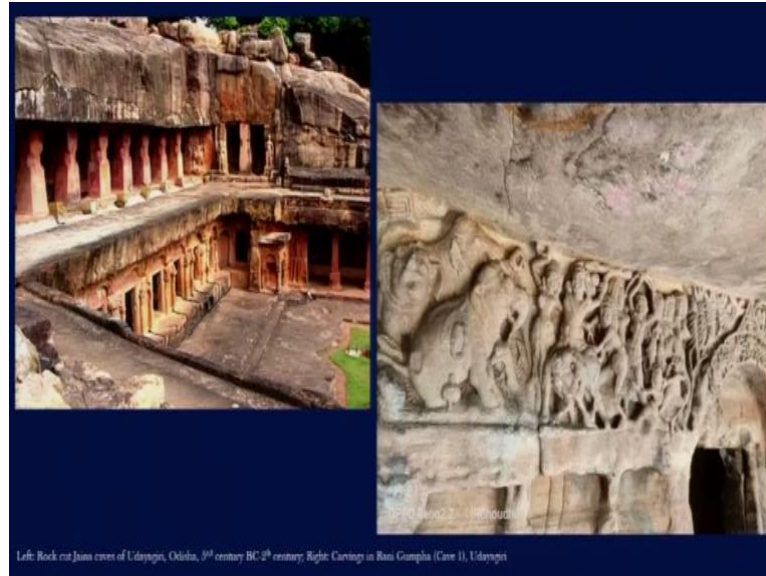
Also, this Shrivatsa sign that we have spoken about that is there in their chest that marks their divinity in the Jaina context. So that is also something not present in the Buddhist context. Now the Buddha's urna or this particular mark in his forehead that is also something that we do not really see to be part of the Jainas, but sometimes there will be a mark of an eye that will be represented.

Now the other thing that we also find which can be a distinguishing mark from the Buddhist sculptures and that is that the Jaina sculptures in all these contexts we find them to be always nude. So, in terms of Buddha, we find that he always wears the monk's robes, the robe which flows from one of his shoulders keeping the other shoulder bare and then like this very simple robe of a monk which we find to be not only there in the Buddhist context, but also in the Hindu context.

But in this case in the Jain context, we find that they are usually stark nude. Now, the other thing that we find that with time there have been that Indian figures and so on, they had been joined by the sides of the Jaina figures, however, we see that this idea of nonattachment of this Jaina figures to be prevalent in the way they are not attached to any of those material happenings or the happenings around them in the sculptures as well.

So, those are some of the signs in which we can distinguish them from the Buddha's sculptures or from the Hindu's sculptures.

**(Refer Slide Time: 11:00)**



So, in terms of some of the early traces of the Jaina architecture that we find they had also developed as rock cut architecture in many of these places. And here we have images from the site of Udayagiri in Odisha and that developed somewhere between 5th century BC to second century AD and we know that this was a site of pilgrimage. And as we can see that there, there are those living rock structures.

In the left side of the screen, we find that there were those rock structures already existing which were carved and those series of those pillars to make a colonnade or like a covered pavilion or a veranda was made. And then there were those individual cells for the monks and the nuns those were made and of course there were also places for the visitors or the pilgrims those were made.

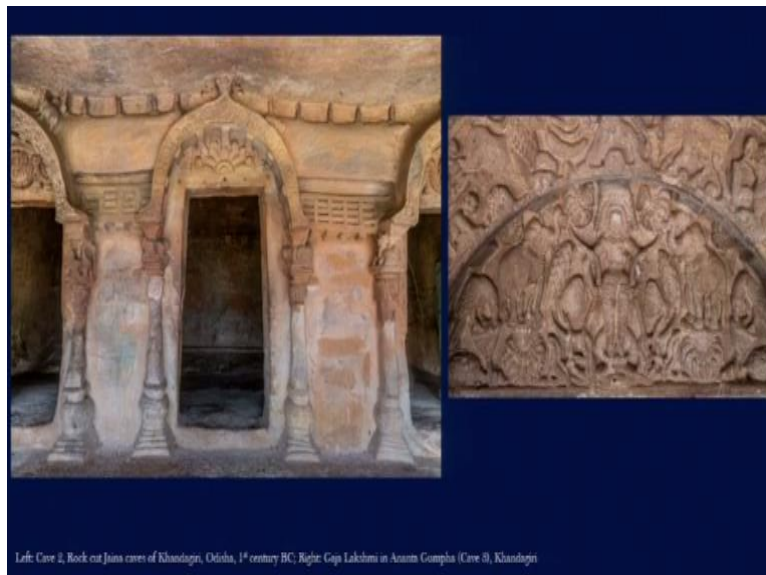
And then there were also some of the sites where we find that the prayer halls where all the monks and the nuns would gather during the prayers, those were also made. So, this is something that we find that how the making of these structures that had their roots in these earlier times, perhaps something that predates Buddhism that was also there in Jainism as well to make use of these existing structures and then carving them out to make places of habitation for the monks and the nuns and the pilgrims.

So again, these structures are made from stone, but they are not really built for the royal people, they are not really built as palaces, but they are built as monasteries, something that we have also seen in the Buddhist context. And then there are some of the details of the sculptures that we find. So, for example, here we have this Rani Gumpha or cave-1 from which we have the images those are featured there in this rock cut shelters or these rock cut sites where some of the contemporary events those are depicted.

So, these particular images they come from second to first century BC, and they are very surprisingly even though the sites were made for Jaina pilgrimage or for the monks and the nuns, there are some of the narrative panels in the horizontal panels we find that there are some of the scenes in which the warfare and the mighty deeds of the kings those were also carved out.

So, in a way we can understand that how religion and the spread of religion is never independent of the socio-political and cultural context during their own times. So, how the patrons of this rock cut caves and the shelters, so they have also made an impact of their own deeds and their warfare, their achievements in the sites of pilgrimage as well as practicing religion.

**(Refer Slide Time: 14:15)**



This is another image from the site of Khandagiri. So Khandagiri and Udayagiri these two places are neighbouring sites in Odisha, and this site we find that here there is an image from cave-2 and that comes from first century BC. And then what we have here really interesting is that how these individual cells as I have mentioned earlier for the monks and the nuns to stay

inside and to take shelter and as well as perhaps continue their daily activities and their education and things like that.

And how these individual cells they do not have much of decoration inside, but how the outer walls are made that also were some of the references to this trefoil arch motif that we have studied in the Buddhist context so far. So, this particular arch motif that first we have seen in the Lomas Rishi cave in Bihar and then we found that how that arch motif also became really significant in terms of the Buddhist art and architecture.

So, this is also something we find it was developing simultaneously with the Buddhist art and architecture. So, one thing we can find that how the architectural motifs that were present during this time period like the third century, second century BC and so on. They were not really specific to one religion, but they are used by different groups, different communities, and both Jainism and Buddhism they have incorporated these particular architectural motifs as part of their structures.

So, as we have already spoken about this trefoil arch motif or this Chaitya arch way which came into being and this is something that we have seen in the Lomas Rishi cave. Later on, we have also seen how that was also reflected in the Karla and Bhaja caves and here we also see them in the Jaina context in Khandagiri. And then in the panel which is there on the top of the doorways, there we find some of the images of the gods and goddesses.

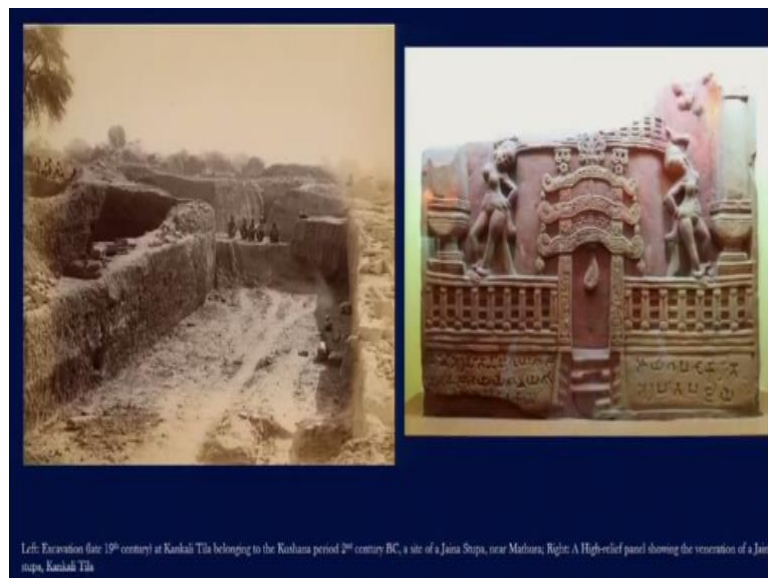
So, for example here from the Anantagumpha or cave-3 in Khandagiri, on the right side of the screen, we have image of Gajalakshmi. So, Gajalakshmi is goddess who has been also revered in Hinduism and in the Hindu belief and she is also someone who is associated with prosperity and life and fertility and so on those in the Jaina context. So we find that there is this figure of Gajalakshmi who is represented here in the frontal form.

Only the deities or someone who is highly significant they are represented in this kind of frontal form as we have also seen in the figures of Buddha or the Jaina tirthankaras. So, we see that there is the figure of Gajalakshmi who is at the centre of this particular panel and she holds the lotus stems from which the lotuses are blooming. And there are also many other lotuses that we find around her.

So, basically it is a stylized representation of a lake full of lotuses. And then there are two elephants by both her sides who are showering water in a way to welcome her. So that is the reason this association with the elephant or gaja that comes into this name Gajalakshmi. So, these are some of the characteristics we find how there are particular figures in terms of the gods and goddesses who are relevant not only in the one religion, but in several religion.

In multiple religion so as the architectural motifs like this chaitya motif or this trefoil arch motif which was first seen in the Lomas Rishi cave and then of course in the Buddhist context and in the Jaina context. And perhaps this kind of developments were simultaneous, it was not really like whether the Buddhist predated the Jainas or the Jainas did it first and then the Buddhist, but perhaps these things continued simultaneously.

**(Refer Slide Time: 18:50)**



From there, we also have another site which is also highly significant and that that particular place is called Kankali Tila and this is a site which was developed in the second century BC. It is very close to the place of Mathura. And there, the excavations and this name of Kankali Tila that actually came into being from this temple which was dedicated to Kankali or the fierce manifestation of the great goddess Kali in the later times.

But this was a site where this Jain stupa was there in the second century BC or so on. So, we have an image of its excavation in the 19th century that is there on the left side of the screen. And on the right side, we have one of the panels which are found from this site that shows a representation of the stupa. And this panel which is now kept in a museum in Mathura that



shows that has the Brahmi script in lower part of it here and then it also shows all the architectural details of a Jaina stupa.

So, unlike the Buddhist stupa in which what we found that how the relic of the Buddha was kept in the stupa and that was the site of veneration that developed, in terms of the Jaina stupa we have that how the stupa became a mark of the Mount Meru. So, the Mount Meru is also considered to be the centre of the entire universe and this is something that is believed both in Jainism as well as in Hinduism.

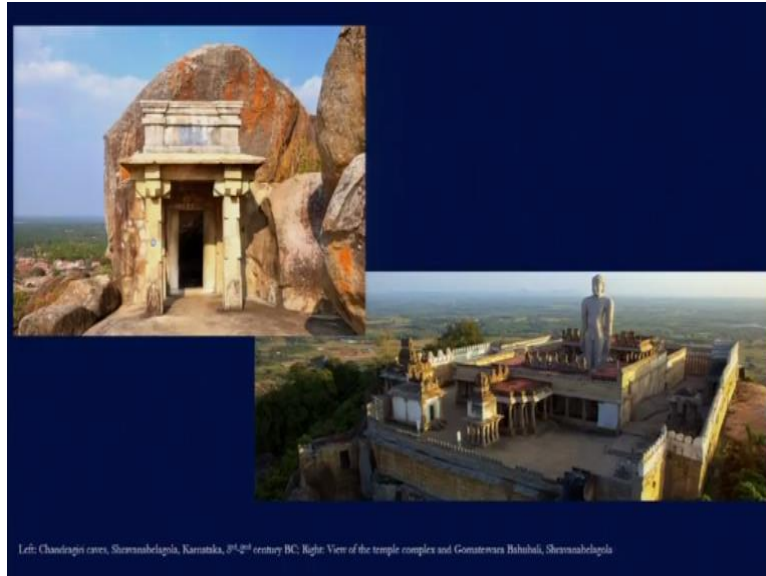
So, the stupa became a sign of the Mount Meru and that is something we find that even though there are some of those structural similarities. Here the stupa structure we find and there are some of the celestial women, they are represented who sort of support the stupa structure, also they show the importance of this particular structure. And then we also have how this is situated on a higher platform.

Something that we have also considered in the Buddhist context that how if a structure is not really situated on the ground but on a higher platform that shows its religious as well as spiritual importance, so something that we also see it here as well. And then it is not only just that, but we also find the kind of railing which surrounds the stupa that also goes very similar to what we have seen in Bharhut or in Sanchi with the horizontal bars and those vertical columns, how they sort of intersect and make this really interesting railings.

Now another characteristic feature we also see here are those elaborate gateways that is also something we have seen in Sanchi. And here we see that how these elaborate gateways they also follow very similar kind of programmatic that we have seen there, but they also bear some of the very significant symbols from the Jaina context that make them distinguishable from the Buddhist structures.

So, these are some of the exchanges we can talk about that how certain kinds of architectural motifs were there and how those architectural motifs actually were not specific to one religion, but several religions. And stupa is one of the examples of that and the other one we have already spoken about and that is the one we see in this trefoil arch motif.

**(Refer Slide Time: 22:43)**



So, another Jaina site, a very important one in Southern India will be the site of Shravanabelagola and Shravanabelagola is a site which perhaps developed during the third to second century BC. As we know that this is also the site where the Mauryan emperor Chandragupta Maurya had relocated. So, Chandragupta Maurya was grandfather of emperor Ashoka.

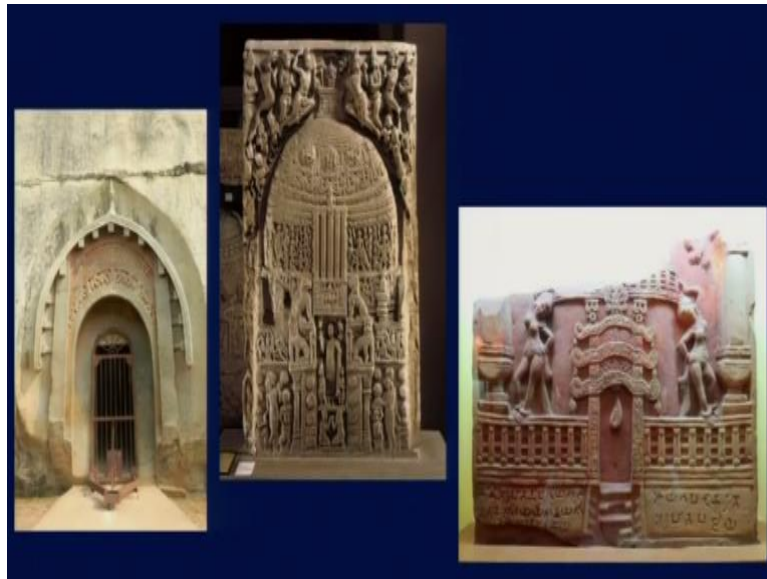
And after he retired from his responsibilities as a ruler, then he relocated to this southern state, the southern side of Shravanabelagola which is in southern Karnataka today. So, in this place what we find that there was already this hillside and perhaps there was already some significance of the Jains here. And with Chandragupta Maurya's arrival, the importance of this site grew farther and farther.

So here on the left side of the screen, we have images of this small rock shelters in the Chandragiri cave, and Chandragiri was this particular hill, was also named after Chandragupta Maurya. And then in the later times, we find that the Shravanabelagola this site that had developed into a much larger temple complex and there is a temple for people to gather there and pray, but also there are monasteries, there are places for educational activities and the other ritualistic purposes.

So, this is how we find that aside this of Jaina veneration that had developed during this third to second century BC and that continued to be in practice in the much later times as well. And later on, much later, we find that this mighty sculpture of Gommateshwara that was added to this complex of Shravanabelagola on this hillside. So that also added to the significance of this

site and also how the pilgrims' interaction with the site had developed further and further with time.

**(Refer Slide Time: 24:57)**



So, from there if I come back to some of the common characteristic features of what we have studied so far in this module, we can say that there have been some of the crucial features of this architecture starting with this trefoil arch motif, also with the stupa and how these particular forms in architecture they are not just significant for one particular community or in one context, but they had their significance in a much larger scale.

And that happened perhaps because of the power of this architectural structures as well as these forms, which transcended the religious boundaries and their importance was revered, their importance was acknowledged by the people, not only from one religious background, but from several religious backgrounds. And this is also to something that ran into the discussion of this module.

But perhaps it has not been explicitly addressed that how there have been an importance of the hillsides, site which is perhaps slightly apart from the regular ground level and how those hillsides or something that is like a plateau or something like a stupa which basically means like a piled up form that become very important in terms of understanding this religious belief and philosophy. So, how this particular form which had its relevance both in Jainism as well as in Buddhism.

We find that how this forms, they already had this particular form or this structure which perhaps made the practitioners both in these religions to think about their importance much more in a symbolic way or to take them in the realm of philosophy. So, that is how we find that even though that architecture and sculpture making is something that is happening with the material, with our hands, with our eyes, but they always have their relationship.

They have always the deeper meanings into how they relate to these religious ideologies, the philosophy and the underlying meanings. So that is how the symbols, the structures, the forms, the materials, and the community lives interwoven into the study of art and architecture in the Buddhist and Jain context. Thank you.