

Jaina Non-Tīrthas in Madhyadeśa I: Fragments of Digambara Temples and A New Vaiṣṇava Inscription in Tumain

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Many historical traces defy definition and delimitation. Areas featuring widely scattered largely unrecycled remains of one or more un-locatable fully disintegrated Jaina temples cannot even be described as ruins¹ or differentiated as distinct places from their surroundings.² Neither a site worthy of worship, a “tīrtha” in a wider sense,³ nor an archaeological site, nor a tourist place,⁴ or both,⁵ such zones can at best be described as “non-tīrthas.”

A distinction between *tīrtha* and *atīrtha* has been drawn by the Jaina tradition itself, though ostensibly only by the Śvetāmbaras. In the Āgamas, the Prakrit word *tīthha* (Skt. *tīrtha*), “passage, ford,” is used metaphorically, and equivocally, to designate different constitutive elements of the Jaina tradition: the Jina’s “teaching” of the right way, his “fourfold community,”⁶ and “pilgrimage sites” linked to the five principal life-events of the Jinas (*kalyāṇaka-kṣetra*), in particular liberation (*siddha-kṣetra*), or to miraculous events attributed to “astonishing” (*camatkārin*) Jina-images or extraordinary Jaina ascetics (*atiśaya-kṣetra*). The Jinas themselves, the *tīrtha-karas*, are considered to be both part of the *tīrtha*, in the sense of community, and *atīrtha*, “beyond the *tīrtha*.”⁷ As a technical term, *atīrtha* was specifically introduced to theorise the possibility of liberation “outside the period of teaching of a *tīrthakara*.” Because the canonical theory of *atīrtha-siddha* ratified the possibility of liberation for laity, women, and even non-believers,⁸ Digambara authors seem to have altogether ignored the opposition *tīrtha* / *atīrtha*.

Literally, the Prakrit word *atīthha* (Skt. *atīrtha*), “non-passage,” designates the absence (*a-bhāva*) of the right way or time. Logically, the concept points either to a state of affairs before or after the existence of the *tīrtha*, an amorphous immanence, or to a state of affairs judged to be outside the confines of the *tīrtha*, such as activities of “dissidents,” termed *anautthiyas* (Skt. *anya-tīrthika*). In both cases, the *atīrtha* comes in view only by comparison with the *tīrtha*. The state of non-existence indicated by the privative a-prefix is not meant to designate absolute nothingness, however conceived, but the relative absence of a known alternative. In Jaina universal history this is conveyed by the conception of alternating periods of decay and development.



Figure 1. Recycled fragments of a former Digambara temple in Māmōṃ.

In the following, the term “non-tīrtha” is used as an analytical category. In extension and one-sided accentuation of selected aspects of traditional Jaina semantics, it can function as an ideal-type, in the Weberian sense, to measure aspects and degrees of perceived “non-existence,” of “decay” or “renewal,” of a *tīrtha*. Schubring (1926: 910f., 1935/2000 § 12) noted that “the Jains can afford to be quite easy in stating the inevitable impendency of degeneration” since the expectation of times of decay is encoded in the *utsarpiṇī* / *avasarpiṇī*, *tīrtha* / *atīrtha*, and similar distinctions. However, the processes of expansion and contraction of the realm of the cultural unconscious have not yet been studied empirically, notwithstanding the ongoing recovery of historical evidence by modern archaeology and historical philology.

Non-tīrthas, here: *tīrthas* that have vanished or do not yet exist, can be subdivided into “nominal-,” “forgotten-,” “projected/potential-” and “virtual *tīrthas*.” In the present context, only “sacred sites” will be considered.

An example of the first variety are “Jaina temple and tourist places,” such as the Sahariyā Ādivāsin village of Māmōṃ (Bhāmauna), near Canderī,⁹ which is listed in contemporary Digambara pilgrimage guides as a Jaina “place” (*sthāna*),¹⁰ despite the fact that no active or ruined Jaina temple exists there anymore, only recycled building

9 24°48'10.2"N 77°58'17.1"E. The village was visited by Peter Flügel and Ingrid Schoon on 19 December 2019, under the guidance of Muzaffar Ansari of Canderī, locally known as Kallebhāi.

10 B. Jain 1997: 334, Nagaraj 2001: 49. In contrast, the Jains in neighbouring Canderī have disowned the place: “There is no Jain site in Māmōṃ.”

1 Cf. Hegewald 2012.

2 Cf. Bruhn 1958: 1.

3 Bruhn 1959a, 1959b; B. Jain 1976.

4 Nagaraj 2001.

5 Many sites of ruined Jaina temples, demarcated and administered by the Archaeological Survey of India, are now reactivated by members of the Jaina community with permission of local branches of the ASI.

6 *Viy* 10.8.4b-5 (792a-792b).

7 *Viy* 25.6.8 (895a).

8 See *Paṇṇavaṇā* 1.16-17 for the distinctions *tīthasiddha* / *atīthasiddha* and *tīthagarasiddha* / *atīthagarasiddha*, which “make it crystal-clear” that adepts of the particular path can attain “liberation even without listening to the preachings and teachings of a spiritual teacher [...] They are known by the name *atīrtha*” (Punjavijaya et al. 1971: 248). See also Schubring 1935/2000 § 81.

material and scattered rubble, products of natural decay, including displaced fragments of Jina statues, pedestals, friezes, coping stones, etc., spread all over the village and surroundings.¹¹ (Figure 1)

Tumain

“Forgotten *tīrthas*,” are sites that once featured Jaina shrines, but are not recognised as Jaina places anymore, because their either submerged or fully disintegrated remains are now invisible and disremembered. A good example are the Digambara Jaina temples of Tumain, a small village in the District of Ashoknagar in Madhya Pradesh, located south of the bridge of State Highway 9 over the river Orr (Urvaśī).¹² Tumain was built on the ruins of the ancient town of Tumbavana, going back to the 5th century BCE,¹³ located at a main junction of the ancient road network connecting Vidiśā with Mathurā and with Kauśāmbī, as stated in Buddhaghosa’s 5th-c. *Paramatthajotikā* (p. 194), which identifies the “forest” city of Vana-Savhaya, mentioned in the Pārāyana chapter of the *Suttanipāta* vv. 1011-1013, with Tumba-vana, describing it as a step between Vidiśā and Kauśāmbī on the route from Gonaddha-Gonarda to the Yamunā.¹⁴ Tumbavana is also listed in Varāhamihira’s 6th-c. *Brhatsamhitā* 14.15,¹⁵ and referred to in the Hindu Purāṇas, as well as in six c. 2nd to 3rd century votive inscriptions in Sanchi (Sāñcī), commemorating donations by citizens of “Tu(m)bavana.”¹⁶

Tumain, does not figure in any modern list of Jaina *tīrthas* or *sthānas*. Jaina literature, however, recognises Tumbavana as the birthplace of one of the “elders” (*thera*) of the Nirgrantha tradition, Ajja Vaira (Skt. Āryā Vajra) (c. 1st century CE), nowadays known as Vajrasvāmin, the last *daśapūrvadhara*, and academic teacher of Ajja Rakkhiya (Skt. Āryā Rakṣita), author of the canonised *Aṅugaddārāṁ*.¹⁷ Tumain is thus a potential Jaina *tīrtha*. Yet, not a single Jaina family resides in the village today, and there are no active or ruined shrines or archaeological sites identified as “Jaina” in the vicinity. But the village and its surroundings are complete with relics of a vanished Jaina presence, which has not received the attention it deserves.

The historical remains of the ancient city of Tumbavana, have been recorded in parts by M. B. Garde (1918-19, 1920, 1941-2), K. D. Bapai and S. K. Pandey (1974, 1985), and N. K. Jain and S. K. Dwivedi (2007). Most significant was Garde’s discovery, in February 1919, of a Gupta-period (435-6 CE) inscription mentioning Kumāragupta I and Ghaṭotkacchagupta, “found stuck up

in a wall of a small dilapidated mosque at Tumain,”¹⁸ now exhibited in the Archaeological Museum of Gwalior.¹⁹

The 1972-4 excavations at Tumain of the Department of Ancient Indian History, University of Sagar, under K.D. Bajpai and S.K. Pandey (1985: 9-11), focussed mainly on the local Buddhist *stūpas* and on the historical stratification of the site. But it also recorded relics of the Jaina tradition. The researchers found that most of the Jaina images discovered in and around Tumain had been produced between 600 and 1200 CE, under Gurjār-Pratihāra and Paramāra overlordship. They saw the “brisk rise” in the construction of temples and statues of high aesthetic quality belonging to “Vaishnava, Saiva, Sakta, Saura, Bauddha and Jaina faiths” in this period as testament for the continuing economic and cultural significance of Tumain in the post-Gupta era, and for its “tolerant atmosphere” (p. 4). According to Bruhn (1969: 223), who authored a series of short articles on “Jain Tīrthas in Madhyadesha” and a book on Deogarh, the outburst of artistic activity in Mālavā, particular in the 11th to 12th century, the “medieval period,” “is remarkable and cannot be explained by events in dynastic history,” while “one must be grateful for every photo of an early-medieval Jina in Central India that becomes available” (p. 222, cf. 11f., 52-4). In Tumain, several *tīrthanāka* images of the 9th to 10th century, Bruhn’s “early medieval period,” were located by Bajpai and Pandey.

The artefacts excavated by Bajpai and Pandey, “ranging from the 5th century BCE to the 18th century CE,”²⁰ are now kept in the Harisingh Gour Archaeological Museum of the University of Sagar. Amongst them are nine damaged Jina images and pedestals, mainly carved in ochre sandstone. Five of these objects have been placed in the 10th century, two in the 11th century, one in the 9th century, and the most important find, an impressive Pārśva image, in the 7th century. Two of the identifiable Jina images represent Pārśva and one Supārśva.²¹ Most non-Jaina sculptures have also been dated between the 8th and the 12th centuries, the majority in the 10th and 11th centuries, with the exception of a number of older sculptures going back to Gupta and pre-Gupta periods, in one case even to the 1st century CE.

Later, a defaced *sarvatobhadrikā* (*caturmukha* or *caumukhī*) Jina image was discovered by a local farmer. It was placed in the 5th century CE by Jain and Dwivedi (2007: 195, Appendix: xvi), because its iconographic features resembled the Kuṣāṇa Jaina art of Mathurā,²² whose style was continued in the Gupta period, and is widely in evidence in Tumain. This image, and the bulk of the archaeological relics discovered over the decades seem to remain in Tumain. A few of the ancient Jaina sculptures, including the *sarvatobhadrikā* image, are stored in the so-called “Tumen Museum,” a side-room of the impressive Vinḍhyavāsini Devī (“Mātā” or “Mām”)

11 According to an elderly local woman, “*nāgā bābās*,” Digambara *munis*, lived at the location. The main statue found in the village was relocated to the neighbouring Digambara *tīrtha* of Thūbon a while ago.

12 24°29'25.4"N 77°42'29.6"E.

13 Bajpai & Pandey 1985: 9f.

14 Garde 1941-42: 117, K.C. Jain 1997: 258.

15 Sircar 1967: 94 n.

16 Bühler 1894a: 99, 1894b: 384, 392.

17 For references in the canonical commentary and Āvaśyaka literature, see Mehta & Chandra 1972: 343. Tumbavana is also mentioned in PP 12.2-3. The sources record the following dates: *ācārya* V.N. 584 ~ 22 CE, death V.N. 584 ~ 58 CE.

18 Garde 1941-42: 115.

19 Garde 1920: 114f., CII III 1981: 76.

20 Bajpai & Renner 2012: 10.

21 Bajpai & Renner 2012, Cat. No. 9, 14, 15, 17, 22, 24, 226, 227, 232.

22 Bajpai 1948: 11.



Figure 2. Reconstructed “Baithadeva” Rṣabha image and fragments of smaller Digambara statues in Tumain.

temple, an “originally Vaishnavite” structure, dated “9th century” or later.²³ Yet, most of the historical relics of the once thriving but now extinct Jain tradition in Tumain, going back to the Gupta period, and not just of the Jain tradition, remain submerged underground or lie scattered throughout the village and its surroundings: “Numerous ruins of ancient temples are scattered all over the village” and “[a] large number of loose stone sculptures are scattered in the village here and there. Several are fixed on the walls of residential houses. Some beautiful carved ancient pillars have also been used in the modern houses” (Bajpai & Pandey 1985: 7f.). According to Rasavihārī Mīsrā, son of the Brahmin priest of the Vindhyavāsīnī temple, who disclosed some of the historical relics of the village and its surroundings: “If this village is excavated even today, many ancient remains will be found here.”

The Jina images excavated by the team of Bajpai and Pandey in 1972-74 pointed to the existence of at least one Jain temple. But the remnants of the temple or temples are nowhere described in the published report, and apparently could not be identified with certainty. It emerged, however, that the city of Tumbavana was once divided into clearly discernible quarters:

The entire area was divided in three complexes,

²³ ASI 1918-19: 21. Marshall regarded Garde’s dating of this “only old structure that has survived” as “a little early” (ib.).

viz. Buddhist, Jain and Brahmanical. This has been confirmed by the discovery of ancient relics (Bajpai & Pandey 1985: 5).

While the Buddhist area was located outside to the west of the main settlement in a self-enclosed space across the river, the Brahmanical quarter was situated in the centre of the town, and the Jain quarter apparently to the south, where carved pillars were found, not far from a large, half-buried Jina image, thus pointing to the possible site of a Jain temple:

Jaina complex: Baithadeva – on the southern end of the village stood a Jain temple. A few carved pillars are still standing there. A colossal image of Jain Tirthankara Mahavira is lying in the south of the village. The image is in the sitting posture (Padmasana) and is locally known as *Baithadeva*.²⁴ The pedestal of the image is buried in the ground. There is a possibility of the existence of a Jain establishment at Tumain, which is borne out by several other remains (Bajpai & Pandey 1985: 7).

A photo of a platform, which likely was the foundation of the cella of a temple, has been published by Jain

²⁴ The same expression is used by villagers for the Digambara Rṣabha relief sculpture at Bhiyāmdāmta, or Rakhetrā, which is also named Bhīmasena. See Jain 1976: 104f. Cf. JS 14: 24.



Figure 3. Displaced *amalaka* in Tumain.

and Dwivedi (2007: Appendix: p. xvi plate 25.5). The platform does not feature any pillars, but because the *sarvatobhadrikā* image was found nearby, the researchers concluded, like Bajpai and Pandey before them, who possibly had a different site in mind, that this structure may have been part of a Jaina temple:

An interesting thing is also noticed a few meters away from the findspot of the image. It is a platform like throne cut in rock mass (Pl. 25.5). Such type of thrones are most frequently [196] used for installation of the Jina images during Pañchakalyāṇaka ceremony. It is quite simple. In front of it, a big ground is there as generally required for such type of ceremony for assembling the people. These both together suggest that the place was used for the Pañchakalyāṇaka ceremony of the above image before its installation in any temple over there. However, none of the temple remains is found at the findspot and around, but their possibility can not be denied if some excavations are being carried out (Jain & Dwivedi 2007: 195f.).

Dwivedi (2007: 233) states categorically: “It [the *sarvatobhadrikā* image] reveals the existence of a Jain temple at Tumain in the Gupta period.” S.K. Bajpai and Z. Renner (2012: 40), the authors of the catalogue of the Harisingh Gour Archaeological Museum, go one step further, by speculating about the type of Jaina and non-Jaina temples that must have been constructed in Tumain in the period of the dated finds: “In Tumain, no temples have survived; remains, however, show the existence of temple structures, probably of the type with a covered circumambulatory.”

A village tour led by Rasavihārī Miśrā on 20 December 2019 revealed a number of previously unrecorded facts regarding the Jaina heritage of Tumain. First of all, it

emerged that the “colossal image” of “Baithadeva,” a Rṣabha statue, has meanwhile been fully excavated, and restored with prostheses made of concrete for broken parts (apparently by the Jain community of Ashoknagar). It is now on public display in front of a farmhouse, on a concrete pedestal, under a corrugated iron roof. (Figure 2) The numerous fragments of Jaina statues, scattered across the terrain, are clear evidence for the conjecture of previous researchers that major (Digambara) Jaina temple structures must have existed in Tumbavana. It also evident that many non-Jaina temples existed side by side, since in at least two locations, surviving cellas of former Śiva and Vaiṣṇava temples are being re-used respectively for Śiva and Nāga worship. Further dilapidated ecclesiastical structures are clearly visible, as well as huge decorated pillars and *amalakas*, or “sun-discs” in the shape of a myrobalan, that are still used in north India to crown the spire of a temple, strewn in no particular order across farmyards and pathways. (Figure 3)

One of the most interesting features of Tumain is the way in which in a former temple district farmhouses were constructed on top of ruined shrines whose remnants are now rendered invisible from the outside. Villagers showed the dark interiors of three of these submerged structures, now used as storage – or work-rooms, which were lit up with the help of mobile phones. (Figures 5 and 6) A section of one of these farmhouses may turn out to be one of the long-sought, now forgotten Jaina temples, which must have existed in Tumain. The key evidence, unmentioned in previous reports, are two rooms covered by a relatively new roof, forming the annexe of a one-storeyed farmhouse: a well-preserved entrance to the double-storeyed structure which itself is in a derelict state and presently inaccessible, and an antechamber, made of re-erected richly decorated pillars featuring Digambara Jaina motifs. One can imagine parts

of a *pradakṣiṇapatha*, a passage round a cella used for circumambulation, to be preserved as well, though this is hard to verify without further investigation of the overall architectural design of the ruin, concealed under a farmhouse relatively recently constructed.

The fragments of disintegrated temples, such as this forgotten Digambara Jain shrine, whether they are invisible ruins, unearthed by excavation, scattered across open terrain, held in private possession, or dispersed across museums throughout the globe,²⁵ can in principle be digitally recorded and used either for speculative 3D remodelling of “virtual *tīrthas*” or for projected physical reconstruction.

A 10th- or 11th-Century Vaiṣṇava Inscription

A final previously unreported historical fact can be located in the relative well-preserved remnants of a Vaiṣṇava temple, now partly used as a Nāga shrine, inside a farmhouse located opposite the Jain site. (Figure 4) The former Vaiṣṇava temple, whose “door-jamb of extremely fine workmanship” attracted the attention of Bajpai and Pandey (1985: 8), who also mention the adjacent double-

²⁵ Cf. Stevenson 2019.



Figure 4. Farmhouse with Nāga shrine built over ruined Vaiṣṇava temple in Tumain.



Figure 5. Suspected cella of a Jain temple converted into a farmhouse in Tumain..

storied “remains of an ancient Brahmanical monastery.” According to their account, the Kumāragupta inscription “was found in this place.” A second double-storied “*maṭha*” near-by, described in their report, may have been the above-mentioned suspected former Jain temple, which, however, is not identified as such: “A number of door-jamb and other relics assignable to the medieval period were collected there. They depict various secular and religious scenes on them” (ib.).

Not recorded in the reviewed literature is a copper-plate inscription, attached to an ornamented pillar in a pitch-dark subterranean room of the former Vaiṣṇava temple. (Figure 7) The contents were unknown to the inhabitants of the village, but of great concern. The inscription is duly decoded here, with the help of Dániel Balogh, J.C. Wright and James Mallinson, and turns out to be of considerable interest. It is written in Sanskrit in a Nāgarī (Siddhamātrkā) script. In appearance it resembles the 11th-century Paramāra copper-plate land-grant inscriptions found near Indore, which are displayed in its Central Museum. It could even be older,²⁶ and, in any case, seems to be one of the earliest known inscriptions

²⁶ For 9th- and 10th-century donative inscriptions in Central India from the Pratihāra period, recording the erection of temples dedicated to Murāri, see K.C. Jain 1997: 365, and for 12th century epigraphs p. 501.



Figure 6. Reconstructed composite pillar featuring Digambara Jain and secular motifs..



Figure 7. Copper-plate inscription praising the sponsor of a new Vaiṣṇava temple and monastery.

Diplomatic transcription:¹

- 1 yamaniyamasamādhidhyānatatvādidakṣair avi(c)[*ali]
- 2 tamanobhir yogibhir mṛgyate yaḥ | nikhilaniviḍanā
- 3 ḍīcakramadhyaikavṛttis sa jayati jagadīśaś śāntamūrtti
- 4 r murāriḥ || satprāgvāṭakuṭumvake (h)aragalo² bhūd bhillamā
- 5 lānvayo deddākhyas tanayas tataḥ samabhavat tasmād abhūd īśva
- 6 raḥ | tasyaitasya maṭhaṃ hareḥ śikharavad dhāmaitad uṣṇatviṣaḥ kī
- 7 rttir bhadrapakramair anugato bhūyāt trayīva sthirā ||

Edited text:³

yama-niyama-samādhī---dhyāna-tatvādi-dakṣair
 avi(c)[*ali]ta-manobhir⁴ yogibhir mṛgyate yaḥ |
 nikhila-nibiḍa-nāḍī⁵ ---cakra-madhyaikavṛttis
 sa jayati jagadīśaś śānta-mūrttir Murāriḥ ||

sat-Prāgvāṭa-kuṭumbake (H)aragalo `bhūd Bhillamālānvayo
 Deddākhyas tanayas tataḥ samabhavat tasmād abhūd Īśvaraḥ |
 tasyaitat sa-maṭhaṃ Hareḥ śikharavad dhāmaitad-uṣṇa-tviṣaḥ
 kīrttir bhadra-pada-kramair anugatā bhūyāt trayīva sthirā ||

Translation:⁶

Hail to Murāri in his tranquil aspect, the lord of the world, who alone functions throughout the entire conglomeration of channels (*nāḍī*), [and] who is sought by adepts (*yogin*) of focussed mind, accomplished in self-control (*yama*), restraint (*niyama*), absorption (*samādhī*), meditation (*dhyāna*), the fundamental truths (*tattva*), etc. By Īśvara, son of Dedda, son of Haragala in the lineage of Bhillamāla in the fine Prāgvāṭa community this abode (*dhāman*) to the blazing-rayed Hari [was constructed] with a spire (*śikhara*) and a residence (*maṭha*). May [Īśvara’s] renown, couched in auspicious wording, be as permanent as the triple Veda.⁷

1 D. Balogh.

2 “It may be scribal error for Haragaṇa.” (D. Balogh, E-Mail 28.1.2020).

3 J.C. Wright, J. Mallinson.

4 “There is a parallel in the *Mālatīmādhava* 5.1 [of Bhavabhūti 8th c.] which is cited in the contemporaneous *Kāvyaṭīkā* [...]: [...] *a-vicalita-manobhiḥ sādhakaiḥ mṛgyamāṇaḥ saḥ jayati pariṇaddhaḥ śaktibhiḥ Śakti-nāthaḥ* [...]” (J. Mallinson, E-Mail 21.2.2020).

5 “Here *nibiḍa* is a synonym of *nikhila*: both *khila* and *biḍa* (from *bila*) mean ‘gap’, and so the two words mean ‘without gaps,’ i.e. ‘complete’ or ‘all’. The compound means ‘who only occurs throughout all the channels.’ Here *cakra* means the totality of *nāḍīs* rather than a particular locus. [...] [I]t is that form (*sa*) of Kṛṣṇa which is sought by yogis” (J. Mallinson, E-Mail 16.2.2020).

6 J.C. Wright, D. Balogh, J. Mallinson, redactor P. Flügel.

7 “I [...] think there’s a double entendre in *pada-krama*, which allude to the *padapāṭha* and *kramapāṭha* of the Veda, which in fact serve to preserve the Veda for eternity” (D. Balogh, E-Mail 17.2.2020).

pertaining to *yoga*.²⁷ The text records the erection of a temple for Viṣṇu-Kṛṣṇa, complete with a spire and a residence for Vaiṣṇava ascetics or young brahmins, by a local member of the Prāgvāta (Poravāla) caste.²⁸ Only wealthy patrons could afford constructing a spire. The donor's family traced its origins back to southern Rajasthan, to the city of Bhīllamāla (Śrīmāla or Bhīnmāl), as reflected in the *gotra* name. The inscription contains references to Vaiṣṇava *yogins* and *yoga* terminology. Besides the mention of *nāḍīs* and *cakras*, pervaded by the tranquil form of Īśvara, the conceptual chain *yama-niyama-samādhi-dhyāna-tattva* is remarkable. It seems to vary four of the “eight limbs” (*aṣṭāṅga*) of Patañjali's *Yogasūtra* 2.29, in outlining a path of progressively more refined external and internal yogic practices, culminating in the realization of the fundamental truth (*tattva*) of Sāṃkhya philosophy. In this respect, it can be compared with the Jaina technique of meditative “internalization of important dogmatic subjects,”²⁹ as taught, for instance, in Umāsvāti's 4th c. *Tattvārthasūtra*.

Bajpai and Pandey (1985) must have taken note of this previously unpublished inscription, because in their report on the Tumain excavations of 1972-4 they infused a summary of the contents of the Kumāragupta inscription (435-6 CE) with information which only the 10th to 11th century Murāri inscription offers. The sponsorship (mentioned in line six of the Kumāragupta inscription) of a temple to god (*deva*), interpreted as Pinākin (Rudra-Śiva) by M.B. Garde, is presented as “construction of a magnificent temple of lord Viṣṇu,” with reference to the first part of the unmentioned Murāri inscription, which is identified with the Kumāragupta inscription, and hence associated with the Gupta period:

In the beginning of the inscription Vishnu is mentioned by the name of Murari, which is a clear identification of the temple being that of Vishnu. It is interesting to note that the fragments of several Gupta sculptures and a tastefully ornamented doorway of the 5th century A.D. are still preserved at the main Gupta site at Tumain (ib., p. 3).

This mix-up might explain why this important inscription has remained unpublished to date.

All photos by Peter Flügel, 19-20.12.2019.

References

27 This conjecture is based on a cursory survey of the scarce literature on the archaeology of *yoga*, particularly the post 12th c. epigraphic evidence cited by White 1996: 94 and Sarde 2019: 20f., 75, 240-45. K.C. Jain 1997: 381 refers to the famous inscription of Harirājapāladeva in Thūban, dated 998-999 CE, further down the Urvaśī river, which mentions the Brahmin Sūrasvāmin, who possessed knowledge of “all branches of Yoga,” which may be read as a contemporary variant of a regional epigraphic *yoga* theme.

28 The members of the Prāgvāta (Porvāla) caste tend to be Jainas or Vaiṣṇavas.

29 Bruhn 1997/8, Āvaśyaka V.

ASI = *Archaeological Survey of India. Annual Report 1918-19*. Vol. I. By John Hubert Marshall. Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing, 1921.

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