The Jain sarasvati is known to have secured a supreme position in Jain Iconography. She appears to have been portrayed more prominently in Jainism than in Buddhism. It is now necessary to disclose a brief history of her origin and nature. It is however, emphasised that the followers who came to show their reverential frame of mind towards the Tirthankaras appears to be conceived as the Jains. The Tirthankaras are, by all means, renowned as the great religious teachers. In view of them the speeches which came out from the supreme power are to be considered as Sruta. In Jainism Sruta is of course, indifferent with the goddess of learning and speech. The Tirthankaras are known to have considered the goddess of learning and speech as the Srutadevi. However, the fact that Srutadevi was ulogised by the Tirthankaras is always found in some Jain texts which are said to have been composed before the advent of Srimat Sankaracharya. In the Jnata Dharmasutra Sarasvati appears to be ulogised with vardhana and others.

In Jainism the goddess who is endowed with all sorts of knowledge in the entire universe, is by all means, conceived by the Tirthankaras as Srutadevi. In some of the Jain texts Mahavira Vardhamana appears to be represented as the last Tirthankaras (or the great religious teacher) who is known to have secured a significant place in Jainism. He preached his valuable religious faiths for people who are violently

1. The Jnata Dharmasutra contains the following stanza:

"namah Sri Vardhamanaya Sriparsvaprabhabe namah
namah SriatSarasvatyai Satiaaysbho namo namah."
affected with ignorance, jealousy, misery and unhappiness. He is said to have given to the people the instructions for the emancipation of mankind showing a great deal of his compassions to them. Some of his followers are known to have arranged the religious faiths of Mahāvīra Vardhaman and divided them into several chapters. In this way the followers of Mahāvīra had made some efforts for preaching his religious faiths before 2455 varsha.

A. GENERAL FEATURES OF THE JAINA SARASVATI

As regards the origin and nature of the Jain goddess of learning and speech the Jain texts appear to contain an interesting episode in which there is a reference to the Jambudvīpa. The mountain which is called Himavān (or the Himalayan Mountain) is said to have been situated on the one end of this Jambudvīpa. On this great mountain there are at least seven big lakes. However, rivers are described in the episodes of the Jain texts as flowing rapidly with all sustaining waters and flowing through the lakes up to the ocean distributing riches to the vast world. In the lakes the lotus plants are usually to create lotus flowers. Each section of the lotus-flower is described as an abode of the goddess. According to the Jain tradition the goddess is by all means, known under the name as Śasanadevi. In the Jain texts, while describing the iconographical features of the goddess, there are at least 24 names.
of such goddesses. They are also said to have been regarded by the Jains
as devoted adherents of the 24- Tirthankaras or Jinas, beginning with Adīnātha
or Rashabhanatha and ending with the last of the order, the historical
Mahāvīra. Each of these Jinas is characterised by his respective cognisance.
They have also their individual upasakas along with their Sasanadevis.¹

But, interestingly enough, these Sasanadevis are sometimes
differently named by the followers of the two principal Jain sects - the
Svetāmbaras and the Digambaras. In opinion of the Svetāmbara sects
Sasanadevis of their twenty four Tirthankaras or Jinas are generally known
under the names as Chakresvari, Ajita, Duritari, Kāli, Mahakali, Akupā,
Santa, Jvala, Sutaraka, Asoka, Sivatga, Prayara, Vijaya, Ankusā, Pannagā,
Gaurī, Nirvāna, Achūtā, Dhāranī, Vairātya, Gandhari, Ambā, Padmavati
and sidha².

Similarly, in view of the later sect the names of their Sasanadevis
are known as Chakresvari, Rohini, Prajnātī, VajrasiKhala, Purushadatta,
Monobega, Kāli, Mahakali, Jvalamalini, Manavi, Gauri, Gandhari, Vairātya,
Anantamalī, Manasi, Malamanasi, Vijaya of Jayā, Ajita, Aparajita, Bahurupinī,
Chamuni, Kushmāndeni, Padmavati and Sidhayeni or Sidhayika³. These deities
are

1. See, The Age of Imperial Unity, ed. by Dr. R. C. Majumdar
   and A. D. Pusalkar, pp. 424 ff.
2. A. C. Vidyabhusan, Sarasvati (Bengali), p. 50.
3. Ibid., p. 106.
Sometimes described in the Jain texts as the attendant Yakshinis. However, the above two lists of the names, which is based on such text as Abhidhana Chintāmanī, show that there are repetitions in the nomenclature of their individual duties. Even, the deities in the first list of their names have some iconic features similar and dissimilar to those of the second list of names. The Abhidhana Chintāmanī also shows in the classification of the Jain duties that many of them were adaptations from the Brahmanic pantheon.

Whatever might have been the fact, some of the Śāsanadevis are described by the Jain texts as Vidyādevis. They are, according to the Jain text like Abhidhāna - Chintāmanī, sixteen in number, at whose head is Sarasvati, the one Śruti-devi, the goddess of learning per excellence. They are, however, known by such names as Rūchini, Prajñāpīti, Vijjraśākha, Kulisānkusa, Chakresvari, Purushadatta, Kāli, Mahakāli, Gaurī, Gandhārī, Sarvastramahājvalā, Mangyī, Vairātī, Āchhyupta, Manasi, Mahāmanasi etc.

Curiously enough, though we find these names of sixteen Vidyādevis in the nomenclature of the 24 Śāsanadevis, but the iconography of the two orders is different. As Śrutadevī, Sarasvāti also presides over the Śruti or the preaching of the Tīrthankaras and Kevalins, and is one of the most important objects of worship among the Jainst from a very early period.

1. B. C. Bhattacharya, Jaina Iconography, pp. 22 ff.
On the other hand, B.C. Bhattacharyya provides us a list of the sixteen Vidyadevis in his famous work untitled 'Jaina Iconography'. These sixteen Vidyadevis are: Rohini, Prajnapati, Vajraskhala, Vajran-kusa, Apratikara or Jambunanda, Purushadatta, Kali, Mahakali, Gauri, Gandhari, Acyupta, Manasi and Mahamanasi. However, this list does not conform as a whole to the list of the sixteen Vidyadevis offered by A.C. Vidyabhushan. The names like Vajrankusa and Apratikara or Jambunanda replaced by Kulikanus or Manobega and Cakresvari in the list of A.C. Vidyabhushan.

Whatever the case might have been, we find different of view regarding the connection between the goddess Sarasvati and the sixteen Vidyadevis. B.C. Bhattacharyya is however, inclined to consider Sarasvati as the head of a collective body of sixteen Vidyadevis. In his view her worship is prior to that of other subordinate deities. On the other hand, U.P. Shah does not like to connect the conception of Vidyadevis with that of Sarasvati. In his opinion Sarasvati, the goddess of learning and eloquence, has no connection with the sixteen Vidyadevis of the Jaina pantheon. He also suggests that B.C. Bhattacharyya's recognition of Sarasvati as the head of a collective body of sixteen Vidyadevis is not supported by any Jaina tradition so far known.

Whatever the case might have been, the Jain Sarasvati attains very great importance in iconography. It is now necessary to find out the iconographical features of the deity on the basis of

1. B.C. Bhattacharyya, Jaina Iconography, p. 163.
different Jain literary texts and archaeological finds. It is however, emphasised that sarasvati appears to be regarded as the superintending deity of knowledge and learning. In the Abhidhana-Cintamani\textsuperscript{1} she is known under different names as śrutadevata, Sārada, Bhārati, Bhāṣa, Vāc, Vacevata, Vāgīśvarī, Vāgyādini, Vāni, and Brāhmī. This important deity has been often represented in some Jaina texts like the Bhāgavati Sutra, the Mahānisītha sutra\textsuperscript{3}, the pāksika Sutra\textsuperscript{4}, the pāncāsāka\textsuperscript{5} and the samsāradāvānala stotra\textsuperscript{6} of Hari Bhadra Suri\textsuperscript{6}, and the sarasvati kalpa of Bappabhati Suri\textsuperscript{7}. The information collected from these literary evidences are, of course, found to be corroborated from the iconographical view points by the archaeological findings of various sarasvati images of the Jainas, most of which are installed in different temples all over India. It is evident that the Jaina texts, while describing her iconographical features, offer as a clear picture of her colours, facts hands with their emblems as well as their vahanas (vehicles) as is generally found in the post vedic literature of many of the Brāhmaical gods and goddesses. She is usually found as either sitting or standing in different posters.

4. Pāksika Sutra (Debachand Lalbhai pustakadhara Series)
5. Pāncāsāka, Ch. 19, Verses 24-25.
So far as the colour is concerned, some Jain texts refer to Sarasvati in Jainism as of white colour. In the Kalyāṇakāṇḍa Stutī the Dhyāna of Vagīśvarī describes her to have a purely white complexion, which is like to Kūpī flower, the moon, milk and snow. According to the Śrīsarāvati-Kalpa the goddess of learning and wisdom is also white in colour. It is not only her complexion that is white, but at the same time, she appears to be described in this literary work to have used white garments. The Vidyāvādana - Jinendra-Kalpa, while describing the iconic features of sarasvati under a new name, Brahmī, refers to her as of white in colour. In the same literary text sarasvati, under the name, Bhāsa, is described as white in complexion. The Nirvānākalikā also refers to sarasvati whose colour is white. With this elaborate information on Sarasvati in relation to her complexion we may arrive at the conclusion that like Brahmic sarasvati, the goddess of learning and eloquence in Jainism seems to be cut and cut of white colour.

While describing the face of the Jaina sarasvati, it is emphasized that though sarasvati in Jainism may have one face, she is also found as having three faces. In the Jinendra Kalyāṇābhyudaya she has been described to have three faces. In this form, sarasvati has been named 'Brahmi'.

1. Śrī Kalyāṇa Kūnda - stutī, Verse 4.
4. Ibid, folio 98.
So far as the hands of sarasvati in Jainism is concerned, they apparently vary to great extent. The Jainas are known to have propounded different dhyanas of sarasvati, which refers to two-armed, found-armed and multi-armed sarasvati. It is however, evident that in the Kalyana kanda stuti, the dhyana of vāgīśvarī refers to two-armed sarasvati holding the book (pustaka) and the lotus (padma). In the caturvīṃśatika, Bappabhatti suri also mentions two-armed sarasvati holding manuscript and lotus in her hands. The pāncakalpa-bhāṣya similarly describes sarasvati holding the book (pustaka) in her left hand. Even, the two-armed sarasvati in Jainism appears to be represented in a few verses of the Bhagavati Sutra. The iconic feature of the goddess of learning is also found in the sarada-stavastaka which describes two-armed sarasvati holding lyre (vīṇā) and the book (pustaka) in her hands. In Śrī sarasvati-stotra the two-armed goddess appears to be represented playing on her lyre (vīṇā) with both the hands. Similarly, the two-armed goddess is to be exhibited in the sarasvatayantra-puja. In this renowned text the goddess under a significant name, Mayuravahini, appears to be represented having the book (pustaka) and rosary (aksamālā).

2. Caturvīṃśatikā of Bappabhatti Surī, Verse 76.
3. Pāncakalpa - Bhāṣya, Kalpa V.
5. Śrī Sarada stavastaka, Verse 6.
6. Śrī sarasvati - stotra, Verse 2.
7. Sarasvatayantra - Puja, B.C.R.I., Ms. No. 192 of 1872-73.
Now, it is to be noted that though the Jaina goddess Sarasvatī is mostly alluded to as having two hands, the Jaina texts, while describing her iconic features, states that she should be made as having four hands. However, the Sīrī Sarasvatī Kalpa\(^1\) prescribes that the image of goddess should be made as having the lyre (Vīṇā), the book (Pustaka), the rosary of pearls (Aksamalā) and the white lotus (Śvetapadma). Sappabhatti Suri also refers to another four armed Sarasvatī under the name of Vadevi. In this figure, the goddess is shown carrying a book and a lotus in her two hands, while her other two hands are held in abhaya and varada-posts.\(^2\)

Similarly in the AcaradInakara\(^3\) she appears to be represented holding the white-lotus and the lyre (Vīṇā) in her two left hands, and the book and the rosary of pearls in her two right hands. This iconographical description of Sarasvatī is not only found in the Saradastava of Jinaprabha Suri\(^4\), but also another hymn given in the Surimantra-arādhanāvidhi of the tradition of Jinaprabha Suri gives the same form of Sarasvatī\(^5\). Bhalendra Suri, the author of the Vasantavilāsa mahākavya also describes Sarada holding the lotus (Padma), lyre (Vīṇā), rosary (Aksamalā) and book (Pustaka).\(^6\)

1. Bhairava - Padmavatī - Kalpa, Appendix 12, Verso 3, 1070
2. Ibid., verse 11, p. 70.
The _Nirvāṇakalikā_1, while describing the iconic features of śrutadevata, states that she should be made as having four hands. She is however, mentioned in this text as usually having a book and a rosary in her two left hands and the lotus and the varāda attitude in her two right hands. According to the _Jinasamhitā_ of Ekasandhi2 sarasvati under the name of Vānī should be represented as having the Jñāna-mudrā, the rosary, the abhaya and the book in her hands. The _vidyānusāsana_3, the _sarasvati-kalpa_ of Arhaddaśa4 and the _sarasvati-kalpa_5 of Mallisena also describe the same iconic features of sarasvati. In the _pathitagīdaḍhasaṅgatā_6 she is described to have four hands with the books, the lotus, the Jñāna-mudrā and the varāda in her hands. The _vidyānusāsana_7, _vādānaginendra-Kalyāṇabhuyudaya_7, while prescribing certain rules for making the images of sarasvati, states that sarasvati, under the novel name, Brahmi, should be made as having the vyākhyānamudrā, the rosary, the abhaya and the fruit in her four hands. One more form is given by the same text in which sarasvati, under the name Bhāṣā, is described as holding the pāśa.

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1. _Nirvāṇakalikā_, p. 37.
2. _Jinasamhitā_, Ch. 39, verse 37-38.
3. _Vidyānusāsana_, section on vāgīṣṭhāna.
4. Ibid., section on vāgīṣṭhāna.
5. _Bhairavapadmavati-Kalpa_, Appendix 11, Verses 2 and 8.
6. Appendix 14, verse 7, p-90.
the lotus, the book and the abhayamudra in her four hands. In the Sarada-stotra of Malayakirti Sarasvati has been depicted to have four hands. This goddess is however, shown carrying a rosary, book and lotus in her upper and lower hands, while the right lower hand of the goddess is held in varada-poses. Besides, the Jaina Sarasvati is also found in the Nirvana-Kalika which describes her as having the book, rosary, lotus, varda and various other symbols in her numerous hands.

It is however, emphasised that the Jaina Sarasvati who approximates very closely to the Brahmanical Sarasvati, is by all means, endowed with two, four and numerous arms, holding lotus, book, rosary, water-vessel and showing the Varadamudra.

As regards the vehicle of the Jaina Sarasvati we have to note that the Svetambaras generally give her swan as the vehicle while the Digambaras appear to adopt a peacock as the vehicle of the goddess Sarasvati. This fact can, of course, be established from the literary references. In the

1. Jinendra - Kalyanabhyudaya, folio 98.
Sarada-stavastaka\(^1\) Munisundara Suri refers to a swan as the vehicle of Sarasvati. The Sri Sarasvati-stotra\(^2\) also mentions the swan as vehicle which appears to be enchanted with the divine music. In the Acaradinasakara\(^3\) Sarasvati is described as riding a swan. The Nirvana-kalika\(^4\), while describing the iconic features of Srutadevatā, states that she should be represented as seated on a swan. The Paññitasiddhasarasvata\(^5\), attributed to a certain Jaina (śadhvi) called Śivāryā also prescribes the swan as the vehicle of the Jaina goddess Sarasvati. The vehicle also finds mention in the Vidyānūḍāṅga-jinendra Kalyānabhyudaya\(^6\).

Besides the swan, the peacock has also been alluded to as the vehicle of the Jaina Sarasvati. The Sarasvati-yantra-pūja\(^7\) however, refers to Sarasvati under a novel name, Mayūravahī and describes as riding on a pasaca peacock. The Digambara text Pratīṣṭhāsaroddhāra\(^8\) refers to her as riding on a peacock.

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1. Śrisārada-stavastaka, verse 6.
2. Śrisarasvati-stotra, verse 2.
4. Nirvānākalika, p. 37
5. Pratīṣṭhā-saroddhāra, Adhyaya VI, p. 132.
6. Vidyānūḍāṅga-jinendra Kalyānabhyudaya, folio 98.
7. Sarasvata-yantra-pūja, B.C.R.I., Ms. No. 192 of 1972-73
Similarly, the *Vidyanusāsana*¹, the *Sarasvatī-kalpa* of Arhaddasa² and *Sarasvatī-Kalpa* of Mallisena³ informs that the Jaina goddess *sarasvatī* rides on a peacock. Even, the *Vidyanuvadānga - jinendra - Kalyānabhyudaya*⁴ describes *sarasvatī* under a novel name, *Brahmi*, as riding on a peacock.

Whatever may be the fact, the iconic features of the Jaina *sarasvatī* is not only mentioned in different Jaina iconographical texts, but also the goddess appears to be represented in the Jaina art and sculptures. With elaborate information on *sarasvatī* in relation to her complexion, number of hands with various attributes as well as her vehicles, obtained from the ancient and medieval Jaina texts, we may now proceed to appraise her iconographical features on the basis of actual images discovered in various parts of the country.

By a comprehensive study of her iconographic details, it is however, obvious that the Jaina *sarasvatī* is in the whole, found as either standing or sitting posture in sculptural representations.

B. THE IMAGE OF SITTING *SARASVATĪ*

In Jaina sculptures and paintings *sarasvatī* is generally known to have been represented as either sitting on lotus-seal or seated on different vehicles (Vahanas) in accordance with the prescriptions of various iconographical texts. But, curiously enough, the Jaina goddess *sarasvatī* is not only

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1. *Vidyanusāsana*, *Section on Vāgīśādhana*.
2. *Ibid.*, *Section on Vāgīśādhana*
found as sitting in padmasana (lotus-posture) on lotus-seat, but also the goddess is to be represented as sitting in lalitasana. Sometimes the goddess is to be exhibited as sitting in bhadrāsana. Besides, there are some images of Jaina sarasvati seated on her vehicle like swan.

(1) The Image of the Jaina Sarasvati as seated in lotus-posture (padmāsana).

Though the Jaina sarasvati appears to be represented as sitting on lotus-posture, the earliest known representation of the Jaina sarasvati which was discovered from kankalitala, near Mathura, is shown squatting on a plain rectangular pedestal and holding a manuscript in her left hand. The upper portion of the image is lost together with the right hand which was raised and probably should vyākhanamudrā or a pen. The figure, clothed in stiffly executed drapery, has two attendants, one standing on each side, with hairs dressed in rolls. The attendant on the right wears a tunic and holds a jar, whereas his counterpart on the left shows clasped hands in adoration. The pitcher in the hands of the attendant on the right probably symbolises the respectacle of knowledge of which she is the presiding duty. The figure, found from a Jaina site, bears inscriptive evidence to show it conclusively as a Jaina version of the goddess sarasvati. The Brahm inscription of the kushāna period on the pedestal records the installation of the image by a Jaina devotee, Smith Goya, son of sīha, at the

1. N.K. Bhattacharji, Iconography of the Buddhist and Brahmānical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum, p. 187, Fig. LXII, b.
instance of the preacher Aryadeva in the year 54 (or 44 as suggested by Smith), i.e. 132 or 122 A.D. This image of the goddess which is now preserved in the Lucknow Museum probably belonged to the Svetāmbara sect.

While describing the iconic features of the Jaina Sarasvatī seated on lotus-seat, it is emphasised that the magnificent ceiling of the Vimala Vasahi temple at Dilwara, near Mount Abu, shows in a medallion a four-armed marble image of Sarasvatī flanked by the Sutrādhāra Loyana and the Sutrādhāra Kela, with hands held in aboration. This goddess is shown as seated in padmāsana, with her body quite erect, shown rosary (aksamala), lotus (padma), lyre (vīna) and book (pustaka) as per attributes. The goddess is elegantly ornamented. A small swan as the vehicle is found in the pedestal.

(ii) The Image of the Jaina Sarasvatī seated on Lalitāsana.

The image of the Jaina Sarasvatī is not only shown as seated in padmāsana, but also the goddess sometimes appear to be represented as seated on lalitāsana. In this context we are attempted to describe to a metal image of the goddess Sarasvatī which comes from Murtijapur. This image sets on a lotus in lalitāsana. The presence of a Jina figure above her head clearly shows that the daity belongs to the Jaina pantheon. The goddess bears the book in her left hand, while the right hand is engaged in carrying a small stick or pen. Her hair addressed in a peculiar fashion. The image appears to belong to the Digambara sect. This image is now preserved in the Central Museum, Nagpur.

1. Kramarisch, S., Art of India.; cf. also Kanailal Bhattacharya, Sarasvatī, p. 115.
In Indian Museum we find a beautiful image of the Jaina Sarasvati which has been discovered from a temple of Khajuraho. This four armed image of the 10th Century A.D. site in Lalitasana holding lyre (vina) by her first and fourth hands and a manuscript and a lotus in her second and third hands, respectively. Like Brahmanic and Buddhistic Sarasvati she is bejewelled with various ornaments like ear rings, pearl necklace and bangles in her hands.

Moreover, we have to describe here another four-armed image of Sarasvati which may be assigned to the eleventh century A.D. This image of the goddess, though mutilated, also sits in Lalitasana. In her two front hands she holds a lyre (vina), while her remaining two hands are broken. She is bedecked with various ornaments like double-necklace, armlets, bracelets and decorated girdles. But unfortunately, the crown on the head, the pedestal on which the image is placed and the swan on which the goddess sits, are severely mutilated.

In the Parśvanātha temple at Khajuraho we also find six-armed Sarasvati image which sits in Lalitasana. She is similarly show

1. Kanailal Bhattacharyya, Sarasvati (Calcutta, 1983) p. 119, pl. XXXVIII.
2. Ibid. p. 119.
3. Ibid. p. 121.
carrying a lyre (viṣṇa) in one pair of hands and varada, blue lotus, book and Kamandalu in her remaining four hands.

The Lunavashi temple at Mount Abu also preserves the similar specimen of this variety. This image of sarasvati has all the attributes mutilated excepting the lotus in the right upper hand which is partly preserved. Another hand of the image probably showed varada-mudrā or the rosary held in an open palm. She is also flanked by a female attendant on each side. In this image of sarasvati we find the depiction of a small swan as her vehicle.

In the Lunavashi temple another image of the Jaina sarasvati which is carved on a pillar sits on lalitāsana. The right and the left upper hands of the daily hold a lotus each and the two middle ones show the jhāna-mudrā. The right lower hand, showing the abhaya-mudrā, carries a rosary as well, while the left lower a kamandalu. This goddess has a swan as her vehicle.

(iii) The Image of the Jaina Sarasvati
as seated in Bhadrāsana.

In Jaina sculptures there are some images of the Jaina sarasvati which are seated in bhadrāsana. On the pillar in the temple built by Tejopala at Mount Abu, we find a figure of

2. 122.
Sarasvati seated in Bhadrasana and showing the same attributes with the differences that the book in the left lower is replaced by a water-vessel (Kamandalu).¹

Similarly, the magnificent ceiling of the Vimala Vasahi temple, was Mount Abu, also shows a damaged image of the Jaina Sarasvati which sits in bhadrasana². She is found as having sixteen arms. In her three, left hand she holds lotus (padma), book (pustaka), and water-vessel (Kamandalu), while in the other hands, along with the ayudhas they held, are mutilated beyond recognition. She is also attended by a dancing male figure on each side. Moreover, there is a small figure of a swan on the pedestal. We also find a small seated figure of the Tirthankaras above the crown of the duty.

(iv) The Image of the Jaina Sarasvati as seated on Swan.

In the Jaina sculptural representations there are some images of the Jaina Sarasvati seated on her vehicle (vahana) like swan. In a temple at Mehsana in the Baroda district there is an interesting image of the goddess Sarasvati, which rides on a swan carrying a string of pearls in its beak³.

The caumukha temple at Ranakpur also preserves the four-armed image of Jaina Sarasvati⁴. She is shown as riding on a swan In her two upper hands she holds a lure (vipa) and book (pustaka), while she bears a rosary (aksamala) and a water-vessel (Kamandalu) in her two lower hands.

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2. Ibid., p. 122.
3. Ibid., pp. 117-118.
4. Ibid., p. 118.
Besides the swan, the peacock has also been allotted to as the vehicle of the Jaina Sarasvati. It is no wonder that though the goddess of learning in Jainism is said to have the peacock as her vehicle. This vehicle hardly finds mention in Jainism sculptural representations:

THE IMAGE OF STANDING SARASVATI

The Jaina iconographical texts, while describing the iconographic features of the Jaina Sarasvati, state that she should be made as standing along with or without her attendants. It is however, emphasised that there are some images of the Jaina Sarasvati as standing on lotus-seat, while other images of the goddess are found as standing on pedestal. She is also depicted as either standing in Tribhanga or Abhanga pose.

(i) The Image of standing Sarasvati on the lotus-seat.

Like Brahminic and Buddhistic Sarasvati the goddess of learning and eloquence in Jainism appears to be depicted as standing on lotus-seat. However, on the West wall of the Taranga temple we find an excellent sculpture of Sarasvati. She stands on a full-blown lotus with her right foot raised up in dancing attitude. She has eight arms.

1. Kanailal Bhattacharyya, Sarasvati
   (Calcutta, 1933), p. 122.
In her right hands she holds the book, the rosary and the varada, while she bears the lotus, the book and the noose (pasa) in her left hands. The remaining two attributes are mutilated. Her association with a swan as her vehicle confirms the identification of Sarasvati.

(ii) The Image of the Jaina Sarasvati standing on pedestal.

In Jaina sculptural representation there are some images of Sarasvati which are shown as standing on the pedestal. Dr. Kanailal Bhattacharyya refers to such an image of the Jaina Sarasvati, "The halo is", as remarked by Dr. Bhattacharyya, "slightly oblong and plain except for the familiar beaded border. She carries in her right hand a lotus with a long stalk that rests on the pedestal. A scarf is worn around her shoulders, the ends of which fall to the pedestal. The scarf shows a bead design. A scarf is worn around her shoulders, the ends of which fall to the pedestal. The scarfs shows a bead design followed at both the ends by a geometrical motif. The lower garment of the goddess also shows a pattern of triangles formed by slanting lines.

between the board horizontal bands. The ornaments include an exavali with a pendant and Uraga-sutra. The crown is of the trikuta type. The pair of the goddess is tied in a large chignon which is visible behind the crown. In his description we also find that the lower garment is worn in the vikaschhara fashion, a characteristic of the images of this hoard. The modelling of the torse is somewhat stunted with full breasts, a stump-like waist and a gently swelling abdomen. The slight outward thrust of the right hip and the corresponding bend of the left knee give a certain animation to the figure. The face shows elongated eyes with large eye-balls and drooping lids to express concentration. The broad forehead is marked with a circular tilaka. There is an inscription in the pedestal stating that the image was the gift of Isiya, a nun.

Dr. Bhattacharyya3 however, suggests that the characters are assignable to 600 - 620 A.D., to which period the image may be dated.

Two other images of this type of the 7th century A.D. discovered from Akota have also been preserved in the Baroda Museum. These two metal images of Jaina Sarasvati also stands on the flat surface of the pedestal.

Dr. Kanailal Bhattacharyya also refers to an interesting bronze image of Jaina Sarasvati. This image of the goddess from the Karnatak

2. Ibid., p. 112
3. Ibid.,
stands in an elegant manner with her weight on the right leg, while the left leg is slightly advanced and bent at the knee. She is found as having two arms. In her right hand she holds a lotus bud, while in her left hand she bears a manuscript. She is looking downwards in the attitude of disseminating knowledge to her devotees. We also find a figure of Tirthankara seated above her head in meditation. This image of the 10-11th century A.D. is now preserved in the British Museum.

Another standing image of Jaina Saraswati discovered from Patan&heruvu is now preserved in the state Museum, Hyderabad. The four armed figure of this goddess is endowed with a suppleness of form and flexibility of bhanga. However, she holds a book (pustaka), and a rosary (aksamala) in her two front hands, while she bears a good and a Khadga in her upper two hands. She is shown as wearing a diaphanous sādi with girdle. Like Buddhistic saraswati this saraswati in Jainism wears a high bejewelled crown and is bedecked in various ornaments like ear-rings decorated with pearls, double-necklace, armlets, bracelets and anklets. She is also flanked by two attendants on her two sides. We also

find a figure of the Tirthankara along with some minor figures above her head. The inscription in the Devanagari bears a date corresponding to A.D. 1178.

Dr. Kanailal Bhattacharyya also describes another standing metal image of Jaina Sarasvati from a Svetambara temple in Dabhoi. She is found four-armed having the lotus and the book in the left and the varada and the rosary in the right hands. She is flanked by a female attendant on either side of her.

Similar form of Jaina Sarasvati in standing posture is also found amongst the sculptures on the outer wall of the shrine in the Kharatara Vasahi at Mt. Abu. This image of the goddess also show female attendants standing beside the goddess.

We have to describe here another four armed stone image of Sarasvati from the ruins of the Jains temple at Deogarh. She holds a lotus and the book in her left and the varada and the rosary in her right hands. She is also flanked by a female attendant on either side. This image of Sarasvati appears to represent the Digambara tradition since these temples were built by the Digambaras.

3. Ibid., p. 116.
(iii) The Image of the Jaina Sarasvati as standing in tribhanga posture.

Though there are some standing images of Jaina Sarasvati on Lotus-seat or pedestal, there are also some important images of Jaina Sarasvati, which are shown as standing in tribhanga posture. However, U.P. Shah refers to an unique image of Jaina Sarasvati which is found on a pillar of the Caumukha temple at Ranakapur in the Jodhpur State. She is usually shown as standing in the tribhanga pose and playing on her lyre (Vina) with both the hands. There is a tiny figure of a swan near her right foot as per vehicle.

U.P. Shah also describes a beautiful image from the ruins of the Desgarh temple. He however, identifies this image with Jaina Sarasvati. She stands in the tribhanga attitude, in the raised left hand she carries a lotus (padma), while the right hand, showing the Varada-mudra, holds rosary (aksamala). On her right, left and the top are carved images of the twenty-four Tirthankaras. On her right, between the Jinas and herself, is the small figure of a male attendant holding a pitcher. Thus the presence of the twenty-four Jinas clearly proves that the goddess must hold a unique position in the Jaina pantheon.


2. Ibid., pl. 4, p. 200; Cf. also, Dr. Kanailal Bhattacharyya, Sarasvati (Calcutta, 1983), p. 114.
While describing the images of the Jaina Sarasvati, we have to describe a beautiful white marble image from Pally, Bikaner of Rajasthan, datable to the Chauhan period, i.e. the 12th century A.D., she is shown as standing tribhanga-pose on a full-blown lotus. She holds clockwise a rosary (aksamala), a lotus, a palm-leaf manuscript and a spouted kamandalu, symbolising the vase of full knowledge. She is shown wearing an elaborate headdress and various ornaments. She is flanked by two female figures carrying vina (lyre) in their hands. The donor and his wife with hands held in aboration are shown near the feet of the goddess. A tiny figure of swan is depicted on the base in front. An image of Tirthankara seated in meditative pose is carved above the head of the goddess suggesting thereby its association with Jainism. This image is now preserved in the National Museum, New Delhi. It is however, a product of the well-nlended sculptural orders of Rajasthan and may be regarded as one of the best examples of medieval sculpture of the region.

In this connection we have to refer to a marble image of Jaina Sarasvati. This image of the goddess discovered from south-west Rajasthan is now preserved in the British Museum, London. In this image the goddess is however, shown standing gracefully in tribhanga pose on an inscribed padmapitha. Her right hands.

M.I. Khan, Sarasvati in Sanskrit Literature, p. 212, pl. VI.
are lost, while in her left hands she holds a rosary (aksamala) and a book (pustaka). She wears the diaphanous sari with girdle, the elaborate Karanda mukuta as well as the charming jewellery. She is also flanked by two cross-legged Dhyani Tirthankaras on her either side. A miniature figure of padmaprabha along with garland bearing flying gandharva couples is shown above the image. Two standing figure of female attendants on each side, and two figures - to the right a male and to the left a female - representing evidently the donor couple, are depicted near her feet. The image can be assigned to the days of the Paramaras, and more specifically to the 11th century A.D.¹

Besides, we have to refer here to a plant leaf miniature from a manuscript of the Jñātāsūtra, dated 1127 A.D. The goddess Sarasvati² is shown standing in tribhanga pose. She has four arms. In her right and left lower hands the goddess holds the rosary (aksamala) and the book (pustaka) respectively, while she bears the lotuses by her upper two hands. We also find a figure of the swan as her vehicle beside the left leg. She is also flanked by a seated male attendant with folded hands on either side. It is no wonder that an image³ carved on a pillar in the Vimala Vasahi temple, Mt. Abu, shows the above mentioned form of Sarasvati.

(iv) The Image of the Jaina Sarasvati standing in abhanga-pose.

The National Museum, New Delhi, preserves an image of the Jaina Sarasvati, hailing from Vijayanagar. This four-armed goddess is known to have belonged to the 14th Century A.D. She is however, shown as standing in abhanga pose. She holds rosary and a full blossomed lotus in the back hands, while the right front hand of the goddess is in the abhaya-mudra. Besides, her left front hand is broken. Like other Jaina sarasyati she wears ornaments like ear-rings, pearl-necklace and armlets. Her lower garment is of fine texture and held up by a decorated girdle. She has full breasts, a broad hip and a narrow abdomen. There is a figure of a Jina over her highly bejewelled crown. She looks downwards showing an attitude of meditation.

In addition to the description of the Jaina Sarasvati, we have to describe some other minor images of the Jaina Sarasvati which are generally found in different Jain temples. It is however, emphasised the U.P. Shah refers to a black stone image of the Jaina Sarasvati which comes from Arthuna in the Banswara State. This image of the goddess is shown holding rosary, lotus, lyre and book in her four hands. The mukula of the goddess is surmounted by a small Jina figure.

1. Kanailal Bhattacharyya, Sarasvati (Calcutta, 1983), p. 121, pl. XI.
Dr. Kanailal Bhattacharyya also refers to another image of similar type which is worshipped in the famous Pancasara temple at Patna. The beauty of the image is somewhat spilt by the artificial eyes and the red and black marks of a permanent nature.

U. Agarwal has described some important images of the Jaina Sarasvati. In the Parsanatha temple at Khajuraho, Sarasvati has been represented as seated. She is shown holding a lyre (Vina) by her first and third hands, while she has a lotus in the fourth hand, the second hand being displayed in the Varada-mudra. In the Visvanatha temple she carries a lotus stalk and a manuscript in her second and third hands with a lyre (Vina) in her remaining two hands. Sometimes she has been depicted with her first hand in the Varada-mudra, the upper two hands carrying lotus flowers, while the remaining hand has a manuscript. Other four-handed images of Sarasvati in the Vamana temple, Khajuraho, represent her with the first hand in the Varada-mudra, and carrying a lotus, a lyre (Vina), a ghanta in the rest, or a manuscript and lotuses in the remaining three hands.

Dr. Kanailal Bhattacharyya also refers to a small marble image of Sarasvati which is worshipped in a temple at Mount Abu.

3. Ibid., p. 59.
4. Ibid., p. 59.
5. Ibid., p. 59.
In her two upper hands the goddess holds a book and a lotus, while in her remaining two hands she bears a lyre (vīnā).  

In the Boston Museum there is a palm-leaf manuscript painting which depicts the deity with the attributes like book, lotus and lyre (vīnā).  

Similarly, a figure of the Jaina sarasvati on a pata, published by A.K. Coomaraswamy, is shown holding a lotus and a book in the two upper hands, while the two lower hands display the varada and the pravacana-mudrā.  

Besides, a Hoyāsala sculpture of sarada from the Adinātha temple at Halebid holds the rosary, the goad, the pāsa and the book.  

Considering all these facts we arrive at the conclusion that the goddess of learning and wisdom is known to have secured an uninterrupted popularity in the Jaina art and iconography. Like the Brahmanical and the Buddhist sarasvati the Jaina goddess of learning and eloquence is found to maintain almost all the iconographic features by which she is also known to her Hindu worshippers.  

1. Dr. Kanailal Bhattacharyya, Sarasvati, p. 120.  
2. Ibid., p. 120.  
3. Ibid., p. 120.  