

Pratishthä Ceremony of Shvetämbar Tradition for Jain Temples in America

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The first version of this article was compiled in 2008. At that time 8 different Jain centers of America were planning to do the Pratishtha ceremony. This article is now updated with current information. The primary purpose of this article is to educate first generation Jain youth and adults of North America. This is one of the most difficult articles I have compiled because a very different view exists between immigrant adults and first generation adults of North America.

Introduction

There are two types of Pratishthä Vidhis (rituals) performed to install a Tirthankar Murti of the Shvetämbar Murtipujak tradition in a Jain temple.

- Prāna-Pratishthä (Anjan-Shalākä) Vidhi which includes Standard Vidhi and Panch Kalyanak Vidhi. Prāna-Pratishthä (Anjan-Shalākä) Vidhi is a part of Panch Kalyanak Vidhi.
- Simple Pratishthä Vidhi which includes only Satandard Vidhi but does not include the Panch Kalyanak and Anjan-Shalākä ritual

This article provides an overview of both ceremonial processes as performed by the Shvetämbar Murtipujak Jain communities. It also explains the benefits and additional responsibilities, the members of the society have to fulfill if their Jain centers decide to install a murti with Anjan-Shalākä/Prāna-Pratishthä ritual.

Many Jain temples in America have installed Tirthankar murtis with a simple Pratishthä ritual while a few with the Anjan-Shalākä ritual. This article will provide some help to understand the differences.

History of Pratishtha Ritual

The current Pratishtha ritual (Vidhi) that all Shvetambar Murtipujak Jains use is defined in the “**Pratishtha-kalpa (Anjanshalaka-vidhi)**” manuscript compiled by Upadhyay Shri Sakalchandra Gani about 300 years ago (17th Century).

<http://www.jainlibrary.org/book.php?file=600016>

About 1000 years after Lord Mahavir’s nirvana (5th century AD), the memorized Jain Scriptures (Agam sutras) by monks were documented or written down. The Anjan Shalaka vidhi or Pratishtha Vidhi is not mentioned in any of the documented Agam sutras. Hence, it can be easily concluded that the ritual (vidhi) started after the 5th century AD and it is not based on Jain Agam Sutras.

The two ancient manuscripts; Nirvan Kalika by Padliptsuri and Achar Dinkar by Vardhmansuri are the basis for the current Anjan Shalaka vidhi. According to Jain historian Dr. Madhusudan A. Dhakay, these manuscripts were written in around 7th century.

(Ref – Article “Padliptsuri Virchit **Nirvan Kalikano** Samay” by late Dr. Madhusudan A Dhakay who is one of the authorities of the Jain religion and the recipient of many prestigious awards which includes the Padma Bhushan Award of the Government of India in 2010).

http://www.jainlibrary.org/elib_master/article/230000_article_gujarati/Padliptsuri_krut_Nirvan_kalika_no_Samay_ane_Samasyao_249358_std.pdf

In the introduction of the “Pratishtha-kalpa (Anjanshalaka-vidhi)”, the 17th century manuscript, indicates that this ritual is compiled from using several different Pratishtha-kalpa manuscripts available at 17th century time.

The reference manuscripts are:

Pratishtha-kalpa manuscripts of Shri Haribhadrāsuri (8th century), Shri Hemchandrāsuri (12th century), Vadivetal Shri Shantichandra, Shri Talakacharya, Shri Mantungsuri (9th Century as per Jainendra Siddhanta Kosa) etc.

The author, Upadhyay Shri Sakalchandra Gani has expanded several sections of certain rituals and some traditional rituals (Laukik or popular of Indian culture) are also added by him.

ref www.jaineLibrary.org - book # 600016

The above listed references also indicate that the earliest Pratishtha ritual manuscripts (Nirvan Kalika and Achar Dinkar) were written between the 5th and 7th centuries

Pratishthā (Installation of a Murti) Ceremony in a Temple

Basically there are two Pratishthā ceremonies:

1. Simple Pratishthā ceremony and 2. Prāna-Pratishthā ceremony,

The same rituals are performed in both the ceremonies, except during the Prāna-Pratishthā ceremony an additional ritual known as Pancha-Kalyānak Vidhi; celebrating the five great events; conception, birth, renunciation (Diksha), realization (Keval Jnan), and liberation (Nirvan) of life of a Tirthankar are performed on the murti (idol).

A special ritual named Anjan-Shalākā is a part of the Pancha Kalyanak ritual and is performed during Keval Jnan Kalyanak.

The list of all rituals which are performed during the Pratishthā ceremony is defined at the end of this article in the following Appendixes.

Appendix 1 - List of Required Daily and Yearly Rituals of Anjan-Shalākā Murti

Appendix 2 - List of Rituals of the Pratishthā Ceremony

Appendix 3 - Pancha Kalyanak Pujā Information

In the Prāna-Pratishthā ceremony, during Keval Jnan Kalyānak ritual, certain rituals such as Anjan-Shalākā and Adhi-Vāsanā (Vishistha Vidhāna) are performed only by an Āchārya Mahārāj (Head monk of a Jain congregation). These rituals are performed in India on murtis of Tirthankars, and then the murtis are transported to America for the final installation in temples. This is so because Jain Āchāryas who only travel by walking bare-foot strictly following five great vows cannot travel to America from India. All other rituals of the Pratishthā ceremony are performed by a learned person who is known as a Vidhikār.

Prāna-Pratishthā (Pancha-Kalyānak ritual) ceremony occurs only once on any Tirthankar murti. However the Simple Pratishthā (just installation of a murti) ceremony may occur several times if the murti is moved from one temple to another temple or from one place to another within a temple. Hence, the ceremony we perform in America is generally a **Simple Pratishthā Ceremony** on either an Anjan-Shalākā murti or non-Anjan-Shalākā murti.

Generally in the USA, the Jain society defines the Pratishthā ceremony as a Prāna-Pratishthā ceremony if it installs a murti which had Anjan-Shalākā done in India. This is not a correct terminology because **we do not perform the Anjan-Shalākā ritual here in America**. We only do simple Pratishthā, meaning installing a murti at its defined place in a temple.

The status of a murti of the Simple Pratishthā ritual can be changed in the future to a Prāna-Pratishthā murti by performing Pancha-Kalyānak and Anjan-Shalākā rituals but one cannot

change the status the other way. To change the status, one needs to send the existing murti to India so that an Acharya Maharaj can perform the required rituals.

A Prāna-Pratishthā celebration may last from 5 to 12 days depending upon whether certain rituals are performed in their mini versions or their elaborate versions. The Simple Pratishthā rituals can be done within two days.

Differences between Simple and Prāna-Pratishthā (Anjan-Shalākā) Murti:

It is believed that with the Simple Pratishthā Vidhi, the murti is considered “Darshaniya” meaning that, as a minimum requirement, one needs to do Darshan and prayer daily, and with the Prāna-Pratishthā, the **murti becomes “Pujaniya” meaning that Jain members of the society must do Ashtaprakari Pujā daily, Arti and Mangal Divo two times a day, and other rituals as defined in Appendix 1.**

It seems that the belief of “Darshaniya” and “Pujaniya” is a traditional belief. There is no authentic documented evidence exist of this belief in the ancient literature which explains Jain Principles, Philosophy, Conduct, and Ritual.

Both murtis, with and without the Anjan-Shalākā ceremony, look the same. However, it is **strongly believed** that many powerful Mantras and Sutras recited by Shri Acharya Maharaj during Pancha-Kalyānak and Anjan-Shalākā rituals, which invoke:

- Life (Prāna) in the Tirthankar murti during Chyavana (conception) Kalyānak ritual. Hence the murti is considered a living person (Tirthankar).
- “Divya Chakshu” (Keval-jnān) by Anjan-Shalākā ritual during Keval Jnāna Kalyānak. Hence the murti becomes living Tirthankar.
- Shāsan Devata (heavenly demigod of the Bhavanpati category) who provides protection to Tirthankar murti, the temple and the community associated with the temple. It is also believed that the Shāsan Devata will bring material prosperity to the society and its members.

A Tirthankar attains Keval-Jnān once which remains forever; hence, once this ritual is performed on any Tirthankar murti, then its status can never be changed in future with one exception - if the murti is physically damaged then there is a special ritual which is performed to uninstall the Anjan-Shalākā ritual on the physically damaged murti before properly disposing it off.

Once the temple installs an Anjan-Shalākā or “Pujaniya” murti, then members of the society must perform certain rituals daily and certain rituals yearly (see Appendix 1) under all circumstances other than natural disasters (earth quake, flood, etc.) beyond human control.

In summary, the members of the society must perform following rituals daily (all 365 days) and annually to the “Pujaniya” murti for ever:

- Ashta-Prakāri pujā (Puja which uses 8 different items) and Chaityavandan ritual in the morning every day.
- Daily Ārti and Mangal Divo rituals in the morning and evening
- Changing of a flag ceremony including Astotary Snātra or Laghu shanty Snātra Mahotsav and Sattar Bhedi Pujā rituals once a year
- Adhar Abhisheka Ritual once a year

However, one can do all these rituals on a “Darshaniya” murti voluntarily (it is not required).

Benefits of Prāna Pratistha / Anjan Shalaka Murti:

It is believed that the Jain society and the community associated significantly progress spiritually and materially with **Anjan Shalaka Murti in the temple.**

The spiritual progress is attributed to the Anjan Shalaka murti. After the complete Pancha Kalyanak ceremony, the spiritual aura of the Tirthankar murti covers a much larger area of the community. Hence spiritual progress occurs.

The material progress is provided by the Shāsan Devatā, who is a demigod of Bhavanpati category and who is always present with Anjan Shalaka murti.

The Shāsan Devata will be pleased if we do the daily Pujā and Arti with proper reflection, and he will provide the material prosperity to the individuals and to the society. However, if we do not perform Pujā and other required rituals daily, then he will be unhappy and the society and all members will suffer severely. To be pleased or to be unhappy is one of the characteristics of demigods of Bhavanpati. This is why it is absolutely necessary to perform daily and yearly rituals on an Anjan-Shalākā Murti to make the Shāsan Devata happy.

Employing a Pujari for Daily Rituals

In India and now outside India including America, Jain societies employ pujaris to perform the daily rituals on the Prāna Pratistha / Anjan Shalaka Murtis. Also, in India almost all pujaris are non-Jains in the Svetambar Murtipujak tradition.

Jain societies need to hire Pujari because the members do not have time to come to the temple every day and spend few hours to perform daily rituals.

Such practice grossly violates the basic principles of the Jain religion. Not a single Jain scripture or any ancient or contemporary Jain literature supports such a practice.

If we have to pay someone to fulfill our religious obligations then it is absolutely clear that we do not follow our religious practice and we are in clear violation of Lord Mahāvīr's preaching.

Spiritually we cheat ourselves. We cannot progress spiritually with this type of the arrangement. On the contrary it only boosts our ego that in America, our temple has a murti with Anjan-Shalākā or our temple is the first one with Anjan-Shalākā murti in USA.

In fact, during the 3rd Svetambar Jain Murtipujak Muni Sammelan under the leadership of Āchārya Shri Omkār-Suriji - year 1988, a resolution was introduced and passed unanimously by all Acharyas that, **“A Pujā cannot be considered a valid puja to an Anjan-Shalākā murti if only puja is done by a paid Pujāri.”** This convention was represented by all 18 Svetambar Jain Gacchādhīpati Āchāryas.

However, there is no system existing amongst Jain communities to enforce the resolution passed unanimously by the conventions of Jain Acharyas and monks.

Scholars' Opinion:

Most of the Jain scholars who regularly visit various Jain societies of America indicate that we should not install any murti with Anjan-Shalākā ritual in America. However there are several Jain Āchāryas in India, who strongly recommend to their American followers that, every Jain temple should have Anjan Shalākā Murtis to progress spiritually and materially in America.

The Story of Shatrunjay Tirtha at Palitana:

Shatrunjay Tirth (Palitana) is one of the most popular and pious Tirths of Shvetambar Murtipujak Jains. On mount Shatrunjay there are more than 20,000 murtis with Anjan-Shalākā. On any regular day, most of the pilgrims pay homage to the main murti Shri Adinath Bhagwan of the main temple and visit a few nearby temples. They hardly do puja of 10 to 20 murtis and hardly do “Darshan” of another 100 to 200 murtis. Less than 1.00% of the people travel via the Nava Tuk route (long route) where the majority of the murtis exist. There are several thousand murtis which no pilgrims visit.

However, all 20,000 murtis require Pujä and Ärti daily. The Jain institution, the Anandji Kalyanji Pedhi has hired around 250 Pujäris for performance of the daily pujä of these murtis. All Pujäris are non-Jains. You can imagine the quality of the pujä they perform. I visit Palitana almost every year, and mostly take a long (Nava Tuk) route to reach the main temple because there is so much history associated with the place. One can easily visualize how pujäris perform the daily Pujä rituals on these murtis. It is a production operation on a large scale. After watching this I am sure that one loses some respect and faith in our religious rituals.

The payroll liability of pujäris and the associated staff is about Rs. 1,00,00,000 (\$250,000) per year. Most of the donations received from the pilgrims are used to pay the salaries of these pujäris and the associated staff. The situation is so bad that about 50 to 60 years ago the Pedhi decided not to install any new Murti with the Pran Pratishthä ceremony on Mount Shatrunjay. We have created a tremendous liability to ourselves and there is no practical solution for the problem.

The Story of Jesalmer Tirtha in Rajasthan:

A Jain friend observed this about 15 years ago and I have also verified with other sources that Jesalmer Tirth (Rajasthan, India) has 400 to 500 Dhatu Pratimä (metal murtis). They are all Anjan-Shaläkä murtis, but are not installed permanently in one place. It is called Chal Pratishtha where the Tirthankar murtis can be moved from one place to another to celebrate special occasions.

Every day a pujäri brings a bucket of water and immerses one murti at a time in the bucket and then puts its back on the platform to dry naturally. After immersing all murtis in this way, he returns to perform pujä on the murti. He does it just like a mass production of a commodity in a factory.

If we believe that the Shäsan Devata is always present at all times, we can imagine how unhappy and angry he might be.

In India, we have 18 different independent Jain Gacchädhpati Ächäryas. If all of them get together and come-up with a practical unified solution, then and only then there is a hope to resolve the situation.

Summary and Recommendation:

The Präna Pratishthä ceremony is considered the most pious ceremony of our religion. Before any American Jain society installs such a murti, they must make sure that their members are ready to perform Pujä and Ärti daily forever. Their first-generation Jain youth/adults (they are now around 40 years of age) must also accept the responsibility to continue to carry on such rituals voluntarily.

After the Prana Pratistha ritual, the Murti is considered a living Tirthankar. To transport a living Tirthankar (who has Keval-jnan) from India to USA in a plane is not proper because non-vegetarian food is served around the living Tirthankar Murti. Significant Ashatana occurs. It would be better if Shri Acharya Maharaj who will be doing Anjan Shalaka Vidhi flies with Aloyana or Präyashchitta from his Guru or from the Jain Sangh.

Employing a paid pujari to perform daily rituals on Anjan Shalaka murties, cannot enhance our spirituality. Spiritually we cheat ourselves. This is not what the Jain religion teaches us. This is not what we want to teach our children. We cannot attain liberation by paying someone (Jain or non-jain) to do a religious act that was meant for us to do voluntarily with proper reflections for our spiritual progress. I think this way we do more Ashatana (committing higher sin) than not doing the daily puja at all if we do not have time to do it.

The belief that once the Anjan Shalaka (Pancha Kalyanak) ceremony is performed, the spiritual aura of the murti covers a much larger area of the community is in clear violation of the basic Jain principles.

The Jain Tirthankars are Vitaragi meaning they do not possess any attachment and aversion. Hence our spiritual progress will occur if we truly pray and reflect in front of any

types of murti or even no murti. The belief of higher spiritual benefits due to only Anjan Shalaka performed murti violates the basic principles of Jainism.

Also the belief that Shasan Devtā will help us to progress materially is also a clear violation of Jain principles. It indicates that we practice the religion based on greed or fear.

There is strong evidence that the Pratishtha ritual manuscript was written around the 6th or 7th century. Historically this is the time when Chaityavāsi yatis who were controlling the assets of the Jain temples, may have introduced such rituals to generate income for the Jain temple and to support their luxurious lifestyle. By introducing fears and greed in the ritual, they exploited and controlled the Jain communities.

Because of these types of practices instituted in Jain temples, a layperson name Shri Lonkāshah started movement of non-murti worshipping and established a Sthānakavāsi sect.

The Digambar Āchāryas in India do not play any direct role in Pancha-Kalyānak and Pran Pratishtha ritual of the Digambar Tirthankar Murtis. They believe that it is a violation of their five great vows if they get involve directly in any types of rituals involving religious material (Dravya puja). Hence, Digambars have Panch Kayanak and similar Anjan Shalaka vidhi on a murti during Pratishtha ceremony done by a learned scholar or Pandit in America.

Also Digambars do not have any such requirement that after Panch Kayanak Pratishthā vidhi, the **Jain community must perform certain rituals daily**. Both Darshan (viewing and praying) and Pujā are voluntarily done by the community. It is acceptable if for some reason, no one comes to a temple on a particular day. They do not have to employ a pujāri for such tasks.

Almost every American Jain temples associated with JAINA are neither Shvetāmbar nor Digambar. They are just Jain temples. We should be open to accept the best practices from every Jain sect and do not accept any religious practices which are imposed on us by tradition based on fear or greed.

We should not be against religious rituals because no religion can survive without simple pious rituals. However, we should be totally against any ritual imposed on us by fear or greed. This approach may have been effective in the old times, but in today's environment it creates a negative impact on our youth and adults. In America, hardly any (less than 5%) 1st generation youth/adults who are around 30 to 40 years and older are active in their Jain temples, societies, and communities.

To effectively implement the resolution passed by all Acharyas “**A Pujā cannot be considered a valid pujā to an Anjan-Shalākā murti if only done by a paid Pujāri**”, I would recommend and request all Jain Acharyas that they should not perform any Pran Pratishtha ritual on a new murti unless requesting organization and individual takes a vow stating that they will never hire any Pujari for daily Puja and Arti rituals. Alternatively the Acharyas can remove the daily Puja and Arti requirements as done in the Digambar traditions.

This was the most difficult article I have ever compiled. Please let me know if you find any error in the information provided. If I have hurt any one's feeling with this article, I sincerely request forgiveness.

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Appendix – 1

List of Required Daily and Yearly Rituals of Anjan-Shalākā Murti

Daily Morning Rituals consist of the following:

- Take a bath and cleanse the physical body
- Put on Pujā clothes
- Prepare a liquid paste of Sandal wood
- Carry some flowers, fruits, sweets, divo, peacock feather, three Angluchhana (three pieces of simple white material for wiping the murti after bathing), Väkshep, water etc.
- Enter the temple by reciting Nissihi and Namō Jinānam at appropriate places
- After entering altar, do cleaning of a murti, bathe with water, and do Chandan Pujā, Pushpa Pujā on the murti.
- Do Dhoop Pujā, Deepak Pujā, and Chāmar waving,
- Do Akshat (Rice) Pujā, Naivedya Pujā, and Fal Pujā
- Do Iriyāvahiyā and Chaitya Vandan
- Do Arti and Mangal Deevo rituals

Daily Evening Rituals:

- Do Dhoop and Deepak Pujā
- Do Iriyāvahiyā and Chaitya Vandan
- Do Arti and Mangal Deevo rituals

Yearly Ritual

- Changing of a flag ceremony including Astotary Snātra or Laghu-Shanty Snātra Mahotsav and Sattar Bhedi Pujā
- Adhar Abhisheka Ritual

For simple Pratishthā murti, none of the above rituals are required but it is suggested to do as many as you can.

Appendix 2 - List of Rituals for the Pratishthā Ceremony

- Shri Kumbha Sthāpanā
- Shri Akhand-Deepak Sthāpanā
- Shri Jwara-Ropan in the earthen pot (Kodiyu). Seven types of grains are collected with Māti-Earth-powder and water is poured every day by an unmarried girl.
- Maneka Sthambha āropana and built a Toran on the Main Gate of a temple
- Shri Nav Grah Patla Pujan
- Shri Dash Dighpal Patla Pujan
- Shri Asta Mangal Patla Pujan
- Kshetrapal pujan either Laghu (mini) or elaborate version
- Siddha Chakra Pujan either Laghu or elaborate version

- Visha Sthänaka Pujan either Laghu or elaborate version
- Nanda Varta Pujan either Laghu or elaborate version
- Shri Devi Pujan (this is for the temples that have Pratimäs of Dev & Devi and if time permits)
- **Pancha Kalyanak Pujä (as defined below – omitted for simple Pratishthä ceremony)***
- Shri Rath Yatra Varghodo (procession)
- Shri Eighteen (18) Abhisheka
- Shri Pratishthä Mahotsav (that includes Pratishthä of Bhagawän's Pratimä, Dev Devi Pratimä, Dhvajä Danda and Kalash etc.)
- Shri Laghu Shänti Snätra Pujan (If the Sangh is large enough then Shri Brahat Shänti Pujan is performed)
- On the day of Pratishthä – Ashta Prakari Puja, Aarati, Mangal Divo & Shänti Kalash

Next day after the Pratishthä

- Dwar opening ceremony
- Sattarbhedhi Pujä

Note - A day before the Pratishthä Day, it is also appropriate to perform Gädi Pujan - the Pujan of the actual place where Pratimä will be installed).

Appendix 3 - Pancha Kalyanak Pujä Information

Chyavana (Conception) Kalyanak Ritual

- Establishing Shrävak and Shrävikäs as Tirthankar's parents for the Pratishthä
- Establishing Indra and Indrani (King and queen of heavenly god and goddess)
- Establishing other relatives like Senapati, Nagarsheth, mother, father, Mämä, Mämi, Father in law and Mother in law etc. of Tirthankar
- Perform Chyavana (Conception) Kalyanak Ritual
- 14 Dreams of mother of Tirthankar
- Invoking Life in the Tirthankar murti
- Vibrating ritual of Indra's Simhäsan
- Recitation of Shakra stav (Nanutthunam Stotra) by Indra in heaven

Janma (Birth) Kalyanak Ritual

- Celebration by 56 Dik Kumaris
- Vibrating ritual of Indra's Simhäsan
- Celebration of Tirthankar's birth occasion at Mount Meru by heavenly gods
- Performing of 250 Abhisheka
- A female servant Priyamvada announces the good news to the father, the king on the following morning
- King celebrates the birth of a Tirthankar
- Name giving ceremony by auntie (Father's sister)
- Other various important occasions in the life of Tirthankar such as 1st day of going to school, Marriage is symbolized by Tirthankar murti marrying to Kumbha (not in case of the murtis of Mallinäth and Neminäth)

- Rajyabhishaka – Becoming the king (not in the case of murtis of Mallināth, Nemināth, and Mahāvīrswāmi)

Dikshā (Renunciation) Kalyanak Ritual

- Request by Lokāntika Deva (heavenly gods) to the future Tirthankar to renounce the world for the benefit of humanity and all souls of the universe.
- Tirthankar donates his/her personal wealth (Charity) for the entire year
- Dikshā celebration and initiation of an ascetic life.
- Leaving the town as a monk on barefoot

Kevaljnān (Realization) Kalyanak Ritual

- Attainment of Keval-Jnāna at midnight
- Adhi Vaasana (Vishistha Vidhana) ritual**
- Anjan-Shalākā in the eye indicating opening of a Divya Chakshu or realization of Eternal Truth**
- Establishment of four fold order of the Jain Sangh

** Note - Anjan-Shalākā and Adhi vasana are secret rituals and hence they are performed at midnight by Jain Āchārya.

Nirvana (Liberation) Kalyanak Ritual

- On the following morning, Nirvana Kalyanak ritual is performed
- Performance of 108 Abhisheka and other rituals as defined in Appendix 1A

These five rituals known as Pancha-Kalyānaks are omitted in a simple Pratishthā Ceremony.