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**Translating Texts into Art:
Specimens from the Jaina Tradition**

SUMMARY: This paper explores the ‘crossing of border lines’ between the textual traditions of the Jainas (oral and written) and the corresponding representations in works of art, serving also as a kind of introduction to Jaina art and its idioms for a broader public. It concentrates on three stages of pictorial representation of most eminent Jinās: it touches upon images that are possibly pre-textual (starting with sculptures from Mathurā dating back to the first centuries AD), proceeds to more narrative illustrations found in manuscripts of Bhadrabāhu’s *Kalpasūtra*, and concludes with a more recent specimen of the depiction of Jinās in miniature painting, as presented in a rather late illuminated version of the *Bhūpālastotra*, a text praising the 24 Jinās, which shows the efforts made to translate parts of the eulogies into the visual medium.

KEYWORDS: Jaina literature, Jaina art, Jaina sculptures, Jaina miniature painting, manuscript illustrations, *Kalpasūtra*, *Bhūpālastotra*

This paper explores the ‘crossing of border lines’ between the textual traditions of the Jainas (oral and written) and the corresponding representations in works of art, serving also as a kind of introduction to Jaina art and its idioms for a broader public. It concentrates on three stages of pictorial representation of Jinās: it touches upon images that are possibly pre-textual (starting with sculptures from Mathurā dating

back to the first centuries AD),¹ proceeds to more narrative illustrations found in manuscripts of Bhadrabāhu's *Kalpasūtra*,² and concludes with a more recent specimen of the depiction of Jinas in miniature painting, as presented in a rather late illuminated version of the *Bhūpālastotra*, a text praising the 24 Jinas³ which shows the efforts made to translate parts of the eulogies into the visual medium.

According to the Jain tradition, Mahāvīra, a close contemporary of the Buddha and the founder of the Jaina religion, was not the first exponent of his message of strict non-violence, but was preceded, in more and more distant time intervals in the past, by 23 other Jinas or Tīrthaṅkaras, each of whom (after giving up his worldly life and living as an ascetic) gained omniscience and spread the fundamental teaching.⁴ The last Jina before Mahāvīra, Pārśvanātha, who is said to have lived only 250 years before him, is possibly a historical person, being the only one referred to as a teacher in two canonical texts of the Jainas, the *Ācārāṅga*⁵ and the *Uttarādhyayana*.⁶

The very first Jina, Rṣabha, is especially interesting, since he is also referred to in the cosmographical section of a few important Hindu *purāṇas*, like the *Mārkaṇḍeya*- and *Viṣṇupurāṇa*;⁷ in the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* he is even listed among Viṣṇu's *avatāras*.⁸ In the *upāṅgas* of the Jaina tradition (the *Jambūdvīpa-prajñapti* and Bhadrabāhu's *Kalpasūtra*) he is not only the first mendicant and

¹ Cf. Schmid 2010: 195 and *ibid.*: 568–575, illustrations no. 6–10.

² Cf. Brown 1934: 1 (with reference to Winternitz 1925).

³ In the colophon of the illuminated version the date of 1820/21 is given. For a discussion of the text, its author and its date, see below. (It is planned to get the complete work published in a separate monograph.)

⁴ For a list of their names see Appendix I.

⁵ *Ācārāṅga* pt. 2 (Mahāvīra's parents were followers of Pārśvanātha).

⁶ *Uttarādhyayana* ch. 13: a dialogue between Keśin (a follower of Pārśvanātha) and Gotama (the main disciple of Mahāvīra).

⁷ Cf. R. Söhnen-Thieme, 'Rṣabha and Bharata in Hindu Purāṇas.' 16th Jaina Studies Workshop at SOAS 2014 (in press).

⁸ Cf. Söhnen-Thieme 2016.

omniscient Tīrthaṃkara, but also the first king, who taught his subjects arts and crafts and sciences.⁹ There is one other Jina who is set apart from the rest at a very early time; Ariṣṭanemi or Neminātha, with whom this presentation and discussion of sculptures will start.

The remaining twenty Jinas are in earlier times hardly any more than names; a few of them are identified in inscriptions, and in the course of time they are distinguished by characteristic animals or symbols (see the list of Jinas in the Appendix). Otherwise they all look very similar, being shown in their last stage of meditation before the transition to ultimate bliss beyond any imagination. They are presented in youthful maturity with a perfect body showing no marks of any difficulties they may have experienced during their lifetime. They appear in stereotype posture, either sitting (in *padmāsana*, lotus seat) or standing, with arms hanging down (*kāyotsarga* posture), as can be seen in ex. 1 and 2 (Nemi in Mathurā, see below).

Sculptures

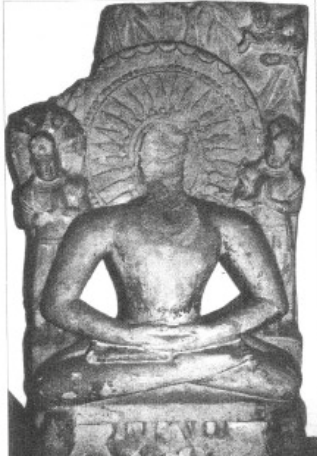
Since there probably did not exist written Jaina texts in the early period (ca 500 BC–500 AD), apart from a few inscriptions which only mention a Jina's name, it is difficult to postulate a connection between an image and any, probably oral, text that may have been 'translated' into the visual medium. Nevertheless, there must have been traditions connected at least with the most popular individual Jinas that, as in the case of Ariṣṭanemi, the 22nd Jina, can be found in later layers of the canonical texts. His story is first told in the *Uttarādhyāyana-sūtra*, ch. 22.¹⁰ Here Nemi is in some way connected with Kṛṣṇa,¹¹ whose early cult was especially associated with Mathurā, and it is in

⁹ Cf. also Mette 1973: 7 ff.

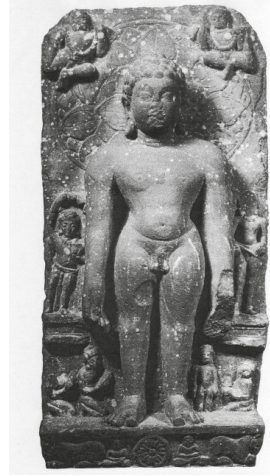
¹⁰ For its date cf. Brown 1941: 2, "The age of the work is not earlier than around 300 BC nor later than 526 AD, and it is a compilation, with the different parts being of unequal age."

¹¹ Kṛṣṇa is called 'Keśava' or 'Vāsudeva' in the *Uttarādhyāyana-sūtra*. He arranges Ariṣṭanemi's marriage, but he is not (yet?) identified as his cousin, as he is in Hemacandra's *Triṣaṣṭiśālākāpuruṣa* (12th cent. AD), quoted by Schmid (Schmid 2010: 195).

Mathurā that we find also early sculptures of Nemi, who presumably belonged to the same Vṛṣṇi clan as Kṛṣṇa. In the examples Nemi is shown in the centre, with the smaller figures of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa standing on his right and left-hand side, in ex. 1 with folded hands¹². [ex. 1, 2nd–3rd cent. AD¹³, and 2 (standing), 3rd–4th cent.¹⁴]



1. Nemi with Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, 2nd–3rd cent.
Source: Schmid 2010: 571, no. 7
(photo: C. Schmid).



2. Jina Neminatha, c. 3rd–4th cent.
Source: Peaceful Liberators catalogue no. 17: 128
(photo: Ranjit K. Datta Gupta).

Although Pārśva, Mahāvīra's immediate predecessor, may have been a historical figure, he is marked from the beginning with a mythical attribute, the hoods of a cobra¹⁵ [ex. 3]. It is an open question,

¹² One may wonder whether this refers to *Uttarādhyayana* 22.27: "In this manner Rāma and Kêśava, the Dasārhas, and many people paid homage to Ariṣṭanemi and then returned to the town of Dvārakā." (Jacobi tr.).

¹³ Schmid 2010: 571, no.7: Nemi with Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa (Vṛṣṇi triad), Mathurā, 2nd–3rd cent. AD.

¹⁴ Ex. 2. *Peaceful Liberators*, catalogue no. 17: 128: Jina Neminatha (standing) from Mathura, c. 3rd–4th cent. (State Museum, Lucknow).

¹⁵ Cf. *Peaceful Liberators*, catalogue no. 20: 132: A shrine with four Jinas; in front: Pārśvanātha with snake canopy. Uttar Pradesh, 7th cent. (not included here); or

whether he may have originally been identified with a Nāga prince, similar to Balarāma, whose hoods were visible in the Nemi sculpture, or whether the hoods point to a story told about him much later, in Devendra's commentary¹⁶ to *Uttarā-dhyayana* ch. 23. This reports an act of protection by a snake (similar to that which had been experienced by the Buddha), as a reward for Pārśva's having saved them from being burnt, of which nothing seems to be known in the canonical literature.



3. Saṃvara attacking Pārśvanātha, ca. 600
(photo: Victoria & Albert Museum courtesy).

to a story told about him much later, in Devendra's commentary¹⁶ to *Uttarā-dhyayana* ch. 23. This reports an act of protection by a snake (similar to that which had been experienced by the Buddha), as a reward for Pārśva's having saved them from being burnt, of which nothing seems to be known in the canonical literature.

Ṛṣabha, the first Jina, is shown in the sculptural tradition with locks of hair hanging down on his shoulders¹⁷ [ex. 4].¹⁸ He seems to be the first one (apart from Mahāvīra) of whom an individual life story is told, and there is a very early frieze,

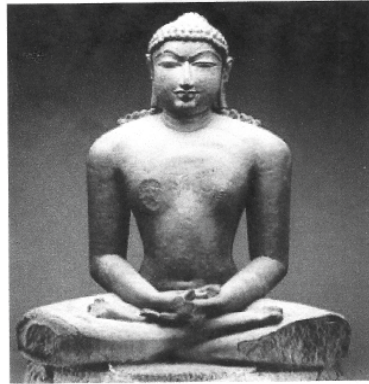
ex. 3 'Saṃvara attacking Pārśvanātha', Madhya Pradesh, Gyaraspur, ca. 600 (V&A Museum, see also *Peaceful Liberators* catalogue no. 21: 134), referring to the event when Pārśva was protected by the Nāga-king Dharaṇendra from the torrential stormy rain issuing from a demon, who was his former brahmin enemy reborn (see below).

¹⁶ Cf. Charpentier 1915: 321–359.

¹⁷ So far I have been unable to find a satisfactory explanation of this unique feature in Jaina literature; it is interesting, however, that the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* (book 5, ch. 5, prose section) seems to present such a depiction of Ṛṣabha: in spite of his disregard for body care, he is here described as being beautiful and attractive, with delicate hands, feet, and chest, with long arms and rounded shoulders, a well-shaped face with a captivating smile, and especially characterised by long hair flowing over his shoulders. One wonders whether the author of this passage was inspired by a Jaina sculpture, showing the Jina with a perfect body and the long hair characteristic of Ṛṣabha, as, e.g., in ex. 4.

¹⁸ Ex. 4. Ṛṣabha, Madhya Pradesh, 11th/12th cent. (Musée Guimet, Quint. no. 7.13, VO: 123). For an earlier testimony of this feature cf. Quintanilla 7.11 (*Victorious Ones*: 121), Ṛṣabha, ca. late 3rd cent. AD, or Dundas 1.3: Ṛṣabha, Gupta period, 5th cent.

predating the sculptures so far presented, that shows the event that led to his renunciation,¹⁹ an event which is not found in written texts even later than our oldest biographical text dedicated to the Jinas and their disciples, Bhadrabāhu's *Kalpasūtra* and the slightly earlier *Jambūdvīpaprājñapti*, a secondary canonical text. It is surprising that it should be earlier than the earliest Jina sculptures in Mathurā. In a way it is a predecessor of the earliest miniatures.



4. Rṣabha, 11th/12th cent.
Source: Musee Guimet website.

Miniatures

Bhadrabāhu's *Kalpasūtra* (approx. 6th cent.)²⁰ is a text that became especially attractive for the inclusion of miniature paintings,²¹ which are preserved from the early 12th cent. onward, first in palm-leaf manuscripts (up to about 1400), from then onward mainly on paper.²²

The *Kalpasūtra*'s account of the Jinas starts with the last one, the Mahāvīra Vardhamāna, followed (backward in time) by Pārśva and Nemi, and ending with Rṣabha, the first Jina (with a greater wealth of details being only given for Mahāvīra), whereas the twenty Jinas in between are only presented in a brief summary restricted to their names and the year of their death in relation to that one of the Jina dealt with immediately before. Even

¹⁹ Cf. the relief shown in Quintanilla, 7.3 (*Victorious Ones*: 114): Rṣabha frieze: 'Dance of Nīlāñjanā and the renunciation of Rṣabha,' Kankali-Tila, Mathura, ca. 100 BC ('dated on stylistic grounds').

²⁰ According to H. Jacobi (Jacobi 1879: 14), the date of its last redaction was 454 or 514 AD.

²¹ Another text which became very popular for illustrations is the *Kālakācārya-kathānaka* (see Brown 1933). Both texts are publicly read out during the *pariyuṣaṇa* festival, the most important event in the Jaina ritual calendar.

²² Cf. Brown 1933: 15–16.

the three other more detailed accounts are presented in a rather formulaic manner, changing only the names of persons and places involved and the characteristic dates for the important events in their lives. For these events individual dates are given right at the beginning of each biography: date of descent from heaven (*cyavana*; including conception), date of birth (*janma*), renunciation (*dīkṣā*, ‘initiation, plucking out his hair in five bushels), obtaining omniscience (*kevalajñāna*, styled as the first sermon=*samavasaraṇa*), and *nirvāṇa* [ex. 5].²³

These events are the common stock for the illustrations of the *Kalpa-sūtra*, being inserted in the manuscripts at the proper places within the individual accounts. A topic which also became very popular is the depiction of the fourteen auspicious dreams that each future mother of a Jina is reported to have seen on the night of her conception:²⁴ [ex. 6].²⁵

One of the earliest narrative miniatures (early 12th cent.) shows scenes from the life of Rṣabha,



5. The five auspicious events in Pārśva's life, late 16th or early 17th cent.
Source: Brown 1934: 41 f, fig. 92.



6. The fourteen auspicious dreams.
Source: Glasenapp 1925: plate 20.

²³ Ex. 5. Brown 1934: 41 f, fig. 92: The five auspicious events in Pārśva's life. Late 16th or early 17th cent.

²⁴ They are: an elephant, a bull, a lion, two garlands, the goddess Śrī, a banner, the moon, the sun, a vase, a lotus-pond, the ocean, a palace of the gods (*vimāna*), a heap of jewels, smokeless fire.

²⁵ Ex. 6. Glasenapp 1925: plate 20.

who appears on it twice: on the left as a teacher, with humans and animals as listeners, on the right at breaking his fast (a detail not mentioned in the *Kalpasūtra*) [ex. 7].²⁶ Remarkable are the locks on his shoulders (which are difficult to find in any other miniatures).



7. Episodes from the life of Rṣabha, ca. 1100–1125. Source: Doshi 1985: 35, fig. 1.

In agreement with the *Kalpasūtra* is the following individual feature: as the first king, Rṣabha taught his subjects the arts and crafts. This is exemplified in miniatures by showing his invention of pottery, allegedly inspired by a part of the elephant's skull called *kumbha*, which is also the general term for pots, jugs, etc. [ex. 8a and b].²⁷

²⁶ Ex. 7. Doshi 1985: 35, fig. 1: Episodes from the life of Rṣabha, wooden book cover, ca. 1100–1125.

²⁷ Ex. 8a and b. Brown 1934: 51 f.; fig. 122: Rṣabha teaches the arts: inventing pottery, carpentry (?), and weaving, prob. late 16th or early 17th cent., and fig. 123: Rṣabha invents pottery, prob. 16th cent.



8a. Rṣabha teaches the arts,
prob. late 16th or early 17th cent.
Source: Brown 1934: 51 f, fig. 122.



8b. Rṣabha invents pottery, prob. 16th cent.
Source: Brown 1934: 51 f, fig. 123.

The Jina with most individual details, especially in his early life story, is Mahāvīra, with whom the *Kalpasūtra* starts. Passing over his birth and early life, only some details of his ascetic life are presented here, which are mentioned in the earliest part of the Jaina canon, the *Ācārāṅga* (but not taken up in the *Kalpasūtra*). Some of the miniatures show what he had to suffer from ignorant villagers and their dogs and from wild animals and insects in the wilderness²⁸ [ex. 9].²⁹

²⁸ *Ācārāṅga* I, ch. 9, part 1 (about *caryā* ‘life-style’, transl. by J. C. Wright): (3) “For over four months many sorts of creatures came and roamed attacking his body; lighting on it they gave pain...”

(7) Giving up association with those who live in houses, he contemplated. Asked about it, he did not answer; he went on and did not leave the right way.

(8) For some that is not easy; one should not answer those who address one, when first struck there with sticks and pelted by the undeserving...

²⁹ Ex. 9. Brown 1934: 37 f, fig. 78. Mahāvīra’s austerities, prob. 16th cent. (cf. Brown 1934: 3); in the upper half the sticks are pulled out of his ears that had been poked in by some nasty village boys, the lower half shows tigers or leopards attacking him (left) or birds (right) pecking at him.



9. Mahāvīra's austerities, prob. 16th cent.
Source: Brown 1934: 37 f., fig. 78.

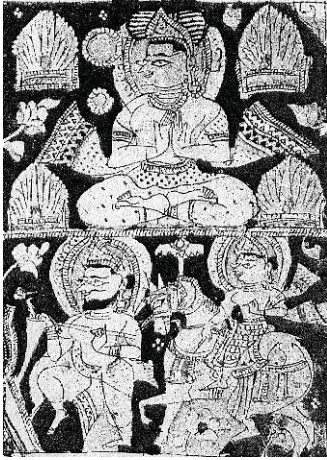
For Pārśva the miniatures provide, apart from the usual five important events, more about the story why Pārśva is shown with the protective hoods of a cobra behind his head (of which there is no trace in the *Kalpasūtra*): it refers to the action how Pārśva saved snakes from being burnt in the logs used for the four fires of a brahmin engaged in the *pañcāgnitapas* (enduring the heat of four fires around and the sun above). This brahmin would be reborn as the demon that would try to destroy Pārśva's meditation (as could be seen in the sculpture ex. 3). In the miniature here it is shown

how the snakes are freed from the log by a servant of the king³⁰ [ex. 10].³¹

Especially interesting is the story of Nemi (or Ariṣṭanemi), which explains the psychological motive for his choosing the life of an ascetic. It is not even mentioned in the *Kalpasūtra*, but told in ch. 22 of the *Uttarādhyāyana*, one of the secondary canonical texts (but possibly earlier than the *Kalpasūtra*). Nemi, for whom his friend Kṛṣṇa has selected a beautiful noble bride, sets out for the wedding, but when he approaches his destination, his attention is caught by the sight of many animals confined to a pen or cages. Asking about these animals, he is told that they will serve as food for the wedding banquet. Filled with pity for these creatures, he orders to be taken away from the wedding and decides to leave the worldly life. The following example

³⁰ The story is not mentioned or alluded to in the *Kalpasūtra*, nor in the *Uttarādhyāyana*, but it is told in Devendra's commentary to *Uttarādhyāyana* ch. 23 (Keśi and Gautama), where Pārśva's teaching is discussed.

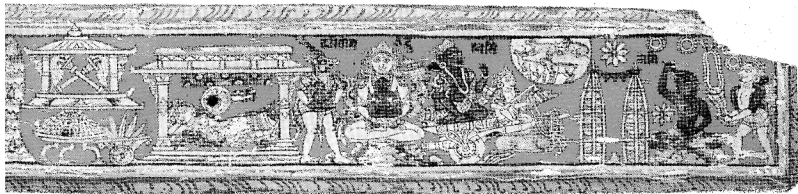
³¹ Ex.10. Brown 1934: 42: Pārśva rescuing the snakes in fig. 93 (poss. 15th cent.) and fig. 94 (prob. 16th cent., cf. Brown 1934: 3–4).



10a. Pārśva rescuing the snakes, prob. 15th cent.
Source: Brown 1934: 42, fig. 93.



10b. Pārśva rescuing the snakes, prob. 16th cent.
Source: Brown 1934: 42, fig. 94.



11. Episodes from the life of Nemi from birth to initiation, ca. 1100–1125. Source: Doshi 1985: 41, fig. 18.

is a 12th-century book cover showing Nemi's life (from left to right): conception and birth, Hariṇega[mesi] carrying the baby to Indra's lap for lustration, the chariot ride to his wedding (the penned animals being seen in a semicircle above), and plucking out his hair, as well as giving his personal possessions to the charioteer (note that Nemi is dark-skinned, as in the text) [ex. 11].³² The episode of Nemi travelling to his bride, but abandoning their wedding, became very popular in the miniature

³² Ex. 11. Doshi 1985: 41, fig.18: Episodes from the life of Nemi from birth to initiation, wooden book cover, ca. 1100–1125.



12a. Ariṣṭanemi driving to the bridal pavilion, 1512 AD. Source: Brown 1941: 46 f, fig. 108.

phant, but asked his ‘charioteer’ about the animals.³⁵ A charioteer

tradition. In the last picture [ex. 11] he travels on a chariot, sees the animals and, consequently, decides to renunciate the worldly life. There are, however, other, more elaborate, miniature versions of his journey to the wedding and return after seeing the animals (arrival on horseback, return on a chariot).³³ In the next example [12a and b]³⁴ the artists seem to have had some problem with the ‘translation’ of the text he was illustrating into the visual medium, a problem based on an ambiguity of the text of the *Uttarādhyaṇa*, which says that he set out on an excellent elephant, but asked his ‘charioteer’ about the animals.³⁵ A charioteer

³³ Cf. Dundas 2009: 21, no. 1.5: Nemi’s wedding, Patan, Gujarat, 1472 (in *Victorious Ones*).

³⁴ Ex. 12a and b. Brown 1941: 46, fig. 108: (a) Ariṣṭanemi driving to the bridal pavilion in a two-wheeled chariot and returning, after seeing the penned animals (dated 1512 AD); fig. 109: (b) Ariṣṭanemi riding to the bridal pavilion on an elephant, and returning in a four-wheeled chariot, after seeing the penned animals (prob. 16th cent.); cf. also Brown 1941: 3.

³⁵ *Uttarādhyaṇa* ch. 22 (transl. by Jacobi):

(10) Riding on the best mast elephant of Vāsudeva he [i.e. Nemi] looked beautiful, like a jewel worn on the head. (11–12) He sat under a raised umbrella, fanned by two chowries (etc.).

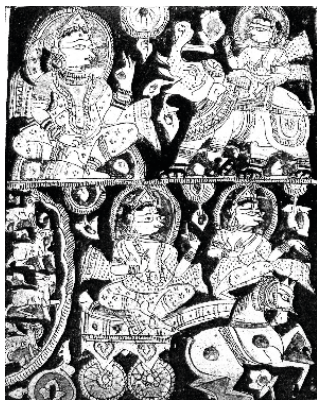
(14) On his way he saw animals, kept in cages and enclosures, overcome by fear and looking miserable.

(15) Seeing them on the point of being killed for the sake of their flesh, and to be eaten afterwards, the great sage spoke to his charioteer thus:

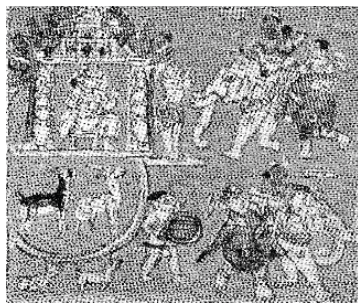
(16) “Why are all these animals, which desire to be happy, kept in cages and enclosures?”

(17) Then the charioteer answered: “Lucky are these animals, because at thy wedding they will furnish food for many people.”

is no doubt a driver of a chariot, not of an elephant, thus Nemi must have used a chariot (as many of the painters seem to have thought). In the *Uttarādhyaṇa* there is no mention of any vehicle after Nemi's decision to avoid the wedding for the sake of the animals, but Devendra's prose commentary tells us that he turned the elephant round, after coming to know about the fate of the animals from the charioteer. An elephant is no doubt more spectacular and auspicious than a chariot for a bridegroom to arrive at his wedding [ex. 13 arrival at the wedding and leaving, with the elephant twice].³⁶ No doubt there must have been slightly different versions of the story that were used by the different illustrators.³⁷



12b. Ariṣṭanemi riding to the bridal pavilion, prob. 16th cent. Source: Brown 1941: 46 f, fig. 109.



13. The marriage procession of Neminātha, 1288 AD. Source: Chandra 1948: 19 of the plates, fig. 50.

(18) Having heard these words, which announced the slaughter of many animals, the great sage, full of compassion and kindness to living beings, meditated thus:

(19) "If for my sake many living beings are killed, I shall not obtain happiness in the next world."

(20) Then the famous man presented the charioteer with his pair of earrings, his neck-chain, and all his ornaments. (For the illustration of this last verse, see ex. 12 above.)

³⁶ Ex. 14. Chandra 1948: p. 19 of the plates, f. 50: The marriage procession of Neminātha, arriving and returning on an elephant, Pātan, 1288 D (cf. also the description *ibid.*: 141).

³⁷ Interestingly, even the miniatures of the *Uttarādhyaṇa* mss. adduced by W. Norman Brown (Brown 1941) have Nemi arriving on a chariot (with no sign

The *Bhūpālastotra*³⁸

This third part of the article turns to a totally different literary genre, not involving the oral or written biographical traditions of the Jainas (except for a few introductory miniatures): a *stotra* or hymn of praise, addressed to the twenty-four Jinas, each stanza praising one Jina in the traditional sequence from Ṛṣabha to Mahāvīra, but with no reference to the names or any biographical detail. It is composed in a late, very elaborate Sanskrit style with diverse metres and an abundance of metaphors. The poem is ascribed to a certain Āśādhara (about VS 1250–1300, [first half of 13th cent. AD], cf. Klatt 2016: 237), by whom Vinayacandra, the Digambara monk who will be seen in the illustrations, was converted in VS 1296 [= AD 1238–39] (cf. Klatt 2016: 777). I have so far been unable to identify who this Bhūpāla is, when and where he lived, and why the *stotra* is associated with him. In the illustrations he is depicted as Bhūpālarāja, a prince of the later Moghul period, whom Vinayacandra makes familiar with the 24 Jinas addressed in the hymn. But this may only help approximately to date the illustrations added to the text, which would use contemporary costumes for the depicted characters; it does not disclose anything about the original Bhūpāla, who probably was a contemporary of Vinayacandra.

The hymn starts with a stanza in praise of the first Jina Ṛṣabha, who is treated in the illustrations differently from the rest: his stanza is preceded by three more pages, one double page showing his mother Marudevī in the palace, in the upper half with her husband Nābhi, and in the lower part lying asleep and dreaming. Her dreams are shown on the second page, they are sixteen, since this is a Digambara text, adding the lion throne, two fishes, and the Nāga king Dharanendra, but

of an elephant), thus not agreeing with the text of the *Uttarādhyayana*, nor with Devendra's commentary (cf. fig. 83 and 84 on plate 26).

³⁸ I met this illustrated text through an e-mail request from an antiquity seller in Jaipur, who wanted me to identify it, its author and its date, which I was able to do with the help of J. Klatt's *Jaina-Onomastikon* (Klatt 2016). I have worked on this text to some extent and I am planning to publish an edition of it.



14. Bhūpālastotra: Ms. p. 8&9 Ṛṣabha's samavasaraṇa.
Source: Renate Söhnen-Thieme.



16. Bhūpālastotra: Ms. p. 19&20 Śītala (10th Jina).
Source: Renate Söhnen-Thieme.



18. Bhūpālastotra: Ms. p. 31&32 Mallinātha (19th Jina). Source: Renate Söhnen-Thieme.



19. Similes for a ‘very learned monk’ in Uttarādhyayana ch. 12: ms. in the Victoria & Albert Museum (Photo Victoria & Albert Museum courtesy)

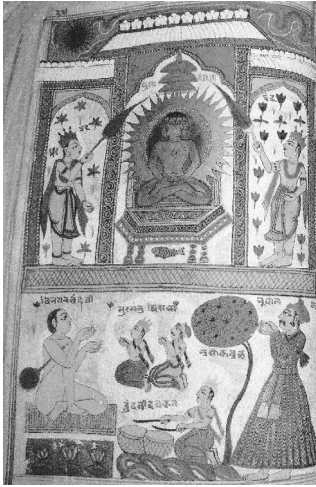
omitting the banner usually shown in the Śvetāmbara fourteen dreams. The double-page illustrating the first stanza of the hymn provides a kind of transition to the visual treatment of the rest of the stanzas; the page on the left still shows an important event in Ṛṣabha's life, his *samavasaraṇa* i.e. his first preaching [ex. 14],³⁹ as carried out in earlier illustrations of the lives of the Jinas. Remarkable is perhaps the fact that the two fly-whisk bearers standing left and right of the Jina are the only humans present, otherwise the listeners are animals. Nothing found in these introductory miniatures is mentioned or alluded to in the first stanza; they appear to be based on the generally known Jaina traditions about Ṛṣabha's life. In the lower half of the *samavasaraṇa* page king Bhūpāla and the Digambara monk Vinayacandra, the listener and the reciter of the text, are visually introduced, who will be shown on each of the following illustrations. The page on the right contains the text of the first stanza, dedicated to, but not particularly related to Ṛṣabha, as well as its visual interpretation, showing the Kalpavṛkṣa tree and the 'temple of all great festivals' which are mentioned in the text. The five empty temples may stand for the five abodes mentioned in the first two lines.

The abode of Glory's grace, the Earth's family home, the resting-place of Renown's joy
the house of pleasure of goddess Speech, the great store of splendour of Victory's display,
who sees it at day-break: the pair of the Jina's feet, granting the desired goal, with its shade of **foliage of the wish-fulfilling tree**,
he may well be the one **temple for all great festivals**.⁴⁰

In a similar way all the other stanzas of the poem are presented with illustrations; sometimes only one word is represented by the corresponding

³⁹ Ex. 14. *Bhūpālastotra*: 8–9: Ṛṣabha's *samavasaraṇa* (left); & quotation and illustration of the first stanza (right).

⁴⁰ *śrī-līlāyatanaṃ mahī-kula-grhaṃ kīrti-pramodāspadaṃ ||
vāgdevī-rati-ketanaṃ jaya-ramā-kṛdā-nidhānaṃ mahat |
sa syāt sarva-mahotsavaika-bhavanaṃ yaḥ prārthitārtha-pradaṃ ||
prātaḥ paśyati kalpapādapa-dala-cchāyaṃ jināṃhri-dvayaṃ ||1||*



15. Bhūpālastotra: Ms. p. 18: Puṣpadanta.
Source: Renate Söhnen-Thieme.

picture, as in the next example (praising *Supārśva*, the seventh Jina): only the serpent of the world cycle (*saṃsāra-sarpa*) is represented, whose poison is destroyed by the Jina according to the stanza (*Bhūpālastotra*: 15).

More often there are several terms or a scene that are depicted. In the case of *Puṣpadanta* [ex. 15, *Bhūpālastotra*: 18] the eight *prātihāryas*, the insignia with which a Jina should be presented, are listed and illustrated: the (lion) throne, the three-tiered parasol, the resplendent halo, two attendants with chowries and a cascade of flowers in the upper shrine, an *Aśoka* tree, the beating of kettle-drums, and speech (in a divine and human assembly).

O king, may the excellent Jina protect us, for whom the diadems of all protectors of the earth form a footstool, who, garlanded with lustre, illuminates the **lotus-pond-like assembly of gods and men** with his eight marvellous insignia: the **triad** of white **umbrellas**, the **chowries**, the **Aśoka tree**, a **halo**, (divine) speech, an abundance of **flowers**, the lion **throne**, and the **drums of the gods**.⁴¹

How *Śīṭala* is honoured by the arrival of the gods is pictured in a charming way [ex. 16, *Bhūpālastotra*: 19–20]: the page on the right shows Indra and his consort arriving on his white elephant, whose

⁴¹ *deva śvetātapatra-traya-camara-ruhāśoka-bhāścakra-bhāṣā-puṣpaughāsāra-simhāsana-surapaṭahair aṣṭabhiḥ prātahāryai(h)*
(for *prātihāryaiḥ*)
sāścaryai(r) bhrājamāna(h) sura-manuja-sabhāmbhojinī(m?) bhānumā[nī]lī
(comm. -*mālīna*)
pāyān naḥ pādapī[r]ṭhokṛta-sakala-jagat-pāla-mauli(r) jinendraḥ ||9||
(comm. -*pādapīṭhikṛta*-)

three trunks bear lotuses and his tusks a lotus pond on which an Apsaras is dancing, various instruments are played by Indra himself (the *vīṇā*), his attendants (the trumpet and a kind of horn), and gods (with percussion instruments); three divine ladies appear on the left-hand page with flower garlands.

The arrival of the gods, o God, marks the success of the performance of your auspicious veneration, with its assemblage of **Apsarases dancing in the lotus grove on the teeth of the dancing celestial elephant**, with its [?] (*māḍya- nilampa-*) of **resounding instruments** contributing to the festive procession of the three worlds, enjoyable for (or: because of) the **lovely divine ladies**, in whose lotus hands **flower garlands** are placed for playing.⁴²

In the illustration of the stanza praising *Vāsupūjya* [ex. 17, *Bhūpālāstotra*: 22–23] the triad of the main Hindu gods is presented, whom the stanza



17. *Bhūpālāstotra*: Ms. p. 22-23: *Vāsupūjya*. Source: Renate Söhnen-Thieme.

⁴² *nr̥tyat-svarddam̐ti-dam̐tāmburuha-vananañannākanārī-nikāya(h) ||
sadyas trailokya-yātrotsavakara-ninad[ad]ātodyamāḍyanilampah ||
hastāmbho-jāta-līlā-vinihita-sumano[d]dāma-ramyāmara-strī-
-kāmyah kalyāṇapūjāvidhiṣu vijayate deva devāgamas te ||10||*

declares to be inferior to the Jina, since they are attached to female consorts: Viṣṇu (in the form of Kṛṣṇa playing the flute), Brahmā with four faces and four arms, and Śiva sitting on a tiger skin, with his trident, on which a small drum is fixed, and with the Gaṅgā flowing from his head (the name Indumauli ‘moon-crowned’ is not interpreted visually).

This presentation may be concluded with the beautifully illustrated stanza praising Mallinātha [ex. 18, *Bhūpālastotra* 31–32], who is metaphorically identified with various winged beings: a parrot (who often functions as a narrator), a cuckoo, a goose, and a bee. In the picture the parrot sits close to the Jina’s throne, with two ascetics as listeners, perhaps also the two well-educated men (*paṇḍita*) who applaud with ‘*yai yai yai yai yai*’ and ‘*jayajayaja...*’, and beside them two koels (Indian cuckoos) are shown in Indra’s pleasure grove. On the right-hand page we find two bees flying to a jasmine bush (*mallikā*: clearly an allusion to the name Mallinātha), as well as a lotus-pond with two geese swimming on it.

You are the **parrot** in the hermitage of **ascetics** of the emerging true religion; you are the composer of poetic works;

you are a **cuckoo** in Indra’s pleasure grove, you are a **bee** delighted in the sacred **jasmine**,

you are a **goose in the lake of lotuses** in the story of the *punnāga* tree; with which ornamental crests garlanded by jewels, your virtues, are you, protector of the earth, not adorned?⁴³

Let us briefly recapitulate the ways of ‘crossing boundaries’ between the verbal and visual medium by ‘translation’, i.e. conveying meanings from one medium to the other, in our case between Jaina literature and pieces of art. In sculptures it was shown how it was rather a certain concept, e.g., the concept of the ultimate spiritual perfection in attaining

⁴³ *tvam dharmodaya-tā(pa)sāśrama-śukas tvam kāvya-baṇḍha-kramah |*
kṛtā-nandana-kokilas tvam ucita-śrīmāllikā-ṣaṭpadaḥ |
tvam punnāga-kathāraṇḍa-saras[ī]hṃsas tvam uttamaśakaiḥ |
kai[r] bhūpāla na dhāryase guṇa-maṇi-śrag-ā)mālibhir maulibhiḥ || 20 ||

omniscience and liberation, which is visually conveyed by the utmost perfection of a liberated Jina's body, to which only very few individual accessories may be added, but there is no specific text to which this may refer, not even an oral predecessor of a text that was committed to writing only much later. Thus it is not really justified to count them as 'translations' (the 'borderline' is not between the visual and the textual medium), but they are included here in order to show the starting-point of a development towards a gradually closer relationship with the textual medium.

Quite different are the miniatures: accompanying a narrative text, here the biographies of some of the Jinas, they translate important events in the Jinas' lives into visual scenes, concentrating on their central message. Interestingly, the miniatures are not restricted to the presentation of narratives found in the text they are illustrating, but the artists seem to have been free in their choice of passages from other texts or even later commentaries, which were known to the individual artist. Thus, the illustrations of the *Kalpasūtra* do not draw necessarily on their own text, but on other texts which are earlier (like the *Ācārāṅga* and probably the *Uttarādhyayana*) or later than the *Kalpasūtra* or the *Uttarādhyayana* (e.g., pieces of commentarial literature); it is rather a 'free translation'. In some cases, however, the visual translation tries to follow its source text indeed as closely as possible, as we have seen in the case of Nemi's wedding according to the *Uttarādhyayana*.

The *Bhūpālastotra* presents a third strategy of translating text into the visual medium, which is probably partly owed to its genre: as a *stotra*, it is not meant to be a narrative, but a highly poetical eulogy, full of metaphors that are visualized in the illustrations, wherever possible. The whole is held together by the sequence of the Jinas, presented in the paintings with their characteristic attributes (see Appendix), and by the figures accompanying the presentation of each of them, viz. the monk Vinayacandra and king Bhūpāla, to whom this hymn of praise of the Jinas is recited.

The illustration of similes occurring in a eulogy is, however, not an innovation of the *Bhūpālastotra*. In at least two of the illuminated

manuscripts of the *Uttarādhyanasūtra*, one can find a visualization of the similes used in the praise due to a very learned monk in ch. 11, who is compared to the most excellent representative of fifteen classes of beings or objects, as can be seen in the last example: a conch-shell (containing a shining water drop), an excellent horse, a valiant hero, an elephant, a buffalo, a lion, a world emperor, a Vāsudeva, the god Indra, the sun, the moon, a (well-protected) storehouse with grain, a magnificent Jambū tree (belonging to, or inhabited by, the deity Aṇḍhya), the mighty river Śītā, Mount Mandara, and the ocean [ex. 19].⁴⁴ This seems to be the closest ‘one-to-one translation’ to be found in the miniatures.

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⁴⁴ Ex. 20. *Uttarādhyanasūtra* manuscript from Gujarat (ca. 1460). V&A Museum, London, no. IS.2:10/2-1972. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

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Appendix 1

(a) The fourteen auspicious dreams of a Jina's mother after her conception (Śvetāmbara):

An elephant, a bull, a lion, two garlands, the goddess Śrī, a banner, the moon, the sun, a vase, a lotus-pond, the ocean, a palace of the gods (*vimāna*), a heap of jewels, smokeless fire.

The sixteen auspicious dreams (Digambaras):

An elephant, a bull, a lion, Śrī/Lakṣmī, two garlands (*puṣpamālā*), the sun, the full moon, two fish, two water jugs (*kalaśa*), a lotus-pond, the ocean, the lion throne (*siṃhāsana*), a chariot from heaven (*devavimāna*), the king of snakes from the netherworld, a heap of jewels, smokeless fire.

(b) List of the twenty-four Jinas with their emblems (compiled from various sources)⁴⁵

name		emblem		
		Śvetāmbara	Digambara	special colour
1	Rṣabha	bull		
2	Ajita	elephant		
3	Sambhava	horse		
4	Abhinandana	monkey		
5	Sumati	heron	cuckoo	
6	Padmaprabha	red lotus		
7	Supārśva	<i>svastikā</i>	<i>svastikā</i>	green or blue
8	Candraprabha	moon		
9	Puṣpadanta	crocodile	crab, fish	
10	Śītala	<i>śrīvatsa</i>	<i>svastikā</i>	
11	Śreyāmsa	rhinoceros		
12	Vāsupūjya	buffalo		red
13	Vimāla	boar		
14	Ananta	falcon	(bear)	
15	Dharmanātha	thunderbolt (or mace)		
16	Śāntinātha	deer		
17	Kunthu	goat		
18	Ara (Aruha)	<i>nandyāvarta</i>	(fish or flower)	
19	Malli	water jar	Mallinātha	
20	Munisuvrata	tortoise		
21	Nami	blue water lily		
22	(Ariṣṭa)Nemi	conch-shell		black/blue
23	Pārśva	cobra		green
24	Mahāvīra	lion		

⁴⁵ For example, Brown 1934: 49, or Glasenapp 1925, plate 22–23.

Appendix 2: List of examples (with brief reference to sources)

1. Nemi with Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa (Vṛṣṇi triad), Mathurā, 2nd–3rd cent. (Schmid 2010: 571, no. 7; photo by C. Schmid).
2. Jina Neminatha (standing) from Mathura, c. 3rd–4th cent., State Museum Lucknow (*Peaceful Liberators* catalogue no. 17: 128; photo by Ranjit K. Datta Gupta).
3. Saṃvara attacking Pārśvanātha, Madhya Pradesh, Gyaraspur, ca. 600. (photo Victoria & Albert Museum courtesy, see also *Peaceful Liberators* catalogue no. 21: 134).
4. Rṣabha, Madhya Pradesh, 11th/12th cent. (Musée Guimet website, see also Quint. no. 7.13, *Victorious Ones*: 123).
5. The five auspicious events in Pārśva's life, late 16th or early 17th cent. (Brown 1934: 41 f, fig. 92.).
6. The fourteen auspicious dreams (Glasenapp 1925: plate 20).
7. Episodes from the life of Rṣabha, wooden book cover, ca. 1100–1125 (Doshi 1985: 35, fig. 1).
- 8a. Rṣabha teaches the arts: inventing pottery, carpentry, and weaving, prob. late 16th or early 17th cent., cf. Brown 1934: 3 (and 51 f, fig. 122).
- 8b. Rṣabha invents pottery, prob. 16th cent., cf. Brown 1934: 3 (and 51 f, fig. 123).
9. Mahāvīra's austerities, prob. 16th cent., cf. Brown 1934: 3 (and 37 f., fig. 78).
- 10a. Pārśva rescuing the snakes, prob. 15th cent., Brown 1934: 42, fig. 93 (cf. *ibid.*: 2–4).
- 10b. Pārśva rescuing the snakes, prob. 16th cent., Brown 1934: 42, fig. 94 (cf. *ibid.*: 2–4).
11. Episodes from the life of Nemi from birth to initiation, wooden book cover, ca. 1100–1125 (Doshi 1985: 41, fig. 18).

12a. Ariṣṭanemi driving to the bridal pavilion in a two-wheeled chariot and returning, after seeing the penned animals; dated 1512 AD, cf. Brown 1941: 3 (ibid.: 46 f, fig. 108).

12b. Ariṣṭanemi riding to the bridal pavilion on an elephant, and returning in a four-wheeled chariot, after seeing the penned animals; prob. 16th cent., cf. Brown 1941: 3 (and 46 f, fig. 109).

13. (lower part:) The marriage procession of Neminātha, arriving and returning on an elephant, Pātan, 1288 AD (Chandra 1948: p. 19 of the plates, fig. 50; description p. 141).

14.–18. *Bhūpālastotra* (photos by Gourang Sarraf; grey-scale scan by R. Söhnen-Thieme):

14. p. 8–9: Rṣabha's *samavasaraṇa*.

15. p. 18: Puṣpadanta (9th Jina).

16. p.19–20: Śīṭala (10th Jina).

17. p. 22–23: Vāsupūjya (12th Jina).

18. p. 31–32: Mallinātha (19th Jina).

19. Similes for a 'very learned monk' in *Uttarādhyayana* ch. 12: ms. in the Victoria & Albert Museum (photo: Victoria & Albert Museum courtesy).