

Research article

Development of Early Jain Manuscript Paintings: A Journey through *Kalpasutra* Paintings

Supriya Lahoti✉

Indian Institute of Heritage, New Delhi, India.

Abstract

Jain manuscripts have a rich history of artistic embellishment. Interestingly, some of the earliest instances of Indian miniature paintings can be traced back to illustrated Jain manuscripts. We explore the stylistic roots of Jain manuscript paintings along with the role of patronage in the production of these manuscripts. In this scholarly exploration, we delve into the stylistic journey of these paintings, focusing specifically on the widely illustrated *Kalpasutra* until the 16th century. The earliest Jain manuscripts were meticulously crafted on palm leaves and encased within painted wooden covers. These early works featured sparse illustrations, often centered around decorative borders and single figures. However, with the adoption of paper, the painting style underwent significant transformation. It became more detailed and ornate, while still adhering to hieratic conventions. Noteworthy features of this style include the use of bright primary colors, precise lines, formal composition, and stylized figures with sharply defined gestures and prominent eyes. As we approach the late 15th to early 16th centuries, Jain manuscript paintings began to draw inspiration from external artistic traditions. Influences from Mamluk Egypt and Timurid Persia shaped the visual language of these illustrations. During this period, the palette shifted, with hues of blue and gold dominating the compositions, signaling a move toward a more opulent aesthetic. Production centers such as Patan, Mandu, and Jaunpur contributed distinct regional stylistic idioms to the world of Jain manuscript art. In fine, it can be said that these manuscripts serve as a testament to the intersection of spirituality, creativity, and patronage within the vibrant realm of Jain culture and art.

Keywords: Jain Manuscript painting, Western Indian Painting style, *Kalpasutra*



Introduction

Preceding the production of popularly known miniature painting styles of India, such as Mughal and Rajput, two traditions of miniature painting existed in the Indian subcontinent. One was from Nepal and Northern Bengal closely associated with Buddhism, and the second was from Western

Article History: Received: 25 December 2023. Revised: 27 February 2024. Accepted: 10 March 2024. Published: 20 March 2024.

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Citation: Lahoti, S. 2024. Development of Early Jain Manuscript Paintings: A Journey through *Kalpasutra* Paintings. *Chitrolekha Journal* 8:1 <https://doi.org/10.21659/cjad.81.v8n102>

India, primarily seen in manuscripts of Svetambara Jains (Brown, 1930, p. 35). Jain manuscripts are an integral part of understanding Indian history in terms of culture, religion, and lifestyle; and the best-preserved examples of early Indian painting on paper, stored and revered in Jain *bhandaras* or "knowledge warehouses" (Goswamy, 2014, p. 150) over centuries. The tradition of preserving religious knowledge through manuscripts not only safeguards the theological tenets and practices of Jainism but also offers invaluable insights into the socio-cultural dynamics of the periods in which they were created. Out of their canonical texts, the most reproduced and illustrated is the *Kalpasutra*, which recounts the life of Lord Mahavira along with biographies of Tirthankaras and other significant figures in Jain philosophy (The British Library, nd).

The methodology for this paper employs a comparative visual analysis of manuscripts from different periods and is supplemented by contextual research for interpreting the visual findings. The focus is specifically placed on the depiction of infant Jina with his mother—a recurring and symbolically significant scene in the *Kalpasutra*.

The paper explores the significance and use of *Kalpasutra* manuscripts for Jains, the patronage of these manuscripts, along with production methods and stylistic variations seen in the early period of production. While correlating visual trends with historical and cultural developments, we also try to understand the interplay between religion, society, and the individual artist's creativity contributed to the early stylistic development of the *Kalpasutra*.

Significance of Jain Manuscripts and the *Kalpasutra* in particular

Religious manuscripts serve as tangible embodiments of a community's faith, wisdom, and traditions. The central role played by manuscripts is a common feature of South Asian religions, especially their worship and recitation. For Jains, these scriptures not only encapsulate sacred teachings but also become integral aspects of their devotion and spiritual practices (Cort, 1995, p. 5). The study of canonical texts is an important part of Jain monastic life, and the worship of books or *jnanapuja* is also a crucial activity in temple rituals (Guy, 2017). These manuscripts serve as a critical vehicle for preserving and propagating Jain doctrines and hold exceptional spiritual significance, as they embody teachings deemed worthy of diligent transmission and veneration within the faith (Syed, 2016). The Jains believe in the power of the recitation of sacred manuscripts (Cort, 1995, p. 65), which has also been a key ritualistic practice in the subcontinent. These manuscripts are treated with utmost reverence, with the creation and dissemination of such texts being seen as an act of devotion (Dalvi, 2017). This underscores the central role that manuscripts play in the religious and spiritual life of Jains, contributing to their quest for punya, or spiritual merit. Listening to recitations of sacred texts and the donation of these manuscripts or Shastra-dan to temple libraries are fundamental to their religious practice and pursuit of enlightenment (Doshi, 1985, p. 30).

Kalpasutra written by Bhadrabahu around the 4th – 5th century BCE is the eighth chapter of the canonical texts of Svetambara Jains, known as the *Paryusanakalpa Sutra* (the book of rules for the *Paryusana* Season) (Dalvi, 2017). The narrative begins with the life of Mahavira, the 24th Jina in detail and then events in the lives of the 22nd and 23rd Jinas, Parsvanatha and Neminatha are described. Following this the 21st to 2nd Jina are all shown together pictorially, with text implying

that their life events were similar to the previously mentioned Jinas (Mahavira, Parsvanatha and Neminatha). The section ends with the life stories of the first Jina, Rishabhanatha (Granoff, 2009, p. 224). The recitation of the *Kalpasutra* forms an important part of the annual *Paryushana* festival during the monsoon season when the monks and nuns fast, spend time in contemplation and are accessible to the lay man. Once the text is recited and illustrated folios are held up to the devotees as *darshana* or holy viewing.

Context of Jain Illustrated Manuscripts

- **Origins**

Like other religious teachings in the subcontinent, Jain teachings were traditionally passed down orally. It is said that the Jains learned about the limitations of this tradition after a massive famine in the 5th century which resulted in the death of many Jain monks in the region and the significant loss of Jain sacred lore. They started transcribing their teachings and drafted their canonical textsⁱⁱ but it was and only after the 8th Century that commissioning manuscripts gathered momentum.

None of the extant manuscripts before the 10th century carry illustrations, however, there is no clear picture as to how the concept of illustrated manuscripts emerged (Doshi, 1985, p. 33). It can be speculated that the art of manuscript illumination started by drawing inspiration from early Buddhist manuscripts, where the illustrations did not have any link with the text and were purely iconographical in purpose. This can be said by looking at the development of early Jain manuscripts. In the earliest Jain manuscripts, figures and deities were present for talismanic reasons rather than a narrative purpose. Illustrations in the 12th Century lacked fixed iconographical schemes and eventually the narrative potential of illustrations is realized in the 13th Century and the narrative tradition emerged (Losty, 1998, p. 22).

- **Patronage**

While various kings and dynasties have patronised Jainism throughout its history, the Solanki rulers of Western India are particularly noted for their substantial contributions to the commissioning of Jain manuscripts. The kings of the Chalukya (Solanki) dynasty, who ruled Gujarat and much of Rajasthan and Malwa from the 10th to the late 13th century, were ardent patrons of the Jain faith. They built numerous temples, libraries and commissioned a substantial number of manuscripts during their reign. It is believed that King Siddharaja Jayasimha of Patan (1094- 1143) employed 300 scribes to transcribe and reproduce books and manuscripts for the royal library. His successor, King Kumarapala (1143–1174), continued this tradition by founding 21 Jain libraries, each graced with a *Kalpasutra* manuscript written in gold (Goswamy, 2014, p.152). The earliest surviving Jain paintings, crafted on palm leaves, originate from Western Indian provinces under Solanki rule.

However, with the decline of the Solanki Dynasty, the region experienced a wave of Islamic invasions during the 13th and 14th centuries, resulting in the destruction of many temples much like other parts of India. The references of painting we have from before this period are primarily on palm leaf manuscripts; other art forms such as temple banners and murals have been lost to time. These manuscripts' survival is attributed to their portability, which enabled them to be

transported to safer locations amidst the Islamic incursions into North India. For instance, the Jain *bhandaras* in the remote desert enclave of Jaisalmer, Rajasthan, became a safe space for precious manuscripts from centres like Patan and Ahmedabad, particularly during the turbulent times like Alauddin Khalji's conquest of Gujarat in 1299 CE (Pal, 1999, p.90).

Philanthropy, as identified by Jain canonical texts for the laity, highly prioritised the commissioning of temples and manuscripts. Jain bankers and merchants, working under Islamic rule thought it to be wise to be less overt about their religious expression, thereby patronising manuscript art. Consequently, numerous manuscripts were commissioned during this period (Doshi, 1985, p. 45). Colophons frequently detailed the donor's name, reason for donation, name of the recipient monk and name of the scribe along with the year of production; illustrators, however, often remained unnamed. Despite this, the nature of the art suggests a close collaboration between the scribe and the artist (Pal, 1999, p. 93).

In Buddhist communities during this time, monks often engaged in the illustration and transcription of manuscripts. However, in the text, *Uttaradhyanasutra* warns Jain monks of the potent power of painting to arouse passion (Jacobi, 2020). Artistic practices were seen to be incompatible with Jain monastic lifestyle. However, some scholars suggest that the colophons of early manuscripts from the Jaina School indicate that the scribes were predominantly monks, and it is likely that the illustrators were monks as wellⁱⁱⁱ. As the demand increased and the manuscripts became more sophisticated, artists from diverse religious backgrounds, including Hindu and later, Muslim, were commissioned to illustrate the *Kalpasutra* for Jains (Pal, 1999, p.92). For instance, an inscription on a 1465 CE *Kalpasutra* from Jaunpur reveals that it was penned and illustrated by the Kayasthas, a Hindu caste of professional scribesⁱⁱⁱ. It is not clear when the illumination of sacred manuscripts became customary, however, when it did, it created a pictorial tradition along with a literal and oral one for the *Kalpasutra* (Pal, 1999, p. 89).

Following the mid-14th century and the introduction of paper in manuscript production, colophons reveal the patronage of the lay middle-class, predominantly merchants and traders. These manuscripts were first presented to the donor's spiritual teacher and then to the teacher's temple library (Pal, 1999, p. 92). A huge number of manuscripts were commissioned during this time.

- **Format**

The earliest of Jain paintings in India are illustrated palm leaf manuscripts and book covers from the 11th – 12th century. The palm leaf folios were prepared from leaves of talipot or papayra, - which were then boiled, dried, and then trimmed. The result was long, narrow folios, stacked together to form a book; these folios were pierced in one or more places to thread a cord from, to hold the manuscript together and covered with wooden book covers or *patlis* (Pal, 1999, p. 90). The folios are flipped over horizontally as the text is read from left to right. The text was first written by the scribe and blank spaces were left for the artist to paint. The text of these early manuscripts was Prakrit language using the Jain Nagari script, a variant of the Devanagari script specific to the Jain texts from Western India. The division of the manuscript was usually done by the scribe, as occasionally, we get to see a brief caption of a tiny sketch indicating the illustration required (Granoff, 2009, p.224).

Early Palm-leaf Manuscripts

The early palm leaf manuscripts from the 11th to 13th century were very sparingly illustrated; much of the illustration was concentrated on decorative borders and single figures. One of the earliest illustrated manuscripts is a philosophical text from 1060 CE preserved in the Jaisalmer Bhandara-the Oghaniryukti (Fig. 1). Goddess Shri and Kamadeva are shown here, drawn with taunt lines, the similarity to pre-existing mural painting traditions seen in Ajanta, Ellora and Bagh caves can be observed (fig.2) (Doshi, 1985, p. 34).

Painting developed in the early Rashtrakuta tradition as seen in Ellora (8th century) is the style that is ultimately taken forward in the Western Indian school of art. The simplicity of colour, stylized form, angular features and strong outline of characters in a two-dimensional form is observed in the paintings (S, 2006, p.48). However, book covers from this period were heavily illustrated (fig. 3). It is argued that this is because the grainy surface of palm -leaves posed a challenge for painters. The smooth surface of wood was more conducive for detailed painting (Goswamy, 2014, p.152). This point however is not agreed upon by all scholars. Doshi (1985) disagrees with the conclusion as she argues that the refinement seen in paper manuscripts around the 14th century is also seen in palm-leaf manuscripts of the same time. She attributes the increase in workmanship later to a shift in style sensibilities (Doshi, 1985, p. 34).



Figure 1: Two folios, Shri and Kamadeva; folio with colophon; palm leaf; (1060 CE), Gujrat, Rajasthan, Western Indian Style. (Jain Trust- Jaisalmer) . Source: p. 36; Doshi, S (1985)



Figure 2: Detail of Cave 1: Scene from Mahajanaka jataka, Mahayana phase (5th – 6th Century), Ajanta Cave 1 Mahajanaka Jataka Mural 2; Jean-Pierre Dalbéra; 24th February c. 2015 Source: Flickr, Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ajanta_Cave_1_Mahajanaka_Jataka_mural_2.jpg#filelinks



Figure 3: One of a Pair of Jain Manuscript Covers (Patli), Opaque watercolour on wood (early 12th century), (Gujarat, India); 2 3/16 x 12 3/4 in. (5.5 x 32.4 cm), (Metropolitan Museum of Art), 1984.496.33b. Source - www.metmuseum.org

From a 12th century Chalukayan text, we know that an accomplished painter would be skilled at fresco and miniature painting alike. This indicates that these early miniatures are in fact miniaturized murals (Pal, 1999, p.94). Ananda Coomaraswamy (1877-1947), the pioneering historian and philosopher of Indian art, said that the panels of miniature paintings in manuscripts must be regarded as “excerpts from painted walls, reduced in size and added to the written page” (Ghose, 1927, p.198).

The stylistic tenets that came to define Western Indian art for the next 400 years crystallized in the 12th century. Palm leaf manuscripts, characterized by broad strokes and simpler compositions and structures compared to paper manuscripts, reflected these early aesthetic principles (Cort, 1995, p. 5). By the end of the 13th Century, the narrative content begins to be illustrated on palm leaves with complex compositions depicting landscapes such as hills and trees and architectural details such as interiors and furnishings. These folios contained a lot more illustrations than previously seen (fig. 4). A progressive narrative was adopted, wherein multiple episodes could be depicted within a single miniature, allowing characters to appear several times within the same frame to convey different parts of the story. (Doshi, 1985, p. 44). The distinctive stylistic tenets of Western Indian art will be examined in further detail subsequently.



Figure 4: Episodes from the life of Parshva, palm leaf manuscript; (1275-1300 CE); Gujrat and Rajasthan; Western Indian Style. (Jain Trust- Jaisalmer). Source: p. 40-41; Doshi, S (1985)

Characteristics and Stylistic Tenants of Western Indian Art through *Kalpasutra*

The distinctive form and expression in Jaina art or Western Indian school of art has been moulded by hieratic tradition (Losty, 1975, p.146). When illustrating for a manuscript such as the *Uttaradhyayanasutra*, the artist enjoyed greater creative liberty due of the vast array of stories and narratives available. Unlike in the case of the *Kalpasutra*, where the limited range of subjects suitable for artistic depiction prevented any deviation from the precedent, with only the most skilled artists able to make any significant departures from established norms (Losty, 1975, p. 146).

The paintings were not made for the sake of art or enjoyment but for the representation of the Tirtankaras, who were the subject of adoration (Nawab, 1980, p. 3). These paintings are formal and serious art which is distinguished by excellent craftsmanship. The drawing is usually rigid and inelastic; however, power of expression and grace can be observed. The adherence to ritual is carried out seriously in the Jain art dogma to the extent that images of the Jinas differing in age by centuries are almost indistinguishable in style (Ghose, 1927, p.193). The school is characterised by linear energy and taut lines and angular outlines and exaggerated body proportions (Doshi, 1985, p.45).

- **Composition and form**

Scenes and compositions depicted in the *Kalpasutra* are often standardized with the same compositions being repeated over again (fig. 4) (Granoff, 2009, p.224). There is conventionalization in Jaina art forms of genders and sameness of composition. The figures were top-heavy with a large head in relation to their body and big eyes in relation to their face (fig. 5). Illustrations of one manuscript are identical to another. The art is based on convention and excludes freedom of design and form for the artist (Ghose, 1927, p.200). Free rendering of the human figure is not done in this style of art. Figures stand, sit or lie in only one position. Movement, posture, and expression draws inspiration from the language of dance (Pal, 1999, p. 95). From the 11th Century, the figures and their limbs would be spaced out around on a red background. To compensate for these restrictions, the artists were allowed the freedom of colouring and detailing; the full potential of this is seen in the 15th century (Sarabhai, p. 4).



Figure 5: The Panchakalyanaka of Neminatha; Kalpasutra and Kalakacharya- katha; paper; (1375-1400 CE); Gujrat; Western Indian style (Prince of Wales Museum of Western India). Source: p. 47; Doshi, S (1985)

- **Facial features**

The protruding eye and three-fourth profile, first seen in Ajanta (fig. 2) is characteristic Jain art feature. The meditative lotus-shaped eyes with drooping eyelids in Ajanta is replaced by fish-shaped eyes, suggesting alertness (Pal, 1999, p.97). The eye appears to be floating away from the flesh-tinted face onto the red ground. Faces are displayed in either a full frontal view or a three-fourth view, which is little more than a profile view. The projecting eye is drawn outside the contours of the face that sticks out in the monochrome background. This angularity of the face and the extension of the eyes is consistent with Svetambara temple sculptures of Jinas (Brown, 1930, p. 38).

- **Line and colours**

Cursive line and limited colour palettes and a flat two-dimensional quality is seen in this tradition (Doshi, 1985, p.42). Strong colours, formal composition and highly stylized figures in traditionally fixed postures are observable. The poses are lively, and the clothes are brilliantly patterned textiles. These paintings lack depth and shadows, and the colour range is restricted. Sharply pointed noses, chins, glances, gestures showed a certain concentration in the characters depicted (Brown, 1930, p. 36). Fractions of regional style did not influence the basic style enough to alter its integral character. In the 15th century, the style becomes complex, but the underlying principles remained unchanged (Doshi, 1985, p.42). With time, illustrations become more ambitious when paper begins to replace palm leaf in the second half of the 14th century.

Transition to Paper Manuscripts

After Alauddin Khalji's invasion of Gujarat in 1299, there were no significant transformations in line, form, and colour; however, there were sudden improvements in workmanship (Doshi, 1985, p. 46-47). Islamic invaders introduced paper in India around the 13th century, but it started being used in Jain-illustrated manuscripts only from the 14th Century (Dalvi, 2017). The transition was slow initially, but from 15th century on, paper eclipsed palm leaf as the preferred medium (Brown, 1930, p. 36). However, the format of the page and the dimensions of the manuscripts were not changed much despite the possibility of change offered by the nature of the new medium (Goswamy, 2014, p.153). The verso and recto of paper folios contain red dots; often decorated, these dots represent the hole through which string would thread in earlier palm leaf versions (Granoff, 2009, p.224). The paper period yields more delicate outlines, detailing and complexity in composition. The paintings look more elegant, sophisticated and aesthetic in comparison to palm leaf paintings, probably because paper was a better medium to illustrate on (Motilal p.40).

There was a new awareness of the stylistic form once paper started being used for manuscripts. Artists adopted a few details from Persian miniatures such as finer hair, a high level of refinement in the art, and a calligraphic concept of drawing (Fig. 6) (Chandra, 1949, p .16). Taut lines were now smooth, and fluid and a wide spectrum of colours were accentuated with gold and silver. The architecture is articulately depicted, and the interiors are exquisitely displayed with details on fabric visible (Fig. 7). Foliage is much more freely used in paper. It reflects a change in style sensibilities, where precision and elegance met the new need (Doshi, 1985, p.47).

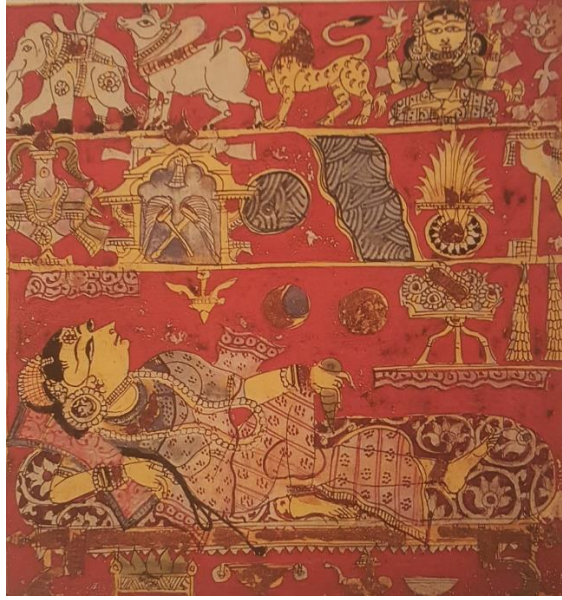


Figure 6: *Kalpa-Sutra*; paper; (1400 CE).; Gujrat, Rajasthan, Western Indian Style:(Jain Bhandhara, Jaisalmer).
Source: p. 105; Doshi, S (1985)

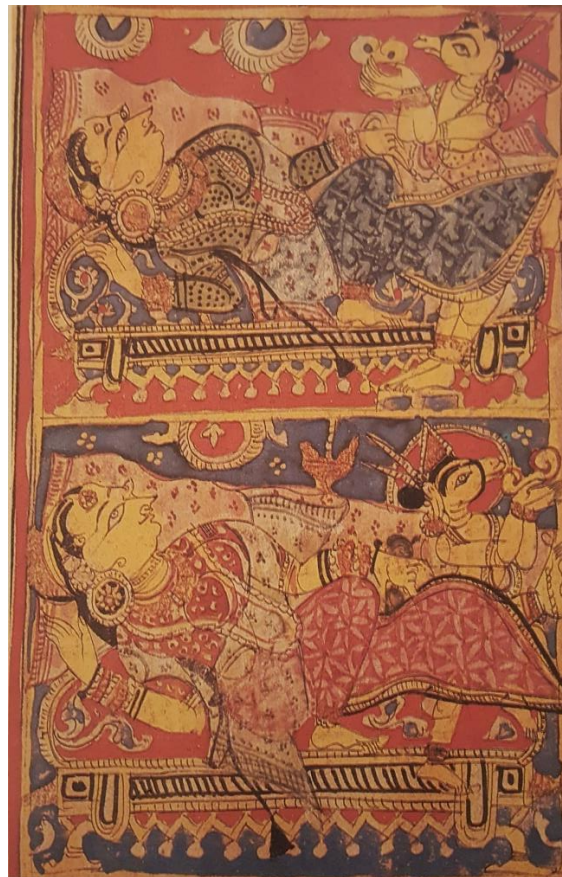


Figure 7: *Kalpa-Sutra*; paper; (1400 CE).; Gujrat, Rajasthan, Western Indian Style: (Private Collection). Source:
p.107; Doshi, S (1985)

Development of the Style - 15th Century Onwards

Due to the growing contact with Islamic kingdoms of Mamluk, Egypt and Timurid, Persia, art from the Islamic worlds- Islamic manuscripts, carpets, textiles, and metalware contributed to the Indian visual language of the time. This is reflected in the detailing of interiors and furniture of the manuscripts. The palette of colours now increases to include new pigments in the 15th century - ultramarine from lapis lazuli, crimson from insect lac, old rose and gold. Gold was used for highlights initially, however, soon, wealthy patrons started to request for lavish use of the metal for an ostentatious show of their generosity. (Pal, 1999, p.95)

Around 1400s, folios became wider (Pal, 1999, p.99) with a wide variety of pigments being used due to availabilityⁱ and extensive amounts of gold leaf was used due to the Persian contact. The execution of the line and detail in the jewellery, fabric, furniture and interiors fill up the ground and keep the painting looking restless. There is a speckled colour field in which figures and ground are one. Despite following the hieratic form and composition, the detailing of the queen's chest, arms, hands and jewellery and fabric patterns is executed with precision (Chandra, 1949, p. 16-20). Contemporary textile trends are depicted – tie-dye patterns in dots and stripes, block printed and woven designs (Doshi, 1985, p.45) (fig. 6, 7). The composition is on red ground, a profuse use of gold, ultramarine, carmine, and green is made. The faces of women are treated more carefully, like in early Mughal schools (Doshi, (985, p.45). Previously, the halo depicted as a slender ring encircling the head was now rendered with opaque colours in contrast to the ground (fig. 8) (Nawab, 1980, p. 1).



Figure 8: Page 16 from a Manuscript of the Kalpasutra: recto text, verso image of Trishala reclining, Opaque water colour and ink on gold leaf on paper (1472), Patan, Gujarat; 11x 26 cm. (Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Dr. Bertram H. Schaffner, 1994.11.24). Source: <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/>

Wide folios mean bigger compositions and the addition of details such as borders, where the Persian influence can clearly be seen (Chandra, 1949, p. 40). These borders resembled Quran bindings, particularly in the complex cartouche and knotted design along with the use of gold (Fig. 9). In the latter part of the century, artists became increasingly creative with borders as hieratic principles did not apply to borders (fig. 10).



Figure 9: Page from a Kalpasutra showing Harinegamesin removing the foetus of Mahavira, Western India, (about 1450-1500). (Victoria and Albert Museum). Source: vam.ac.uk



Figure 10: A Monk is Greeted at the Gate of the Coronation Hall: Folio from a Kalpasutra Manuscript, Ink, opaque watercolor, and gold on paper, Master of the Devasano Pado Kalpasutra (active late 15th century), (1475 CE), Gujarat, possibly Patan, Page: 4 7/16 x 10 1/4 in. (11.2 x 26 cm), (Museum Rietberg Zürich, Gift of Balthasar and Nanni Reinhart). Source: www.metmuseum.org

Regional Stylistic Extensions

The disintegration of the Delhi Sultanate into smaller kingdoms at the beginning of the 15th century led to the creation of new local centres of power and the ruling elite. This led to the creation of different regional idioms, and the existing style and hieratic forms were being created with a fresh vitality (Doshi, 1985, p.45). Patan was the main centre of production in Gujarat; other regional production centres were (Goswamy 2014, p.153):-

- **Mandu**

In the former capital of Malwa, the Western art tradition took a subtle turn. Jainism flourished in Malwa despite the Sultan of Delhi extending its control to the region in the mid-13th century. Mandu *Kalpasutra's* (Fig. 11) follows the Western miniature style but has no elegant border decoration like Jaunpur manuscripts and *devasano pado Kalpasutra* (fig. 10). It follows an advanced technique in colouring and draughtsmanship. Unlike the Gujarati school, the nose is less beaky, and the point of the chin is not as sharp. Mandu paintings have a flat head on the top and the forehead is narrow. Hands and feet are well drawn, and nails are detailed. The male waist is full whereas the female waist is narrower than in Western Indian style of painting. Breasts are well defined, and colours used in this style are red, crimson, carmine, blue, green, yellow and pink (Indubala, 2015, pg. 13-15).

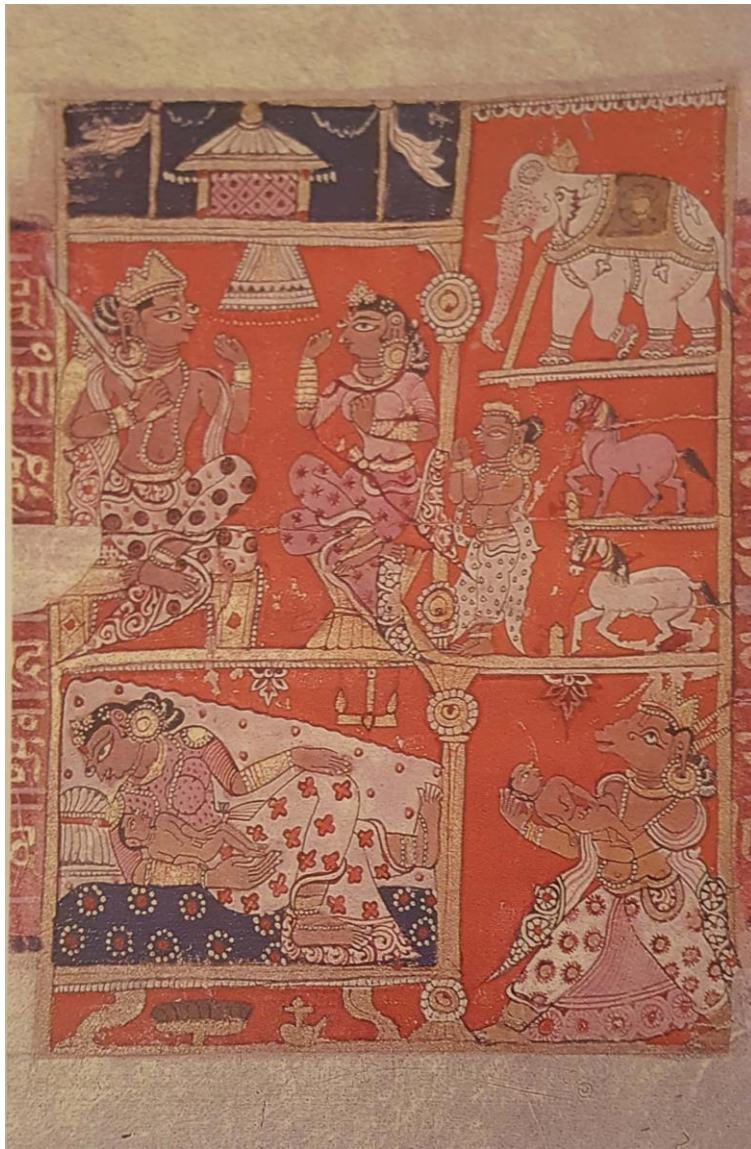


Figure 11: Exchange of embryos; Queen Trishala recounting the lucky dreams to King Siddhartha; *Kalpa-Sutra*; paper; executed in 1439 A.D. at Mandu (Malwa); central India; Western Indian Style (National Museum, New Delhi). Source: p. 50 – Doshi, S (1985)

- **Jaunpur**

Jaunpur, being a wealthy estate was a centre for Jain manuscripts which used a considerable amount of gold in the illumination (Granoff, 2009, p.14). The floral patterns on the border are beautifully executed (fig. 12). Costume draperies stick to the body at angles. It can be noticed that Jaunpur illustrations contain excessive use of beaded detailing in their costumes and jewellery which make them look distinctive from other styles.



Figure 12: Devananda's Fourteen Auspicious Dreams Foretelling the Birth of Mahavira: Folio from a Kalpasutra Manuscript, Opaque watercolor on paper, (1465 CE) : 4 5/8 x 11 1/2 in., Gujarat, Jaunpur, (Metropolitan Museum of Art). Source: metmuseum.org

From the mid to end of the 15th century blue from the lapis lazuli replaces red as the preferred background colour. Copious amounts of gold were used; gold leaf was applied to the entire paper over which the painting was done, as seen in the extravagant Devasano Pado *Kalpasutra* (fig. 10). After this manuscript however, the quality of line and composition degenerates significantly. Though, the palette of blue and gold, gets associated with *Kalpasutra* and is continued into the 16th C.

Conclusion

Jain miniature paintings truly reflect the spirit of Indian thought and religion – clear, symbolical, and brilliantly coloured. Over the centuries, thousands of handwritten manuscripts have been preserved in Jain libraries which have been an invaluable source in forming and understanding of Indian history regarding society, religion, philosophy, and art. Guided by hieratic traditions, Jaina paintings and aesthetics have greatly influenced the development of Rajput schools of painting. However, this investigation is far from exhaustive. The evolution of scripts and calligraphy, and the details of textiles, costumes, and jewellery within these manuscripts hold potential for scholarly exploration. Furthermore, the relatively unexplored Delhi and Gwalior schools of Jaina painting may offer a new perspective on regional variations and influences. As this study has concentrated on stylistic tenets within *Kalpasutra* illustrations, it invites a comparative analysis with other Jaina manuscripts, which could yield insights into the evolution of artistic motifs. As other Jaina texts such as *Uttaradhyayanasutra* gave the artist more creative liberty, a comparative study could significantly refine our understanding of the Jain artistic lexicon.

Notes

- i) Due to increased trade with Afghanistan
- ii) There are mixed opinions regarding the date. Dalvi, (2017)
- iii) Mentioned in a postgraduate studies module on 'The Western Indian Painting School' developed by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.
https://epgp.inflibnet.ac.in/epgpdata/uploads/epgp_content/S000829IC/P001803/M027463/ET/1519191135P14-M19-TheWesternIndianPaintingSchool-ET.pdf

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Supriya Lahoti is a professional in the field of art and culture. She is a consultant with the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. Supriya actively writes about art, culture, and history for the public. She previously worked at the National Museum in New Delhi and contributed to several exhibitions and publications.
