

jai jinendra

Welcome to Los Angeles **THE BIRTH PLACE OF JAINA**



Jain Center of Southern California (JCSC) is delighted to extend a warm welcome to all the delegates of the 15th Biennial JAINA Convention. A concept to unite all Jain organizations in USA and Canada under one umbrella was proposed by JCSC in 1980 & formalized at the first national convention of Jains in the USA hosted by JCSC in Los Angeles from May 22-25, 1981. Since 1981, JCSC has continued to play a significant role to help JAINA grow into a unified and well regarded international organization.



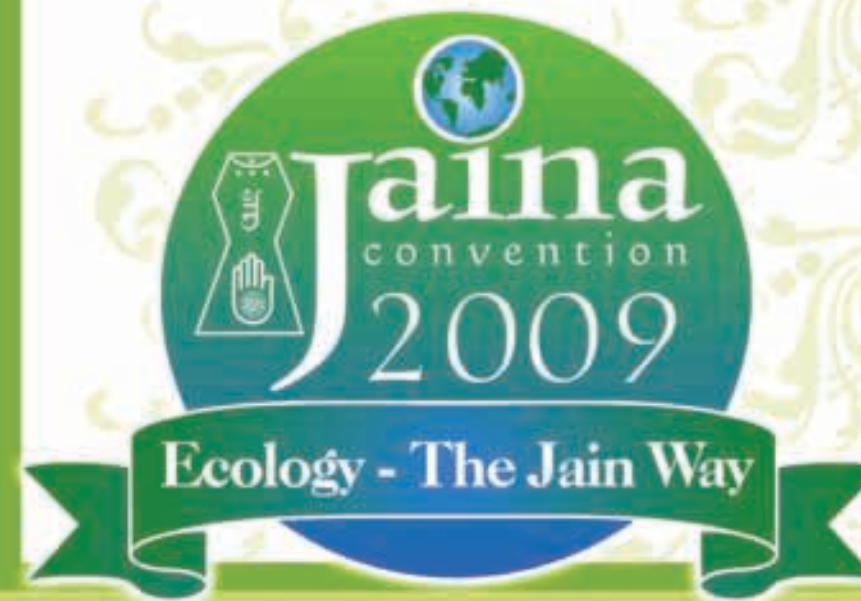
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15TH BIENNIAL JAINA CONVENTION 2009 • JAIN CENTER OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



ECOLOGY

THE JAIN WAY



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Navkar Mantra Pat, Aradhana Hall, Jain Center of Southern California



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Acknowledgement: An opportunity to team up with a talented group of editors (Pallavi Gala, Debi Grand and Dilip Parekh) and graphics artists (Jayana Shah, Rishita Dagli and Darshini Aithal) to produce this fine publication has been a great privilege for me. Harsha Parikh helped with the Ads. Compliment these team members for the publication items that impress you, and blame me for the rest. The publication is printed on paper with go green "post-consumer" contents.

~ Chandrakant Parekh



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JAINA CONVENTION 2009

EDITORIAL

Reflecting on the theme of the 15th Biennial JAINA Convention, "Ecology – The Jain Way", it is worthwhile to take note of Dr. L. M. Singhvi's observation, "Jainism is fundamentally a religion of ecology and has turned ecology into a religion."

In these challenging times, core Jain principles of *Ahimsa*, *Aparigraha*, and *Anekantvad*, identify a framework of responsibilities, challenges, and opportunities to support ecological harmony through non-violence not only towards humans but towards all nature; reducing wants and waste through non-possessiveness; and respect for others including earth, environment and nature through non-absolutism. Lord Mahavir identified the fundamental phenomenon of mutual dependence: "One who neglects or disregards the existence of earth, air, fire, water and vegetation disregards his own existence which is entwined with them." The ancient Jain scriptural maxim *Parasparopagraho jivanan* - all life is bound together by mutual support and interdependence - is refreshingly contemporary in its premise and in its promise. Jainism is indeed a religion of ecology.

The biennial JAINA convention provides a unique opportunity for delegates to celebrate their heritage, gain new knowledge, and revive their spiritual aspirations. In support of such goals, a wide range of articles are included in this commemorative souvenir. As we tread the path of the religion of ecology, several spiritual, theoretical, and practical expositions remind us of our responsibilities as practitioners, proponents, and agents-of-change for eco-friendly lifestyle and sustainable living. Jain doctrines concerning *Ahimsa* and ecology that lead to vegetarianism and not using animal products are discussed. Jain tradition of establishing *paanjarapols* and promoting *jiv daya* is re-affirmed with inspirational stories of two such facilities in USA. Jain youth's activism, awareness and advocacy of "Go Green" movement and animal rights are illustrated. Two poems remind us that we are "merely guests on this planet" and "all one day can be free." JAINA's initiative of Jain Diaspora promotes global unity through a novel concept of *Jains Without Borders*.

The hosting of the 15th Biennial JAINA Convention in Los Angeles is a homecoming event, since JAINA was conceived and founded in Los Angeles in 1981. The founding of JAINA is recorded here with the publication of historical photos of that remarkable event.

Finally, Dr. Dipak Jain, a keynote speaker at this convention, points out that "Jainism offers the resources and the path to reflect on what matters most, and then to renew ourselves as we set upon the journey of making ourselves, and the world, better." Let us all resolve to live, act and contribute responsibly.

The Souvenir Committee is grateful for the responsibility and opportunity to produce this publication. The experience has been enlightening except for one regret - having to exclude some of the articles due to space constraints. For this, and inconsistencies and errors in the publication, if any, we offer our sincere Michhami Dukkaddam. The articles presented here express the views and opinions of the respective authors for which, no responsibility, expressed or implied, is assumed by JAINA and its volunteers.

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Federation of Jain Associations in North America

Founded 1981

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NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations

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WELCOME MESSAGE FROM JAINA PRESIDENT

July 2, 2009

On behalf of the Federation of Jain Associations in North America (JAINA), it is a great pleasure and privilege for me to welcome everyone to the 15th Biennial JAINA Convention. This is a homecoming for JAINA. In 1980, Jain Center of Southern California (JCSC) conceived an idea of forming an umbrella organization for all the Jain institutions in USA and Canada. JCSC nourished the idea and followed through with the first Jain convention in May 1981 and JAINA was born!

And what a sweet homecoming it is! Following the Anjan Shalaka Pratishtha Mahotsav in May 2009, hosting of this convention as the first major public event in the newly dedicated majestic Temple and the Cultural Complex is a proud moment for both, JCSC and JAINA. JAINA represents over 100,000 Jains of North America without any division along sectarian, regional or linguistic divide making it the largest unified Jain community in the world. As a premiere Jain Center in North America, JCSC is a significant participant in unifying the community.

Every two years, Jains from all over North America - young and old come to our convention to celebrate their heritage, make new friends and learn. The theme of this convention "Ecology - the Jain Way" is a timely message for the world looking for answers. Presence of our Gurus, scholars and keynote speakers (all academicians) will provide spiritual nourishment and new insights for a peaceful environment.

On behalf of JAINA I want to thank the Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee of the Jain Center of Southern California along with countless volunteers for hosting this convention. Their dedication is matched only by the generosity of local donors who have made this convention possible.

Please enjoy the convention and don't forget to visit the JAINA/JCSC Library located in the Jain Bhavan!

Sincerely,

Dilip V Shah
President, JAINA

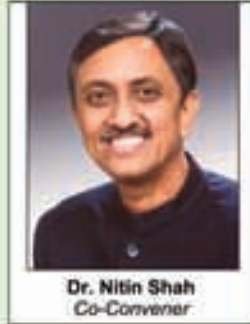


JAINA CONVENTION 2009

MESSAGE FROM CONVENER & CO-CONVENERS



Lata Champsee
Convener



Dr. Nitin Shah
Co-Convener



Rashmi Shah
Co-Convener

Jai Jinendra !

It is a great pleasure and privilege to welcome you all to the 15th Biennial JAINA Convention in Los Angeles – the Birth City of JAINA. We have selected “*Ecology – the Jain Way*” an appropriate theme for today. Furthermore, Ecology resonates what Jain Religion has preached ever since. We are enthused to present to you many sessions on Ecology that will help us practice “*Ecology- the Jain way*” in our daily lives.

Our keynote speakers - **Gary Francione, Jagdish Sheth and Dipak Jain** - and others will share their vision on ecology and explore with us about how Jain Religion has been a leader in the practice of ecology.

What is Unique – A Non-Jain (by Birth) *Sanghpati* , “*Jain21*” in search for Soul mate, *Seva* activity to help needy people, a *vegan* lunch for all the participants, use of Eco-friendly papers, use of Biodegradable products for meals,the list goes on.

We have a unique play – “*SIDDH-HEM*” – World Premiere of the play based on the life and works of Acharya Hemachandracharya (by Apoorva Aysar team) Raas Garba, JAINA Academic Bowl, cultural programs from various Jain Centers. Bollywood night, Holobola, Boat cruise for youth!

We are thankful to all Monks, Scholars, Dignitaries, Speakers, and Presenters for their contribution. We also thank all the donors for their generous donations. Our special thanks to our *Sanghpati, Hamilton Brewart Insurance Agency*. We also appreciate efforts of hundreds of volunteers who have spent thousands of hours for the success of this Convention. Finally, the Convention will not be a success without all of you – The Participants, thank you for attending.

We were faced with a major Challenge of balancing the budget under the current economic situation – Convention Board unanimously decided to move the Convention to Jain Center of Southern California’s facility from Anaheim Convention Center. We hope all of you will embrace the change.

Our sincere hope is that if all of us learn at least one thing on ecology and adopt in our life then we would consider ourselves being rewarded for the job well done. **Save The EARTH – Go GREEN !**

With Regards

Lata Champsee
Convener

Dr. Nitin Shah
Co-Convener

Rashmi Shah
Co-Convener



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President's Message

Ashok Savla

June 2009

Jai Jinendra!

Sadharmik Shravaks, Shravikas & Respected Guests:



On behalf of Jain Center of Southern California (JCSC) it is with great excitement, I welcome all of you at the doorstep of our newly expanded derasar and cultural complex in sunny city of Los Angeles on the occasion of the 15th Biennial JAINA Convention.

JCSC is also the founding member of Federation of Jain Associations in North America (JAINA) that was started here in Los Angeles in 1981. We are very fortunate that JAINA has chosen Los Angeles to be the site of 15th Biennial JAINA Convention. Furthermore, we are very excited that JAINA has accepted our invitation to move the Convention to our beautiful facility.

I am sure that our Sangh will do the best to fulfill the theme of the Convention "Ecology - The Jain Way". I would like to take this opportunity to outline some of the highlights of JCSC.

Jain Center of Southern California

Pathshala - Our Jewel!

The growth of Pathshala is unparalleled; JCSC is very proud to be able to graduate children with sound Jain principles committed to intellectual pursuits with emphasis on ethical & spiritual values, social responsibility, and personal development.

Cultural Complex - Our Crown!

Auditorium with a capacity of almost 900 opened up new horizons for the community. Use of the facility has gone beyond the religious rituals to many celebratory functions like Drama (Apurva Avasar), weddings, birthdays, anniversaries etc., to visit of dignitaries including Swami Ramdevji, Nithyanandji, HRM, Kalyanji (Composer), & Many Jain Scholars!

Many religious & fund raising activities have taken place for JCSC, Anekant Community Center & also for other organizations. My favorite one still remains the Kashmir Earthquake fund raiser of March 2006! For the

first time in Southern California, Pakistani & Indian community came together for a fundraiser to help survivors of Kashmir Earthquake in India & Pakistan where in performers entertained the audience pro bono! JCSC has also done fundraiser for Earthquake in Bhuj, India & to help survivors of Katrina!

Wooden Temple - Our Diamond!

One of a kind wooden temple built in 1904-05 found its permanent home in the Cultural Complex. It was reassembled in June 2006.

Religious & Spiritual Complex - Our Heart & Soul!

As per the wishes of our community, we have made a humble attempt to include representation of multiple sects under one roof. Community had agreed to have only Tirthankar idols in the Temple area & accommodate Acharyas, Gurudev, & Swamijis in Aradhana Hall!. We also have Pujari to increase the number of hours of temple for the members.

This complex will be for only religious & spiritual purposes.

Research & Study Complex – Our Spirit!

Plans are underway to develop Phase III into a distinguished place where we can house JAINA library (largest collection of books of Jain Religion outside of India), have Pathshala classes & have facility for people to be involved in Studies & Research of Jain Religion, Rituals, Principles, & to learn about Jain Way of Life!

National & International Humanitarian work – Our Pride!

Our Annual free Health fair has grown significantly & actually has truly become international as we have served not only non-Jain Indian community but also others like Chinese, Whites, Blacks, Pilipino, Koreans etc. JCSC has crossed the boundaries when it comes to humanitarian work. We have been associated with Bidada Sarvodaya Trust in Bidada, Kutch for many years. Through Anekant Community Center; we have supported free medical/surgical camps in India, Zambia, &

Columbia. JCSC has contributed towards one of the six divisions in Jaya Rehabilitation Institute & Research Center, at Bidada, Kutch.

Volunteers – Our Force

All these achievements would not have been possible without the commitment, & hard work of our dedicated Volunteers! They have come from all sects & different economic backgrounds and have participated in all activities from computerize accounting, architecture, AV system, construction, dining, financing, library, maintenance, pathshala, rituals, sadharmik seva, etc. The Vision for JCSC is to be a leader in education and along with being a religious organization offer a vehicle to growing community for social change! We appear to be on our way.

I am sure you liked and enjoyed our facility. While our volunteers have tried our best to meet all your needs and yet if an error has occurred by anyone I beg your pardon on behalf of all of us-Michhami Dukkadam!!



JAIN CENTER OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA: BRIEF HISTORY

Souvenir Team



- ✦ Founded: 15 September 1975.
- ✦ Mandate: To practice, promote, and teach Jainism with no sectarian bias.
- ✦ Jain Bhavan: A first custom-designed Jain Bhavan was inaugurated in July 1988.
- ✦ Expansion: A multi purpose Jain Bhavan Complex in three-phases: Phase I: A 62,000 sq. ft. Cultural Complex (Auditorium & Pathshala) – inaugurated 27 March 2005. Phase II: A 13,000 sq. ft. Religious Complex (Derasar & Aradhana Hall) – inaugurated 26 September - 6 October 2008. Phase III: An

Atma Sadhana Kendra (Library & Study Rooms) – To follow.

- ✦ Additional Features: 105-year Wooden Temple, JAINA/JCSC Library.
- ✦ Pathshala: Initiated with 20 students in 1980's. Current enrollment 350 students with 70 teachers & volunteers.
- ✦ Major Activities: Religious, Educational & Outreach Activities.
- ✦ Affiliates: Mahavir Mahila Mandal, Jain Senior Association, Jain Center Youth Council (JCYC).
- ✦ Notable Achievement: Proposed a concept in 1980 to unite all US and Canadian Jain communities under one umbrella organization, and founded JAINA in Los Angeles in 1981.



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JAINA Convention, July 2-5, 2009\

Founder

His Holiness Pujya
Shree Chitrabhanuji

Directors

Jivan Proctor
Pramoda Chitrabhanu
Barry Wolfe
Devendra Peet



Pujya Shree Chitrabhanuji

My dear Friends ~

It is a pleasant occasion to come together to celebrate the 15th Biennial JAINA Convention where all Jain Centers have worked with great dedication, to bring together the various flowers of Societies and Temples to create a beautiful garland of unity.

Jain Dharma is not only a teaching but it is primarily a practice: the practice of Ahinsa. Ahinsa means the dignity and sacredness of the human person in relation with other living beings. Its criteria are Reverence for All Life.

Violence is spreading like wildfire all over the world and is devouring human life. It is a matter of grave concern to all of us, and our conscience urges us to do something in this direction: Practicing Ahinsa in everyday life, creating literature, holding conferences and seminars, and increasing the consciousness of Reverence for All Life - these are the ways to peace. And with our sincere practice, meditation and prayer, we create vibrations of awareness of Reverence for Life. In this way, we help nullify the idea of dehumanizing war and violence in the world.

Bhagwan Mahavira has shown us by the examples of his own life experiences that nonviolence and compassion are the answers for peace and well-being. In order to expunge violence, one has to remove it from thoughts, from feelings, from the mind, and from one's expressions. Knowing this law of life, we can purify our minds with peace, feed our body with healthy vegan food, and nourish our thoughts with understanding others' point of view through Anekant.

One thing we know is that children learn more from our practices and living example rather than from commands and rituals. Example speaks louder than our advice.

Success, not at the cost of others, not with conflict but with cooperation and coordination, becomes pragmatic and automatic. We grow through mutual *Parasparoagraho Jivanam*, helping each other. The cruelty which is imposed upon the lives of animals is beyond imagination. True Jains, all through their history, have refrained from



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Founder

His Holiness Pujya
Shree Chitrabhanuji

cruelty. Carl Sagan in Time Magazine, October 20, 1980, wrote: "... there is no right to life in any society on earth today, nor has there been at any former time (with a few rare exceptions, such as among the JAINS in India)."

Directors

Jivan Proctor
Pramoda Chitrabhanu
Barry Wolfe
Devendra Peer

You will not find any vegetarian army that has participated in war. Nor will you find any vegetarian soldier who has gone out to kill human beings. That is why even Mahatma Gandhi, though he was not a Jain by birth, realized the true Ahinsa of Mahavira and embraced it and practiced it in life. He raised Ahinsa to the level of statesmanship and politics to liberate India without bloodshed. This Ahinsa is a solace to mankind. Not only Gandhi, not only Martin Luther King, and not only the Venerable Japanese Monk Nichidatsu Fuji, but the whole world is now looking up to this principle of Ahinsa.

Ahinsa is neither dogmatic nor sectarian. Its foundation is not blind faith but experiences of various aspects of life. In this world there is no religion as alive, beautiful and kind as Ahinsa.

Our primary purpose is to liberate our mind from attachment, greed and ignorance. When the essence of these principles is shown through example to our children, they will become the best citizens of the world. I am sure all centers, societies and temples, individually and collectively with JAINA, will continue to work in this direction and will seek the light to create an atmosphere that will be conducive to achieving our goal.

The former Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi, very appropriately mentioned in his letter to me that, "Ahinsa is the only answer for mankind; this Ahinsa is our heritage, our wealth, our spiritual light, and our essence."

I have no doubt that we can change many things in this world by changing ourselves, by being sensitive, caring and compassionate beings. May all cherish a feeling of amity and love amongst fellow beings and may peace and nonviolence become our guiding force.

Love and Blessings,
Chitrabhanu



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15-B, Bombay Market Apt., Tardeo Road, Mumbai-400 054. Tel: 022-2351 1352 • 2352 4181 • Fax: 022-2351 1353 • Email: srashk@srashk.org



JAINA Convention, 2-5 July, 2009

"Ecology-The Jain Way"

My Dear Friends,

Jainism is a way of life and its true practise can be reflected in our attitude in everyday life, through love, kindness and compassion towards all beings. Jainism teaches us to extend ourselves towards not only beings but also towards everything that surrounds us in the form of our environment and ecology. As responsible citizens of the world, we owe it to ourselves and our future generations; that we leave this world in better shape than we inherited it.

The topic selected for the 15th Biennial JAINA Convention, "Ecology-The Jain Way" reflects the global Jain community's concern and how through the principles, already propounded in Jainism, can show us the way to a more peaceful and blissful existence.

I wish the JAINA Convention 2009 all the very best and may you take the message of Peace and Love Life to every corner of this world.

Love and Blessings,

Rakeshbhai Jhaveri



SHREEMAD RAJCHANDRA ADHYATMIK SADHANA KENDRA

(Conducted by Shree Satguru - Seva - Sadhana Kendra)

KOBA - 382 009 (Dist. GANDHINAGAR) INDIA

E-mail : rajchandrajikoba@pukhyaplanet.net

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April 23, 2009

Jai Jinendra.

We are pleased to know about 15th Biennial Convention of JAINA in Los Angeles, hosted by the Jain Center of Southern California (JCSC).



The place is befitting since JAINA was born in Los Angeles in 1981, organized by the JCSC. The history is graciously repeating. Of course, the seed of JAINA sown in May 1981 in Los Angeles has grown into a huge internationally recognized institution, with 75 member organizations. United Nations, US Congress and Government of India have recognized JAINA. It held 14 successful biennial conventions and developed wonderful series of uniform Jain textbooks for Pathshalas.

The JAINA Convention theme of "Ecology - The Jain Way" is very appropriate since Lord Mahavir, the apostle of nonviolence and environment, demonstrated how human beings can live in harmony with the environment. The timeless aphorism "*Parasporopagraho Jivanam*" from the "Tattvarth Sutra" provides the sound foundation for an ecologically responsible society. Jainism has contributed immensely in this regard. As a matter of fact, we presented "Jain Declaration on Nature" to Prince Philip (leader and pioneer of international ecological organizations) in Buckingham Palace of London in October 1990. We are sure that this Convention will increase awareness of the importance of ecology for the whole humanity and show that ecology is ingrained in the Jain way of life. As a matter of fact, "live and let live - *Jivo ase Jivavado*" is the living guide for the Jains. Some people even go one step further and say "live and help others live" which shows compassion for all living beings.

It is commendable that JAINA has done considerable work in helping unfortunates during the natural calamities of earth quake, tsunami, floods and fires. We have visited the US many times and have travelled across frequently. It is amazing how various Jain Sanghs function religiously and socio-culturally. This way JAINA is very unique and has contributed significantly toward the unity and brotherhood among various Jain sects.

With the best wishes for success of the JAINA Convention, we convey our blessings to achieve the theme goals may Mahavir Swami bless all living beings.



Sharnishtaben Soneji, Trustee



H. H. Shri Atmanandji

Sri Parshwanathaya Namah
Sri Padmavathi Devi Prasanna



Sri Swamiji : 91 (08185) 662721
Office : 91 (08185) 662722

Mobile : 91 (08185) 662722



HIS HOLINESS JAGADGURU SWASTI SRI SRI SRI
SRI DEVENDRAKEERTY BHATTARAKA PATTACHARYAVARYA MAHASWAMIJI

SRI HOMBUJA JAIN MATH

P.O. HOMBUJA . Shimoga Dist., Karnataka State, INDIA - 577 438.

ಪರಮಪೂಜ್ಯ ಶ್ರೀಮದ್ ಜಗದ್ಗುರು, ಭಾರತಗೌರವ, ಸ್ವಸ್ತಿ ಶ್ರೀ ಶ್ರೀ ಶ್ರೀ

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ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹಾಯಜ್ಞ ವೈದ್ಯ ಮಠ

ಅವಳಿ ಕಛೇರಿ : ಹೊಂಬುಜ, ಹಿರೇಬಳ್ಳಿ ಪಟ್ಟಣ, ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯ, ಭಾರತ - 577 438

Ref No. : _____

Date : 27-04-2009

HOLY BLESSINGS

WE ARE EXTREMELY HAPPY TO KNOW THAT FEDERATION OF JAIN ASSOCIATIONS IN NORTH AMERICA POPULARLY KNOWN AS "JAINA" IS PLANNING TO ORGANISE THE 15TH "JAINA" BIENNIAL CONVENTION AT LOS ANGELES, CA-USA FROM 2ND JULY THROUGH 5TH JULY 2009.

"JAINA" HAS BEEN DOING A WONDERFUL JOB BY PROPAGATING THE JAIN RELIGION, CULTURE, HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY. BESIDES ITS BIENNIAL CONVENTIONS SINCE LAST 19 YEARS, IT IS ENCOURAGING TO START NEW JAIN CENTERS AND JAIN TEMPLES AT VARIOUS PLACES IN USA, CANADA, AS-WELL-AS, IN SOME OTHER COUNTRIES. IT IS SINCERELY WORKING HARD TO BRING ALL THE SUB SECTS OF JAIN SOCIETY, (VIZ : SWETAMBAR, DIGAMBAR, STANAKVASI, SHREEMAD RAJCHAND PANTH FOLLOWERS). ALL MONKS, SCHOLARS AND BELIEVERS OF JAINISM HAVE COME TO A COMMON PLATFORM IN THESE DAYS, AND THE CREDIT OF THIS GREAT ACHEIVEMENT SHOULD GO TO "JAINA"

WE DO PRAY LORD SUPREME BHAGAWAN SRI 'JINESHWAR' FOR THE GRAND SUCCESS OF THE 15TH JAINA BIENNIAL CONVENTION

MAY GOD BLESS EVERY BODY OF THIS UNIVERSE

अकम् घृणान् । वर्धनान् श्री जिनाराम्

WITH BLESSINGS



Sri Devendrakeertyji

SRI HOMBUJA JAIN MATH
PO : HOMBUJA
KARNATAKA-INDIA 577438

HIS HOLINESS JAGADGURU
SWASTI SRI SRI SRI
DEVENDRAKEERTHY BHATTARAKA
MAHASWAMIJI



Letter from Father Carlos G. Vallès
May 2009

I feel honoured to be invited to send a message to the 15th JAINA Convention in Los Angeles, and I do so from the heart. All the more so as the theme of the Convention, 'Ecology - the Jain Way', is particularly important and meaningful today.

Jainism has a threefold claim to world relevance in our days.

1. *Ahimsa*. Non-violence is a fundamental principle of Jainism and the first need of the world in these times of continued wars, increasing terrorism, and widespread street violence.

2. *Anekantvad*. The many-sidedness of truth is also a Jain principle. The parable of the eight blind men and the elephant, now present in all literatures, is of Jain origin. The need for different cultures, and particularly different religions, to know, understand, accept, and complement one another is keen and urgent for the survival of civilisation.

3. *Jiva-ajiva*. Jainism extends life to material beings like earth, water, air, fire, only that they have fewer senses (one) than human beings (five). This means that the whole of creation is alive, and this in turn is the best basis for a true ecology in theory and in practice. It is this principle that gives Jainism a very special relevance today.

Reverence to living beings should be extended to what western thought calls material beings, and so all should be equally respected. Jain monks and nuns wear a piece of white cloth in front of their mouths. The reason for this is not precisely to avoid swallowing insects, as is popularly believed, but to minimise the hurt and pollution caused to the surrounding Air by the human breath while speaking. Water taps in Jain homes are covered with a cloth, not to filter the Water, but to break its fall and soften its impact on the basin below. Jain monks and nuns walk barefoot, again not out of a desire to practice austerity, but in order not to hurt Mother Earth while walking. Devote housewives salute with folded hands the Fire in the kitchen before switching off the electrical supply to the oven. Practical respect for Air, Water, Earth, and Fire. I've witnessed and I've been inspired by the deep meaning of these simple gestures.

These examples put before us an ideal ecological image, and place in our hands a practical daily reminder of our duty to nature. Reverence to Earth, Water, Air, Fire, and then, as we go up in the scale of more-sensed beings, to plants and vegetables and animals and humans. This is deep and true and all-embracing ecology. The Earth is alive. May this Jain tradition guide us and encourage us to lead more ecological lives, and may this Convention inspire us all in the task.

Father Valles www.carlosvalles.com



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

CITY OF BUENA PARK



A Message from the Mayor

April 29, 2009

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is my great honor and pleasure, as Mayor of the City of Buena Park, to welcome each of you attending the Jaina Convention 2009.

This convention will be a tribute to the Jain religion in its desire to foster and strengthen the belief of the Jain religion and promote friendship among the Jain and non Jain believers for the Jain way of life, while at the same time respecting all religions and cultures of the world.

We hope that you plan to extend your stay to take advantage of our many attractions and activities here in Buena Park and in surrounding cities in Orange County.

It is our hope that you will have a meaningful and entertaining convention, and that you will come back to see us in the future.



Donald W. McEay
Mayor Donald W. McEay
City of Buena Park

6850 BEACH BOULEVARD, P.O. BOX 5009, BUENA PARK, CA 90622
(714) 562-3754 • FAX (714) 562-3506



HARRY SIDHU, P.E.
COUNCIL MEMBER
CITY OF ANAHEIM



~ *On the Occasion of the 15th Biennial JAINA Convention 2009* ~

It is with great pleasure that I extend my congratulations and support on the occasion of the 15th Biennial Jain Associations in North America (*JAINA*) Convention taking place at the Jain Center of Southern California (Los Angeles Jain Temple), Buena Park, California, from July 2-5, 2009.

The theme for the 2009 convention, "*Ecology - The Jain Way*," meaningfully demonstrates how the timeless principles of the Jain Religion so positively inspire respect for our environment, compassion for all living beings, and worldwide humanitarian activities. I especially applaud *JAINA* for offering at the convention, *for the first-time*, a special Youth Program with separate speakers who will explain and address the theme and aspects of Jain Religion for different youth age groups.

Since its founding in 1981, *JAINA* has provided an exceptional forum for fostering friendship and unity as a federation of 68 Jain organizations - representing more than 100,000 Jains living in the USA and Canada. It is especially noteworthy that *JAINA* functions through the core services of more than 300 volunteers on behalf of the entire Jain community of North America sharing positive life values with others.

JAINA, its dedicated committee members, President Dilip V. Shah, and many hardworking volunteers, are *all* to be commended for organizing such a vital, visionary, convention that will provide a significant educational activity and lead to a better understanding of Jainism.

In joyful celebration and with warmest wishes for ongoing success,

Harry Sidhu
Anaheim City Council Member

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P.O. Box 19019 Anaheim, CA 92817
(714) 920 - 4151 • info@JoinHarry.com



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THE CITY OF ARTESIA, CALIFORNIA

18747 CLARKDALE AVENUE, ARTESIA, CALIFORNIA 90701

Telephone 562 / 865-6262

FAX 562 / 865-6240

April 28, 2009

To: JAINA 2009 Convention

It is with genuine excitement that I extend my best wishes to the 15th Biennial Jain Associations in North America (JAINA) Convention taking place at the Jain Center of Southern California, Buena Park, California, from July 2-5, 2009.

"Ecology - The Jain Way," the theme of the Convention really relates to the principles of Jain Religion practiced over centuries. I am very delighted to learn about various programs offered related to ecology & am particularly happy for JAINA to offer, for the first-time, a special Youth Program with separate speakers who will explain them various aspects of Jain Religion.

Since its founding in 1981 in Los Angeles, JAINA now consists of 68 Jain organizations - representing more than 100,000 Jains living in the USA and Canada.

JAINA, its dedicated committee members are all to be commended for organizing such an informative & educational convention.

Sally Flowers
Mayor





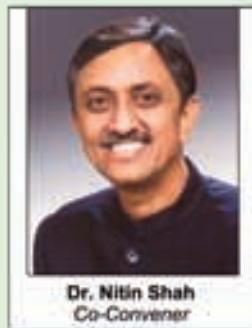
JAINA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2007-2009

President Dilip V. Shah Philadelphia, PA	First VP Lata Champsee Don Mills, ONT	Secretary Sushil Jain Dunn Loring, VA	Treasurer Rita Seth Tulsa, OK	Past President Kirit C. Daftary Waco, TX
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JAINA CONVENTION BOARD 2009





JAINA CONVENTION 2009 : COMMITTEES

Note: Committee members are sorted last/first names

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Chair: Keerti Shah	JSMC
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Pooja Mehta	JCSC
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Shailesh Mehta	JCSC
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Aditi Shah	JCSC
Bakul Shah	JCSC
Binish Shah	JCSC
Deepak Shah	JCSC
Deepal Shah	JCSC
Harshad Shah	JCSC
Hement Shah	JCSC
Hitesh Shah	JCSC
Jagat Shah	JCSC
Jagesh Shah	JCSC
Jatan Shah	JCSC
Jayesh Shah	JCSC
Pushpa B Shah	JCSC
Ramila Shah	JCSC
Sanjay Shah	JCSC
Udhay N Shah	JCSC
Vijay Shah	JCSC
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Rahul Jobalia	JCSC
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Dilip Punatar	CDJC
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Pravina R Shah	JCSC
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Mina Sheth	JCSC

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Jayana Shah	JCSC

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Mahaveer Jain	JCSC
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Parmod Jain	JCSC
Sachi Jain	JCSC
Sailesh Jain	JCSC
Sailesh Jain	JCSC
Vidhu Jain	JCSC
Renuka Jogani	JCSC
Rakesh Kothari	JCSC
Narendra Maniar	JCSC
Asmita Mehta	JCSC
Punit Mehta	JCSC
Dina Parekh	JCSC
Harsha Parikh	JCSC
Rupen Patwa	JCSC
Bhavana Sanghvi	JCSC
Ankit Shah	JCSC
Bharti Shah	JCSC
Kalpna Shah	JCSC
Kiran Shah	JCSC
Parag Shah	JCSC
Parul Shah	JCSC
Sachil Shah	JCSC
Geeta N. Sheth	JCSC
Vinodini Sheth	JCSC
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Hemesh Surana	JCSC
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Rajul Vasa	JCSC

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Kishor Sanghvi	JCSC
Digish Shah	JCSC
Jawahar Shah	JCSC
Kirit Shah	JCSC
Mahendar Shah	JCSC
Lalit Vora	JCSC
Nayna Vora	JCSC
Nilesh Vora	JCSC



JAINA CONVENTION 2009 : COMMITTEES

Note: Committee members are sorted last/first names

VOLUNTEERS &

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

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Jagdish Kamdar	JCSC
Neal Kothari	JCSC
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Pooni Parekh	JCSC
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Jagdish Shah	JCSC
Mahesh Shah	JCSC
Mamta Shah	JCSC
Mayuri Shah	JCSC
Navin Shah	JCSC
Nitin Shah	JCSC
Shami Shah	JCSC
Smita Shah	JCSC
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Vipul Udhani	JCSC
Jagdish Vora	JCSC

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Neeta V Shah	JCSC
Niranjana Shah	JCSC
Punam Shah	JCSC
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Smruti Shah	JCSC
Vina Shah	JCSC
Usha Wadher	JCSC

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Ramesh Zaveri	JCSC
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ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATIONS:

CDJC	Cincinnati Dayton Jain Center	JSMW	Jain Society of Metropolitan Washington
JCNC	Jain Center of Northern California	JSOB	Jain Community of Buffalo
JCSC	Jain Center of Southern California	JSOT	Jain Society of Toronto
JSMC	Jain Society of Metropolitan Chicago	TJS	Tulsa Jain Sangh

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Kala Jain	JCSC
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Charu Maniar	JCSC
Sonia Maniar	JCSC
Hasmita Parekh	JCSC
Hema Parekh	JCSC
Shayna Parekh	JCSC
Kavita Sanghvi	JCSC
Anand Shah	JCSC
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Maluni Shah	JCSC
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Pankaj Shah	JCSC
Pushpa Shah	JCSC
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Soumil Mehta	JCSC
Dina Parekh	JCSC
Shamita Parekh	JCSC
Khusboo Shah	JCSC
Paras Shah	JCSC
Payal Vasa	JCSC
Ankit Vora	JCSC

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Gyanchand Jain	JSOT
Dr. Jagat Jain	JCOB
Dr. Dhiraj Shah	JCOB
Rita Sheth	TJS

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Mira Doshi	JCSC
Rekha Doshi	JCSC
Hema Parekh	JCSC
Amy Shah	JCSC
Dipti P Shah	JCSC
Komal P Shah	JCSC
Maluni Shah	JCSC
Nirali A Shah	JCSC
Rekha Shah	JCSC
Meena Sheth	JCSC
Pankaj Sheth	JCSC
Vijay Sheth	JCSC
Vindoini Sheth	JCSC

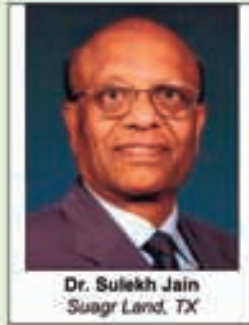
JAIN21 PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Chair: Preksha Shah	JCSC
Anjali Iyer	JCSC
Narendra Jain	JCSC
Sonia Maniar	JCSC
Puja Parekh	JCSC
Payal Savani	JCSC
Ankit Shah	JCSC
Avni Shah	JCSC
Dipti Shah	JCSC
Prashant Shah	JCSC
Rashmi Shah	JCSC
Rohit Shrimal	JCSC
Vipin Vadecha	JCSC



JAINA AWARDS 2009

JAINA RATNA AWARD



Dr. Sulekh Jain
Suagr Land, TX

JAINA PRESIDENTIAL AWARDS



Udal C. Jain
Suagr Land, TX, USA

Udal Jain is the longest serving member of JAINA Executive Committee. As a highly respected elder gentleman, Udalbhai provides a voice of reason and a clear, sectarian-free vision during JAINA committee deliberations. He has served as Chairperson of JAINA Patron Program and in various capacities with the Jain Society of Houston.

Udalbhai is one of 8 brothers - all of whom are involved in the family diamond business with offices in Bangkok, Mumbai and Houston. Deeply committed to the cause of Jainism, Udalbhai and his entire family have been very generous to Jain causes and to JAINA. Their ancestral home was turned over to the Samaj and converted into an Upashraya. They are currently building a Dharamsala near Jaipur, and are also planning to convert their home in Jaipur into a second Dharamsala. The fine Jain tradition has continued in the second and third generation of family members. His son is the Chief Trustee of the Jain Society of Houston, and his grandchildren have participated in JAINA Academic bowl.



Mahendra G. Mehta
Mumbai, India

Mahendra G. Mehta established Ratna Nidhi Charitable Trust over 20 years with a vision to tackle the problems of poverty in Mumbai, especially amongst young children. The trust offers free nutrition packages, food for education program, and motivates older kids to start small businesses. Through his Help Handicapped International Trust (HHI), over 95,000 victims of war, accidents, and polio in India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sudan, Kenya, Burundi, Sri Lanka, Honduras, Columbia and Afghanistan have been provided with free Jaipur prostheses, calipers, wheelchairs, tricycles, crutches, and walkers. HHI was recently accorded special Consultative Status by the Economic and Social Council of United Nations. Mahendrabhai serves as a trustee for Bharatiya Bal Vikas Trust, Hamara Foundation, and Safe Kids Foundation., and is the coordinator in India for JAINA's humanitarian relief efforts.

Mahendrabhai has received numerous awards from national and international organizations from India, Europe, and USA. Mahendrabhai and his wife Ashaben truly exemplify the message of Lord Mahavir to serve the poor, the sick and the needy. JAINA is proud of its affiliation with Mahendrabhai G. Mehta.



JAINA RECOGNITION AWARDS 2009 A D U L T S



Amita Desai
Anaheim, CA



Narendra Jain
Torrance, CA



Rakesh Jain
Columbus, OH



Mayur Mehta
Clarksville, TN



Arvind Shah
Gaithersburg, MD



Kirit Shah
Edison, NJ



Nilesh Shah
Clarksville, MD



Pravin Turakhia
Fremont, CA



Hamir Vadi
Mountainside, NJ



Rasik Vagadia
Foxboro, MA

Y O U T H S



Naman Jain
Nonwood, MA



Rajiv Jain
Odenton, MD



Pina Mehta
Tustin, CA



Parinda Shah
Schaumburg, IL



Shanehi Shah
Torrance, CA



JAINA: THE FOUNDING



The concept of uniting all Jain communities in USA and Canada under one umbrella organization was conceived in 1980 by Lalit Shah, a visionary Vice President of Jain Center of Southern California (JCSC). The idea was well received by various Jain communities, scholars – Professor Padmanabh Jaini (UC Berkeley) and Professor Jagdish Prasad Sharma (University of Hawaii), and dignitaries - Pujya Gurudev Chitrabhanuji and Pujya Acharya Sushil Muniji. A convention committee of Sudhir Kothari (Chairman), Lalit Shah (Co Chair), Mahendra Khandhar, Pallavi Sheth, Dhiren Shah and Dinesh Gala was tasked to explore the feasibility of this concept and led to organizing the first national convention of Jains in the USA hosted by JCSC from May 22-25, 1981. The delegates met at the TRW Auditorium, Manhattan Beach,





OF AN ORGANIZATION

California (a suburb of Los Angeles). The convention was graced by Pujya Gurudev Chitrabhanuji, Pujya Acharya Sushilkumarji, Professor Padmanabh Jaini, Professor Jagdish Prasad Sharma, Dr. Ann Norton, and delegates from New York, New Jersey, Washington DC, Boston, Cleveland, Detroit, Rochester, Toronto, Chicago, San Francisco and other cities. The delegates adopted a draft constitution and the name The Federation of Jain Organizations in North America (JAINA), and elected the First Executive Committee - Lalit Shah as President; Manoj Dharamsi, Tansukh Salgia and Dinsh Dalal as three Vice Presidents; and Girish Shah of San Jose as Secretary/Treasurer. A record of this remarkable historical event - THE FOUNDING OF JAINA - is depicted in the collection of photos here.

- Souvenir Team





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THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECOLOGICAL TEACHINGS OF TIRTHANKARA MAHAVIRA

Sadhvi Shilapi
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Sadhvi Shilapiji has been the Education Director of Veerayatan – Kutch since 2001 when the campus was first established to help the victims of the devastating earthquake. She holds a Master of Commerce degree from Delhi University, and a

Master of Philosophy degree from King's College, London. She began her spiritual journey at the age of 26. Her proficiency in six languages has enabled her to touch the lives of a wide cross-section of people in India and abroad. Sadhvi Shilapiji frequently lectures at Oxford, Harvard and other international institutions.

THE ECOLOGICAL CRISIS

We are in the midst of an unprecedented environmental and ecological crisis, at the centre of which, clearly, lies the human race. It is the human community, among all forms of life on this planet, which is interfering with the laws of nature by squandering her gifts and destroying other species. Ironically, the recent and urgent desire to protect the environment has not arisen because we have begun to hear the cries of plants, animals and other forms of life – a direct result of our maltreatment of them – but because human life itself is now in danger. That is, the depletion of these elements may result in a legacy for our children and our grandchildren of compromised immune systems, increased infectious disease and cancer rates, destroyed plants and the disruption of the food chain. I wonder: Would we have the same concern, the same worry for other forms of life, if human life had not been in danger? Would we give the protection of the environment a second thought?

MAHAVIRA'S LIFE ETHICS

From the beginning, Tirthankara Mahavira campaigned for ecological preservation not solely because of his desire to protect human life, but also because of his concern for the pain suffered by living beings in the animal and vegetable realms. Through scriptures such as the *Acaranga Sutra* (ca.400 BCE), the first in the Svetambara Jain tradition, Mahavira fundamentally influenced our understanding of and attitudes toward the environment. In short, he believed in the equality

of, and reverence for, all forms of life. He included in his definition of life not only all beings that can move, but also the earth, air, water and vegetation. Moreover, he considered any injury to these forms of life a sinful act. "Vegetation has life just as human beings have life," he stated. "It is born as are human beings; its body grows and feels pain when pricked or cut with weapons." Mahavira further proclaimed that anyone who neglects or disregards the existence of earth, air, water, and vegetation disregards his own existence, which is intrinsically bound up with them.

This notion of the symbiotic relationship of humans to their environment appears in the earliest Jain scriptures, including in the *Adipurana*, the epic poem about the first Tirthankara, Rusbha Dev. This text emphasizes that forests moderate the climate, protect against thunderstorms and floods, shelter the neighboring areas from cold winds, and enable the constant flow of rivers. They provide a habitat for wildlife, fodder for animals, innumerable industrial raw materials, and countless sources of vegetation with medicinal and healing properties. It is thus the duty of all to protect and preserve the forest.

Mahavira actively propagated these ideas and went on to make the protection and care of life in all its manifestations an obligatory duty for all Jains. Some may think that divine-human relations are considered more important than the relationship between humans and the natural world. However, *sarvajnyata*, the perfect knowledge of Mahavira or of any Tirthankara and for which we all strive, is not only defined as the knowledge of past, present, and future, but also as an extraordinary capacity for experiencing the pain and pleasure of all beings. Tirthankaras have attained this great state of empathy by the purification of their soul. And at the root of the Jain path of purification is the concept of *ahimsa*, that is, of nonviolence.

Carefulness so as to avoid violence to all living things, as Mahavira defined them, thus became the norm for the Jain way of life. This developed to the extent that those who renounce the world are required to take precautions for the protection of life before every action they perform. It is not a coincidence, then, that a Jain follower's daily prayer includes the following: "I confess to any injury caused by the path of my movement, in all my comings and goings, in treading on living things, in treading on seeds, in treading on green plants, in treading on dew, on beetles, on mould, on moist earth, and on cobwebs" and so on.

At the same time, Mahavira was clearly conscious of the fact that according to his philosophy, whatever humans do, whether it be eating, walking, sitting or even breathing, we are committing acts of violence, interfering with nature, and contributing to the destruction of the environment. Still, he said, "If you are aware of all your actions, and are careful about what you do in relation to other living things, you will develop spirituality and be in perfect harmony with the natural world." If this harmony is achieved, the long term outlook for the global environment would change dramatically.

NONVIOLENCE AND ECOLOGY IN PRACTICE

Mahavira carried this philosophy into the workplace, preaching to his disciples that they take care to avoid professions that destroy nature and perpetuate violence. Jains are clearly forbidden, for instance, from earning a living through the destruction of plants, cart-making, any trade in animal by-products, liquor, alcohol, poisons, weapons, and other substances that have the potential to injure animals, insects, or plant life. Significantly, rejection of such trades also requires that Jains not consume the products of these trades. At the same time, by limiting one's use of resources and possessions – one of the major vows that the Jain laity observes – one can also minimize one's environmental impact.

Tirthankara Mahavira's life offers a profound example of one living in ecological harmony. He used resources sparingly, ate just enough to survive, had no dwelling of his own, and no possessions whatsoever. His life shows that progress along a spiritual path does not forbid someone from being concerned about the environment and the world around him. The two are not mutually exclusive, and may, in some senses, be symbiotic.

Moving forward along the path toward purification requires not only that we strive *not* to commit violence, but also that we work actively to promote peace, reverence, justice, and tolerance in the world.

I come from Bihar, the place of Tirthankara Mahavira's birth, teaching, and final death and where most of the population lives below the poverty line. Villagers cut down trees for fuel for cooking and sell wood as a way to earn a living. People feed on rats, empty the lakes and ponds of fish to survive, and continue to perform sacrificial rituals. The impact on the local environment is profound.

Veerayatan, a Jain institution established in Bihar and run by Jain *sadhvis* (nuns), is taking preventative measures to save the environment. Veerayatan has by planted thousands of trees, and by provided drinking water, food, shelter and employment to thousands in the community to reduce individuals' dependence on remaining natural resources. Above all, Veerayatan is conveying moral and ethical values about the importance of ecological balance and minimizing violence. As a result, thousands of people in the area have given up drinking alcohol, killing animals, chopping trees, and eating meat.

Religion is often seen as passive and unconcerned with the world. In Veerayatan, the reverse is true. The *sadhvi*-led activism at Veerayatan, enacted on a daily basis, is rooted in Tirthankara Mahavira's universal principle that the sun, air, water, and nature give of themselves silently and selflessly all the time. It would be selfish on our part if we take and do not at least return a portion in our lifetime. A life of renunciation, and being mindful of the violence we commit in the world, carries us forward along the path of spiritual development, allowing us to live in ecological harmony and thus better protect our precious environment.

Modern technology
Owes ecology
An apology
~ Alan M. Eddison

SACRED BALANCE: AN ACTIVE PURSUIT

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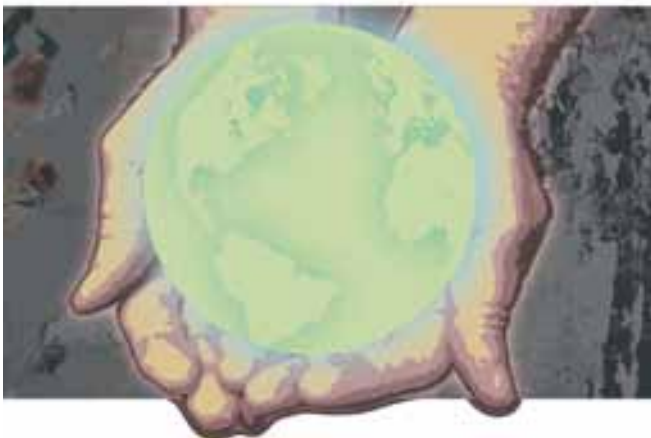
Samir Doshi resides in Burlington, VT. He is a Systems Ecologist for Ocean Arks, International and a Doctoral Candidate at the Gund Institute for Ecological Economics at the University of Vermont. Samir

works with impoverished communities to help restore degraded landscapes and develop an economic return around a restoration economy.

A certain degree of physical harmony and comfort is necessary, but above a certain level it becomes a hindrance instead of help. Therefore, the ideal of creating an unlimited number of wants and satisfying them seems to be a delusion and a snare.

-- Mahatma Gandhi

We sleep. We wake and meditate. We pray and recite mantras. We do yoga and breathe. Throughout the course of our days and our lives, we seek balance. At our most simple form, we strive for harmony. Jain philosophy describes the



pursuit of balance and Ahimsa as liberation from *samsara* – the attainment of *moksha*. But, regardless of what awaits us in the life after this, the need for balance is inherent and eternal. This is our true nature. This essay is entitled 'Sacred Balance' as a reference to geneticist and environmental philosopher David Suzuki's work on humanity's place in nature.

Balance is often thought of as a passive exercise. If I do nothing, then I will affect nothing and presumably have balance. But this is impossible. I do things, many things – all the time! How do I

attain balance, liberation, happiness? The answer can be found as readily in science as it is in spirituality. Newton's third law of motion describes each action as having a simultaneous reaction with equal force in the opposite direction. Chinese philosophy recognizes the concept of *yin yang* as opposing forces that are interdependent and naturally give rise to each other. In the spiritual plane within ourselves, time does not exist as it does in the physical plane. Each action is not instantaneous, but lasts for an unspecified period. This means that the reaction that maintains the balance could be delayed, and might have not yet occurred. Just as we initiated the original action, we must undertake the reaction. This is an active exercise.

I am not assuming that our actions are all negative or positive. They simply are, and they all have an effect on the self and the planet. The renowned chemist, James Lovelock, developed the Gaia hypothesis in 1965, which states that all the living and non-living components of our planet form a complex holistic single organism that regulates itself physically and chemically. In other words, there is a scientific consensus that the Earth also seeks balance and utilizes actions and reactions to self-regulate. Presently, our society and our planet are incredibly unbalanced. Our species is taxing the environment at an unprecedented level and is continuing to grow at an exponential rate. As Gandhi professed over half a century ago, we have an unlimited number of wants and cannot sustain our current way of life. Unless we act, the reaction of the planet to the disruption of the climate will entail more hurricanes, larger monsoons, and a sea level rise that will bring about the migration of hundreds of millions of 'climate refugees.' The Earth is awaiting our reaction before it becomes so imbalanced that it is forced to act.

History shows that whenever our culture has taken on a change of course, the initial phase yields the largest results. The greatest need is at the moment of change, and this is when the greatest effect can be actualized. The original agricultural revolution, the French revolution, and the industrial revolution – all encompassed turning points in the history of our species and all were actively accomplished. We are in the midst of another turning point that is being called, 'The Green Industrial Revolution,' combining ingenuity, vigor and the pursuit of lessening our impact and achieving a balance. There is a place for each of us in this movement: young and old, male and female, immigrants and nationals.

The action with the greatest impact that we can grasp onto right now is education. We each need to educate ourselves and our communities on how to lessen the impact on our planet and attain a harmony within ourselves. Globally, education has reduced poverty and disease, and increased prosperity, social capital, human well-being and a greater respect for our environment. Two of the largest developing countries, India and China, are following the example of the United States with respect to consumption and waste. Education is integral in helping these countries develop in a sustainable fashion. You might feel that this is a waste of time – you already know how to reduce your impact on the planet. What are you currently doing? Are you doing everything you can? Do you know what else you can do? This is where education can aid your actions. It will allow you to

maximize the output of each action, and subsequently have the greatest impact.

Education is at the heart of Jain *dharma*. We look inwards to learn more about ourselves and our interaction with others. Our culture prides itself on our aptitude and welfare. The next logical step is the integration of our prosperity and spirituality. The musical definition of harmony is the simultaneous combination of notes that fit together in a balance. A spiritual definition of harmony is a natural extension of *Ahimsa*, as well as *yin yang*.

We must utilize our resources to encourage a balance between our species and our surroundings. In this action, we can attain a sacred balance within ourselves.

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15th Biennial JAINA Convention



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New Jersey
Cherry Hills, NJ**

THE ROLE OF JAINISM IN EVOLVING GLOBAL & ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

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Samani Charitra Prajna specializes in Jain Philosophy & Comparative Religion; Preksha Meditation & Yoga; and Science of Living. Since 2006, she is a guest faculty member at Florida International University teaching undergrad

courses titled Jainism & Nonviolence; Religion, Life & Vegetarianism; and Meditation & spiritual Development. Samani Charitra Prajna has travelled extensively in USA, UK and Asia to conduct training sessions, make conference presentations, and deliver academic lectures in areas of her specialization.

Globalization of economy, technology and media has also brought a globalization of problems stemming from the crisis in the financial and labor markets, organized and international crime, environmental pollution, the violence of the drug trade and other international conflicts. If there are to be global solutions to them, they therefore also call for a globalization of ethics. In other words, there is a need for a common basic human ethic. There can be no new world order without a world ethic, a global ethic.

What is the role of Jain principles in evolving global ethics and environmental ethics? What kind of ethics and what kind of actions are needed to overcome environmental problems such as global warming, the growing gaps in the ozone layer, the destruction of rainforests, the growth of deserts and the pollution of oceans? How does Jainism deal with the issues of resource consumption, sustainable development, preservation of biodiversity, poverty, and global justice? Are we misguided by the so called definition of development? Is there any way to restore natural resources and make our Mother Earth a beautiful sustainable planet?

We have not yet succeeded in finding a way of life that could satisfy the primary needs of all and simultaneously mitigate cruelty, a by-product of excessive acquisition of wealth. Availability of resources is limited. Consumers' demands are unlimited and their desires are vaster still. We have no arithmetic that can induce balance. Keeping the truth in view, Mahavir, the 24th

Tirthankar, proclaimed that what is more dreadful is that man has focused his attention exclusively on acquisition of wealth, the sense of mine-ness or possessiveness with things. The truth, however, is those things do not belong to anybody. The attempt to deny this truth breeds violence, cruelty and inhumane actions.

Mahavir said, 'Self discipline is Ahimsa.'¹ Self discipline stands for not injuring the six classes of one sensed immobile living beings, namely earth, water, fire, air, plants, and two, three, four and five sensed mobile beings.² This self discipline is possible only on the acceptance of the existence of soul. The existence of soul cannot be established without accepting the existence of non-soul (non-living substances). That is why, the concept of non-soul, like the concept of soul, is also the basis of self discipline.³ There is mention of mobile beings and plant life in much literature but the concept of life in immobile beings like water, earth, etc, is exclusively a contribution of Jains. The first chapter of *Āchārāṅga Sūtra* deeply propounds the attributes of pleasure and pain in mobile and immobile living beings. The Japanese scientist, Masaru Emoto has done marvelous research on the droplets of water to explore that the molecular structure of water changes dynamically with the exposure of positive and negative vibrations.⁴ As long as we do not have the inner connectivity with the substances of the nature, it is difficult to stop man's inhumane actions. One has to think that as one wishes not to suffer, so do all others. This understanding supports the abstinence from exploitation of resources.⁵

Mahavir said, one who denies the existence of other beings denies his own existence.⁶ All souls are equal.⁷ No matter what size, shape, structure and color of their bodies, every soul has to be treated equally without any discrimination. Ahimsa is the eternal and core principle of Jainism.⁸ No living beings should be injured, commanded, enslaved, tortured, or killed.⁹ Everybody has the right to live and they desire to

¹ Dasvaikalik sutra, 6/8

² Samvao sutra, 17/2

³ Bhagvati sutra, 5/255

⁴ Masaru Emoto, *The message from water*

⁵ Acharang , 1/148, Dasvaikalik, 10/5, Suyagado, 1/10/3

⁶ Acharang , 1/66

⁷ Bhagvati , 7/8, Uttaradhyana , 19/25, 32/107

⁸ Dasvaikalik, 1/1, 6/8, Prasnavyakaran, 6/3

⁹ Acharang, 4/23

live happily.¹⁰ Mahavir is trying to convey this important message that every living organism has consciousness, the core intrinsic quality of soul and has the feelings of pleasure and pain. If we understand the value of their lives, we will not humiliate them for self interest. The binding force with all is the soul, and that inner connectivity with all forms of life can support the survival of all species. Our Earth, consisting of infinite multitude living organisms, is not a personal property of any specific community, particular religion or nation. The feeling of possessiveness or attachment is the root cause of problems. There is an internal relationship between possessions, fear and cruelty.¹¹ With the increase of possessions, there is an increase of fear and that leads to the decrease of the softness of heart, and man becomes very selfish in ignoring the well being of others. We have to develop a culture of nonviolence and reverence of life. We have to work for non-violence and respect for life, for justice and solidarity, for truthfulness and tolerance, and for partnership and mutual respect and love. Freedom from fear is the essential cause of the practice of Ahimsa. A person who neither frightens nor is frightened by other living beings can be nonviolent.

Mahavir knew that to live in the world it is not possible to completely stop violence without harming any form of living being. He suggested two types of life styles – one is monkhood and the other is the life of householders. The monks are supposed to follow rigorous practice by complete abstinence from any form of violence, whereas householders should cut down the unnecessary violence. Violence has been categorized as necessary and unnecessary.¹² In leading a domestic life and in self defense, it is often unavoidable that subtle living beings are harmed by householders. But they are supposed to mitigate the unnecessary violence created by negative emotions like anger, greed, passion, power and dominance. The concept of minimization of necessary violence and curtailing unnecessary violence can become an efficient tool to preserve nature. Nature has provided food, shelter and all the basic needs of life to us. Now it is our turn to look after nature. Sharing and caring enrich everyone's life with peace, happiness and harmony. Mahavir declared that there is no freedom from bondage unless and

until we share with others.¹³ Each of us has the equal right to share the resources and have a comfortable life. If 10% of the world's population consumes 40% of the natural resources, then the remaining 90% gets only 60% of that, thus making the rich richer and the poor poorer.

Mahavir has laid out a code of conduct for the householders to make their lives qualitative, disciplined and spiritually oriented by undertaking an inner conviction and commitment to apply certain vows. He had given an enlightened vision for peace, sharing equal rights, justice and solidarity of all humans with each other. Those vows are known as 'Anuvrat'¹⁴ which means small vows. They are as follows:

1. Ahimsa – practice of nonviolence, love and compassion, respect and reverence to all forms of life, refrain from intentional violence.
2. Satya – practice of truth, morality and values.
3. Asteya – practice of non-stealing, not taking anything which is not given or not one's share.
4. Svadar santosh – avoid sexual relationships except with one's spouse.
5. Iccha Pariman – limit one's possessions, practice contentment, charity.
6. Digvrata – constrain the expansion of business to promote local jobs, business.
7. Upabhog-Paribhog pariman – minimize the quantity and numbers of things that are used everyday, reduce personal consumption. (This vow also elucidates the guidelines for undertaking certain prohibited professions that involve violence—the killing of animals, the production and sale of leather products, non-vegetarian food and animal-based cosmetics, torturing animals for fun, hunting, cutting trees, etc.)
8. Anarthadanda virti – abstain from harmful activities—not supporting the production of weapons, drugs.
9. Samayik – practice equanimity for peace of mind.
10. Desavakasik – practice these vows rigorously for short period of time.
11. Paushadhopavas – living a day once in a year with complete detachment.

¹⁰ Acharang, 2/63

¹¹ Acharang, 5/32,34

¹² Upasakdasa, 1/26,27

¹³ Dasvaikalik, 9/2/22

¹⁴ Upasakdasha, 1/24-44

12. Yathasamvibhag – sharing your “stuff” and helping the community, supporting ascetics in their spiritual journey.

Among these 12 precepts, Ahimsa, asteya, iccha pariman, upabhog paribhog pariman and yathasamvibhag are deeply connected with environmental issues. Accepting that animals do possess consciousness and share the same kind of feelings of pleasure and pain can create more awareness to treat them like our family members. The equality of all souls builds a friendly relationship with them. Giving up those professions which are connected with the cruel treatment of animals can be a major step in protecting the animal kingdom. The equal rights of sharing natural resources will emphasize living a simple life rather than an aristocratic life style. All these small but prodigal precepts can establish peace and harmony within nature.

Cruelty towards nature and the inhabitants of our planet can be curtailed if we put certain questions to ourselves while buying any product – is it my need or greed? Can I do without this? Will this desire harm the ecosystem? Is it better to enjoy the existential beauty or its extinction by consumption? Am I a nature loving person? Do I look upon nature as merely serving and fulfilling my desire? If every individual takes an initial step to contemplate and analyze, it will bring in more awareness to restore nature and enhance its potential. On the basis of above vows, His holiness Acharya Mahaprajna has conceptualized a strategy of an eco-friendly life style.¹⁵ It runs as follows:

Alpa iccha – less desire of material abundance.

Alpa arambha – restriction of unnecessary violence, unethical professions.

Alpa parigraha – limited possessions, wealth, attachment.

Alpa upabhog – limited personal consumption.

Avashyak Hinsa – indulgence only in necessary activities. Micro-organisms and other subtle forms of life might be killed, for example, in order to maintain a home, cook food and do business; we cannot completely stay away from any kind of violence.

More desire → More consumption → More production → More pollution.

Unlimited desires are the root cause of every problem. Everybody has to learn and understand

that happiness does not come from more material consumption; rather, it comes from having peace of mind within. Desires are needed to have incentives for achievement and progress, but those desires that harm another's life, self respect and value are to be eliminated. Even Gandhi said that, 'I don't want independence of India by any means of violence. I can wait little longer but I want only on the basis of nonviolence.' Mahavir never said that you should not use your caliber, talent and efficiency to make money. His message is that you use your wealth in promoting the welfare of the community. If you have excess give back to society to help the needy instead of living an extravagant life. That will reduce the big gap between the rich and the poor.

Jainism also emphasizes and promotes the concept of vegetarianism. The so-called modern world considers that animals are made for humans and there is no harm in killing them for human use. This conviction creates selfishness in man killing millions of animals every year for food, cosmetics, leather products and research.

Eating animals simultaneously contributes to a multitude of tragedies: the animals' suffering and death, the ill health and early death of people, the unsustainable overuse of oil, water, land, topsoil, grain, labor and other vital resources, environmental destruction, including deforestation, species extinction, mono-cropping and global warming, the legitimacy of force and violence, the misallocation of capital, skills, land and other assets, vast inefficiencies in the economy, tremendous waste, massive inequalities in the world, mass world hunger and starvation, the transmission of dangerous diseases and moral failure in so-called civilized societies. Vegetarianism is an antidote to all of these unnecessary tragedies.¹⁶ A vegetarian diet can feed significantly more people than a meat-centered diet.¹⁷ The way that we breed animals for food is a threat to our planet.

Lives of animals and plants which inhabit this planet with us deserve protection, preservation and care. As human beings we also have the responsibility for air, water, fire and soil for future generations. The dominance of humanity over nature and the cosmos is not to be propagated. The earth cannot be changed unless the human consciousness transforms.

¹⁵ Acharya Mahaprajna, *Economics of Mahavir*

¹⁶ World Watch, July- August issue, 2004

¹⁷ Peter Uvin, *The State of World Hunger*

Dr. Hans Kung drafted four essential commitments in the Parliament of World Religions held in Chicago in 1993 to be shared by humans as a common ground for a global ethic.¹⁸ They are as follows:

1. Commitment to a culture of nonviolence and respect for life
2. Commitment to a culture of solidarity and a just economic order
3. Commitment to a culture of tolerance and life of truthfulness
4. Commitment to a culture of equal rights and partnership between men and women

On the basis of personal experience and the burdensome history of our planet, we have learned that a better global order cannot be created or enforced with laws, prescriptions and conventions alone.

The justice in our societies depends on the insight and readiness to act justly, a consciousness of duty towards Mother Earth. Therefore both the heads and hearts of men and women must be addressed.

Taking into consideration all the threatening issues, there will be no better global order without a global ethic. Humanity needs not only political programs and actions, but also a vision of peoples, ethnic and ethical groupings and religions living peacefully together. It needs hopes, goals, ideals, dedication, commitment and strong resolution to make our planet better and beautiful. It is true that there will be no survival of this planet in freedom, in justice and in peace without a global ethic.

¹⁶ World Watch, July- August issue, 2004

¹⁷ Peter Uvin, *The State of World Hunger*

¹⁸ Dr. Hans Kung, *Towards A Global Ethic: An Initial Declaration*



The true meaning of life is to plant trees under whose shade you do not expect to sit...

-By Nelson Henderson.

Jain Society of San Diego

Best Wishes to JAINA
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WHO OWNS THE PLANET? JAIN PERSPECTIVE ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Harshad N Sanghrajka, PhD
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Dr. Harshadray N Sanghrajka has an M.A. In Indian Religions and was awarded a Doctorate by the Intercultural Open University for his thesis on Dhyana. He is an Honorary Secretary of the Institute of Jainology; a lecturer in Jainism at the Birkbeck University of London; a Cultural Guide for the Victoria and Albert Museum in London; and a Religious Education (RE) consultant to various government agencies. Born in India and brought up in Kenya, he now resides in UK.

I wish to present the Jain view on ecology by asking the question: 'Who Owns the Planet?' This question is very interesting. It may be simpler from the mono-theistic philosophies to point the finger at God. But Jainism does not believe in a 'creator God'. So the Jain answer has to be different.

First, let us understand the Jain perspective on the environment. Lord Mahavir, the last Jain teacher of this era, 599 BCE – 527 BCE, was our first environmentalist.

His discourses on the following two precepts support this claim:

1. *Ahimsa* Non-violence negation of violence in all modes
2. *Aparigraha* Altruistic attitude negation of desire for ownership

These precepts address the environment from both angles: social as well as ecological. This paper will be limited to the precepts and their relation to ecosystems.

Eco is our natural surrounding in which earth, air, water and vegetation are in common ownership passed down from generation to generation. Eco cannot be isolated from life because LIFE is totally dependent on ECO. One cannot imagine life in the absence of eco-friendly earth, air, water or vegetation.

Ernst Haeckel (1834 -1919), a German life-scientist, coined 'ecology' by conjunction of the

Greek words *Oikos* and *Logos*, which is now defined as the study of the relationships of organisms to their environment and to one another.

That organisms have relationship with one another was stated in the Jain work *TATTVARTHA SUTRA* from 2nd century CE and I quote aphorism 5.21: *parasparopagraho jävànàma*

Souls render service to one another; they create a common environment and live together in weal and woe. In other words, all life is interdependent.

Scientists in modern times have been warning us about the protection of the environment and the results of ignoring it since 1900. But Mahavir defined this phenomenon in the first scripture of the Jains called *Acharanga Sutra* which is extant and dated at 6th century BCE by academics.

To relate *AHIMSA* to ecosystems, it is relevant here to understand the definition of the constituents of ecology as defined by Mahavir.

In Indian tradition the five basic elements of nature: earth, water, fire, wind and space are defined as *pancha maha bhoot* ~ or five greater existents. These are greater existents because the manifest universe arises from, subsists on, and disintegrates into these five elements.

Mahavir classified four of these elements, excluding space, as sentient, as conscious, as capable of cognition and feeling. Thus, earth, water, air and fire are living organisms, not to be confused with other life which subsists within them.

Mahavir added plant life to these four and defined five individual life forms as one-sensed, immobile, living beings. In a single group he combined the remaining life forms, with two to five senses, as mobile living beings and gave us the classification of six types of embodied life. *Shadjivanikaya*.

On contemplation, we can appreciate that Mahavir gave five times as much importance to the elemental beings compared to the greater mass of mobile beings, which, even with higher levels of grasping were grouped into one.

Having established the natural elements and plants as living beings with consciousness, perception and feeling, Mahavir proceeded to define sinful acts against these living elements and prohibited such acts of violence.

Here are some quotes from the *Acharanaga Sutra*:

"See! There are beings individually embodied (in earth; not one all-soul). See! There are men who control themselves because one destroys this (earth-body) by bad and injurious doings, and many other beings, besides, which he hurts by means of earth, through his doing acts relating to earth." I.1.2. (2)

"He who injures these (earth-bodies) does not comprehend and renounce the sinful acts; he who does not injure these, comprehends and renounces the sinful acts. Knowing them, a wise man should not act sinfully towards earth, nor cause others to act so, nor allow others to act so. He, who knows these causes of sin relating to earth, is called a reward-knowing sage. Thus I say." I.1.2. (6)

The messages are repeated for (2) water, (3) fire, (4) plants, (5) mobile life and (6) wind. Thus, Mahavir has preached total protection of the natural elements of ecology as well as human and sub-human life. He also warns that violence against any one is violence against all life forms.

I.2.6.(1) : "He who perfectly understands (what has been said in the preceding lesson) and follows the (faith) to be coveted, should therefore do no sinful act, nor cause others to do one. Perchance he meditates a sin (by an act against only) one (of the six aggregates of lives); but he will be guilty (of sin against) every one of the six &c.."

"... .. all breathing, existing, living, sentient creatures should not be slain, nor treated with violence, nor abused, nor tormented, nor driven away." 1.4.1. (1)

With *Ahimsa*, defined as non-violence in thought, speech or deed, to be observed in direct and indirect activity against even the lowest form of life, AND the ecological elements defined as life, it is absolutely clear that Mahavir preached preservation of the natural environment through the precept of *Ahimsa* over 2,500 years ago.

As the most intelligent beings on earth humans are responsible for the environment of weal or woe. Environment is universal, and as a result we will have to live in whatever environment we create. The message here is for the humans to take care of the elements if the elements are to

take care of all other life on earth including the *endangered human species!*

Mahavir blamed desire for ownership and accumulation as the single major cause of violence. Desire for ownership is tantamount to attachment.

Here are some quotations related to the second precept of *aparigraha* from *Saman Suttam*, a collection of verses from diverse Jain scriptures:

"Owing to attachment, a person commits violence, tells lies, commits theft, indulges in sex and develops a wish for unlimited hoarding." (140)

"A person, who hoards even the slightest amount of an animate or inanimate thing or gives consent to someone for hoarding, will not escape from misery." (141)

Desire for ownership drives our action for acquisition.

Intensity of the desire generates intensity in the action.

Intensity can be directly related to irrationality. Irrationality leads to anger, greed, deceit, ego, falsehood, stealing, adultery, destruction, pollution, terrorism and other vices.

When one becomes engrossed in the thought of "owning" "someone" or "something", one may go to any length to satiate that desire.

Our ever-growing desire for material things are the cause of degradation and depletion of the ecosystems. Each and every article which we possess, or desire to possess, is manufactured from natural resources. Thus overuse, misuse and pollution of these resources creates imbalance in ecology.

Let us not congratulate ourselves for having successfully authored our disaster through producing infinite types and quantities of material objects for our comfort. In reality, we have guaranteed extinction of life by not understanding Mahavir and not respecting the natural elements.

Even now, each individual can save the earth simply by saving one drop of water a day. Just multiply and work out the total volume. And, if we take care of one drop, rest assured that we will THINK of protecting the environment in everything we do. THIS IS AN ATTITUDE.

Let us not worry about what GOVERNMENTS WILL DO for the ecosystems. No Government is more

powerful than the individual when each one acts with a single purpose in mind. This is why Mahavir preached this to the masses, in their own language.

Let us make it a habit to THINK! Think of the repercussions on the environment of all our actions.

'Who Owns the Planet?' A very interesting question.

Jainism believes that the universe is in existence from time immemorial and it is eternal. Its ontological constituents can neither be created nor destroyed. It is according to the inherent qualities of the constituents that change takes place all the time.

The planet is but a collection of ecological elements and life forms. Hence, the occupants are the owners of the planet. Do we not own our properties jointly with our spouses as *tenancy in common*? Well the same applies to this planet; only the number of tenants is infinite.

On that joint ownership we assume responsibility according to our skills. We should apply the same principle to the ownership of the planet. Just as in commercial enterprise, we should assign responsibility to the most apt. Let the humans assume responsibility for the ecosystems on behalf of the joint owners of the planet.

By not believing in a creator god or a supreme being as owner, controller and dispenser everything, Jainism makes us responsible for everything that happens to us. Through the doctrine of *Karma*, the ultimate law of causality, we are responsible for our own deeds and hence we are responsible for the fruits of such deeds.

The same principle applies to the balance or imbalance of the ecosystems. As ye sow, so shall ye reap! Or, what goes around comes around!!

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THE TRUE VALUE OF ENVIRONMENT

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In the age of science and technology the dream of progress is at the forefront. But this race is begetting imbalance in every facet of human life – desires are more, discipline is less; comforts are more, conduct is less; selfishness is more, self-control is less; cruelty is more, sympathy is less; materiality is more, spirituality is less.

This imbalance of the individual has degraded the value of Mother Nature. However, some people are trying hard to keep nature alive. Is saying 'go green' enough to rehabilitate it? Going green will not be successful for an ecological balance until man stops destroying and misusing natural resources just to satisfy his selfish desires. To maintain the environment, we will have to give value to all natural constituents. We will have to be very sensitive and compassionate to nature. This is what Lord Mahavir experienced around 2700 years ago. He perceived the life in earth, water, air, fire and plants, not just human beings and animals. These five forms of life constitute nature or the environment. Lord Mahavir recognized them as living beings with one sense – the sense of touch. Lord Mahavir said that the smallest unit of life also experiences pain and



Reaction of water to the words "You make me sick" taped to bottle overnight.

In this way, science is getting close to the truth, searched through the inner power of soul. Truth never changes; it needs to be revealed.

The same issue regarding ecology is discussed in environmental ethics also. Western philosophers

pleasure. *Acharang Sutra* (1.28), the first canonical text of Jainism explains it at length. 'Apege andhmabhhe, apege andhmachhe' – if the earth-bodied beings are pierced or cut, they have the feelings of intense pain like human beings born blind, deaf, lame and deficient in other limbs.

The key principle of Jainism is non-violence – it means not to hurt a single living thing of this universe by your thoughts, words or actions. By accepting the one-sensed beings as the lowest form of life, Lord Mahavir gave them their existential value and identity. Why should one not hurt living organisms? It is said in *Dasvaikalik* (6.10), 'savve jiva vi ichhanti, jivium na marijjium' – life is dear to all, not death. Therefore, to hurt nature means committing violence. Man does not have the right to take a life which is not given by him. These beings have all the instincts that man possesses, such as hunger, fear, sex and possessiveness. The difference is, the activities in such beings are subtle and out of the reach of materialistic or gross instruments. Therefore, common man does not believe.

Fortunately, in this technologically savvy era, man is doing intense research on nature. Dr. Weston has done many experiments on plants which show their instincts of fear, love, hate and lot more. Plants are already proven to be living forms. Modern geologists also agree the rocks, mountains, etc. undergo growth and decay. Water has emotions too. A Japanese researcher, Mr. Masaru Emoto, has written a book named "Message from Water," which explains the response of water to human emotions. Mr. Emoto and his colleagues decided to see how thoughts and words affected the formation of untreated, distilled water crystals, using words typed onto paper by a word processor and taped on water-filled glass bottles overnight. The bottles were then frozen and photographed.



Reaction of water to the word "Peace" taped to the bottle overnight.

have discussed this issue a little differently. They ask, "Why should we protect or respect the environment?" Is it because a sustainable environment is essential for human well-being? Or is it because nature and its parts have certain values in its own right? The former is the value of

things as a 'means' to some other ends. This is called 'instrumental value;' whereas the latter is the value of things as an end regardless of the utility. It is known as 'intrinsic value.' For example, as an employee a man has instrumental value, but he has an intrinsic value as being a human. The former is conditional and the latter is unconditional.

The traditional western ethical perspective, known as 'anthropocentric,' is human-centered. Intrinsic value is assigned to the human being alone. For example, Aristotle, and Immanuel Kant did not consider any wrong in destroying a non-human entity. According to Historian Lynn White Jr., Judeo-Christian thinking has encouraged the over-exploitation of nature by accepting humans as superior to all life on the earth. Later, Leopold, Roultey, Holmes Rolson III and many more have given intrinsic value to land, water, mountain and all natural resources. They believe that it is immoral and unjust to destroy nature.

Another concept, Animism, is quite similar to Jainism. Animism is a philosophical or spiritual idea that souls exist not only in humans and animals, but also in plants, and rocks; natural phenomena such as thunder; geographic features such as mountains or rivers, and other entities of the natural environment.

It is true that the concept of '*shadjeevnikay*' – six forms of life – is a unique concept propounded by Lord Mahavir. The whole Jain philosophy and ethics are profoundly ecological. The monks and nuns are completely friendly to nature. Self-restraint is the motto of their life. Satisfaction is

their wealth. Even codes of conduct for a layman defined by Lord Mahavir are quite kind to the environment such as – not cutting trees, not wasting water in daily activities, not hunting, reducing travel, controlling desires, etc. They are forbidden to do such businesses which involve significant violence.

In a nut shell, the environment will be respected and stay green if:

1) We control our desires. There is no end to desires. Acharya Mahapragya says to make the circle of selfishness so big that all constituents of this universe would fall within that range. It is not selfishness, but self-control which is the only foundation of love, non-violence and peace.

Fewer desires, fewer products, fewer industries, less exploitation of resources, less pollution and global warming more protection of environment.

2) If we assign nature an intrinsic value, then we will only have the sense of sameness; 'what I feel, they also feel. I like pleasure, these small lives also like pleasure.' When we consider ourselves and these subtle forms of existence on same platform then we would not think to hurt or destroy them; rather we would let them enjoy their lives. The true value of environment is to accept their independent true existence.

Lord Mahavir proclaimed the ecological truth: "One who neglects or disregards the existence of earth, water, fire, air and plants disregards his own existence, which is entwined within him."



THE FIRST COUNTRY IN THE WORLD TO GRANT CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS TO NATURE

The people of Ecuador approved a sweeping new constitution that makes that country the first in the world to give legally enforceable constitutional rights to nature. The new constitutional provision states:

"Nature or Pachamama [an indigenous term for Mother Earth], where life is reproduced and exists, has the right to exist, persist, maintain and regenerate its vital cycles, structure, functions and its processes in evolution. Every person, people, community or nationality, will be able to demand the recognition of rights for nature before the public bodies."

JAINISM & ECOLOGY: OLD VOWS FOR NEW WOES

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He has published several books on Karma, Patanjali Yoga Sutras, Nonviolence, Hinduism and Ecology, and co-edited books on Jainism and Ecology, and Reconciling Yogas.

Among the world's faiths, Jainism stands uniquely poised to make a significant contribution to the current problems of climate change, species extinctions, and chemical pollution. Most religions ascribe to the belief that God created the world, set the world in motion, bestowed on human beings responsibilities and conscience, but ultimately maintains control over the earth's destiny. Only slowly are the Jewish, Christian, Islamic, Buddhist and Hindu traditions seeing a connection between human agency and the environment.

Jainism posits a non-created, eternal world suffused with life. This life, in all its multitudinous incarnations, holds the will and power to perform actions that result in predictable consequences. If one commits violence, violence will result. If a person dedicates himself or herself to peace, then calm will prevail. Jain karma theory accounts for our current ecological predicament: due to human violence against living souls, the atmosphere has become polluted, trapping unwanted heat. Animals, insects and plants are disappearing from nature due to human greed and encroachment upon native habitats. Human folly has produced harmful chemicals that have entered our air, waterways, and earth, as well as the human bloodstream, resulting in countless diseases and genetic disorders. For Jainism, all these tragedies arise from human effort. According to Jain philosophy, only human effort can correct these ills.

In the traditional pathway established by the *Tirthankars*, knowledge of the soul and its expression through various life forms resulted in the cultivation of harmlessness toward life. 2500

years ago, and even 250 years ago, the amount of violence brought against nature today would have been unimaginable. The traditional texts of Jainism set forth meticulous rules about the bare necessities of life: how to eat, how to speak, how to move, how to ease one's bowels. Vegetarianism, the guarding of speech, the development of appropriate attitudes toward others, and care in the disposal of one's waste shaped a way of life still observed by Jain monks and nuns throughout India. Having visited with these leaders in the various corners of the subcontinent, and having witnessed the in religious vow-taking, the 'staying power' of core Jain tenets cannot be denied.

Today, the world requires an approach to its environment far more complex than the responding to the simple needs of nutrition, civility, and waste disposal. With the birth of science and the growth of technology, our food has become adulterated, our civility has become compromised by the global reach of media and competing nationalities, and the quantity and toxicity of our waste has become staggering. Though we have overcome, for the most part, the blight of communicable diseases, we have not been able to develop a sustained peaceful polity or a core commitment to the joyful values of sustainability. Gandhi himself would be amazed and perhaps alarmed if he were to experience the contemporary world, with its roadways, automobiles and communication devices. These great comforts have been won at the expense of the health of the earth, requiring a vast exploitation of natural resources and producing huge volumes of refuse released into the earth, the waters and the sky.

How might Jain values help correct these imbalances? How might Jainism, a tiny minority faith possibly contribute some solutions? Today in North and South America, tens of millions of individuals are being exposed to the vows of Jainism through the practice of Yoga. Gandhi communicated the values of Ahimsa through his life work. These ideas are being engaged again by a new generation of young people who practice Yoga and hence are becoming familiar with the ethics promulgated by Mahavir. Patanjali borrowed the ethics of Jainism and placed them at the center of his Yoga Sutra.

Clayton Horton of GreenPath Yoga has suggested that the vows of Yoga and Jainism can be reinterpreted and applied for the cultivation of a

modern lifestyle that is sensitive to environmental needs. He describes eco-friendly vows as follows:

1. *Ahimsa*: Non-Violence

- Observe the results of human actions to discontinue tendencies that are hurtful to myself, other human beings and all of creation.
- By eating a plant-based diet, one can minimize global warming and world hunger.
- Recognizing the soul in all of creation, one recognizes the sacredness of fragile ecosystems, all beings and myself.

2. *Satya*: Truthfulness

- Observe the reality of the need for widespread environmental education and action to maintain responsible stewardship of planet Earth.
- Choose to pay attention to the media and environmental research to be aware of the environmental health and condition of our planet.
- No matter how urban or industrial my life is, recognize the human connection and interdependence with nature.
- Honor the wisdom of traditional cultures as well as modern science.

3. *Asteya*: Non-Stealing

- Give thanks for the food, water, and the blessings received from the material world.
- Support 'Fair Trade' agricultural and manufacturing policies and philosophies when trading and working.
- Acknowledge the gifts of Mother Earth and try to give back something.

4. *Brahmacharya*: Moderation in all action, directing our vital energy towards the internal divine.

- Reprioritize the constant need to gratify the senses with a more reasonable agenda that includes taking care of others and the health of our planet.
- Conserve energy by not overindulging in work, sex, eating and sleeping.
- Devote time and energy to do my Yoga and meditation practice.
- Get outside to enjoy nature with friends and family.
- Recognize the environmental impact of a growing world population when planning family size.

5. *Aparigraha*: Non-Possessiveness

- Unsubscribe to the ideology that consumerism, urban sprawl and materialism equals happiness and progress.
- Commit to taking only what is needed whether it is at the buffet line, supermarket or the shopping mall.
- Recognize that if we all shared a little bit more and were not so greedy with natural resources and financial wealth, there would be less suffering on the planet.

By reconfiguring the age-old principles and practices of Jainism, and by thinking carefully about the results of one's actions, observant Jains (and practitioners of Yoga) can become examples and agents of change. Nature has shown us the harm caused by the rapaciousness of modern technology, manufacturing and consumption. Humans can respond by being mindful, exhibiting restraint, and cultivating appreciation and respect for the lives and beauties within nature.



There is a sufficiency in the world for man's need but not for man's greed.

~ Mohandas K. Gandhi

KNOWLEDGE-BASED JAINISM & ECO-WARRIORS

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My exposition is motivated here by two quotations, the first from an *Agam* (Jain scripture) and the second by Albert Einstein. The *Agam Dasavaikalika* (Chapter 4, Verse 10) makes a fundamental statement:

'Prathamam jnanam, tato daya'

This means 'first knowledge, then compassion;' so the emphasis is on knowledge-based Jainism and ecological values that include compassion toward every form of life. The Jain even expounds life such as water bodies and air bodies. It is also important to keep in mind that the label Jainism is a misnomer for what is *Jainness/Jain Spirit*. On the other hand, Albert Einstein (*Nature*, 1940, a prominent scientific journal) states that:

*'Science without religion is lame,
Religion without science is blind.'*

The modern way of life in western and developing countries has really lost a sense of conservation, e.g. the 'Affluenza' virus exists everywhere. The simplest example is how we could easily forget that water goes through so many processes to be available in taps (through a reservoir especially built, specially treated, channeled and so on) that we take so lightly; we waste water, perhaps half a glass is drunk and half thrown away. We have become insensitive; everything is so packaged that we take the natural resources and their uses for granted. This is a very simple example but it goes into the heart of misuse, wastage and insensitivity in destroying the world's resources. This, with climate change and terrorism are some of the evils of the 21st century.

In his dialogue, Mahavir said to his disciple Gautama a key message, '*Ma Pamayae*' (*Utradhyayana-sutra*, Chapter 28, verse 35), which broadly means 'be alert every second whatever you do.' To have dynamic awareness as

a way of life still has clear relevance today. True Jains are *eco-warriors* whose Dharma is to practice and promote compassion!

Jain Dharma has developed through many centuries and has provided a rich inheritance of universal thinking/philosophy on a scientific basis, which means many Jain concepts have direct relevance now. Jain thinkers, like other thinkers, have given wisdom in several scriptures (often like compendiums) so that it is difficult to focus on the key applications. It is essential for Jains to focus on what is really the foundation from which the principle of ecology follows. Jains try to rightly summarize '*ahimsa permo dharma*,' but there is quite a significant Jain science behind this statement.

These points have led to the *Four Noble Truths* (*Chatvari Arya Satya*), first published in *The Scientific Foundations of Jainism*, Mardia, 1990. These Truths give the basis of the Jain way of life through Jain science in today's language. Some truths along these lines are necessary to keep our perspective clear in this turbulent modern world. The Four Noble Truths show the gradual evolution to the central aim to become a *siddha*, that is, to achieve *moksha*. These are:

The Four Noble Truths of Jain Dharma are:

- Truth 1: The soul exists in contamination with karmic matter and it longs to be purified.
- Truth 2: Living beings differ due to the varying density and types of karmic matter.
- Truth 3: The karmic bondage leads the soul through the states of existences (cycles).
- Truth 4A: Karmic fusion is due to perverted views, non-restraint, carelessness, passions and activities.
- Truth 4B: Violence to oneself and others results in the formation of the heaviest new karmic matter, whereas helping others towards *Moksha* with positive non-violence results into the lightest new karmic matter.
- Truth 4C: Austerity forms the karmic shield against new karmons as well as setting the decaying process in the old karmic matter.

(These four noble truths of Jain Dharma are reminiscent of the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism: suffering exists, suffering arises from

attachment to desires, suffering ceases when attachment to desire ceases, freedom from suffering is possible by practicing the Eightfold Path.)

Truths 1-3 emphasize that we keep on absorbing these karmons through activity, and throw some out after their effect has taken place. Thus the soul has a *Karmic Computer* attached to it that keeps all the records – it also dictates some tasks from previous records, i.e. past lives. The fundamental aim in life is in removing this old karmic matter as well as stopping the inflow of the new *karmons*. So this karmic process can be stopped and rehabilitated through *Jainness*. One of the key negatives responsible for heavy karmic matter (Truth 4A, 4B) is *kashaya* (destructive emotions) which is composed of anger, pride, deceit and greed.

These *kashayas* are correlated with the color coding (*leshya* = karmic stain) of the karmic density of soul. Of the six consecutive levels (black, blue, grey, yellow, lotus-pink and luminous white) the first three represent heavier karmic density whereas the next three represent lighter karmic density. In practice, an analogy of picking fruits from a tree is used to classify the degree of color stain (*Sthanag Sutra*; verses 537 & 538). A person with the first level uproots the tree for its fruits, the second cuts the tree from its trunk, the third cuts a branch, the fourth cuts off a bunch, the fifth plucks ripe fruit from the tree and the sixth merely picks up ripe fruit fallen to the ground (see the figure). Thus the person with the highest spiritual level has the total preservation of the environment in the forefront – a real Jain. Furthermore, the karmon intake is increased upon creating waste and pollution since these are regarded as acts of violence. We can take a cue from 'the bee that sucks honey from the blossom of a tree without hurting the blossom while strengthening itself.'

Six different personality types which are color coded by karmic stains as expounded in an ancient Jain parable. The true Jain merely picks up ripe fruit falling to the ground.



(Picture taken from the early 19th Century, Leeds Collection, © K.V.Mardia)

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With realization of one's own potential and self-confidence in one's ability, one can build a better world.

~ Dalai Lama

I'm not an environmentalist. I'm an Earth warrior.

~ Darryl Cherney, quoted in Smithsonian, April 1990

## JAINISM IS ECOLOGY – ECOLOGY IS JAINISM

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Practicing the Jain religion in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century should acquire the orientation and focus of a religion of environment. Bhagwan Mahavir's greatest contribution was to articulate with great clarity a comprehensive and wide-ranging definition of Ahimsa. Behind this enlarged and integrated vision of non-violence was the spiritual urge to transform the concepts of 'oneness of all creation' and 'live and let live' into life ethics. Mahavir elucidated the principles of Jainism in their most fundamental and encompassing compassionate parameters.

Indeed, 'Jainism is ecology and ecology is Jainism.' Ecology is the culture of inter-relationship among all living organisms and their environment. It encompasses the entire universe – all the stars and planets and their geospheres and hydrospheres, their atmospheres and biospheres. Living organisms are to coexist with the forces of nature in an ambience of mutually complimentary and mutually-sustaining interdependence.

The integrated linkage between Ahimsa and ecology is reflected all around us. A river does not drink its own water, a cow does not drink its own milk and a tree does not eat its own fruits. They give them to others. Life grows only because of such mutually supportive generosity and understanding.

For over 5000 years, religion has enshrined this approach in the motto of 'Parasparopgrha Jeevanam.' This means that all living organisms, irrespective of the degree of their sensory perceptions or size, are bound together by mutual support and interdependence. This is part of Earth's integrated life support system.

Jain ecological perception views evolution and growth of life in all its splendor and variety on this planet. It is a democratic concept pinning faith in the sanctity, integrity and equality of social category, irrespective of differing forms of living creatures ranging from humans to animals, insects, plants and other miniscule living organisms.

The Jain religion arouses the awareness that humans, the most gifted of living beings on Earth, need to awaken to the realization that they have an obligation to fight for processing life on Earth.

Not just for themselves, but for all other living beings as well as the natural environment. There is no cause more urgent, no dedication more fitting than to protect the future of our species in a peaceful and healthy ecological setting. Humans must realize that God has given them an uplifted face so that spiritually they turn their eyes to heaven, while all other animals are prone to fix their gaze upon the earth. Thus, the identification of human obligation to the universe has both spiritual connotation as well as realistic and practical implications in day-to-day life.

But look what has happened. In a poet's words:

Now the land is barren  
The waters are contaminated  
The air is polluted  
The forests are dying  
The creatures are disappearing.

This represents the selfish exploitative instinct of human beings for the sake of temporary material comforts and at the cost of permanent damage to Earth's divine support system. A poet has put it aptly.

We live in all things.  
All things lie in us  
We live by the sun  
We move with the stars  
We eat from the earth  
We drink from the rain  
We breathe from the air  
We depend on the forest.

Hence the Jain religion ordains that in the best tradition of 'forgiveness', we human beings must come in communion with nature and the vital elements of universal ecology. Only then we would deserve the joy of celebrating our



tremendous scientific, technological, literary and artistic achievements.

In Jainism, respect and concern for ecology stems from its fundamental emphasis on 'Live and let live.' Inherent in it is the need to give up ego (aham) and practice restraint (samyam). Between these two is the constantly flowing current of respect for others without claiming superiority over others and coupled with the need to limit one's wants and desires, which if pursued recklessly lead to exploitation of other living beings and nature. This, indeed, is also the thought and conduct process that enables a more

effective practice of Ahimsa, Aparigraha and Anekant, the three fundamental pillars of Jain philosophy.

Global Jain Diaspora must come together on this vital front of ecology, mobilize our collective will and resolve to contribute meaningfully to an international environmental operation. It is welcome that JAINA has taken significant initiatives. They should now be intensified and moved up to higher levels at the forthcoming JAINA convention in Los Angeles with its motivational theme of Ecology-the Jain Way.

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With Best  
Wishes  
From  
Jain Center  
of  
South Florida



"PRACTICE OF 4A AHIMSA, ANEKANTVAD, APARIGRAHA, AUSTERITY,  
SELF DISCIPLINE AND EQUALITY FOR ALL SOUL,  
WILL SHOW THE PATH TOWARDS NIRVANA"

--Mahaveer Swamy

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## WE ARE GUESTS!

Pallavi Doshi



*Pallavi Doshi teaches Indian Culture & History to Pathshala teens at the Jain Center of Southern California. She is interested in nature and travel, and how these themes interact in the arts. Her hobbies include painting and writing poetries.*

### WE ARE GUESTS

As the journey of our souls is limitless,  
We are guests of our Mother Earth.

We co-exist with birds and animals,  
We are grateful to the great host.

This guest house has many conveniences,  
To stay there are many continents and places.

The guests will need plenty of water to wash,  
So she made lakes, mighty rivers and waterfalls.

The travelers will be thirsty,  
So she made streams, juicy fruits and water in the coconut.

The voyagers will be hungry,  
So she made the wheat, rice, corn and millet.

The explorers are here! Let's offer some sweet,  
So, she made dry fruits, sugar cane and ripe fruits on the trees.

She did not even forget to entertain,  
And created the ocean waves, flowers and the mountain slopes.

This host offers everyone so much,  
That everyone loves their stay in this guest house.

Besides enjoying her hospitality,  
Do the guests have any other rights?

Other animals are teaching humans,  
To consume basic requirements and live a contented life.

Earth is showing mankind is doing too much damage,  
Its self repair is not sustainable now.

The host is questioning the guests through natural disasters,  
'Do guests have a right to take away the rights of the future guests?'

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# Jain Society OF GREATER ATLANTA

*Come and Visit the First Full Marble  
Shikharbandhi Jain Temple*



*in North America*

#### **Features:**

**Main Level:** Three main moortis - Main Mulnayak Adinath Bhaghvan (Anjansalaka), two side moortis: Parshvanath Bhaghvan and Mahavir Swami Bhaghvan surrounded by 24 Tirthankaras and ten Dev and Devis

**Lower Level:** Diagmber temple with three moortis: Main Mulnayak Mahavir Swami & two side moortis: Shantinath and Sheetal Nath Bhaghvan and Dhyam room (Upashrai)

## **Jain Center of Greater Atlanta**

**669 South Peachtree Street NW, Norcross Georgia 30071**

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## COMPASSIONATE ENVIRONMENTALISM

Tim Helton

[tim@timhelton.com](mailto:tim@timhelton.com)



*Tim Helton is currently a PhD student at Drew University where he is studying the Anthropology of Religion. As a student in the first annual ISSJS in India, he developed a love for Jain people and their rich religious tradition, and expects to do his dissertation on Jain-Christian dialog.*

In light of this convention's theme, the comments of the noted Jain scholar Anne Vallely are worth considering. Vallely notes that while Jainism as practiced in the west is becoming increasingly environmentally active, the ecological sensibilities held by Indian Jains have historically differed significantly from those who participate in the western environmental movement. Western ecologists see themselves as protectors of the environment and actively seek to combat human activities that lead to environmental destruction, while Jainism's 'live and let live' suggests a more serene approach. Thus, Vallely calls the Jain concept of *Ahimsa* 'an ethic of non-interference' which leads to 'disengagement and withdrawal from nature.' She calls Jainism 'a powerful ecology in itself' but also notes that Jainism concentrates on the avoidance of harmful activities rather than the active promotion of remedies. This difference in philosophy derives from the Jain concern with detachment, and Vallely notes that this concern also lies at the root of differences in the way that Westerners and Jains think about compassion. For Jains, 'compassion means recognizing that all living beings...deserve respect and that none should be injured.' Thus, for Jains compassion is not 'emotional vicarious suffering.'

The evocative phrase 'emotional vicarious suffering' pleads for elaboration, and a brief story may help. As a young Christian minister, I once expounded a scriptural passage that describes a time when Jesus felt compassion for a crowd. Besides suffering from the disadvantage introduced by differing definitions of the word, the English word 'compassion' is much too weak to contain the meaning that the gospel writer had in mind. To capture the thought of the writer, the passage might better have been translated with

something like, 'Jesus ached with sorrow at the crowd's suffering.' The way that I read the verse was that Jesus experienced a visceral emotion that led him to long to alleviate the hunger of those in the crowd in much the way that Western ecologists, faced with a particularly ugly example of environmental destruction, long to mitigate that destruction. Such longing, suggests attachment, rather than detachment.

I am now a student learning from religions like Jainism, and the words of the Hippocratic Oath have become increasingly meaningful to me. If one would help, the medical doctors insist, one must 'do no harm.' Looking back on the twenty-five years that passed since I preached that sermon, I can see that the help that my compassion motivated was often overshadowed by the harm I did – sometimes in the very act of trying to help! Because the Jain concept of compassion is closer to the 'do no harm' of the Hippocratic Oath than to my longing to help, I find a deep wisdom in the synthesis of these two notions of compassion. For if I would help (whether other humans or the environment), I must first do no harm. However, the 'emotional vicarious suffering' that Jesus experienced is not without wisdom as well; to deny help, when it is within my capacity to render it, is not much better than doing harm. Thus, I find that compassion, including environmental compassion, walks a tightrope between doing no harm and doing good. On this tightrope, Jainism teaches me the wisdom of detached restraint while Christianity teaches me the wisdom of engaged caring. Listening to both, I learn to maintain a healthy detachment from outcomes while I engage in helping activities.

Recently I encountered the words of the *Irya Vahiya Sutra*: 'May all the suffering I caused knowingly or unknowingly cease.' Since I have often hurt others in spite of my best intentions, I find these words particularly poignant. These words also resonate with me because they emphasize (in my mind) the Christian notion that a loving God adds to our best efforts, flawed as they are, a measure of grace that makes them good enough. Thus, when I hurt another in my effort to help, I can hope that the ripples of pain will fade with time, and that the good, rather than the harm will be retained.

The most powerful forces on the planet, human societies, face the same balancing act that I do as an individual. Even in our efforts to do the right

thing, we often do exactly the wrong thing. To take but one example, years ago a region on the Oregon-California border introduced small flies called midges to control the mosquito population. Unfortunately, the insects thrived to the point that in the summer, one can barely drive the highway due to masses of dead insects on the windshield. Undoubtedly, those that introduced them thought that the midges would be helpful since they obviated the need for traditional chemicals to control mosquitoes. What could be more ecologically sound? Yet, the result was certainly more harmful to the environment than the mosquitoes would have been. Jainism's 'live and let live' might have been a better solution.

On the other hand, to fail to respond to the unrestrained rape of the environment is at least as bad as doing the wrong thing in an effort to

protect the environment; and for many an 'emotional vicarious suffering' like that experienced by Jesus, promotes the tenacity needed to confront the greed that leads to environmental destruction. Compassion, then, whether personal or ecological, is a matter of finding the sweet spot that is the balance between a longing to help and a desire to do no harm, and Jainism's hope that 'the suffering I caused knowingly or unknowingly' can one day cease, promotes the courage needed to continue to seek that balance. Thus, by encouraging the hope that the damage done to the environment can, with time, be undone, and by teaching me to participate actively in environmental efforts, while remaining detached from the results of those efforts, Jainism and Christianity collaborate to teach me a balanced environmentalism.

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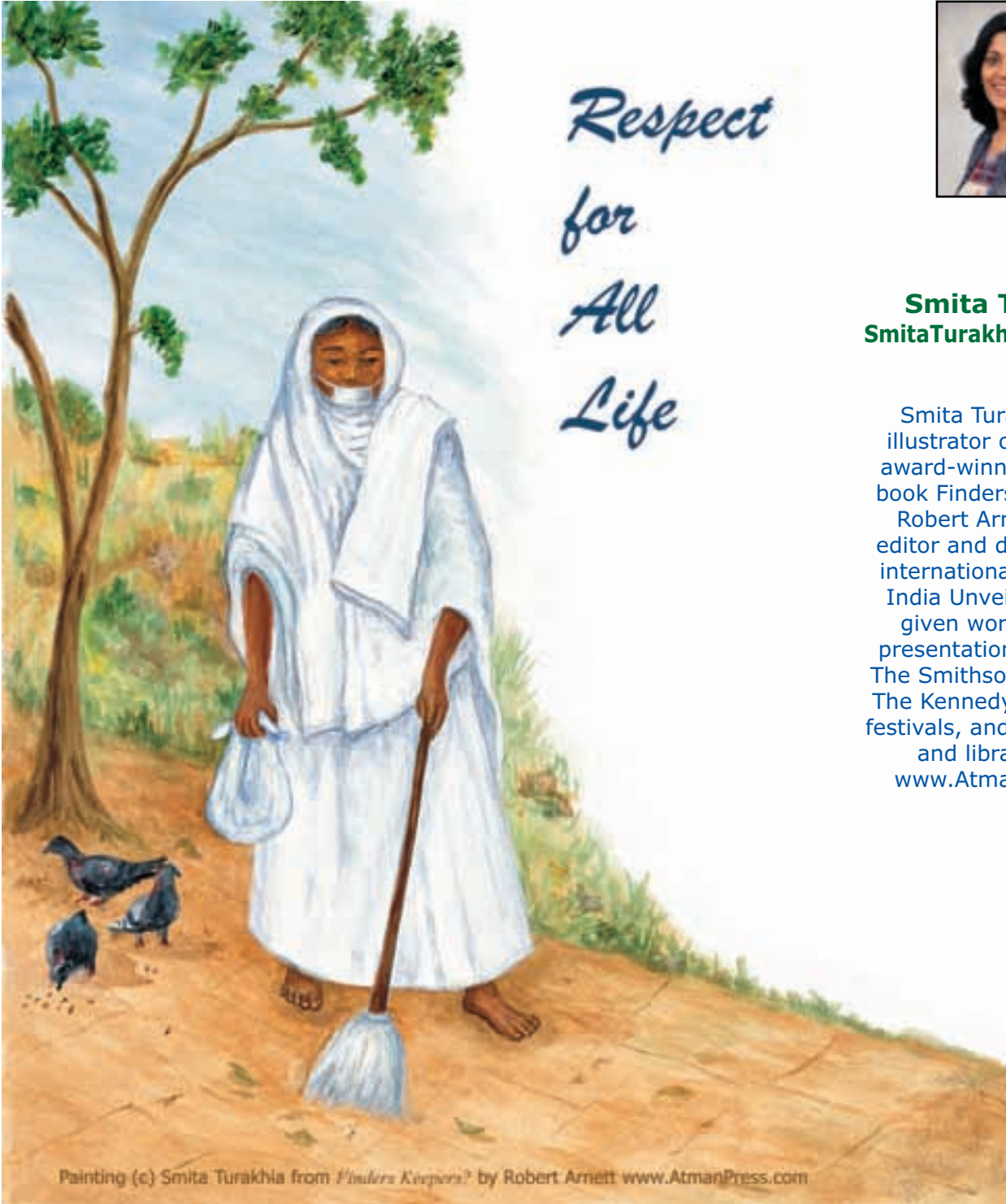
### *With Best Compliments*



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Smita Turakhia is the illustrator of the multi-award-winning children's book *Finders Keepers?* by Robert Arnett and the editor and designer of his internationally acclaimed *India Unveiled*. She has given workshops and presentations on India at The Smithsonian Institute, The Kennedy Center, book festivals, and many schools and libraries. Visit [www.AtmanPress.com](http://www.AtmanPress.com)



# **Jain Society of Houston** wishes Grand success to **JAINA Convention 2009**

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## JAIN ECOLOGY – HARMONIOUS LIVING & PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE

Kokila P. Doshi, PhD  
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*Dr. Kokila Doshi is Professor of Economics at the University of San Diego. She served as a JAINA Director for six years and as a guest speaker at several JAINA conventions. She established the Jain Pathshala for children in San Diego. Dr. Doshi received the JAINA Recognition Award in 1995.*

Modern day problems of environmental degradation and violence have their roots partly in the exploitative attitude toward ecology. Unlike the western religions, the older traditions of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism have emphasized ecological harmony and have promoted sustainable lifestyles long before mankind faced the current environmental issues.

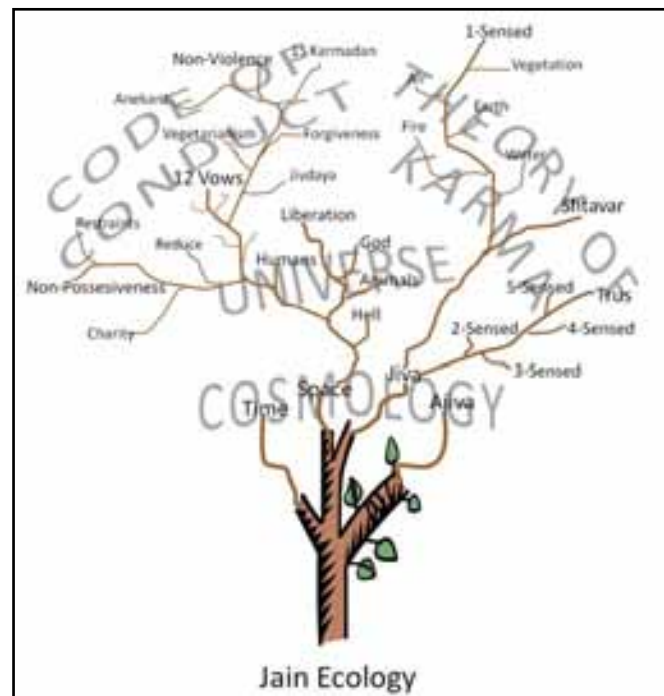
Vedic tradition sees God's presence in everything surrounding us; earth, fire, air, water, and ether are considered the five basic elements. The universe was created by Brahma and all creations are sacred. Environmental forces are personified as deities worthy of worship. Rivers, mountains, earth, trees, cattle, etc. acquire a special significance and sacredness as they are perceived as life-sustaining forces. The whole world is considered one family – *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*. The sensitivity and reverence toward planet Earth is clearly revealed in Vedic verses such as, 'O Goddess Earth, the consort of Vishnu (Lord of the Universe), you whose garments are the oceans and whose ornaments are hills and mountain ranges, please forgive me as I walk on you this day.'

Buddhism emphasizes interdependence, coexistence and the Principle of Trusteeship in the context of the relationship between man and nature. The eight-fold path prescribed by Lord Buddha includes right vision, right thought, right action, right livelihood, right efforts, right mindfulness, and right concentration. Right livelihood implies individual actions consonant with the interest of society. Employment in exploitive industries causing damage to the forest, earth, and marine resources is prohibited as it violates the principle of right livelihood. Buddhism

also made the state or the government a guardian of the environment under the Ten Duties of the King.

Jainism takes ecological awareness, compassion towards living beings, and interconnectedness between man and nature to new heights. Reverence for all life and peaceful coexistence with the universe form the cornerstones of Jain philosophy. Embedded in this belief are the ideals of equality, compassion, harmony and inclusiveness. Jain philosophy provides a comprehensive, coherent and logical framework of ecology through the theory of Karma, the cosmological view of the universe, and its code of conduct. It is characterized by non-violence in thought and actions. As explained in the chart below, environmental awareness and compassion towards all living beings are embedded throughout Jain theory and practice.

According to Jainism, the universe is throbbing with life. Jainism recognizes 8.4 million species of life and infinite life forms. Every form of life is



divine and sacred, irrespective of its size or shape. With the divine consciousness (soul) within, each Jiva is capable of attaining Liberation. Apparent differences in life forms – fire, water, vegetation, animals, insects, human beings and celestial or hellish beings – boil down to the differences in acquired karmas and resultant stage of development. Thus, according to Jainism, environment or nature is nothing but the



manifestation of the moral imprints living beings have formed over past lives. The universe is uncreated and everlasting. In Jain Cosmology, according to Professor Christopher Chapple, one's station in life is determined by the binding karmic matter and one's degree of efforts in following an ethically correct pattern of life preached by Jinas. Thus, the world of nature cannot be separated from moral order. The powerful worldview of Jainism makes it a unique religion in which ecology is intertwined with the very goal of attaining liberation. Environmental protection and sensitivity therefore become our 'dharma' in the true sense of the term. The feeling of 'oneness' with the universe (*Maitri*), universal fearlessness (*Abhaydan*) and peaceful coexistence with all life forms surrounding us become the essential pillars of the Jain Code of Conduct.

Although the ultimate goal of Jains transcends all earthly concerns, as Professor Chapple states, 'Jainism is a religion of ecology, of a sustainable lifestyle, and of reverence for life.' Its entire emphasis is on life in harmony with ecology.

How do we live, eat, walk and speak in this universe throbbing with life without causing any harm or injury to any living being? How do we live so that we do not create the bondage of Karma?

'Kaham chare, kaham chitte, kaham aase,  
kaham saye,  
Kahame bhujanto, bhasito, pavkamma na  
bandhai?'

Lord Mahavir's profound answer to this is 'with utmost vigilance,' or *Jayana*. Thus, the Jain way of life incorporates *Jayana* in each individual action at each step which minimizes the acquisition of

Karma. Thus, the goal of liberation, code of conduct and ecology are intertwined in Jainism. Seeing divinity in all living beings and avoiding violence in deeds or thoughts characterizes the Jain lifestyle.

Mutual interdependence is another cornerstone of Jain philosophy. 'One who rejects the people and world rejects his own existence; and one who rejects his own existence rejects the existences of the world.' According to Jain perspective, one cannot cause violence to others without first causing violence to one's own soul. A lifestyle of peaceful coexistence would incorporate compassion (*Jivdaya*) and daily forgiveness. Jains believe in purity of means. Similar to the Buddhist concept of right livelihood, Jains do not engage themselves in occupations (15 *karmadans*) that excessively harm earth, water, animals, or cause the destruction of life. Jainism takes non-violence to a new height by extending its scope to a much broader 'spiritual home' inhabited by microorganisms and one-sensed to five-sensed living beings.

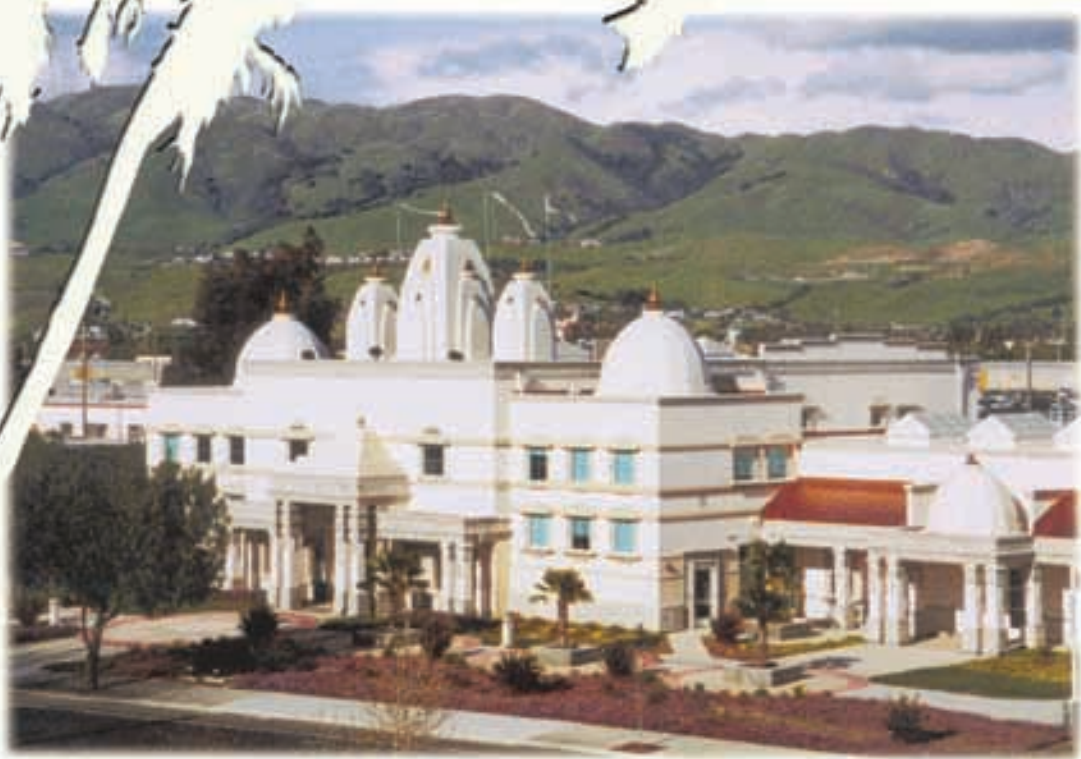
Jainism teaches us to live a life of restraints and limit wants and waste. Attachment to possessions is also a form of violence. As described in the Jain Declaration on Nature, in their use of earth's resources, Jains take a cue from 'the bee that sucks honey in the blossoms of a tree without hurting the blossoms and strengthens itself.' Using any resource beyond one's needs or misusing any part of nature is an act of violence. Thus, our visionary Tirthankars have given us both the means and the mindset to develop compassionate solutions for the environmental issues we are facing today, while progressing on our spiritual journey.

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**The whole idea of compassion is based on a keen awareness of the interdependence of all these living beings, which are all part of one another, and all involved in one another.**

~ Thomas Merton quotes

15th Biennial **JAINA** Convention  
*Congratulations and Best Wishes*



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**JAIN SOCIETY OF METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON** was established in March 1980 as a non-profit religious organization with church status. It is a founding member of JAINA as well as a founding member of the Association of United Hindu and Jain Temples of Washington.

**MEMBERSHIP:** 530 families including 500 families who are life members.

**CURRENT FACILITIES:** Acquired in 1989. Facilities consist of 4.35 acres of land with public sewer & water and a 4,300 sq. ft. two-story building with a Jain temple, multipurpose hall, classrooms, library, kitchen and rooms for overnight accommodation.

**JAIN TEMPLE:** Pratishtha was performed in August 1989 in the presence of Chaturvidh Sangh including 7 Jain Munijis (Acharya Sushilkumarji, Gurudev Chitrabhanuji, Bandhu Triputi, Charukeerti Bhattarakji, Amarendra Muniji) and 2 Sadhvijis. The temple has three Jain idols (Mool Nayak Shantinath Bhagwan plus one Shwetambar and one Digambar idol). To visit the temple, please call any committee member for the combination lock number.

## **ACTIVITIES:**

- ❖ **Regular religious classes** on every other Sunday
- ❖ **Celebration of Jain holy days** (Mahavir Jayanti, Paryushan Parva, etc.)
- ❖ **Pooja and Bhakti** programs
- ❖ **Speeches** by Jain spiritual leaders and Jain scholars
- ❖ **Jain camps** for children and adults
- ❖ **Children's activities** (religious competitions, dramas, cultural programs, etc.)
- ❖ **Youth activities** in coordination with national umbrella youth organization (YJA) for establishing a network to share Jain heritage and Jain religion principles
- ❖ **Senior Citizens'** programs
- ❖ **Bus trips** to other Jain temples
- ❖ Celebration of **Ahimsa Day** on Thanksgiving Day
- ❖ **Picnic and Health Fair** programs
- ❖ **Community outreach** activities and fundraising for **humanitarian** purpose
- ❖ **Library** of over 300 Jain books and tapes
- ❖ Up-to-date **Website**
- ❖ Regular publication of **Newsletters**, and **Members' Directory**.

## JAINISM'S TIMELY WISDOM

Will Tuttle, PhD  
willtuttle@earthlink.net



*Dr. Will Tuttle, author of [The World Peace Diet](#), is a columnist for [VegNews](#) magazine, the co-founder of [Circle of Compassion](#) ministry, a recipient of the [Peace Abbey's Courage of Conscience Award](#), and an acclaimed pianist and composer.*

Jainism is an ancient wisdom tradition whose time, more than ever, is now. From every angle, our violence toward animals for food and other products is boomeranging and if humanity fails to embrace Jainism's core tenet—that violence brings misery and death—we will fail as a species to survive.

For example, and predictably, the most forcibly ignored cause of global warming is eating meat and dairy products. According to a recent major study by the United Nations entitled "Livestock's Long Shadow," the single largest contributor to greenhouse gases, of all human activity sectors, greater even than all transportation by car, truck, bus, boat, train, and plane, is livestock production. Breeding millions of cows, pigs, and other animals for food is the greatest source of nitrous oxide, a greenhouse gas 297 times more powerful than carbon dioxide, as well as methane gas, which is 30 times more powerful.<sup>i</sup> The science on this is unequivocal, and in addition, eating animals requires massive amounts of fossil fuel inputs, directly pumping carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. In the West, we transport over seventy percent of our corn, soybeans, oats, and other grains to animal confinement operations, pump water to irrigate these fields, manufacture millions of pounds of fossil fuel-based fertilizer and pesticides, and house and slaughter billions of animals yearly. The end result of all this is that while it takes only two calories of fossil fuel to produce one calorie of protein from soybeans, and three calories for wheat and corn, it takes 54 calories of fossil fuel to produce one calorie of protein from beef! It's easier to see the gallons of petroleum poured into our cars than it is to see the gallons of petroleum poured into our cheese, eggs, fish sticks, hot dogs, and steaks. We waste huge amounts of petroleum for our meat, and send our children to war to ensure the supply.

On top of this, sixty percent of our fish are now factory-farmed, causing severe water pollution and decimating wild fish populations. Our seemingly limitless appetite for fish for feeding factory-farmed fish, birds, and mammals has brought our oceans to the brink of collapse. Dairy cows, for example, consume huge quantities of fish, added to "enrich" their feed to increase milk and cream output. And it takes three to five pounds of caught fish to make one pound of farmed salmon. We have exterminated fish, turtles, and sea mammals so completely that jellyfish are now taking over parts of the ocean, and fishing vessels have to go out so far that they use unsustainable amounts of diesel fuel. A recent study published in the prestigious *Lancet* medical journal concluded that the only effective way to reduce greenhouse gases is to reduce human consumption of animal foods.<sup>ii</sup>

This is just the tip of the iceberg. Converting precious land and grains to animal fat, protein, and sewage is extravagantly wasteful, and is also the main driving force behind water pollution, topsoil loss, habitat destruction, and the ongoing extinction of species that many biologists say is the greatest threat our Earth is facing. Eating animal flesh, dairy products, and eggs is also elitist. Those with higher incomes buy grain and feed it to animals whose flesh and secretions they eat, driving up the price of grain so that those less wealthy suffer malnourishment and starvation.

Violence toward animals for food also devastates our personal environment as well as our social environment. The largest human nutrition study ever conducted, the Cornell-Oxford study under T. Colin Campbell, concluded, "Our study suggests that the closer one approaches a total plant-based diet, the greater the health benefit." Buying and eating animal-sourced foods damages our social environment because it fosters an attitude of reductionism, domination, disconnectedness, and exclusion. It is forced on us from birth and is based, at its living core, on dominating the reproductive cycles of female mammals, birds, and fish. It requires a heartless exploitation of what we know in our bones is the most sacred dimension of life: mothers giving birth, nesting, and nurturing their babies. Female animals are virtually always inseminated with sperm guns, their babies are stolen from them and killed, and the mothers (mere "breeders") are also killed for their flesh after a few years of cruel treatment. We drug them, terrorize them, sicken, oppress,

and imprison them, and break their families, and we wonder why we find the same things happening in our human world. As we sow, we reap. And we employ whole armies of our brothers and sisters to do the terrible work of confining and killing billions of hapless animals, work that tends to bring out the worst in them.

Jainism—striving to minimize our violence toward others—is indeed a tradition and way of life whose time has come! Its core principle of ahimsa is the inspiration underlying the modern vegan movement, and for both, the essential motivation is compassion. As each of us embodies the power of this ancient Jain wisdom, we directly reduce

cruelty and suffering, and bless the world by dramatically reducing our abuse of the Earth, other humans, other species, our loved ones, and ourselves. Our physical, psychological, social, and spiritual health are all connected, and they can flourish when we understand and live this.

I have sketched just the briefest of outlines in this short piece. To understand the deep structure of our culture and the big picture in more detail, please read, explore, study, meditate, and ask questions. We are each called to be, as Gandhi said, the change we want to see in the world. That is Jainism's message and its power.

<sup>i</sup> Eshel, Gordon, and Martin, Pamela, "Diet, Energy, and Global Warming," *Earth Interactions*, May, 2005.

<sup>ii</sup> CBC News, "Eat Less Meat, Reduce Global Heat, Says Study," *The Canadian Press*, September 13, 2007.

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***Best Wishes for a Successful JAINA 2009***

Jain Center of Greater Hartford (JCGH, CT)

***Para-us-para Upgraho Jivanam***

***"Live and Let Live"***



***May the Spirit of Ahimsa and Anekantwada  
Guide us to a Great Future.***

*Our Heartiest Congratulations &  
Best Wishes to JAINA  
and all Jain Centers for the  
15th Biennial JAINA convention*



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## UNIVERSAL MANTRAS FOR ECOLOGY

Vinod Kapashi, PhD  
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*Dr. Vinod Kapashi is President of Mahavir Foundation, UK. He earned a PhD in Jain sacred hymns (nav-smarana). Dr. Kapashi has lectured in the Parliament of World Religions in Chicago, Cape Town and Barcelona. He has taught Jainism for over 15 years and takes keen interest in interfaith activities. He is the past President of Harrow Interfaith Council, UK.*

There are many beautiful *shlokas* (verses) and mantras in our scriptures. Ancient sages recited these mantras to spread the message of non-violence, goodwill, harmony and brotherhood. Systematic recitations of mantras spread divine vibrations and these vibrations help us in many ways. Mantras were chanted to invoke the hidden powers within us and to pray to Tirthankars or Sashan-devtas for our wellbeing. We can find hundreds or perhaps thousands of mantras in our ancient literature. Hindu scriptures, especially most Upanishads, also have beautiful Shanti-mantras (mantras for peace).

Our Acharyas, hundreds of years ago recited verses and mantras to spread vibrations of peace and harmony. They composed the mantras not just to please the deities but they advised and guided people on how to achieve real and lasting peace in the universe. One cannot attain such peace without also thinking about peace in the environment which surrounds us. Our philosophy is not the philosophy of selfish motives and self-centred gains. Our ideology includes the whole environment, in fact, the whole universe, while chanting mantras. The great Acharyas knew very well that when one obtains a blissful state, everything around him is in perfect balance. If one examines the Shanti-mantras sung by those sages, he or she will be convinced that there is more than just a superficial singing in those mantras.

Mankind has polluted the environment today. We have polluted air, water and many natural resources of our Mother Earth. We have done lot of damage to the ecological balance by our greedy life-styles. We have neglected the value of pure air and pure water. We have caused imbalance by killing not just the rain forests but also many species which existed in the sea and on land.

Jains have placed great importance on trees and animals while thinking about worship practices and while describing the attributes of the Tirthankars. All Tirthankars attained *Keval Gnan* under a particular tree. Thus, there are different trees which are sacred to Jains. Most Tirthankars have symbols of different

animals. Quite a few animals have been named this way. This shows respect for trees and animals.

The *Brihat Shanti Stotra*, one of the most important *stotra* in Jain literature narrates the following lines:

*'Shri Shraman sanghasya shantirbhavatu  
Shri janapadanam shantirbhavtu...'*

And

*'Shri paurjanasya shantirbhavtu  
Shri brahmalokasya shantirbhavtu...'*

This shows that those who recite the *stotra*, recite it for the welfare and peace of everyone in the universe and not just for himself or herself. In fact, one thinks and prays for the entire universe.

A Jain, while doing *pratikraman* asks forgiveness from the tiniest living creatures and describes how he or she might have hurt any living beings.

*'Abhahaya, vattiya, lesiya, sanghaiya, sanghthiya,  
pariyaviya, kilamiya, uddaviya, thanao thanam  
sankamiya, jiviao vavroviya... tassa michchhami  
dukkadam.'*

*'I might have kicked them (living beings), rolled them, covered them, assembled them, touched them harshly, separated them from their own kinds or killed them... May my faults be destroyed (forgiven)...in connection of all these things.'*

The above shows concern for the smallest creatures on earth. This is the philosophy of compassion and peaceful co-existence. We have forgotten the ideal of *'Parasparopgraho jivanam.'* We all are interdependent. This interdependency includes life in the air, water and even in fire. We are not absolute masters and we have not been given the license to exploit resources and other creatures. We are here to protect and preserve, to care and share.

We cannot achieve peace unless we achieve harmony with nature and everything which surrounds us. There is a beautiful Hindu mantra which narrates this philosophy.

*'Om dhyauh shaantih; Antariksham shaantih  
Prithivee shaantih; Apah shaantih  
Oshadhayah shaantih; Vanaspatayah shaantih  
Vishvedevaah shaantih; Brahma shaantih  
Sarvam shaantih Shaantireva shaantih  
Saamaa shaantiredhiih  
Om shaantih, shaantih, shaantih!'*

*'(O Lord!), May peace radiate there in the whole sky and in the vast space above. May peace prevail all over this earth, in water and in all herbs, trees and plants. May peace flow over the whole universe. May peace be in the Brahman. May there be peace everywhere and at all times. Om peace, peace, peace.'*



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## WORLD RELIGIONS & ECOLOGY

Chandrakant Parekh  
cparekh1@yahoo.com



*With claim to no particular skill or talent, Chandrakant Parekh is grateful for the opportunity to team up with a talented group of editors and graphics artists to produce this fine publication, which is printed on paper with "post-consumer" contents.*

A commitment to stewardship of the earth and the responsibility to sustain an ecological harmony are not exclusive to Jainism. Here are few samples of the opinions from other religions – as observed from cursory Internet searches. <http://www.arcworld.org> – a website of Alliance of Religions and Conservation – is a good place to begin the search. *The Religions of the World and Ecology* book series, (Harvard University Press, 1997-2003) examines nine religious traditions and their ecological implications. *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Ecology* (Oxford University Press, 2006) explores traditional religious concepts of and attitudes towards nature; how these have been changed by the environmental crisis; and finally their participation in environmental politics. Many informative resources are available to pursue the subject matter further.

**Baha'i:** Nature is God's Will and is its expression in and through the contingent world.'

~ *Tablets of Baha'u'llah, p 142*

**Buddhism:** All beings are connected - Buddhism teaches that the idea of separateness is an illusion. The health of the whole is inseparably linked to the health of the parts, and the health of the parts is inseparably linked to the health of the whole. This means that caring for the environment begins with caring for oneself: 'When our hearts are good, the sky will be good to us.'

~ *Venerable Maha Ghosananda of Cambodia.*

**Christianity:** 'At the time that the Holy One, Blessed Be He, created the first man, He took him and had him pass before all the trees of the Garden of Eden, and said to him: See my works, how fine and excellent they are! Now all that I

created was created for you. Think about this and do not harm or desolate the world: for if you harm it, there will be none to fix it after you.'

~ *Midrash Koheleth Rabbah*

**Hinduism:** A dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, is a clear and precise Life Science. It is narrated in the third chapter of this great work that a life without contribution toward the preservation of ecology is a life of sin and a life without specific purpose or use.

~ *Bhagwad Gita*

**Islam:** As for the earth, We have spread it out, set firm mountains on it, and made everything grow there in due balance (Qur'an 15:19)

~ *Muslim Green Guide to Reducing Climate Change, Lifemakers UK & Islamic Foundation for Energy and Environmental Sciences*

**Judaism:** Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai said, 'Three things are of equal importance - earth, humans and rain'. Rabbi Levi ben Hiyata said, '...to teach that without earth, there is no rain, and without rain, the earth cannot endure, and without either, humans cannot exist'.

~ *Genesis Rabbah 13:3*

**Shintoism:** "In the beginning of the universe there appeared various Kami, or deities from the chaos. A pair of male and female deities appeared at the end and gave birth first to islands, their natural environment, and then to several more deities who became ancestors of the Japanese."

~ *Jinja Honcho, Shinto Shrines, Japan.*

**Sikhism:** Sikhs use the term eco-sophism, which literally means the wisdom of the universe. Such wisdom is required for the promotion of a sustainable and peaceful ecology.

~ *"Episcopal Concerns in the Sikh Tradition," by S. Lourdunathan.*

**Zoroastrianism:** "Whoever teaches care for all these seven creations – sky, water, earth, plant, animal, human and fire - does well and pleases the Bounteous Immortals; then his soul will never arrive at kinship with the Hostile Spirit. When he has cared for the creations, the care of these Bounteous Immortals is for him, and he must teach this to all mankind in the material world."

~ *Shayasht ne Shayast (15:6)*



God made everything out of nothing, but the nothingness shows through.

~ Paul Valery



## ECOLOGY & AHIMSA IN JAIN DHARMA

Pramoda Chitrabhanu  
pchitrabhanu@gmail.com



*Pramoda Chitrabhanu is the director of the Jain Meditation International Center in New York City. She also is a Chairperson of Jivadaya Committee of JAINA, Director of PETA-India, a founding member of the Vegetarian Society in Mumbai. She lectures and teaches the philosophy of Ahimsa, Love and Compassion and has authored and co-authored five books.*

Lord Mahavir, an epitome of love, compassion and empathy, lived 599-527 B.C.E. Through his teachings, he emphasized that this world is an echo point. Anything said or done, good or bad, is echoed back with the same intensity it was intended. The global crisis we face today is the echo of our own negative thoughts, words and actions.

Jain *Dharma* sees the whole universe as a great cosmic mechanism 'with its own self-propelling force' and we, being part of that mechanism, must conduct ourselves in harmony and rhythm with that mechanism. In the manifestation of nature, we see harmony and rhythm everywhere. But when we look at ourselves, we do not see our lives in agreement with the cosmic mechanism. We are out of sync with nature and people, and we live against our true qualities of love, compassion and friendship towards all living beings.

We forget that we are interrelated and bound together by mutual support and interdependence with all life forces. This fundamental natural phenomenon of symbiosis or mutual dependence forms the basis of the modern day science of ecology. This relationship is disturbed by our lust for power, greed, arrogance and an unrestrained lifestyle and insatiable desires.

Man, on the top of the ladder of evolution, has learned to take things for granted and use them for personal gain and benefit. In the process, the sense of recognition, appreciation and gratitude has been lost.

Many of us like to believe that our life is experienced in isolation and that the way we conduct our daily affairs does not have a significant impact on society and the world we live in. We must not forget that just as a stone thrown into a pool will affect every molecule of water, our every thought, word and action will affect our inner and outer world. Therefore, it is important to watch what we do to life around us and the environment.

Lord Mahavir has reiterated that thoughts which govern our actions are the products of the food we eat. The food that feeds the body has a significant influence on the person physically, emotionally, psychologically and spiritually. It is rightly said that we are what we eat. It is our choice of food that also has a direct impact on the environment and ecology. Pure and natural foods pose the least threat to the earth and its natural resources. This is why Jain *Dharma* teaches us to practice *Upayoge Dharma*: to live in awareness and to minimize violence and negative karmas in our thoughts, words and deeds that are the cause of our suffering.

One of the greatest threats to mankind today is global warming. The depletion of natural resources, environmental crisis, climate change, ecological imbalance, and annihilation of innumerable life forms are the result of our wrong living. They are our responsibility. Accepting these responsibilities, we can change our lifestyle and save the earth from being destroyed.

The core teaching of Jain *Dharma* is *Ahimsa*. This fundamental teaching of Ahimsa and ecology complement each other, and the understanding of their inter-connectedness and relation encourages us to practice the five principles of Jain *Dharma*: *Ahimsa* (non-violence), *Satya* (truth), *Asteya* (non-stealing), *Brahmacharya* (chastity) and *Aparigraha* (limiting or restricting one's possessions). When these principles are practiced in their true spirit, the result is the protection of nature, the environment and its inhabitants. Living with this awareness, we will then have acted from the true nature of our self which is compassion and reverence for all life.

To sum this up, let me quote Lord Mahavir who expressed it succinctly:

'One who neglects or disregards the existence  
Of earth, water, fire, air, vegetation and all other  
lives, Disregards his own existence  
Which is entwined with them.'

## THE PURPLE COW & FRIENDS

Kishor Mehta  
daman2118@yahoo.com

*Kishor Mehta is a member of the Jain Society of San Diego.*

The *Purple Cow & Friends* is a *panjarapol* – a shelter for unwanted and sick animals – founded by Tiffany St. Ives in Valley Center near San Diego, California. Tiffany founded the organization about 17 years ago as a shelter for rescued farm animals – cows, sheep, goats, pigs, donkeys, chicken, dogs, cats and many more – which are free to roam on the farm and are fed a home cooked, well balanced vegetarian diet till the end of their natural lives. In an article dated September 1, 2007, Paul Eakins of *North County Times* described *Purple Cow & Friends* as a 'Haven for farm animals.'



Tiffany St. Ives

Tiffany St. Ives, a frail blond woman, was described as a modern day saint by *Union Tribune* of San Diego. A vegan herself, she is an animal activist and an expert in holistic care of the animals. She was born in a Christian German family in Los Angeles, California. Her love for

animals was evident at very early age. She worked for animal rights and rescuing animals in Los Angeles area. In 1992, she moved to the current farm in a rural setting where she works more than 12 hours a day, seven days a week, bringing and preparing food for these animals, preparing places for them to live and sleep, and getting them medical attention. The tasks are endless.

It costs Tiffany about \$150,000 a year to operate *Purple Cow & Friends*, which, until about three years ago, was primarily funded by her parents. Tiffany's family can no longer support her work or the shelter. There is a significant urgency to organize a new base of donors to support and help Tiffany. Her great devotion to animal care is exemplified by the fact that, when funds are scarce, Tiffany observes a fast in order to ensure that there is adequate food to feed the animals – an ultimate demonstration of core Jain values of love, compassion and personal sacrifice.

Financial support (*jiv daya* funds and fundraisers) from Jain Center of Southern California (JCSC), Anekant Community Center, and several other Jain Centers from USA have been limited and intermittent. An appeal is being extended to all Jain families in the United States to provide regular financial donations for this noble cause and for this noble organization. For thousands of years Jains have supported the operations of *panjarapols* in India. This is a golden opportunity and a unique privilege for all Jains in America to help support the tradition of operating a *panjarapol* (an animal heaven) in the United States. Donations are tax deductible and 100% of the funds are used for taking care of the animals. The need for financial support is urgent.

For additional information, visit [www.SanDiegoPurpleCow.org](http://www.SanDiegoPurpleCow.org). To offer financial support, please contact Kishor Mehta at [daman2118@yahoo.com](mailto:daman2118@yahoo.com) or (760) 734-6930.

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Until he extends the circle of his compassion to all living things, man will not himself find peace.

~ Albert Schweitzer, French philosopher, physician, and musician (Nobel 1952)



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## ANGELS OF ASSISI CLINIC & HARMONY FARM SANCTUARY

Norman Mason  
nmason@nationsline.com

*Norman Mason is the co-founder of the Angels of Assisi Spay & Neuter Clinic, and the Harmony Farm Sanctuary in Roanoke, Virginia.*

'Oh, I love animals!' How many times have we heard this phrase? For the most part these words ring hollow. Many years ago I was invited to an SPCA fund raiser. I thought of these words as they tried to serve me a choice of pork or chicken for dinner; I politely declined both. The hypocrisy of killing one species to save another we happen to favor prompted the launching of two animal-focused charities in Roanoke, Virginia: the Angels of Assisi Spay & Neuter Clinic and the Harmony Farm Sanctuary for neglected farm animals.

- 5,000+ adoption of dogs and cats from our 'no-kill' shelter
- 200+ cows, pigs, sheep, goats and chickens live peacefully on our Harmony Farm Sanctuary



Young Farm Volunteer, Macey Kirby, Age 12



Dr. Kelly Ferrell operating on cat

In the summer of 2001, Dr. Kelly Farrell, a very compassionate veterinarian, and I decided to offer low and no cost spays and neuters to pet owners with limited incomes, all in the hope we would reduce the number of unwanted dogs and cats from getting killed (euphemistically called 'euthanasia'). We started with a 36 foot state-of-the-art mobile spay/neuter hospital. Two years later we added an in-ground clinic and a 'no-kill' shelter. Next, we founded a 90-acre Harmony Farm Sanctuary for farm animals in need of help.

Our accomplishments to date include:

- 60,000+ completed spay/neuters of cats and dogs, and about 100 bunnies

One thing was still missing. We knew eating 'life style' choices dramatically affected the lives of thousands of living creatures raised for 'food.' This prompted the launch of our company 'Vegeteria,' where to this day, we serve all of our employees free-of-charge completely vegan lunch meals—veggie 'loafs,' spaghetti, casseroles, lasagna, fresh vegetables, vegan soups, and vegan desserts. In recognition of our Vegeteria, we received from PETA their annual 'Proggy' award. In the lifetime of just one vegetarian, more than 12 cows, 25 pigs and 220 chickens will be spared – just one simple life style choice – good for the individual, good for the animals and good for the planet.

Our efforts have been modest but with every step some progress is made. Perhaps one day all of us will understand it is not necessary to kill animals to live. Perhaps one day we will all understand that the choices we make every day enormously impacts our health, our earth, and the lives of billion of countless forgotten animals with whom we share this planet.

## VEERAYATAN: A NON-VIOLENT CHALLENGE TO A HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT

Vastupal Parikh, PhD  
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*Professor Vastupal Parikh, PhD taught Chemistry at a Canadian University. He is now retired and lives in Brampton, Canada. In his first book, Jainism and the New Spirituality, Dr. Parikh explains principles and practices of Jainism with simplicity and logical analysis. His recent book, Walk With Me, co-authored with Acharya Shri Chandanaji, is a fascinating account of Mahavir's life as a remarkable revolutionary who inspired contemporary society to be gentle and compassionate to fellow human beings, animals, plants, and all living forms on earth.*

Nearly two-thirds of the Kutch region of Gujarat, India, is a dry, hot desert, where vast expanses lie devoid of all vegetation. The natural growth in the remaining one-third is that of a stunted and fast spreading thorny shrub which locals call *Gaandy Baval*, a variety of *Acacia Arabica*. The entire Kutch region is so hostile to any other flora that in its long history, the land-hugging Arabian Sea tried to encroach and occupy the land several times, but it too receded, leaving behind only footprints in the form of millions of sea-fossils. Furthermore, located on a geological fault, this dry and cursed land is frequently struck by earthquakes and vicious typhoons, making it difficult even for the hardy *Kutchhi* people to survive.

One such disaster struck the south-eastern area of Kutch in 2001 when an earthquake killed more than 20,000 people, and destroyed thousands of homes in Bhuj, Anjar, and Bhachau. That day, January 26, some 400 elementary school children, who were celebrating India's Republic Day, were buried under rows of collapsing buildings on the narrow streets of Anjar. The harsh environment of the region had once again raised its ugly head to challenge the brave people of Kutch. This time, however, Veerayatan – a non-profit, non-governmental organization from Bihar in eastern India – bravely stepped in. Ultimately, Veerayatan's founder, Acharya Shri Chandanaji, with her dedicated and talented team of sadhvis, issued a peaceful and non-violent counter-

challenge to the hostile and violent environ of Kutch.

Their response was in the form of five stop-gap schools for children – 5,600 children in total, many of them orphaned through the cruelty of the natural disaster. These quickly-erected tents in and around disaster-struck Bhuj, ensured that the children would continue to receive their education, despite the destruction of their own schools.

Veerayatan's selfless work immediately gave rise to unexpected events. Several men and women from the village of Rudrani, approximately 16 kilometers east of Bhuj, came to see Acharya Chandanaji. They requested that Veerayatan open a permanent school in their village. The population in and around Rudrani consists of socially and economically marginalized people – mostly migrants from the border region, as the border with Pakistanis only a few kilometers away. In the community's 700-year history, few members, if any, had ever received formal education. The migrants now desired to provide for their children the educational and employment opportunities that they themselves had lacked. Veerayatan immediately assist in these efforts.



The Rudrani Vidyapeeth (Elementary School) began as a series of tents. It has since developed into a unique permanent campus with round thatched-roofed *bhungas* for classrooms, an open-air dining hall for midday meals, and a bubbling creek that winds its way through the middle of the compound. The surrounding desert land has been transformed into an orchard where hundreds of fruit trees, planted by Veerayatan and tenderly looked after by school-children and employees, have provide hundreds of pounds of mangoes, *chikkus*, *bor*, and several other fruits, eaten during the midday meals. Veerayatan's presence here has not only directly benefitted the ecology

of the land but has provided an excellent opportunity for the young pupils to develop and ecological consciousness. More than 300 students are registered here, and a vocational school for village women is in the process of being designed.

Impressed with Veerayatan's success in Rudrani, a Kutchhi businessman invited Veerayatan to start an even bigger project on 17 acres of donated land in a village called Jakhania, 40 kilometers south of Bhuj. The environment in this region of Kutch was so brutal, even 'Gaandi Baval' was few and far between. Upon drilling bore wells, Veerayatan found only salty water, unfit for drinking and agricultural development. Undeterred, Veerayatan vowed to bring productivity to the land, and educational opportunity to the people of the region.

The Kutch project found itself under the able direction of Sadhvi Shilapiji in 2003. Her challenge was to build a unique university that could produce tomorrow's leaders grounded in the lessons of ahimsa, anekantvada, compassion and ecological sensitivity, taught by Tirthankar Mahavir. The resulting Tirthankar Mahavir University, the next big undertaking from Veerayatan, will be the fulfillment of a dream long held by Acharya Shri Chandanaji.

Today, Veerayatan has become a major educational and environmental force in Kutch. The Jakhania campus stretches over half a square kilometer. It includes an English and Gujarati medium elementary school, a high school, a Bachelor of Business Administration and Computer Applications College, and a Pharmacy College. These colleges are the first of their kind in the entire region of Kutch. The educational buildings are supported by student hostels, staff quarters, a state-of-the-art administrative building, a modern dining hall, and tree-lined walkways and recreational areas.



**Veerayatan: Jakhania Campus**



**Veerayatan, Jakhania: Institute of Pharmacy**

Impressive as the construction achievements are, the real achievement of Veerayatan is in overcoming the challenges to make this desert habitable, not just by people, but by fruit trees and diverse flora. Jakhania's 17 acres has transformed into an oasis where more than 2500 trees bring shade, scent, and color to the thousands of students, staff and visitors that grace the campus each year. More than five hundred fruit-trees provide several tons of *chikkus*, pomegranates and coconuts, in an area where such foods are a luxury of the highest caliber. Bougainvillea, hibiscus, and other flowers in brilliant shades of purple and red contrast starkly against the surrounding brown and grey desert landscape.

How was this environmental and ecological miracle achieved? The key, of course, is in the efficient use of water and natural energy. Salt water from two bore-wells is used for washing, bathing and sanitation, while drinking water is piped in from the town of Mandvi, approximately 10 kilometers away. All waste-water is subsequently treated in a processing plant located at the edge of the property; the nutrient-rich,

reclaimed water is then used for irrigation. The trees, shrubs and flowers are responding happily, growing thicker and taller with each passing year. And while hundreds of children, students and staff members live and work on campus, daily, the sentiment of ecological consciousness has affected all: Hardly does one see even a single scrap of paper or a discarded plastic bag on the grounds or walkways in the campus.



The dining hall feeds nearly 500 students, faculty, staff, and guests daily, a considerable energy burden by any measure. However, the vast majority of cooking on Veerayatan's Jakhania campus is accomplished through a unique solar-energy system. Ten six-foot diameter, concave

mirrors track the sun from morning till evening. Solar energy is directed to absorbing pads, attached to a large insulated water-pipe. Within minutes of the sun's rising, the water is converted into high-pressure steam which is piped into the kitchen powering three giant pressure cookers. The whole operation is so efficient, enough rice, *daal*, and *subzi* is prepared to feed 500 hungry mouths, three times a day, with steam left over for conservation, or to power other activities.

Twenty-six hundred years ago, Bhagwan Mahavir, the world's first ecologist, counseled us to cherish every living being, stating that "air, water and land are also living systems, which must be respected." Veerayatan's sadhvijis have aptly lived this message by demonstrating that with love, compassion and dedication we can transform not only devastated lives but also devastated lands. Veerayatan's unprecedented ecological activities continue to expand through the nation. With generous donations of acres of land in Kutch and Palitana, Veerayatan will develop the Tirthankar Mahavir University and Tirthankar Mahavir Ahimsa Theme Park, respectively. Both sites will be among the greenest, most environmentally conscious, and most energy-efficient examples in India.

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## POLLUTION – ANOTHER FORM OF VIOLENCE

There is another form of violence which the world has been much slower to recognize, and much more hesitant to take firm action against. I am referring to the violence being inflicted on Mother Earth by our materialistic civilization. The destruction of the environment, which is evident in the alarming levels of pollution of our land, water and air resources and which is now climaxing in climate change, has catastrophic implications for man and other species on our planet.

--- Shri L. K. Advani, Jain International Trade Organization (JITO) Global Summit, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, Jan 10, 2009.





*Best Wishes to JAINA And  
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*Dipak - Harshila Doshi  
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## VEGETARIAN SENIORS: A THOUGHT FOR REFLECTION

Fakirchand J. Dalal  
sfdalal@comcast.net



*Fakirchand J. Dalal, age 82, is a Jain retiree, living in metro Washington, D.C. area. He is a long time community activist.*

Migration to the United States from India accelerated after the 1965 change in immigration law. The first generation of NRIs (including Jains) – who established basic organizations-ethnic, religious, linguistic, professional, business, etc – is aging. Our organizations which we have not been able to institutionalize are also aging. The (human) machine of seniors needs tune up and parts need greasing or replacement. The second generation has grown up, married and left. They have started their own Grihasthashram. The joint family system has collapsed everywhere and unitary family is order of the day. Oriental wisdom of Varn-ashram dharma vanished with the advent of the industrial revolution. Now we are left without any well thought out plan of alternative social or community organization. It is our responsibility to plan and recast the structure for our human needs, as man is a social animal.

We migrants brought with us education, family values and ethics of hard work as our only assets. It helped us to succeed in an alien western society. Our children continued the professional tradition that brought us name and fame. Indians are considered the most educated and economically successful as a group.

Some of us are seniors, yet not retired. We are afraid and do not know how to pass time during retirement. Many of us have not developed hobbies. Money is important, but not everything. Most of us are living in golden cages of empty nests. Aging, in its turn, brings along problems of health. Health is wealth. Both are needed, as one without the other, makes life burdensome. Loneliness, boredom, anxieties, aches and pains add to the miseries. Quality of life gets lost. With all the financial resources tended during the entire working life, we are not at ease. Dreams of life during crimson colored evenings are evaporating. Again, we are a resourceful people and can chart our own future, as our life spans are going to be

long. Are science and technology a boon or curse? Only time will tell.

To enhance the quality of life, we need to live healthy, happy, active and independent lives. We can serve and enrich the community through our accumulated experience and wisdom. We can improve our physical, mental, emotional, social, financial, and spiritual well being. Successful aging depends on what you eat, drink and digest. One can be one's own doctor for most of the routine ailments, fatigue, and self-imposed irregularities through restraint and discipline. Education, training and reading are highly essential for keeping our minds functional.

We should never forget that we live in an interdependent universe, or in other words, '*parasparopagraho jivanam.*' Our life style has to be congenial with our neighbors, the entire world of other living beings, including one sense (sthavar) lives – plants, earth/soil, water, fire, and air/climate. 'Live and let live' should be our motto. We should be concerned about the adverse effects of global warming created by the self-centered arrogance of the human species. 'Simple living and high thinking' should guide our behavior. This is all part of Ahimsak living. If this is not Jainism, then what else is it?

We seniors can and must meet regularly as a part of a vegetarian senior organization in every metropolitan area. We can eat vegetarian or vegan meals together. Seniors have adult day care centers. We know that old age is the second childhood, but with a difference. Every one of us has something to offer, as every immigrant has a story to tell. Our cumulative wisdom can be an invaluable precious community storehouse, which cannot be allowed to be frittered away.

Meeting together is good, eating together is better, but living together in a township of a retirement community is the best. It is a comprehensive solution for most of the needs of feeble aging seniors. This is the modern concept of adopted vaanprasth ashram and sanyas ashram combined. Many other religious and commercial groups have already jumped into this venture to meet the needs of a growing senior population in the United States. Living as an extended family of compatible seniors will provide human warmth, for which there is no substitute. When one spouse passes away, this will be of immense help.

We seniors will be able to lead independent, respectful and economical lives for the natural remainder of our precious human lifetimes. With downsizing and less clutter, we will use smaller living space, less energy (gas and electricity), less gasoline due to common transportation, and less wasting of food and water with a common kitchen. We will have more open space, sun light, fresh air and time for sports, entertainment, and learning a variety of new skills and arts. Life will be a pure joy.

We Jains can think about all of this, as we have built enough magnificent temples by now. Our second and following generations will not inherit the first generation's problems, as they have sufficiently assimilated. Their identity will be their performance. Where there is a will, there is a way. Let us make a thoughtful transition and beginning. Shall we?

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## AHIMSA, ECOLOGY, AND STRICT VEGETARIANISM AS THE JAIN WAY OF LIFE

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*Dr. Gary L. Francione is the Distinguished Professor of Law and Nicholas deB. Katzenbach Scholar of Law and Philosophy at Rutgers University School of Law, Newark, New Jersey. His book, "Animals as Persons: Essays on the Abolition of Animal Exploitation", was published in 2008. His forthcoming book (with Dr. Robert Garner), "The Animal Rights Debate: Abolition or Regulation?", will be published in Fall 2009. (Photo by N. Romanenko)*

### THE BASIS OF JAIN VEGETARIANISM

There is almost unanimous support among Jains for not consuming meat, poultry, fish, and eggs. The basis for Jain vegetarianism is two-fold.

First, Jains consider that eating these products violates the foundational principle of Ahimsa. Jains are forbidden from committing intentional violence against all mobile beings, whether they have two, three, four, or five senses. The mammals, birds, and fish that humans regularly consume all belong in the highest class of those beings with five senses—a class in which humans belong as well. This prohibition is not limited to what a person does directly but extends to those causing others to do Himsa as well as to approving of the Himsa of others.

The standard Jain diet not only seeks to eliminate violence to animals but also has the effect of minimizing the Himsa to plants, which are one-sensed beings, necessary to feed humans. Animals raised for meat consume more plant protein than they produce:

- For every kilogram (2.2 pounds) of animal protein produced, animals consume almost six kilograms, or over thirteen pounds, of plant protein from grains and forage.
- More than 50 percent of U.S. grain and 40 percent of world grain is fed to animals to produce meat, rather than consumed directly by people.
- Livestock in the United States are fed enough grain and soybeans each year to feed the entire human population five times over.

Second, a meat-based agriculture is an ecological disaster and a central tenet of Jain philosophy involves our obligation to minimize our impact on the environment. Because we need so many crops to feed the billions of animals that humans consume, we use an enormous amount of land to grow those crops:

- Livestock use 30 percent of the earth's entire land surface, including 33 percent of the global arable land used to producing feed for animals.
- Livestock herds cause serious degradation of land through overgrazing, compaction, and erosion.
- Approximately 20 percent of pastures are considered as degraded and the percentage is even higher in dry lands where there is increasing desertification.
- Approximately 90 percent of cropland in the United States is losing topsoil at a rate thirteen times above the sustainable rate.

Moreover, the need for land to produce grain and forage for animals has resulted in forest destruction throughout the world; as older pastures are destroyed through overgrazing, new land is cleared to replace them. It takes much more land to feed an average meat-eater than a vegetarian.

Animal agriculture also consumes enormous amounts of other resources, such as water and energy:

- Almost 90 percent of the fresh water consumed after withdrawal is for agricultural production, including livestock production.
- The production of animal protein requires much more water than is required to produce plant protein. It takes more than 600 gallons of water to produce meat for an average quarter pound hamburger; that same amount of water could produce approximately 5 ½ pounds of wheat or almost 10 pounds of potatoes.
- The average amount of fossil energy used for animal-protein production is more than eight times the average for grain-protein production.

In addition to the consumption of huge amounts of water and energy, animal agriculture results in serious water pollution because animals in the United States produce approximately 1.5 billion tons of waste per year—many times more than is produced by the human population. Much of this waste is not recycled but is dumped into our waters, with the result that the nitrogen in the



waste reduces the amount of dissolved oxygen in the water and causes levels of ammonia, nitrates, phosphates, and bacteria to increase. Animal agriculture involves the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides that are often discharged into surface waters.

Animal agriculture also contributes significantly to global warming:

- Livestock sector presents a more serious threat to global warming than does the burning of fossil fuels for transport purposes.
- Livestock rearing generates 65 percent of human-related nitrous oxide, which is almost 300 times as warming than carbon dioxide. Most of this comes from manure.
- Animal agriculture accounts for 37 percent of all human-induced methane, which is largely produced by the digestive system of ruminants and which is more than 20 times more warming than is carbon dioxide, and 64 percent of ammonia, which contributes significantly to acid rain.
- Deforestation to produce more land for crops and grazing also results in the release of large amounts of carbon dioxide.

## DAIRY PRODUCTS

Although considerations of Ahimsa and ecology mean that we should not consume the flesh or eggs of animals, many Jains consume dairy products and use dairy products (and wool) in temple rituals. I respectfully submit that for the same two arguments—violence against animals and ecological concerns—that the Jains consider a move toward a pure vegetarian diet, what is today called *veganism*.

Dairy products involve inflicting suffering and death on mobile, five-sensed beings. Some forms of production are more brutal than others but under the very best of circumstances there is a great deal of suffering involved in the production of these products, and the death of animals is a necessary aspect of *any* industry or practice that uses animals.

Animals used in dairy production are kept alive longer than meat animals, treated as badly if not worse, and end up in the same slaughterhouses after which humans consume their bodies. The male babies of dairy cows are sold into the veal industry and most of the females are used in the dairy industry. It is an endless cycle of exploitation, suffering, and death. There is an

inextricable relationship between the meat industry and the dairy issue.

Similarly, the very same detrimental ecological concerns are also applicable to dairy foods:

- Animals used for dairy require a great deal of grain and plant protein and water.
- Dairy industry causes the degradation of land, the pollution of water, and the creation of greenhouse gasses.
- A single dairy cow produces approximately 120 pounds of wet manure per day—equal to that of 20-40 humans.

Moreover, the environmental impacts of processing dairy products are considerable. The most significant problem is the discharge of large quantities of liquid effluent with high organic loads, which are increased when whey from the cheese making process is not used as a by-product and is discharged along with other waste waters. The amount of effluent produced in the processing of dairy products can often exceed the sewage load of municipal systems and, if irrigated to land in rural areas, may affect soil structure and cause salinity. Contaminants in effluent can also get into the groundwater and affect water quality. Effluent discharged directly into water bodies can cause a depletion of oxygen levels.

The dairy industry consumes large quantities of fresh water that is used to clean processing equipment and work areas and large amounts of energy for the operation of machinery, refrigeration, etc. Many of these refrigeration systems use chlorofluorocarbons, which can cause ozone depletion. Most dairy products are packaged in plastic or plastic-lined containers, or cans, and these results in a considerable amount of solid waste.

Some Jains defend the continued consumption of dairy products on the basis of tradition—that is, the fact that Jains have been consuming dairy products for as long as anyone remembers means that it must be acceptable to continue doing so. But if Jainism stands for anything, it represents the notion that ethic principles are a matter of rational thought and careful consideration and that tradition can never be a sufficient answer to an ethical problem.

Many people think that milk and dairy products can be produced by animals who graze peacefully in the pasture and have a good life. But even if that is possible in theory, *no* animal products

actually come from such animals. Almost all dairy products come from animals kept in intensive conditions known as “factory farming” that involve unspeakable brutality and violence. Even those animals who are supposedly raised in “free-range” circumstances, or whose products are advertised as “organic,” are raised in conditions that *may* be only *slightly* less brutal than the normal factory farm, but all animal agriculture *necessarily* involves violence, suffering, and death.

The person who keeps only one cow must keep that cow pregnant in order for the animal to give milk and this means that there will be a steady stream of calves. In most cases, most if not all of these calves will end up on someone’s table. And whenever a calf is separated from her or his mother, there is tremendous suffering from that event alone. Is a glass of milk or some raita with our meal worth inflicting even that suffering? The picture of the happy cow grazing in the pasture ignores the simple reality that the process of producing animal products—*however “humane” it may be*—involves Himsa. If anyone doubts what I am saying, go visit the most “humane” dairy farm you can find and observe what goes on there. Your doubts will be put to rest.

Some people think that it is difficult to be a strict vegetarian but that is not the case. There are now a large variety of delicious non-dairy “milks” (soy, rice, almond) available and these can be used for cooking and in beverages. There are delicious vegan “butters” made from soy that can substitute for ghee. Most Jains have already done what most non-Jains would regard as the difficult part—they have removed meat, poultry, fish, and eggs from their diets. Taking the additional step of eliminating dairy products is the easy part.

A note about the use of animals for clothing and rituals: Leather is not merely a by-product of the meat industry—it is an important part of the economics of that industry. Leather processing has harmful environmental effects. There is terrible cruelty involved in producing wool. Silk worms are boiled alive to make silk garments. Once again, there are many alternatives to wool,

leather, and silk. The use of animals for all these purposes unquestionably involves Himsa.

### THE FUTURE

I became a vegetarian in 1978 after visiting a slaughterhouse. It was terrible and I became convinced immediately that I could no longer eat animal flesh. I eliminated all animal products from my life in 1982 and became a strict vegetarian when I recognized that there was no logical or moral distinction between flesh and dairy or other animal products. They all involved Himsa; they all involved horrible suffering; they all involved death. As a practitioner of Ahimsa, I could no longer ignore the harm in which I was participating.

The sentiment in the Jain community is moving in the direction of strict vegetarianism. Jain community leaders have sought to facilitate discussion of this issue within the broader community. But most important of all, Jain youth, particularly those born in the United States and Canada are increasingly embracing strict vegetarianism and not wearing animal clothing as well. As these young people assume positions of leadership in the Jain community, the rejection of all animal use will become more widely accepted.

We live in a world of unspeakable violence that only gets worse by the day. It is more important than at any time in the past to speak up for peace and nonviolence. Although no one has a monopoly on these precious values, Jainism is the only tradition that emphasizes Ahimsa as the foundational principle of spiritual practice. *Ahimsa Paramo Dharma*. Jains are in a unique position to be the emerging voice of sanity in an insane world and have the responsibility to do so. Nonviolence begins with what we put in and on our bodies.

I offer these thoughts respectfully for your consideration. I recognize that many Jains are not yet strict vegetarians and it is not my intention to judge or to offend those people. I am only trying to apply what I understand to be important Jain principles in a consistent way. If I have offended anyone, Micchami Dukkadam.





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## JAIN WAY OF LIFE & ETHICAL LIVING

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*Pravin Shah is the Chairperson of the JAINA Education Committee. He directed the production of Jain education books used in the Pathshala curriculum throughout the world.*

Jain scriptures state that earth, water, fire, air and vegetation, which constitute the five basic elements of our environment, possess life. Human beings are also blessed with advanced developed thinking as compared to animals. Therefore, humanity is responsible for achieving oneness and harmony among all living beings including the environment, through compassionate living, and disciplined behavior.

Lord Mahavir's entire life was full of compassion and was an example of how to live in perfect harmony with nature and provide utmost respect for the environment. Lord Mahavir made the following profound statements of all times:

- 'All life is bound together by mutual support and interdependence.' (*Tattvārtha* sutra)
- 'One who neglects or disregards the existence of earth, air, fire, water and vegetation, disregards his own existence.' (*Āchārāṅga* sutra)
- 'We harm and kill other lives because of our greed and possessiveness.' (*Shrāvākāchār*)

Since all lives are interconnected, one should realize that *if we harm one, we harm all living beings*. Greed, possession and possessiveness are the primary causes of all violence as well as imbalance in the environment.

These ancient statements are refreshingly contemporary in their premise. The main theme of Lord Mahavir's teaching is:

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**Doing our best at this moment,  
puts us in the best place  
for the next moment.**

~ Operah

- Ahimsa (Non-violence) is respect for life of all living beings.
- Aparigraha (Non-possession/Non-possessiveness) stems from respect for others' lives as well as the environment.
- Anekāntavāda (Non-one-sidedness/Open-mindedness) is respect for the views of others.

It is not possible to sustain human life with absolute non-violence and absolute non-possession. The goal of Jainism is to minimize the negative impact of our existence to other living beings and the environment. Jain texts state:

- A living being with five senses (animals, birds, fish, etc.) feels maximum pain and their destruction involves greater violence. At the same time, killing many-sensed beings has a greater negative impact on the environment.
- A living being with one sense (plants and vegetables) feels minimum pain and its destruction involves minimum violence and it produces a minimum negative impact to the environment.

Hence Jainism advocates vegetarianism.

Please remember that if we consume dairy products for our personal use we are responsible individually for our actions and the resulting karmas. However, we should reevaluate the use of dairy products in the temples for religious functions. We do not use root vegetables in religious programs even though some Jains in North America may consume root vegetables at home. Milk and other dairy products used for the traditional rituals could be substituted with alternatives vegan sources.

The Jain way of life is very ethical and it also respects and honors the earth and the environment. Our scriptures indicate that we need to practice our religion based on time, place and the environment that we live in.

## APPLIED JAINISM: INTEGRATING VEGANISM INTO JAIN TRADITION

Saurabh Dalal  
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*Saurabh Dalal is involved in outreach, education, and greater advocacy of sustainable plant-based diets and Ahimsa as compelling solutions to many global problems. He serves as Deputy Chair of the International Vegetarian Union ([www.ivu.org](http://www.ivu.org)) and President of the Vegetarian Society of DC ([www.vsd.org](http://www.vsd.org)). He holds graduate degrees in Physics and Engineering and explores ways of integrating sound science into related areas.*

The global production and consumption of animal products is a critical driving force for virtually every major category of environmental damage now threatening the future of the planet and all its inhabitants. The vast inefficiency and waste produced by the dairy and eat industries exact a staggering toll on the planet. Key consequences of the crises include climate change, air / land / water pollution, fresh water scarcity, biodiversity loss, top soil erosion, the destabilization of communities, and the spread of disease. A *vegan* diet and lifestyle offer a powerful and easily accessible solution for the preservation and revitalization of the natural world.

This article explores a connection of the *vegan* diet (all plant-based with no animal products including no milk, butter, cheese, eggs, honey, etc.) to the fundamental concepts of Jainism. Since Jains are generally well-known as being strict in what we eat, our dietary tradition serves as the best example to apply the essence of Jainism.

Jainism clearly explains that living beings are held accountable in the three aspects of thoughts, words, and deeds, and in the three cases of 'what we do', 'what we have done for us', and 'what we support/encourage'. The first set of three applied to the second set of three for each of the *panch vrats* shows the depth of Jain philosophy and its relevance today.

*Ahimsa* is the first and foremost *vrata*. Not only are we compelled to the goal of 'not killing' any

living being, it is precisely about 'not harming' any living being. The immense suffering of cows in dairies where they are treated as commodities and then slaughtered before age five when they are less "productive", is a clear example of *hinsa* in 'what we have done for us' and 'what we support/encourage'. And since only cows (females) are of use for milk production, consumption of milk and milk products directly contributes to the slaughter of bulls (males) and calves, well before their natural life expectancy.

Believing in *satya* and our calling to speak the *truth* can be viewed in a far more complete way - thinking about what is the truth; questioning what we're told or led to believe; and seeing through the way we delude ourselves. Myths like - the wonderful treatment of cows and bulls on dairy farms; cows needing to be milked as actually benefiting the cows; and not contributing to an animal's death when we drink milk - are untrue.

We often see *asteya* as non-stealing but *asteya* can be very important in our relationship to others and the world. Asking ourselves - what is given to us and what is truly ours to take - broadens our worldview. It brings perspective to our human place in the grander scheme of Nature. We see that other living beings have rights to enjoy the world every bit as we do - not to be confined, controlled, or exploited - for human needs. We have no special permission to take another animal's milk (nor eggs or honey), or to deprive them of their right to clean air, unpolluted land, safe habitat, and their freedom.

When we view *brahmacharya* in the light of 'what we have done for us' by others, one essential aspect around the treatment of dairy cows is heart-breaking. Since a mammal must be pregnant or have given birth recently to produce milk, the cows are forced to be pregnant again and again to continue to give milk. Whether cows are forced by artificial insemination or become pregnant by a stud bull while the cow is kept in submission, we humans control their reproductive lifecycle. To satisfy our milk consumption needs, we force the cows to endure the violence and brutality that would be shock and outrage if they were inflicted on a different *panch indriya jiv* - the human.

*Aparigraha* is non-possessiveness or detachment from material things. We humans are obligated not to consume more and more, but to tread lightly while exercising utmost care. Accepted traditions like consumption of dairy products and

the use of milk or silk in ritual Pujas should be re-evaluated. Tasteful and healthier *vegan* substitutes are available. Eliminating long-held practices that are not in-line with our inspiring principles is practicing *Aparigraha*.

The potency of *Anekantavad* is not only about respecting the fact of a multiplicity of viewpoints and having the humility to consider each view, it is about perspectives and weighing the possibilities in light of the *panch vrats*. We can assess veganism and apply *Anekantavad* from non-human perspectives. What do cows and other farmed animals want for themselves? Do they not want to be free from forced servitude, exploitation, and abuse? What do the immeasurable wisdom and compassion of the *Tirthankars* exemplify to us? Isn't the 'voice' of our planet already roaring up in so many ways against human egotism, greed, and deceit? Our *kashayas* seem to seriously obstruct our ability to perceive and realize the *panch vrats*.

Through *pratikraman* when we reflect on our past activities and consider how we affect others and impact the world, and ultimately our own *atma*,

we ask and grant forgiveness for our transgressions and pledge to improve ourselves in the future. From such a path of great insight and discovery, we become open and realize the physical and emotional *hinsa* we cause by supporting the system of milk production. We see through the dairy industry's attempt to transform *panch endriya Jiv* (five-sensed beings like cows) into *ajiv* commodities. The undeniable link between the "dairy – beef – leather" industries must be challenged and stopped. Reducing, removing, and preventing future *karma* depend on such realizations and modified behavior.

So we have the power to energize change, to transform this tragic experience by non-human animals today because of direct human involvement, to something far more life-affirming. With our foundation in the *panch vrats* and our rich Jain philosophy as our guiding framework, a re-examination of our diet and lifestyle towards *veganism* is needed. Let's hope that for the animals of the world, including ourselves, each of us will be that change, living it proudly and conscientiously, and inspiring others in the process.



## THE FIRST ONCE-A-WEEK VEGETARIAN CITY IN THE WORLD

*A balanced vegetarian meal is not only sustainable, but also a healthy meal.*  
-- Tom Balthazar, a Ghent City Councilor

By declaring every Thursday a "Veggie Day", the Belgian City of Ghent, a picturesque town 30 miles west of Brussels, has become the first in the world to go vegetarian at least once a week. By opting for vegetarian meals on this weekly meatless day, the civil servants, elected councilors, and schoolchildren have become pioneers in the fight against obesity, global warming, and cruelty to animals. "There's nothing compulsory. We just want to be a city that promotes sustainable and healthy living," declared City Councilor Tom Balthazar in support of the city's effort to make the entire place vegetarian for a day every week. The organizers cite UN data arguing that meat production and consumption are responsible for nearly one-fifth of global greenhouse gas emissions – more than the cars. "If everyone in Flanders does not eat meat one day a week, we will save as much CO<sub>2</sub> in a year as taking half a million cars off the road," said the director of the local branch of Flanders' Ethical Vegetarian Association (EVA).



# Ecology - The Jain Way

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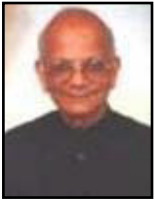
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## GLOBAL WARMING

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*Dr Natubhai Shah is a retired medical practitioner, who has PhD in Jain religion. He is the author of 'Jainism: The World of Conquerors (2 volumes)', Hon. Research Fellow in the University of London, and Visiting Professor in Jain Studies in the Faculty of Comparative religions at Antwerp. He has been involved in interfaith movement for many years and was awarded 'Jain Ratna' by the Prime Minister of India in 2001.*

The environment, pollution and global warming are new challenges for the mankind. We have to create equilibrium of responsibility to protect the environment against the humanity's rights to development and wealth creation and show our concerns not only to ourselves and our communities, but also towards the needs and welfare of others. Our consumer life style, the plastic pollution and throw away culture affects the lives of hundreds of species. We should remember that we do not have a divine right to exploit our environment and natural world for a short term gain.

The impact of pollution falls unequally; often those pollute the least may be affected the most by climate change. The least developed nations have no capacity to cope with the impact of pollution. It is important to remember that the environmental choices available in some countries may not be the options for others. In some parts of the world, for example, fossil fuels can be used more sparingly and buildings can be made of efficient, sustainable materials; but it is too much to expect someone to adapt to the sparing usage if he or she depends on trees of local forest for fuel, shelter and livelihood.

### What is Global Warming?

Global warming is an increase in the near surface temperature of the Earth. Increased concentrations of greenhouse gases such as the carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), halogenated fluorocarbons (HCFCs), ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), per fluorinated carbons (PFCs), sulfur hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>) and water vapor, allow incoming solar radiation to pass through the Earth's atmosphere, but prevent most of the outgoing infra-red radiation from the surface from escaping into outer space. The greenhouse gases trap the infra-red radiation

and make it to reradiate back toward the surface creating a warming influence and global warming.

### What are pollutants?

Atmospheric pollution may be defined as the presence of substances in the atmosphere, resulting from man-made activities or from natural processes that cause adverse effects to human health, property, and the environment. Fossil fuels and nitrogen oxides produced in the emissions of vehicle exhausts and from power stations are major air pollutants, and contribute to formation of photochemical ozone (smog), impair visibility, and have health consequences.

### What causes Climate Change?

Changes in climate have increased greatly in the past 200 years. Due to 'greenhouse effect' global temperatures have risen by an average of 0.5°C over the past century with huge consequences - the spread of tropical diseases; disruption of agriculture due to drought and changes in rainfall patterns; elimination of endangered species; increasing deaths during summer heat waves; and increasingly severe tropical storms. Air currents can be exacerbated causing typhoons and storms, which can trigger big climate disasters.

### What do the Jain Texts say for the future?

While describing the descending cycle of time (*avasarpini*) the Jain sacred texts mention about the gradual spiritual decline (leading ultimately to the deterioration of material things) in the world. 21,000 years long fifth epoch (*aara*), in which we are living, has about 18,500 years yet to go. It has been predicted that in this epoch the people will be self-centered, violent, discourteous and unhelpful to others due to increase in greed and other passions and there will be destructive weather patterns and worldwide unbearable climatic conditions leading to famines, increases in diseases and reductions in the fertility of land.

In the sixth epoch (*aara*), which is also 21,000 years long, there will be unbearable heat during the day and cold during the night. People will live in burrows along the banks of rivers. Near the end of this *aara*, dust clouds, violent storms, heavy rains and fire will destroy most of the living beings and civilization. After this, the cycle will be repeated in the reverse order (*utsarpini*) ascending cycle of gradual spiritual happiness.

### Will the policies adopted stop global warming?

- By all estimates, only severe reductions in global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions -- on the order of 60

percent or more -- will alter the computer forecasts.

- If the policies do not include developing nations the result will likely be a reallocation of emissions to developing nations, not a reduction of emissions.
- If global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are severely restricted, it may help to reduce global warming, but the science is not clear what impact, if any, it would have on the world's climate.
- Our actions will help tackle global climate for a long time.

### **What is a Jain Perspective on global warming and a sustainable environment?**

The *Jain Declaration on Nature* emphasizes the ecological harmony, a gift of togetherness, accommodation and mutual assistance including the life of natural world and values of non-violence. The Jain practice of compassion and reverence towards all living beings stresses to refrain from harming life and avoid all possible causes of pollution. Indulgent and profligate uses of natural resources are a form of theft and violence; and advise when using earth's resources, take a cue from the bee that strengthens itself by sucking honey from the blossoms of a tree without hurting the blossom.

Jain ethics, both for laity and ascetics, suggest to maintain the benevolent and non-polluted character of the surroundings and advise people to refrain from all possible causes of pollution, external as well as internal. Like Jainism, different religious systems have affirmed the duty of humanity to preserve the beauty of our surroundings by expressing nature as mother, water as father, and air as teacher. Men and nature hold a causal relationship of inter-dependence and inter-

relatedness at the finest (micro-level) and grossest levels. Jews and Christians have been advised to be stewards of the earth; the Buddha encouraged improving the aesthetic beauty of the environment to earn merit; and Hindus have included service to nature as one of their five duties for the repayment of debts, which people receive directly or indirectly from birth. By contrast, the Jains not only declare the natural components as living but have made the care of them a part of their daily duties for spiritual progress and control over the mind.

### **What can new do?**

We all should help the nature to rebalance itself and carry out activities that minimizes the production of greenhouse gases and their effect on the earth. We should:

1. Save energy-reduce your energy bills and have a positive impact on climate change at the same time.
2. Travel wisely - travel in ways which save fuel, help members get to know each other and which reduce carbon dioxide pollution from cars and mini-buses.
3. Shop ethically - use your shopping choices to buy local food which cuts transport pollution, supports local businesses and buy fairly traded goods to help producers overseas.
4. Save our resources - by saving waste and water you can save money for your organisation as well as help protect the environment.
5. Care for our area - take an interest in the local environment, help protect local wildlife and have our say on local plans affecting our area.



My religion is very simple. My religion is kindness.

~ Dalai Lama

Our prime purpose in this life is to help others. And if you can't help them, at least don't hurt them.

~ Dalai Lama

## THE ROOTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION & THE PHILOSOPHY OF JAINISM

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*Aakash Desai will graduate with a B.Sc. degree from University of California, Irvine, in summer 2009. He plans to pursue a M.Sc. degree in Environmental Engineering at University of California, Berkeley. Aakash is interested in solving world environmental and human health issues. He is an alumnus of Jain Center of Southern California Pathshala.*

In physics, potential energy is a function of mass, gravity and height. Any object that is held above a reference point has potential energy; the greater the height from which the object can fall, the greater the energy potential. With human potential, it is not how far we can fall, but how high we may climb. Philosophy is often a study in human potential, and how it can be expanded and fulfilled. In Jain philosophy, human potential is limitless. The soul itself has infinite capacity for love, peace and harmony. However, instead of exploiting the positive energy of our souls, humans have instead exploited and destroyed the rich natural resources of the Earth. Humans are the most destructive species on the planet; Barbara Ward wrote in *Only One Earth*, 'We have forgotten how to be good guests, how to walk lightly on the earth as its other creatures do.' In our tireless pursuit of comfort, convenience and entertainment, we have compromised the very cycles, processes and resources that furnish life. Our negligence has carried on to the point where we have endangered our future prospect for survival as a species.

Current metrics of measuring the 'development' of a civilization are its technological prowess, the level of scientific understanding and military might. However, such metrics provide no insight into whether the 'development' is sustainable. Our concept of achievement in society provides a window into why we are so exploitive and destructive. If one dares look through this window, he or she will recognize infernal engines that have driven human societies to where they are today. I propose that three institutions of modern civilization have perpetuated much of the

poverty, violence, inequality, suffering and exploitation on Earth: religion, government and property.

Blind faith, in the name of religion, has closed the human mind. The narrowness of scope and irrational beliefs associated with many of the world's major religions have bound human intellect and capacity for understanding.

Government has allowed for the systematic exploitation of whole populations of people and of the environment, resulting in creating deep economic inequalities and environmental disasters all over the world. Government and property go hand in hand; the rich have instituted government to protect their rights to resources and the means of production while exploiting the underprivileged. Emma Goldman wrote in *Anarchism: What it Really Stands For*, 'all forms of government rest on violence, and are therefore wrong and harmful, as well as unnecessary.' Non-violence is the fundamental principle of Jain philosophy; therefore government policies must be examined and challenged, if necessary, by its followers.

Property has bound the souls of humans and thwarted their intellect and energy toward the accumulation and shallow love for mere material objects. The accumulation of property through means of unjust economic systems such as capitalism, and the subsequent exploitation of resources in pursuit of more property, has led the world to the environmental catastrophe that it is in right now. Jains must reevaluate these three institutions, for they have led much of the world into vicious cycles of greed and violence. Sustainable survival of the human race depends on it.

However, tugging at the roots of these three institutions would require a global transformation incorporating a complete restructuring of thinking and lifestyles. So, what can we do now? Starve the beast. Make meaningful and progressive lifestyle changes that reduce our rates of consumption and waste. Focus on needs, not wants. Henry David Thoreau states in *Walden* that human needs are simply food, water, shelter, clothing and fuel (firewood, etc). Mohandas K. Gandhi once said 'Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not every man's greed.' Material wants and commercial entertainment do little to enrich the mind or quality of life. Finally, we need to start taking control of our lives and stop relying on other people to take care of our necessities. Externalization of responsibility is a key

characteristic of a capitalist society; we never fully realize the social and environmental costs of the things we consume.

It is no coincidence that lifestyle choices to limit our impact on the environment such as cooking for self, growing our own food, riding a bike instead of driving a car, are also exercises in freedom. However, token lifestyle changes will not save our environment from destruction; we must constantly be vigilant and critical of ourselves, questioning every action, belief, thought and idea.

We should not shy away from questioning the norms of behavior and functionality of society either. Consistent, informed and sharp criticism and questioning of our governments, economy and belief systems will help enlighten the masses. The principles of Jain philosophy fall neatly in line with this. Followers of Jain philosophy need to lead by example. We must encourage a society in which the basic needs of all living things are met; a society of zero economic growth, but of infinite growth in the realms of education, equality, understanding, and coexistence.

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## JAINS GO GREEN

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*One who neglects or disregards the existence of earth, air, fire, water and vegetation disregards his own existence which is entwined with them.*

– Lord Mahavir

Lord Mahavir stated these words thousands of years ago, and they ring as true today. Jainism teaches us to take care of ourselves, our planet, and all living beings. Many climate-related changes are already being observed globally and within the United States, including changes in air and water temperatures, sea level, freshwater supply, frequency and/or severity of intense hurricanes and heavy downpours, loss of sea ice, etc. Scientific studies show that we are already expecting to the sea level to rise one meter over the next hundred years which could devastate many coastal communities. This prediction could be an underestimate if we continue to increase our greenhouse gas emissions. While one person may not be able to stop or reverse climate change, it is our Jain and civic duty to do our part.

There are a number of things that can be done on the individual, community and national level. First, at the individual level there is a wide range of simple actions we can all take. Basic things include replacing light bulbs with energy efficient ones (CFLs), keeping car tires inflated and taking our own reusable bags to the grocery store instead of using plastics bags. Other easy but bigger actions include installing solar panels on our houses. All across the United States, especially in California and Arizona, solar panels

are being heavily subsidized through government tax credits and are even a large cost savings in the long run.

Each individual action seems minor, but collective individual actions can have significant impacts. For example, if every family in the United States changed one light bulb to an energy efficient bulb, we would reduce carbon dioxide emissions by more than 90 billion pounds which would be the equivalent of taking over one million cars off the road! Each of us should think globally, but act locally, which translates to making a difference in our communities. A great place to start is our own Jain communities. Our Jain temples regularly use disposable products, including Styrofoam and plastic utensils, which are made from petroleum and pile up in landfills, but there are affordable alternatives. Also, we can opt to power our Jain Centers from renewable power sources by talking to the utility companies. As new temples are built or renovated, we can look into green building practices and becoming LEED certified. These practices use fewer raw materials, less water, less energy, and lower utility costs. We need to educate our leaders so that our Jain Centers can become an example for the communities we live in. We can carry these same messages to our schools or workplaces to make an even bigger impact.

On a national level, we can become educated about the policies of our Congressional representatives. Ask them to support polices that will help us solve our problems related to climate, energy and the environment. Talk to friends and family across the country and encourage them to take these same actions since the greater the number that emulate this vision that Lord Mahavir espoused, the greater the effect we can all have in protecting all living beings.

So of the countless things you can do, where do you start and where can you get more information? In 2007, *Jains Go Green* was created to help people make a personal commitment to becoming more environmentally friendly and follow the words of Lord Mahavir. It also provides resources for actions to take at the individual, local and national level. Visit [www.JainsGoGreen.com](http://www.JainsGoGreen.com) to start becoming more environmentally aware today and take action now!

## THE PRACTICE OF ECOLOGY: THE ROLE OF IMJMC YOUTH CAMPS

Harish C. Jain, Kamal Jain, Tushar Mehta,  
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*Professor Harish C. Jain is President of the IMJMC and Kamal Jain is Senior Vice-President of IMJMC. Dr. Tushar Mehta, Kroopa Shah and Madhu Jain have led several IMJMC Youth Camps.*

The late Acharya Sushil Kumar Ji Maharaj, founder of the International Mahavira Jain Mission of Canada (IMJMC), gave spiritual guidance, blessings and inspiration for the initiation of Jain Youth Camps beginning in 1985. He presided over our annual camps until his passing in 1994. He taught children, youth and adults who attended these camps initially (1985-1994) about the meaning and practice of non-violence or *Ahimsa*.



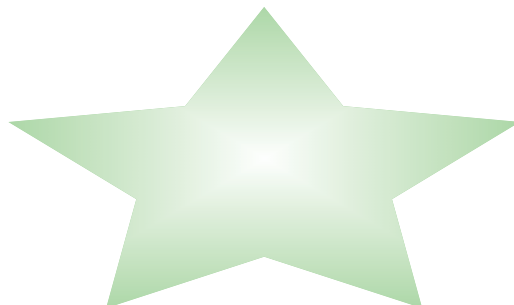
IMJMC Youth Camp Participants

From 1985 to the early 2000's, the camps were attended by children including the last three co-authors. Since 2002, the IMJMC has devoted its camps to youth.

Tushar Mehta, Kroopa Shah and Madhu Jain, along with many other team members, organized and actively participated in these youth camps. Every camp has included activities to learn about ecological issues. The theme of the 2006 IMJMC summer camp was in fact 'Jainism and Ecology,' and the work to educate Jain youth on the philosophical and practical aspects of Jainism will continue in our annual camps. The Jain camps endeavor to be environmentally responsible on a practical level. They are held in an outdoor center with very basic facilities, and carpools or buses are used to travel there. No disposable items are used for eating or drinking, and all food waste is composted. The counselors and campers personally help wash dishes and deal with all waste. An attempt is made to keep the diet as close to vegan as possible.

The rationale for these youth camps is based on Jain principles as propounded by Lord Mahavir. These principles are equally applicable today. Lord Mahavir was completely in tune with the divine harmony of the universe. Thousands of years ago, his wisdom manifested itself in his observation of *parasparopagraho jivanam*, the idea that all life is interdependent and mutually supportive. All life is bound together. Perhaps this is the broadest and boldest definition of an ecosystem; one that includes all life in the universe. When we ruminate on the meaning of these words, it is clear that with its belief in the interdependence of all living beings and the harmony of nature, Jain philosophy is revolutionary in its emphasis on ecology.

The late Acharya Sushil Kumarji spoke at the two symposiums organized by the IMJMC on the themes of 'Ahimsa and Peace' on June 1-2, 1985 in Montreal and 'Survival or Violence' in Toronto on October 30, 1988. Professor Harish Jain also addressed the 1988 Symposium.





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**From**

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## JAINISM – A RELIGION OF ECOLOGY

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*Shanehi Shah has been attending Pathshala at Jain Center of Southern California for 15 years and served as an assistant teacher for 4 years. She graduated from University of California, Irvine, with a major in Psychology and Social Behavior, and minor in Education and Sociology. She currently works as the Educational Advisor for the Upward Bound program at Cal State University, Dominguez Hills, California.*

*Jainism is fundamentally a religion of ecology and has turned ecology into a religion.*

-- L. M. Singhvi

Let me begin by saying that I am in no way an authority on Jainism or ecology for that matter, and that I only write this as an observer, humbled more and more each day by life and by my exposure to Jainism. I say this not as an attempt at modesty, but more as a disclaimer, as there are many other pieces and articles published in this souvenir book from very credible sources and who have a much more extensive knowledge of Jainism and/or other religions, as well as much more life experience. I speak simply from my limited observations and personal experience, as well as the knowledge from Pathshala classes, amazing teachers and my parents that I have been fortunate enough to receive.

I have been taught that the basis of Jainism is non-violence, which I believe is the basis of ecology as well. I believe there is a universal consensus that we must try and preserve, if not improve, our physical and social environment and the way we relate to it, or our 'ecology.' From the environmental perspective, we as humans have been the single greatest cause in the drastic deterioration of the earth. Typical life today is centered around instant gratification, and receiving without giving back, and our environment has been the greatest victim of our greed. Using our history as evidence, hundreds of years ago, before the age of cars and airplanes, mass production, computers, etc. the earth was healthier – there was exponentially less pollution, fewer environmental toxins, more forests and nature, and a much stronger harmony between humans and the natural planet. However, with

each new 'advancement' in technology, we have inflicted more and more harm to the earth and to ourselves, and then we justify it by claiming that it is for the greater good. There is definitely a lot of good we can do with our technology today, but there is an equal or greater amount of bad. And the cost of this? Our environment, our minds, and our independence. This is not an effort to convince every person to become a 'hippie,' abandon all electricity, and move to a hut in what is left of the jungle. This is simply to get a perspective of our current state, examine one of the many crises that threaten our existence, and to see what can be done to slow ourselves down on the path of steady destruction.

Now, presented with this problem, we must seek a solution and one solution that has yet to fail is the 'Jain way of living.' This religion thrives on conservation, preaching that we must take only what we need, control our wants, and not waste anything. When we eat, we are advised to take only what we can finish. As a householder, we are asked to use only the appliances that we need and as few lights as possible. And though the deepest reason for this is to avoid killing one-sensed beings, Jain living just happens to produce an eco-friendly side effect. But these are just a couple of examples, chosen from hundreds. Looking at the bigger picture now, as an effort to show compassion towards five-sensed beings, we are vegetarians (some of us are even vegans) and numerous articles have proven on multiple levels how being vegetarian is vastly more environmentally friendly, and that being vegan is even better. The meat industry consumes a great deal of our resources, including energy, space, and vegetation (to breed the animals for years until they are ready for slaughter), which could all be used to better serve a greater number of people, just by people eliminating, or at least limiting their consumer support of the meat, poultry and egg industries. And now, to look at the even bigger picture, our Sadhujis and Sadhvijis, or modern-day role models, are a perfect example of where Jain living and eco-friendly living meet. They walk to each of their destinations, thus eliminating vehicles, gas (the destruction of our fossil fuels), and harmful emissions from the gas; they are independent of all types of modern technology, including even indoor plumbing; and cut down on every single type of extra activity or usage. Taking this to something as seemingly simple as the food they eat, which is required to come from a Jain family, to whose house they travel unannounced and

request small portions of whatever food the family offers, no matter the taste. (This is to make sure that no extra dish was made for the Sadhuji or Sadhviji, to further ensure that not even a single unnecessary drop of water was used to wash an 'extra pot' to make food for the Sadhus or Sadhvijis, to prevent them from harming even water, a one-sensed being). Their lifestyle is a perfect example of economic and environmental planning at its best. To live one's entire life with such a minimal negative impact is virtually unheard of, and it is here that we can truly see an apparent parallel between non-violent living and green living.

Jainism also has a positive impact on the health and social realms. It is widely known that being vegetarian is much better for one's health than a carnivorous or omnivorous diet. The elimination of rooted vegetables from our diet, which we are supposed to do as Jains anyway, is also much better for our health. There is less research on this, but many Homeopathic and Allopathic philosophies support this, and different (non-Jain based) health treatment centers in India have already recognized this and prohibit their patients from consuming the root vegetables. In addition to this, Jainism advises strict regulation of our non-religious activities, which include our favorite time wasters – TV, computers, magazines, gossiping with friends, or whatever else many of us use to 'decompress.' Most of these activities are highly sedentary and are linked to an increase in the consumption of unhealthy foods, and especially mental stress if we are not careful.

We know that stress is a serious trigger, if not the root cause, of many of our major illnesses today. We are overworked, constantly concerned about 'securing our future' or our friends and family, and often complain about the daily stresses of life and about not having much time for ourselves. We all know that it is nearly impossible to free ourselves from these stresses, and the people who have freed themselves have done so not by wealth or by power, but by developing a coping system as well as an understanding of life and their roles. Jainism can play a key role in developing this in ourselves. Graduating from the School of Social Ecology at my university, I am all too familiar with the impact of our reactions to our environment on ourselves as well as each other. A number of studies show that people today tend to blame their surroundings for their problems. How often

do we blame traffic for being late, when we know we should have left five minutes earlier, or blame others for 'making us angry' when we probably countered their yelling with an equal tone? We make it a habit of attributing all of our misfortunes to our environment, deeming ourselves helpless victims of circumstance and thus stripping ourselves of the steering wheel in our own lives. (Of course, when it comes to the good outcomes in life, we jump to take credit for it, attributing it to our own hard work, brilliance, planning, etc.) However, the Jain religion explains that we are responsible for our own karmas, and explains that we cannot control our circumstances, or the fruition of our past karmas, but we can and must control our reactions to those circumstances; and this is a good lesson for any person – Jain or not. Also, we tend to drown ourselves in the frivolous details of our daily lives which turn out to be insignificant later. Things like constantly striving to pioneer the latest trends, or the time spent thinking about what we are going to eat that day, anticipating it, consuming it, and then thinking about it later – for each meal, or going out of our way to cut off the driver in the beat up car who cut us off earlier and then, discussing it with each person we meet that day. And on top of that, we constantly pursue worldly pleasures which turn out to be temporary and leave us feeling dissatisfied again, briefly after a minor peak in joy. All of these things complicate our mind, bring us to highs and lows, and then leave us too emotionally and sometimes physically exhausted to engage in activities that truly bring us peace. Instead, after just a brief refresher of almost any Jain topic, and we find it easier to regain a logical perspective, free ourselves from the ups and downs and the useless attachments, and go towards being a more compassionate, peaceful person, harmonizing with the environment and with those around us. If all of us could truly learn to disengage even a little from the attachments, and to cut ourselves off from pointless anger, pride, deceit, and greed, we would all be in better health, a better mental state, and a significantly better environment. And the better we get along with each other, the better off each of us truly is.

Thus, by each step towards a Jain way of living, we make a major impact on our souls and our bodies. And combined, our efforts can contribute to one of the deepest positive ecological impacts in history.



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## STUDENT ORGANIZATION FOR ANIMAL RIGHTS (SOAR)

Karina Ashish Mehta  
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*Karina Mehta, age 15, is a student at Canyon High School, Anaheim Hills, California. She attends Pathshala at Jain Center of Southern California for the past 9 years. Her compassion and love for animal welfare motivated her to establish SOAR at her high school. She hopes SOAR movement will spread to other schools and colleges throughout the nation.*

*The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated.*

-- Mahatma Gandhi

Animals should be equal to us; after all, they are living beings. Cruel treatment of animals cannot be justified in any way. I believe that most people are not heartless, but instead, uninformed. By teaching the world about vegetarianism and eradicating animal cruelty, we can eliminate the injustice that animals face today.

My friend Kayleigh Soto and I organized SOAR, *Student Organization for Animal Rights*, at our high school to spread knowledge about animal

rights to others who may not have the same awareness. Organizing a club can be difficult. The endless paperwork, as well as choosing competent board members can become challenging. We started this club to spread awareness about animal rights. Our main focus is expanding the pro-animal community. We send out weekly emails with information ranging from becoming vegetarian to exposing the fast food restaurants that mercilessly kill animals for business. We advertise products that are not tested on animals. By raising awareness and consciousness, we hope that people are affected enough to make a change.

In December 2008, we sold bracelets to raise money, which was used to buy doghouses and blankets for the homeless dogs across America, especially in the colder states. The program, called *Angels for Animals*, raised money to assist these homeless animals. We are also in the process of organizing a protest against various fast-food restaurants who offer products that are produced through inhuman treatment of animals. By raising awareness about animal rights and welfare, we can work towards developing a better community.

All in all, we started this club to promote awareness about animal rights. I hope that in a couple of years, this club will have grown and expanded to the point where we can really make a significant positive impact.



## ANEKANT COMMUNITY CENTER (ACC)

Anekant Community Center (ACC) – a Los Angeles-based non-profit organization - has set up a Nalini Shah Cancer Fund for prevention and early detection of cancer. Nalini Shah, Age 61, had breast cancer and passed away in August 2008. Her family has donated \$10,000 in her memory to fight the cancer and spread the message of cancer awareness. ACC has initiated a series of lectures at the Jain Center of Southern California (JCSC) on various cancers. Early detection through regular screening tests and life style improvements to minimize the cancer risks is emphasized. With the help of American Cancer Society and Orange County Health Authority, ACC organized train-the-trainers sessions at JCSC to spread the message of cancer awareness and motivate the public to go for regular screening tests.

For more than 15 years, ACC has organized free annual health camps in USA and abroad. ACC can make funds available to organize cancer detection camps in India. Please contact Harkishan Vasa at 714/771-7860 or hvasa@yahoo.com; or Mukund Shah at 949/509-6716 or mgshah@yahoo.com.

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## THE TREE LADY

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*A recent graduate from Wharton Business School, Shreyans is now enrolled in Wharton's MBA program. His interest in Social Entrepreneurship and Micro Finance has led him to spend his summer break with NGOs in Kenya and Peru – helping Kenyan banana farmers maximize profits through better marketing, and assisting a Peruvian waste management startup raise venture capital. Shreyans is an alumnus of Jain Center of Southern California Pathshala.*

In the *The Jain Declaration On Nature*, Dr. L. M. Singhvi notes that the Jain philosophy of ecological harmony is synonymous with the principle of Ahimsa (non violence) - a principle that Jains teach and practice not only towards human beings but towards all nature. Lord Mahavir identified the fundamental natural phenomenon of mutual dependence: "One who neglects or disregards the existence of earth, air, fire, water and vegetation disregards his own existence which is entwined with them". The ancient Jain scriptural maxim *Parasparopagraho jivanan* - all life is bound together by mutual support and interdependence - is refreshingly contemporary in its premise and in its promise. It defines the scope of modern ecology and extends our responsibility to taking care of the earth and the environment. In this spirit, the following story is an inspiration for all.

Planting billions of trees may sound like an overly zealous and unachievable goal, but not to Wangari Maathai of Kenya, a formidable advocate of tree

planting and environmental protection, a human rights activist, and a Nobel Peace Prize Laureate. According to Maathai, affectionately known as *The Tree Lady*, Kenya and African countries with low forest cover and ongoing deforestation are the most vulnerable of all regions to the effects of global warming and catastrophic climate changes. She is spearheading a UN initiative to plant more than 7 billion trees globally.



Wangari Maathai was born in 1940 in Nyeri, Kenya – where I spent my summer break helping native farmers improve marketing strategies. She was the first East African woman to earn a Ph.D. and also to chair a university department. She introduced the idea of planting trees in 1976 and continued to develop it into a broad-based, grassroots organization. Through her Green Belt Movement, she has assisted in planting more than 20 million trees, and also trained individuals from other African countries to successfully launch similar initiatives. The Green Belt Movement (GBM) mobilizes community consciousness for self-determination and environmental conservation, and provides income and sustenance to millions of people in Kenya through the planting of trees. According to Maathai, "*When we plant trees, we plant the seeds of peace and seeds of hope.*" GBM also conducts educational campaigns to raise awareness about women's rights, civic empowerment, and the environment throughout Kenya and Africa. See

<http://www.greenbeltmovement.org/>

Wangari Maathai is internationally recognized for her persistent struggle for democracy, human rights and environmental conservation. She and the Green Belt Movement have received numerous awards, most notably The 2004 Nobel Peace Prize.

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Every man's life ends the same way. It is only the details of how he lived and how he died that distinguish one man from another.

~ Ernest Hemingway, An American Novelist



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## NOISE POLLUTION – THE FORGOTTEN HAZARD

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*Dr. Shaival Shah is an alumnus of Jain Center of Southern California Pathshala. He is currently completing residency training in ophthalmology.*

These days all the press is focused on carbon emissions, renewable energy and solar panels. Flying under the radar is a very important, often overlooked, issue: noise pollution. Overall, I think the Jain community has been ahead of other communities in terms of being environmentally friendly. A large part of this can be attributed to our culture's frugality. As a culture, we do not like to waste, and our parents have drilled this into our heads. There are many examples that I am sure the youth can relate to:

'Hey! Turn off the lights when you leave the room! Do you think this is Diwali?'  
'You do not need to use the air conditioner – just open the window!'  
'Bring back the yogurt container – I am going to wash it out and use it to store my shaak.'

We are very good at reducing consumption and very good at recycling, but completely and utterly oblivious to noise pollution.

So what do I mean by noise pollution? I realize the temple serves to help bring our society together. Anytime you have hundreds of people congregating in an area, it is going to be loud. People will talk, babies will cry, little kids will shout. This is okay – and expected. The problem is inside of the main temple itself where people pray. This part of the temple ideally should be a sanctuary, a place of refuge,

contemplation and reflection, presumably in silence. Unfortunately, it is very common for people to sing their sutras out loud, to mumble their mantras, and sometimes just socialize! How is a guy supposed to meditate with so much noise? It is no wonder Mahavir Bhagvan had to escape to the forest for self-reflection!

Why do we have this noise pollution? This again can be attributed to our culture. We are a very loud culture, accustomed to having our voices heard and to speaking louder if we are not. As Indians, we come from a culture where the rickshaws have bumper stickers reading 'Honk OK Please!' Have you ever been to a quiet Indian dinner party? It is part of who we are, and it carries over into the way we pray.

So what do we do about this? This is a very tricky situation, because people like to express their devotion to religion in their own way – nobody likes to be told how they can and cannot pray. However, when one's expression of spirituality becomes distracting and hinders the spiritual development of the person sitting beside them, perhaps reform is in order. Now I consider myself to be an intelligent fellow – I have been in school for a long time and have done pretty well. After much thought, the most effective solution I can come up with is to have an 'Auntie Brigade' wearing bright t-shirts that say 'Noise Police' patrolling the temple and 'Shhhh!' anybody who is too loud. People may not like it, but nobody argues with the Auntie Brigade.

A more realistic approach might be to print signs or raise awareness. Ultimately, what is required is a change in what we expect from each other. People know they are supposed to be quiet in the library, and they act accordingly. We just need to apply this to the temple. And if people are too set in their ways, we can always reactivate the Auntie Brigade.



We need to find God, and he cannot be found in noise and restlessness. God is the friend of silence. See how nature - trees, flowers, grass - grows in silence; see the stars, the moon and the sun, how they move in silence.... We need silence to be able to touch souls.

~Mother Teresa

## OVER CONSUMPTION – A STATE OF MIND

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*Pooja Jhobalia is the Co-Chair of the Green Activity Committee for the JAINA Convention 2009. She holds a MS degree in Public Policy with an emphasis in International Relations and State and Local Government, and a BS degree in Environmental Sciences with a minor in Economics.*

*'One who neglects or disregards the existence of earth, air, fire, water and vegetation, disregards his own existence which is entwined with them'*

-- Lord Mahavir

As a religion of compassion, Jainism crafts the welfare of all living beings. Creating cohesion of spirituality and paving the existence of ecological balance, Jainism demonstrates advocacy for both nature and the fabric of society.

*Ahimsa* fundamentally encompasses non-violence and inspires Jains not to harm any living being. It embodies one's willingness to separate oneself not merely from acts of harming, but deterring the mechanism of possession and over consumption that is common in our world today. As Jains, we strive to reduce our needs by stressing the importance of simplicity.

Today's society is a complete paradox. These days we are judged by external possessions and have made materialistic objects the focus of our worth. Our worth is defined by what we own, not about what we know or what we do. Do we do this because we believe in the survival of the most compassionate or survival of the richest?

By doing so, we have neglected the existence of the earth and have tarnished the environment. We face devastating deforestation rates, greenhouse gas emission in the air we breathe, chemical effluents in our waterways and animal extinction. And for what? To satisfy our selfish wants. We purchase state-of-the-art devices one year only to throw them away when an updated version comes along the following year. The cell phone is a perfect example of this. Over the course of five years, we have moved from the Motorola Razor to the Sidekick to the Blackberry,

and now the Apple iPhone. The not-so-new products are trashed into our overflowing local landfills. As wonderful as innovation is, one can not help but wonder how many cell phones have been created, thrown-away, or remain unopened because the new bigger and better cellular device has just surfaced.

According to world-renowned economist Joseph Stiglitz, 'The United States makes up 5% of the world's population, but consumes 24% of the world's energy; one American consumes as much energy as 31 Indians or 370 Ethiopians.' (*Davos Man's Depression*) How can we reverse this staggering trend? We can achieve this by re-establishing a spiritual relationship between humanity and its natural surroundings. Once this relationship is established, we can move towards solving our global ecological crisis.

One of the simplest ways an individual can help the environment is to use reusable bags. Utilizing reusable bags, for groceries or trips to the mall, diminishes our consumption of plastic and/or paper bags. According to *The Wall Street Journal*, 'the United States goes through 100 billion plastic shopping bags annually.' ([www.reusablebags.com](http://www.reusablebags.com)) Virtually none of these plastic bags are recycled and plastic bags frequently end up in landfills and/or the ocean. In addition, plastic bags are not biodegradable and can be mistaken for food by a surplus of marine life. The next time you are asked 'paper or plastic?' you can do your part to help the environment by replying 'neither' and shop with a reusable bag.

We can reduce harm to wildlife by careful disposal of trash in natural settings, like parks or beaches. We can cut up the plastic rings around six-packs of beverages to prevent animals from getting strangled in the holes. We can wash out containers like plastic yogurt cups so the aroma will not attract animals whose heads consequently get lodged inside them.

Another great place to reduce consumption is the office and/or workplace. We can reduce consumption by copying and printing on both sides of paper and reusing items such as envelopes and folders. We can cut down on waste by bringing in our own ceramic cup to drink our morning coffee instead of using disposable cups. Carpools, vanpools, and public transit are excellent modes of transportation that get us to the office and improve our air quality. We can also

purchase refurbished office equipment that conserves natural resources and energy required to produce new products. Refurbishing extends the life of furniture and diverts the disposal of unused office products from the waste stream. The office and/or workplace is an excellent starting point for re-establishing the connection with the environment.

We have no control over what other individuals may do in their lives, but we know that we can help educate about environmental awareness. Being environmentally friendly is more than just

recycling bottles and cans, or buying organic foods – it is a way of life. There must be demand in order to see change. The simple and effortless tasks mentioned in this article can make a world of difference. Movement beyond the ever-so cliché recycling loop will create environmental awareness. Additionally, we must find ways to reduce, reuse, redesign, react, regulate, and most importantly remind ourselves that one day this world will not belong to us and that it must be viable for generations to come. By reducing our consumption – can we find sustainable living.



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## ECOLOGY - THE JAIN WAY

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*Saahil Jain is a junior at Irvine High School in Irvine, California. He has attended Jain Center of Southern California Pathshala since 1999. Saahil has served on the Jain Center Youth Council (JCYC) Committee since 2005 and is currently a Co-*

*President.*

Ecology by definition is the branch of biology dealing with the relations and interactions between organisms and their environment. Two main concepts of ecology are conservation and preservation. Issues related to the environment exist in our lives everyday which we do not hear about as much as the larger problems of global warming, deforestation and pollution.

Everyday, we, the people of the world, behave in such ways that cause ecological crises in our environment. One major dilemma is the reduction of living space. Since the early 1920's, America has loved the concept of urban sprawl. People continue to settle down in cities erected in the middle of nowhere disturbing the peace and equilibrium that once existed in both the animal and plant kingdoms. Although these cities have created jobs and businesses, they damage and disrupt the original ecosystems. Areas that have been untouched for decades suddenly become the site of a housing tract, landfill, quarry or even an oil field. By limiting urban sprawl, we would benefit from the results of having simpler lives with smaller homes. With smaller homes, we would be able to limit our possessions thus limiting bad karma. Urban sprawl was a minor issue that is now endangering undisturbed ecosystems and our souls.

In addition, we are accumulating toxic or non-biodegradable wastes at an unprecedented rate. We are not recycling enough and are wasting too much. Our landfills are crammed with plastics that could be recycled but are not, so they remain in our landfills forever. If we were to recycle these plastics, our environment would be cleaner, our landfills would be emptier, and our lives would be improved. We have to get into the habit of recycling so that it becomes automatic.

In today's changing world, we are constantly looking for new, more efficient sources of energy. One possibility that keeps coming up is using nuclear power; however, there are major setbacks. First, the waste must be disposed of in an area that will not be disturbed. If the waste is not disposed of properly, all living organisms in that area could suffer from genetic mutations and other serious complications. Second, nuclear power plants are very dangerous and could cause major issues if even the slightest thing goes wrong. In the history of nuclear power, there have been two deadly accidents: Three Mile Island in the United States and Chernobyl in Ukraine. Both accidents harmed the environment and made certain areas uninhabitable. Conserving energy is a solution to this problem. Turning off unnecessary lights, opening windows instead of using air conditioners, and unplugging electronics while they are not being used, could save enough energy to power the world hundreds of times over. Though we are looking for new ways to power our world, paths like nuclear power could cause significant problems to our environment.

Our world has been taken over by technology and those who adapt thrive. However, there are areas where the indigenous populations are at risk of vanishing. These indigenous people have learned to support themselves in their environments; however, when technology from the outside world is introduced, the balance that existed is disturbed. Slowly, the inhabitants' culture and heritage is changed according to the new world and eventually, their culture is lost. Today's world has become survival of the fittest; people who can keep up with technology prosper while the others are left behind. We must learn to respect others and allow their cultures to continue to thrive. Ecology involves the way people interact with other people and how they get along and evolve. By protecting native peoples, we are also helping to look after the environment. These people are crucial to our world's diversity and uniqueness and should not be disturbed.

The compassionate Jain way of life automatically leads to harmonious living and protection of the environment. However, these three problems are just a few of the many that are potentially harmful to our environment and the other species around us. Now more than ever, people need to conserve and preserve to help our world last for as long as possible.

## THE ANSWER IS JAINISM

Debi Grand

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*Debi Grand has been a member of the adult Jain Study Group at the Jain Center of Southern California since 2003. Even as she still considers herself a 'baby Jain'*

*in many ways, she believes her soul is, and always has been, Jain.*

There are many reasons why I chose Jainism as my spiritual path. One of them is because Jainism is the religion of true environmentalism.

I had the extraordinary good fortune, or as I understand now, the *punya*, to be born to parents who were environmentalists long before the green movement really took hold in this country.

My parents raised my brothers and me to live respectfully on the planet. They instilled in all three of us a love for the beauty of the earth and an appreciation for the marvelous industry of the balance of nature. This is something all of us have

carried into adulthood and I have passed on to my own son.

We were taught the careful practices of not wasting (water, food, electricity, paper, gasoline and even time), of not littering, and not interfering with the natural world as much as possible.

I now realize how my upbringing laid the foundation that eventually led me to Jainism, which I know in my heart and soul to be the most true and evolved religion in the universe.

Every aspect of Jainism that I can think of—compassion, non-violence, non-possessiveness, non-stealing, vegetarianism, and Karma theory—it all leads to the same thing. Everything in Jainism guides us in living carefully and gently on this planet for the good of ourselves and every single other soul here.

I truly marvel at the logical and practical simplicity and the absolute magnificence of the Jain way of ecology. If the rest of the world ever reaches a point where they really want to know how to save the planet, all they have to do is look to Jainism for the answers. It is all here—the Jain way!



## ELLIS ISLAND MEDAL OF HONOR AWARD TO DR. DHIRAJ H. SHAH



Dr. Dhiraj H. Shah, Past President of JAINA and the current Chairman of JAINA's World Community Service has been awarded 2008 Ellis Island Medal of Honor by NECO (National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations).

Since 1986, NECO has sponsored an annual Ellis Island Medals of Honor to recognize and honor the diversity of American people that makes America a great nation. Past recipients include six Presidents of the United States, Nobel Prize winners, athletes, industry leaders, artists and others.

This prestigious award to Dr. Shah is in recognition of humanitarian services he has been associated with in his personal capacity and as chairman of JAINA's World Community Service.

## पर्यावरण सुरक्षा में जैन दर्शन का योगदान



**प्रा. माणिकलाल शोरा** M.A. (Hindi)  
राजगुरुनगर जि. पुणे महाराष्ट्र

चालीस सालतक हायरकुल और कॉलेजके विद्यार्थियोंको हिन्दी पढाकर निवृत्त होनेके बाद प्रा. माणिकलाल शोरा पिछले साइस सालसे जैन धर्मके बारेमें अध्ययन लेखन तथा प्रवचन कर रहे हैं। आचार्य भूषनशुशीश्वरजी की दो और पंथ्यास अरुणविजयजी की चार गुजराती पुस्तकों का उन्होंने हिन्दी भाषामें अनुवाद किया है। मराठी भाषामें उन्होंने “महावीरायण” नामक भगवान महावीरके चरित्रका लेखन किया है। महाराष्ट्रके प्रसिद्ध “जैन जागृती” मासिकमें उनके धार्मिक और सामाजिक विषयोंपर अनेक लेख प्रकाशित हुये हैं।

पृथ्वी (जमीन), आप (जल), तेज (प्रकाश), वायु (हवा) और आकाश इन पाँच मौलिक तत्वों से यह संपूर्ण जगत बनता है। पृथ्वी तत्व के चारों ओर वायु तत्व है। ऐसी थोड़ी सी भी जगह नहीं जहाँ वायु तत्व न हो। वायु तत्व के इसी आवरण में आप तत्व और तेज तत्व है और उस के भी चारों ओर आकाश तत्व है। पृथ्वी तत्व और आकाश तत्व के बीच में जो आप, तेज और वायु तत्व है उसेही पर्यावरण कहा जाता है। इसी पर्यावरण की सहायता से इस पृथ्वी तत्व पर 84 लक्ष योनियों में उत्पन्न सभी प्रकार के जीव रहते हैं। इन जीवों को जीने के लिए पवन (वायु), पानी (आप) और तेज (प्रकाश) की नितांत आवश्यकता रहती है। पर्यावरण ही इन तीन तत्वों की आपूर्ति करता है।

जब ये तीन तत्व (पर्यावरण) अपनी मर्यादा में रहते हैं संतुलित स्थिति में रहते हैं, तब जगत के सभी जीव आनंद पूर्वक जीवनयापन कर सकते हैं। पृथ्वी को लपेटकर रहा हुआ यह पर्यावरण ही जगत के सभी प्राणियों का प्रमुख आधार है। जब कभी कारणवश पर्यावरण में कमबेशी हो जाती है परिवर्तन हो जाता है तब जन जीवन अस्तव्यस्त हो जाता है। अतः कहा जा सकता है कि संपूर्ण जीव सृष्टि के लिए पर्यावरण यह कुदरत से निकला हुआ अहुमोल उपहार है।

कई बार स्वयं मनुष्य ही अज्ञान के कारण अथवा अपने स्वार्थ के लिए कुछ ऐसी हरकतें करते हैं जिससे पर्यावरण का संतुलन बिगड़ जाता है प्रदूषण बढ़ जाता है। परिणामतः उस वातावरण में रहनेवाले जीवों को अनेक प्रकार की तकलीफों का सामना करना पड़ता है। इन तकलीफों से समाज में घबराहट न फैले मानवी जीवन कष्ट प्रद न हो, किसी प्रकार की हानी न हो इसके लिए मानवों का अज्ञान दूर करनेका, उनकी दृष्टता नष्ट करने का उनकी दृष्ट प्रवृत्ति पर अंकुश लगाने का काम धर्म को करना पड़ता है। जैन दर्शन (तत्त्वज्ञान) ने मानवों को अच्छा मानव बनने का अपनी दृष्टता को छोड़कर मानव की तरह जीनेका संदेश दे कर पर्यावरणमें होनेवाले प्रदूषण पर रोक लगाने का महत्वपूर्ण कार्य करके पर्यावरण की सुरक्षा एवम् संवर्धन में सहायता योगदान दिया है।

जैन दर्शन कहता है “पानी का अनावश्यक अतिरेकी एवम् मनमाना उपयोग करना याने अनंत जीवों की हिंसा करना है”। भ. महावीरकी वाणी है “सव्ये जीवावी इच्छंति जीवियुं नमसीज्जकं” अर्थात् “सभी जीव जीना चाहते हैं मरना कोई नहीं चाहता”। संसार के हर प्राणियोंको चाहे वह मनुष्य हो या तिर्यक

अपनी जान प्यारी होती है | अंतः दूसरे जीवों की जान लेने का या उभे शारीरिक या मानसिक दुःख पहुंचाने का किसी को भी अधिकार नहीं | यही है भ.महावीर का अर्थात जैन दर्शनके अहिंसा तत्त्वका संदेश | इसलिए जैन दर्शन का कहना है, “जीवन के लिए आवश्यक उतनेही पानी का उपयोग किया जाय | जहाँ एक आलटी पानी से काम चल जाता हो वहाँ शॉवर के नीचे बैठ कर कई आलटिया पानी खरबाद करना महान हिंसा है |

पानी का अतिरेक उपयोग करने से बहुत सारा पानी नाली से खह जाता है, जिससे नाली में अनेक जीवोंकी उत्पत्ति होती है और मानवों की अनावधानी के कारण कई जीवोंकी हिंसा भी होती है | अनेक स्थानों पर खुली नालियोंसे पानी इधर उधर फैल जाता है, उसमें भंडन पैदा होती है और पर्यावरण दूषित हो जाता है |

वर्तमान कालीन वैज्ञानिक युगमें अनेक प्रकार के कारखाने खुल गये हैं | इन कारखानों में बननेवाली वस्तुओं का मानवी जीवन को अवश्यही लाभ हुआ है | परंतु इन कारखानों की चिमनियोंसे निकलनेवाली विषारी गंध से वायुमंडल प्रदूषित हो जाता है और कारखाने का अतिरिक्त गंदा पानी आजूबाजू जलाशयों और नदियों के पानी को दूषित जहरीला बना देता है | ऐसा पानी चारों ओर गंदगी एवम् खदबू फैला कर पर्यावरणमें प्रदूषण पैदा करता है | इसी लिये जैन दर्शनने पानी का उपयोग करते समय ध्यान पूर्वक सावधानी खरतनेको कहा है |

वायु या हवा यह पर्यावरण का महत्वपूर्ण प्रमुख तत्व है | संसार के सभी जीवों को जीने के लिए हवा की नितांत आवश्यकता है | स्वाभोच्छ्वासकी क्रिया ही जीवके जिंदापन की निशानी है |

पर्यावरण में अनेक प्रकार के वायु रहते हैं, उनमेंसे जीवनके लिए उपयुक्त वायु है ऑक्सीजन जिसे प्राणवायु भी कहा जाता है | संसार के सभी जीव प्राणवायु को ग्रहण करते हैं और उच्छ्वास के द्वारा कार्बन-डाय-ऑक्साईड जैसी दूषित वायु को बाहर छोड़ देते हैं | अब आप अंदाज करिए कि संसार के अंनत जीवों द्वारा पर्यावरण में जीवों के लिए आवश्यक ऑक्सीजन अर्थात प्राणवायु आती कहाँ से है?

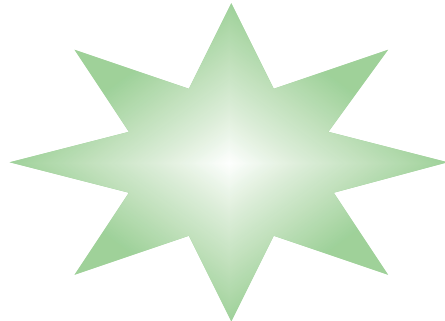
जैन दर्शन सदियोंसे कहता आय है कि पृथ्वी पर उगने वाली लता-पेली-पेड़-हरियाली आदि वनस्पतियाँ सजीव हैं और ये भी जीवों की तरह स्वाभोच्छ्वास की क्रिया करती हैं | वैज्ञानिक संशोधन से भी यह सिद्ध हो चुका है | निरगम भी एक उदा जादुगार है जिसने वनस्पतियों की श्वास की क्रिया में एक अजीब जादु भर दी है | भूर्य प्रकाश में अर्थात दिन के समय में सभी छोटी-छड़ी वनस्पतियाँ जीवों के लिये उपयुक्त ऑक्सीजन वायु छोड़ती रहती हैं और पर्यावरण में फैली दूषित वायु स्रव्य ग्रहण करती हैं | कितने महान उपकार है वनस्पतियों के जीवों पर !

वनस्पतियों की उपयुक्तता के बारेमें जैन दर्शन ने अपने अनुयायियों को ही नहीं पूरे संसार को हिदायत दे रखी है कि विनाकारण वनस्पतियों को नष्ट न करो .

हरियाली पर मत चलो. पेड़ पौधे को मत तोड़ो | पेड़ को तोड़ना तो दूर पेड़ की पत्ती भी न तोड़ने का आदेश जैन दर्शन ने दिया है | जनरपतियों को नष्ट करने में जैन दर्शन पहले दर्जे की हिंसा मानता है. इसी लिए जैन धर्म के कई श्रावक श्राधिकाएँ हरी भोजी तरकारी जिसे लिलोत्री कहा जाता हैं न खाने की शौंघ लेते हैं | जैन धर्म के अनेक परिवारों में पर्युषणादि पर्य दिनों में हरी भोजियों का भेषन नहीं किया जाता | पर्यावरण की सुरक्षा एवम् संवर्धन में जैन दर्शन का महान योगदान है |

जीवन प्रदान करने वाले वायु तत्त्व को प्रदूषित करने में पटाखों का आतिशबाजी का काफी योगदान रहता है | भारत के सभी प्रांतों और लगभग सभी धर्मों में दीपावली का त्योहार बड़े हर्षोल्लासके साथ मनाया जाता है | इस त्योहार में एक से एक ऊँची आवाज करने वाले एवम् रंग बिरंगी चिनगारियों वाले पटाखों की आतिशबाजी करने की प्रथा है | इस आतिशबाजी में बच्चों के साथ उनके पिताजी दादाजी भी बडी उमंग के साथ शामिल होते हैं | केवल दीपावली में ही नहीं आजकल शादी ब्याह एवम् हर तरह के आनंदोत्सवों में बड़े पैमाने पर आतिशबाजी की जाती है | आतिशबाजी में फूटनेवाले पटाखों की आवाज से ध्वनि प्रदूषण के साथ ही साथ ही साथ उनसे निकलने वाले विषैले धूँबेसे साथ वातावरण प्रदूषित हो जिसमें शॉंभ लेना भी कठिन हो जाता है पटाखों और तरह तरह की फुलझडियों से निकलनेवाली अग्नि एवम् जहरीली गैस से असंख्य जीवों की हत्या होती है | आतिशबाजी एक ऐसा घातक खेल है जिससे हर बाल बनेकों को केवल अपने अवयव ही नहीं जान तक गँवानी पडती है | चातुर्मास में ही आनेवाले दीपावली त्योहार के समय जैन संत भक्तियाँ आतिशबाजी न करने की बच्चों को शपथ देते हैं आतिशबाजी का विरोध करते हैं |

पर्यावरण यह जीवों की सुरक्षा का एक अत्यंत आवश्यक एवम् उपयुक्त आच्छादन या कवच है. जिसकी मदद से संभारी जीव सुरक्षपूर्वक जीवनयापन कर सकते हैं | परंतु अज्ञानी, स्वार्थी एवम् दुष्ट प्रवृत्ति के लोग अपनी भेजा हरकतोंसे पर्यावरण प्रदूषित करते हैं. जिससे असंख्य जीवोंकी अकारणही हिंसा होती है | जैन धर्म का दूसरा नाम है “ अहिंसा धर्म ” | इसिलिए तो पर्यावरण में प्रदूषण फैलाने का जघन्य कार्य करनेवाली हर हरकत का जैन दर्शन ने विरोध कर पर्यावरण की सुरक्षा में महत्त्वपूर्ण योगदान दिया है |





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## 2009 PARLIAMENT OF THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS

Melbourne, Australia

"Make a World of Difference: Hearing each other; Healing the earth" is the theme of the 2009 Parliament of the World's Religions scheduled to meet in Melbourne, Australia, December 3-9, 2009. Naresh Jain and Hema Pokharna, members of JAINA Interfaith Committee, serve as trustees on the board of the Parliament. They both were instrumental in bringing a sizeable Jain delegation to 2004 Parliament of World's Religions in Barcelona, Spain which brought significant attention to Jains through the programs and exhibitions they created.

The Jain community plans to have a significant presence at the 2009 Parliament of World's Religions. This will be an opportunity to inspire the delegates with core Jain values and care about life and living, and empowering each other, using alternatives to violence. For additional information, contact Dr. Hema Pokharna at [hemapokharna.phd@gmail.com](mailto:hemapokharna.phd@gmail.com) or 773/368-1656. [www.parliamentofreligions.org](http://www.parliamentofreligions.org)



ଋତୁର ଶୁଭ ଶୁଭ

## GREEN POTPOURRI

Souvenir Team



### Going Meatless:

Researchers at the University of Chicago concluded that switching from standard American diet to a vegan diet is more effective in the fight against global warming than switching from a standard American car to a hybrid.

~ *The Startling Effects of Going Vegetarian for Just One Day*, By Kathy Freston, Huffington Post. April 2, 2009.



### A Vegan Life:

Vegan life is not ordinary  
Vegan life is extraordinary  
Vegan life is less sedentary  
Vegan life is evolutionary

~ A variation by C. Parekh of *Carbon Leaf*, [www.gothic.net](http://www.gothic.net)



### Food for Laughter:

"I need to get some organic apples for my husband. Are these apples sprayed with toxic insecticides or poisonous chemicals?" a wife asked a novice Produce Manager at a Farmer's Market. "No madam, we don't do that here. You will have to do that yourself," he responded.

पानमूलं गुरुमूर्तिः पूजमूलं गुरुवन्दनम्  
भजनमूलं गुरुवाक्यं, भोक्तमूलं गुरुदया.



*In Seva,*

*Kirit, Pramila, Nikhil and Rajesh Daftary*

## THERE IS NO HAPPINESS IN A LIFE FULL OF IGNORANCE

Pujya Rakeshbhai Jhaveri  
amitkgala@sradharampur.org



*For his extensive research treatise on Shrimad's finest literary creation, 'Shri Atmasiddhi Shastra' (a poetic composition on Self-Realization), the University of Mumbai conferred on Pujya Rakeshbhai*

*Jhaveri the degree of Ph.D. in 1998.*

There is no happiness in a life full of ignorance, that is, a life devoid of knowledge of the self. There is no meaning to such a life, no purpose and no sense of fulfillment. Mankind is depressed, anxious and exceedingly frightened. Just as a tree whose roots are shaken and unearthed will dry up, mankind is drying up and becoming lifeless.

Why have these roots been shaken? Simply because man is not aware of his own self. An auspicious, beautiful and joyful life is possible only when man is at least aware of who he is and why he exists.

### The Question Persists

No matter how much we try to forget it and keep ourselves busy elsewhere, time and again, the question surfaces. It reappears until it is convincingly answered. No matter how much wealth is amassed, or reputation earned, until an answer to this question is found there is emptiness inside. Deep down there is a feeling of despondency, which prevents us from being free from anxiety.

Our state is like that of a person who is traveling by train, but does not know where he has to go. He neither knows his destination, nor does he know the purpose of his journey. To overcome this anxiety, he reads the newspaper, listens to the radio, eats, drinks and talks to his co-travelers. He engages in various activities. However, the question 'Where do I want to go?' still remains.

### Meaningless Existence

The problem of that traveler was only that he did not know where he had to go, but we are like travelers who do not even know who we are! We are ignorant not only about the journey, but about

ourselves too. We do not know where to get off, why we have to get off or even who has to get off! Questions like – Who am I? Where have I come from? Where am I going? Why am I going? Should I continue to live like this or should I change the course of my life's journey? – remain unanswered.

It is but natural then, that mankind is sad, depressed, worried and restless. Until the question 'Who am I?' is answered, sorrow is inevitable; until then there can be no ecstasy in life; until then tension, restlessness, agony and misery will not end. The life of one who has not found an answer to this question is meaningless. As Sartre has described it, 'Man is a useless passion.' The life of such a man is futile, all his interests and activities are useless, and his life is a senseless story without any substance. A meaningless existence!

Saints have asserted that life is not a meaningless existence. It can be full of meaning and joy provided one is aware of one's true existence. Life's meaning starts unfolding as one begins to question, 'Who am I?'

### Avoiding is Not the Remedy

Human beings have invented a myriad of ways to escape this problem, but not solve it! When someone is sick in the family, outstanding balances in business are not recovered or close relationships have ruptured, man seeks solace in music, drowns himself in liquor or goes to a movie to try to forget his problem. But the problem can never be solved by forgetting it. On the contrary, by forgetting it he loses the ability and strength to solve it. The problem continues to remain the same whereas mentally he gets weaker and weaker.

Pain and restlessness do temporarily disappear by forgetting the problem and he may also feel good, but in the end this oblivion proves to be suicidal. Even though there is a way to happiness, he does not tread that path. He has either chosen to forget his misery or he lives under the illusion that there is no misery in his life. Neither of these options has eliminated his sorrow. The door to happiness will open for those who discover the root cause of pain, understand it and correct their fundamental mistake.

### The Root Cause of Misery

The only misery is – not knowing one's self. Other sorrows are nominal. Other sorrows are only

projections of this one sorrow. There is only one wound – to be away from one's self, to remain divorced from it. There is only one pain – the absence of realization of one's self.

If we try to find out why we are unhappy, we will blame it on any number of reasons. Physical pain, psychological suffering, financial problems, difficulties in relationships are among the innumerable reasons. Try to eliminate one type of suffering and ten others will emerge. We try to protect one wall and the other crumbles! If we proceed in this manner, we will soon be at death's doorstep and we will never have had an opportunity to live! Therefore it was said that we need one remedy for all our miseries.

### **The Essence of Religion**

Someone asked a Zen Master, 'Please can you tell me in short, the essence of religion?' The master kept quiet and stared at the questioner. The man became disturbed, anxious and started perspiring. In exasperation, he asked the master, 'Why do you not speak? Why do you keep looking at me as though I have committed a crime? Why do you not speak?' The master's eyes seemed to pierce him like an arrow. The master said, 'I am speaking; why do you not listen?' The man answered, 'You have not said anything; what do I listen to?' The master said, 'I said, just as I am quiet, you should also become quiet and calm. Look within and liberate yourself.' Look within.

We will be miserable because no matter what we hold on to in the outside world, it will slip away. Whatever we care for will perish. No matter how hard we try, we will not be happy externally. Happiness is our intrinsic nature, and yet we never undertake the journey within. We wander far and away and court misery. We make preparations to go to the moon and stars, but not within. We turn a blind eye to that which is close by. The self is the closest, but we believe it to be very far. The first thing, therefore, is to realize that it is the closest. Then effort should be made to become steady in it.

### **Turn Within and Impart Happiness**

When one's discriminative faculties are awakened and one sees that everything in the outside world is of no consequence, the inward journey begins. If you start the inward journey you will turn to your self. And if you turn within, you will come close to that which will never leave you. Moreover, as you turn within, fountains of joy will spring forth. Just as the Ganges, Brahmaputra, Indus and many other rivers flow from the Himalayas, the rivers of love, tranquility and joy will flow from the Himalaya of meditation. Not only will you be full of joy, you will also make the world joyous. You will be able to impart a great deal of happiness to the world. The one who is happy also makes others happy. What else can he give but happiness!?!



## **THE MOST ANCIENT GREEN MOVEMENT IN WORLD HISTORY**

It is when we reflect on the challenge of climate change that we begin to appreciate the enormous contemporary relevance of the Jain philosophy of ahimsa and jiva daya. We realize that Bhagwan Mahavir and the other Jain Tirthankars were great environmental conservationists. They taught us that we human beings are merely trustees of this planet. We need to re-learn their teachings in our times. If we do so, we realize that eco-friendliness is not a mere fashionable phrase; it has to be interwoven into our development paradigm and also into our day-to-day living. In a sense, we all have to become *adivasis* or tribals who know how to exist in harmony with the earth. The earth takes care of us, and so we have to take care of her. In this sense, Jainism is the most ancient Green Movement in world history.

--- Shri L. K. Advani, Jain International Trade Organization (JITO) Global Summit, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, Jan 10, 2009.



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## NON-VIOLENCE : A WAY OF LIFE

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*Dr. Kumarpal Desai is a well known scholar – an author of over 100 books and a speaker in international forums. He has received several awards including the prestigious Padmashri for his outstanding services and for having authored books in Gujarati, Hindi and English on Jainism, philosophy, and spirituality. As a former Dean of the Faculty of Arts of Gujarat University, he guided over twenty PhD students in the disciplines of literature, journalism, and Jain philosophy. Dr. Desai is the coordinator of the Institute of Jainology and President of Gujarat Sahitya Parishad, the most prestigious literary organization in Gujarat.*

In the past three thousand years of 'civilized' life, fifteen thousand wars have taken place. Among all creatures on earth, human beings are the only beings that choose to kill their own species. Man invented guns and bombs to kill his fellow men; a single nuclear bomb can wipe out the human race. This reminds one of an incident from the life of Maxim Gorky, the Russian writer. He talked to the villagers about the achievements of science. He said : "Science had helped man to fly in space and to fathom the depths of oceans. Once, when he was discoursing on the wonders of science". An old villager retorted saying : "You are right. Science has shown us how to fly and how to reach the bottom of a sea, but has it taught us how to live in peace on this planet?" Gorky had no answer.

Yet as Jains, Tirthankar Bhagwan Mahavira has blessed us and taught us how to live. We live today in perpetual danger of war. There are a varieties of bombs, each capable of killing hundreds of thousands in one go ! There is a stockpile of many nuclear weapons that can decimate the human race in an instant.

Violence has become a way of life and is seen in each and every act of a being. The media play a negative role in inflaming our passions and providing an impetus to violence. Human kind is ravaged by poverty and famine, yet money is spent on developing new weapons and on

planning war strategies. Around the world, there are people who live in a state of fear, terror and insecurity and as nations, we talk and prepare for war. Is the need for non violence not stronger than ever before?

Tirthankar Bhagwan Mahavira's concept of non-violence encompassed the universe - human beings as well as all other organisms. Cruelty is not physical but is innate, inborn. Compassion to all needs to be practised, he said.

The first *mahavrat* is non-violence. Tirthankar Bhagwan Mahavir said, "The one you want to kill is your ownself and the one you want to rule over is also your ownself. Therefore a truly enlightened soul will never think of killing anyone or ruling over anyone, nor does he cause pain to anyone." Non-violence is the most basic tenet of the Jain religion. It is the very heart of the religion and the concept of 'live and let live' is its cornerstone. As all beings are equal, it says, everyone should be able to live happily and with no one causing unhappiness to others. Violence results in the formation of *karma* (action). Bad conduct, lying and indulgence are attributes of violence, truth, *astey* (non-stealing), celibacy and detachment are attributes of non-violence. Violence is committed not only through action but by thought and deed – as the saying goes, "war is born in the heart of man". Non-violence in thought is reflected in *anekant* (the doctrine of manifold aspects).

Non-violence is a way of life; it comes from within. In the oldest book of Jain religion *Acharang Sutra*, it is said that non-violence is a true universal religion. Acharya Shri Umaswatiji said, "Parasparopagraha Jivanam" – each living organism supports another. Mahavira's theory of non-violence encompasses the entire universe and he had also emphasised the unity of life.

It was after a gap of 2600 years that Mahatma Gandhi felt inspired by the same principles of non-violence and compassion that Tirthankar Bhagwan Mahavira propounded. In August 1946 Mahatma stood, unarmed before a violent mob and his compassion melted their hearts. Mountbatten said , "What a battalion could not have achieved, has been achieved by this frail man and has saved East part of India from a conflagration." Non-violence links Mahavira to Mahatma, "as if there was an invisible traffic between Mahavira and Gandhi."

As we have stepped into the next century, everyone has to make non-violence a part of

one's being, the very existence. Jain philosophy lays emphasis on totality of life, not on fragmented existence. There are people who take care to see that tiny insects are not killed but they do not flinch when it comes to exploiting others. Everyone has a split personality and this leads to fragmentation which is highly detrimental. Non-violence must pervade one's life, one's every action and activity. Compassion should be encompassing as was evident in Tirthankar Bhagwan Mahavira's love for Chandkaushik, a venomous snake.

Acquisitiveness or possessiveness is directly related to violence as are exploitation and corruption. To exploit the disadvantaged or the underprivileged is also a form of violence. "Jain religion affirms the co-existence of non-violence and human existence," says Muni Santbalji. Jonathan Swift a great satirist, has said, "We have just enough religion to make us hate but not enough to make us love one another." We must annihilate the very idea of violence and fanaticism to reach the ideal of religious fellowship. Truth, detachment and non-possessiveness are the fundamentals of universal religion preached by Tirthankar Bhagwan Mahavira.

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***Jai Jinendra & Best Wishes to 15<sup>th</sup> Biennial JAINA Convention***

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## GREEN PRATIKRAMAN: A FRIENDLY PROPOSAL FOR GLOBAL JAINS

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*Dr. John E. Cort is Professor of Asian and Comparative Religions at Denison University in Granville, Ohio. He is the author of Jains in the World: Religious Values and Ideology in India (Oxford University Press, 2001) and Framing the Jina: Jain Narratives of Icons and Idols (Oxford University Press, forthcoming), as well as several dozen essays on a wide range of subjects related to the study of Jainism.*

At the heart of the Jain moral universe is the recognition that each and every living being, in nearly each and every moment of its existence, by nearly everything it does, says and thinks, inevitably causes harm (*himsa*) to countless other living beings. This is a defining aspect of our very embodiment. It is the cause of untold suffering to other beings and to ourselves, and binds us to the continuing round of rebirth, suffering and redeath.

In response to this inevitable harm that each one of us causes, Jains developed the ritual of *Pratikraman*. In this ritual, performed annually by most Jains in India during the observance of Paryushan, and twice daily by all monks and nuns as a foundational aspect of their practice, the person performs special gestures and recites phrases in order to negate the karmic impact of all the harm he or she has caused since the last performance of *Pratikraman*. Much of what the person recites is in the form of *mantras* and *sutras*, sacred phrases that, if pronounced correctly, have the automatic effect of reducing the effects of past karma. These *mantras* and *sutras* are in Prakrit and Sanskrit. Key passages that the person recites are in the vernacular—Hindi, Gujarati, Kannada, and other modern Indian languages. Here the point is not that the person recites a sacred sound, but that he or she consciously thinks about the meaning of what he or she is saying. It is important that the person consciously and intentionally express regret for all the harmful things he or she has done, said or thought, in order that he or she can make a concerted effort to do better in the future.

Among the vernacular phrases in *Pratikraman* is a passage known in Hindi and Gujarati as *Sat*

*Lakh*, or 'Seven-hundred Thousand' (these are the first two words of the recitation), in which the person engages in a critical self-examination (*Alochana*) of all the myriad ways he or she has caused harm to all manner of embodied souls (*jiv*). Here is an English translation of the passage as performed in the Shvetambara Tapa Gachchha:

700,000 earth bodies,  
700,000 water bodies,  
700,000 fire bodies,  
700,000 air bodies,  
1,000,000 separate plant bodies,  
1,400,000 aggregated plant bodies,  
200,000 two-sensed beings,  
200,000 three-sensed beings,  
200,000 four-sensed beings,  
400,000 divine five-sensed beings,  
400,000 infernal five-sensed beings,  
400,000 plant-and-animal five-sensed beings,  
1,400,000 humans:  
In this way there are 8,400,000 forms of  
existence.  
Whatever harm I have done,  
Caused to be done,  
Or approved of,  
By mind,  
Speech,  
Or body,  
Against any of them:  
May that harm be without consequence.

In other words, the person enumerates all the possible classes in which souls may be embodied, and recognizes that he or she has caused harm to beings in every single one. This is a powerful statement of the impact each one of us has upon the environment.

In an essay I published in *Jainism and Ecology*, the 2002 book edited by Christopher Key Chapple and published by the Center for the Study of World Religions of Harvard University, I suggested that *Sat Lakh* 'could be creatively adopted by Jains as an environmental ritual,' a ritual that I termed 'Green *Pratikramana*.' This poses a problem, however, in the new globalized setting in which many Jains find themselves—especially those from North America, such as those attending the 15<sup>th</sup> Biennial JAINA Convention in Buena Park. The older generation knows the Hindi or Gujarati or other vernacular language in which *Sat Lakh* (or the equivalent recitation in other Jain communities) is recited. An increasing number of younger Jains who are born outside of India do not understand its meaning. As a result, instead

of being a profound statement of awareness, its recitation can become an empty ritual in a foreign language.

Part of the genius of the Jain tradition over the centuries has been the ability of Jains to adapt to new cultural and linguistic settings. I would like to make a friendly proposal that both the language and the performance of *Sat Lakh* could be adapted to a form that would be more meaningful for Jains outside of India. This could also help Jains advance their program of becoming a more compassionately aware religious community.

Jains in North America might want to consider borrowing a practice from the Religious Society of Friends (more commonly known as the Quakers). The Friends are a small Christian denomination that, like the Jains, places a high emphasis on non-violence. While there are only several hundred-thousand Friends in the world, in the past several centuries they have had an influence for justice far beyond their small numbers.

Since the time of George Fox, the British Friend who founded the Society in the seventeenth century, Friends have regularly assessed their spiritual state through the regular use of 'queries.' These are questions that guide a Friend in a process of self-reflection, by which a person reflects on the Quaker ideals and how better to let them guide his or her life. In recognition of the fact that social and cultural contexts change, the content of the Queries has also changed over the years, and each regional Yearly Meeting develops its own set of Queries depending on its specific circumstances. In recent decades each Yearly Meeting has included a number of Queries that are concerned with environmental issues. For example, among the Queries of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting are the following: ([www.pym.org/publish/fnp/10\\_queries.php](http://www.pym.org/publish/fnp/10_queries.php))

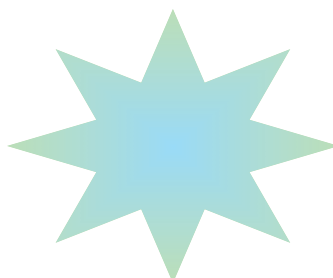
- Are the decisions of the Meeting and its committees relating to the uses of property, goods, services, and energy made with sensitivity toward the environmental impact of these choices?

- How does our Meeting learn about environmental concerns and then act in the community on its concerns?
- How am I helping to develop a social, economic, and political system which will nurture an environment which sustains and enriches life for all?
- Am I aware of the place of water, air, and soil in my life? Do I consider with care the necessity of purchasing substances hazardous to the environment? Do I act as a faithful steward of the environment in the use and disposal of such hazardous substances?

The Quaker Queries, I propose, might provide a model for adapting *Sat Lakh* and other elements of *Pratikraman* to a new context.

- How in body, speech or mind have I caused harm to the 700,000 species of earth bodies?
- How in body, speech or mind have I caused harm to the 700,000 species of water bodies?
- How in body, speech or mind have I caused harm to the 400,000 species of five-sensed plant and animal bodies?
- How does our Sangh learn about environmental concerns and then act in the community on its concerns?
- How am I as a Jain helping to develop a social, economic, and political system which will nurture an environment which sustains and enriches life for all 8,400,000 forms of existence?

I expect that it would be an exercise in which many North American Jains would be excited to participate. Such a text could also provide guidelines for each Sangh as Jains continue to integrate ecology and compassionate living 'the Jain way.'





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## JAIN UNITY AND DIASPORA

Dilip V. Shah  
dilipvshah@gmail.com



Dilip Shah is the President of JAINA for 2007-2009.



We are all aware of the state of Jain unity. In India, you may find a majority of Jains not even thinking about unity. For them, they are quite happy to follow their birth traditions. Most of them are unaware of the fundamentals of other sects. Many are hostile to other traditions. Many are more respectful of various Hindu traditions than of 'other' Jain traditions.

There are many organizations in India that are trying to form a unity; Bharatiya Jain Sangathan, World Jain Confederation and JITO are a few. As far as I know, Delhi is one city that organizes a huge Joint Mahavir Jayanti Celebration for all the sects, but that is more of an exception and not the rule in India. Each tradition or panth has its spiritual leaders—Acharyas, Gurus and scholars who guard their traditions.

Outside of India, Jain Diaspora is in varying states of unity. Diaspora is the movement of people with a common ethnic background to a location that is not their homeland. In that context, a Jain Diaspora is the cultural development of Jains outside of India and the adaptations we make. It is the means for our culture/faith to maintain its fundamentals while adapting to the society and world we live in. I wish to present an overview of the status of Jains in North America first and then suggest how this Jain Diaspora can be the key in bringing our dream of unity closer to reality.

JAINA, the federation of Jain Associations in North America is an umbrella organization of 67 Jain centers throughout the United States and Canada. Inspired by visionaries like Gurudev Shri Chitrabhanuji and Acharya Shri Sushil Kumarji, it was formed in 1981 with just four Jain centers as members. Today it represents over 100,000 Jains

without any distinction based on sect, language or the region they come from. JAINA is the largest organization of Jains anywhere. Since 1981, about 50 Jain Temples have been inaugurated in North America. Many, though not all, Temples are 'Unified' Temples, offering both Swetamber and Digamber Murties, a Navkar Mantra Tablet and swadhyay hall for Sthankwasis or followers of Shrimad Rajchandra. Many centers celebrate both Paryushan and Das Laxana and Pratikamans of all three traditions plus English Pratikaman for youth is practiced. Scholars of all traditions are invited at most centers and most centers have Pathshalas that use a unified curriculum that is non-sectarian and is in English.

Jain Diaspora is an initiative by JAINA launched at the 2007 JAINA Convention. The very first meeting was held under the chairmanship of the late Dr. L. M. Singhvi and attended by Gurudev Shri Chitrabhanuji, Acharya Shri Chandanaji, Padma Shri Kumarpal Desai and Ambassador Dr. N. P. Jain along with delegates from 11 countries. The idea was to build a platform that would bring together leaders of Jain communities around the world to exchange ideas, create communication links or plan joint projects. It was agreed that we have a whole day seminar with delegates from as many countries as possible every two years during JAINA Conventions during odd years. Beginning in 2010, there are plans to meet in a host country in Europe, Africa or Asia in the even years.

Jain Diaspora can achieve the following:

- Develop more unified Jain education material for our youth and adults in English both in print and on the web.
- Set Pathshala curriculums and standardize tests for different levels, have Academic Bowls, essay competitions etc.
- Organize joint pilgrimages of Tirthdhams in India (Swetamber and Digamber Temples) by residents of many countries.
- Develop Jain Census in member countries and directories like the one published by Jain Center of Boston for the United States and Canada. Bharatiya Jain Sangathan in Pune has developed software for census taking and has offered it for free to any Jain organization.

In April 2009, I was one of the invited keynote speakers at the Mahavir Janma Kalyanak Celebration hosted jointly by fourteen different

Jain organizations in London. About 3,000 Jains, young and old, and from all different traditions came together for two days to what seemed like another JAINA Convention. Scholars from India were invited. The program consisted of lectures, pooja, a cultural program by youngsters, sumptuous vegan meals and exhibits – all under one roof. What I witnessed was a birth of a JAINA-like entity for the United Kingdom and they call this new organization JAINS UK!

On the third day there was a meeting of the leaders of all the United Kingdom Jain groups with invited guests from overseas. At that meeting I offered JAINA's hand of cooperation to their unity movement, specifically in printing additional JAINA calendars with information about their various groups. They instantly applauded the idea and promised to follow up. They also agreed to publicize JAINA Pilgrimage to their members so they may participate in a joint *yatra*. They are sending a small delegation to our 2009 convention as a further desire to work together and are thinking of holding a Jain Diaspora meeting in London in the year 2010.

The largest population of Jains outside of India is in North America and the second largest is in the United Kingdom. Many of the Jains of the United Kingdom have their roots in Kenya – a country with the third largest Jain population outside of India. Jain Diaspora can bring all these groups together and plan for additional joint projects. It is important to note that Jain Diaspora is not a separate organization. It is a JAINA forum for all the Diaspora members to share ideas and plan areas of cooperation. This December, there is a plan for a large medical camp in Palitana where volunteers from various countries will work together and participate in relief operations.

By setting examples of international cooperation, we can influence unity movements in India. After all, Indian Diaspora gave birth to two revolutions in India – India's independence movement in 1930 and the 1940's, and it was the Indian Diaspora of Techies who brought the information technology revolution to India. Jain Diaspora can bring unity of Jains everywhere. The fact is, Jains all over the world look at JAINA with admiration and as a model of Jain unity. Many of our first generation immigrants spend part of their year in

India and many parents in India visit their children in the United States or Canada for extended periods of time. National boundaries are less significant now and today people are more open to new ideas.

For Jain Diaspora to reach its goal of Jain unity, we have many helpful tools.

- The modern communication tools of email, websites, blogs, et cetera are natural favorites of Jains.
- Monthly newsletters like Ahimsa Times from Delhi or the JAINWORLD.com website are already used by thousands of Jains worldwide.
- JAINA Education Committee's eLibrary project launched two years ago, has scanned more than 1,000 Jain books (over 325,000 pages) in various languages and covering all traditions – including much rare literature. This was achieved at the cost of \$35,000 and further, \$25,000 in expenditure is planned over the next three years. Items will be made available for free world wide to students and scholars alike.
- A mammoth project of cataloging of Jain manuscripts in the British Museum by the Institute of Jainology.
- International Summer School for Jain Studies, in its fourth year, has already taken 72 students (undergraduate or post graduate), full-time professors and researchers from universities around the world to India to give them intensive classroom teaching and showcase the Jain community, its rich culture and living traditions. This year ISSJS also conducted a month long seminar in Thailand for 17 Buddhist scholars.
- We also have a hidden asset, our youth. For most of them, being Jain is sufficient. They do not identify with any sects. They are also united by a common language.

All of the above are examples of noble efforts by Jains Without Borders. No national borders, no linguistic borders, no sectarian borders—this is the making of Jain Diaspora.







*Ohm*

*Shri Mahavirai Namah*

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## ACHIEVING JAIN UNITY

Nirmal Dosi

ndosi@verizon.net



*Nirmal Dosi is the Chairperson of JAINA Scholars Program. He participated as a speaker on the subject of removing poverty at the UN World Religion Conference organized in 2000, and in Unity Seminar at JAINA Convention 2005 in San Jose, California. He has organized seminars at six JAINA conventions. He plays Indian classical music on a violin and composes poetries and bhajans.*

*He has organized seminars at six JAINA conventions. He plays Indian classical music on a violin and composes poetries and bhajans.*

A number of Jain monks and scholars provided guidance on the issue of Jain unity at a seminar conducted on behalf of the JAINA Scholars program. Nirmal Dosi, Amrendra Muniji, Bhattarakji Devendra Keertiji Swamiji, Manak Muniji, Bhattrakji Charukeertiji Swamiji, Ashwin Prajnaaji, Swami Shrut Pragyaji, Samaniji Mudit Pragyaji, Samaniji Rohit Pragyaji, Dr. Hukamchandra Bharrill, Shri Heera Ratanji, Dr. Narayan Kachhara, Dr. Shekhar Chandra Jain, and Dr. Yashvant Malaiya were among those attending.

These are some of their suggestions. We all are Jains and it is our duty to maintain the glory and dignity of the Jain religion. We should all believe in unity, integrity and co-existence as way of life. There were 40 million Jains during the time of Akbar. Since then, the number of Jains has continued to decline, unlike followers of other religions whose populations have continued to grow. Jain unity is of utmost importance. The programs at our centers should bring all Jains

together by overriding language (Hindi, Gujarati, and English) and sectarian (Swetamber, Digamber, Sthanakvasi, Terapanthi and others) differences. A careful study of the differences among the Jain sects suggests that they are actually very minor and the basic principles are the same. The differences should be respected. 'Live and Let Live' is a slogan of Lord Mahavir Swami and will enable us to unite. Jains should ignore the differences, honor and love each other, and provide helping hands socially, economically, and educationally. This will enrich, unite and strengthen us.

Mahavir Swami's principle of *Anekantvad* says for us not to insist too much on our own opinions but to try and understand the other points of view. Ego and stubbornness break the unity. If we want to preserve Jain *Dharma* for future generations, all small and large sects must unite. Today's generation does not give importance to what sects we belong. Let us make a model keeping in mind the newer generations. People can follow whatever they want to follow at home, but in public places, we must keep under one Jain umbrella. Our temples, Tirths, Sanskriti and educational development should be based on Jain Unity. The main objective of unity could be: a) to protect the existence of the Jain religion, b) to safeguard Jain temples and pilgrimage places, c) to preserve Jain scriptures, d) to promote Jain principles in the world, and e) to foster harmony and friendly relations between various sects and followers.

Overall, everyone agreed that we should be proud of our community and religion, and we should follow the principles of 'Unity in Diversity.'



## EASY WAYS TO BE GREEN

- ❖ Drink tap water, skip bottled
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- ❖ Line dry your laundry
- ❖ Turn off the lights when leaving a room
- ❖ Use cloth rags instead of paper towels
- ❖ Make rags from old towels and t-shirts
- ❖ Recycle – paper, cans, glass, plastic, cell phones
- ❖ Unplug unused electronics including phone chargers

## JAIN AWARENESS PRESENTED TO THE WEST

Pankaz Chandmal Hingarh  
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*Pankaz Chandmal Hingarh is a Jain history researcher and a member of JAINA's Virchand Gandhi India Committee. He has been active in global Jainism-related projects and was presented with International Jain Asmita Award.*

Following Acharya Vijayanandsuriji (Atmaramji Muni) request, Virchand Raghavji Gandhi (1864-1901), a young 29 year old barrister, participated in the first Parliament of World Religions in Chicago in 1893 as a Jain representative. Wearing traditional turbans, Virchand Gandhi and Swami Vivekanand commanded great attention at the Congress and were successful in awakening the western world to the spiritual heritage and rich history of India. Gandhi's speeches created great impression upon the American people, and at their request, he prolonged his stay for two years. He was re-invited to visit twice in 1897 and 1899. He delivered over 535 lectures in Chicago, Boston, New York, and Washington, as well as in England, France, Germany and other European countries.

Virchand Gandhi wrote many articles and books in Gujarati and English on topics of social and cultural reforms. He translated *The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ* from French to English in 1894. His legal successes include the abolition of poll tax on Jain pilgrims at Shatrunjay-Palitana Tirth and closing of a slaughterhouse near Sametshikhar Tirth. As a true humanitarian, he sent 40,000 Indian Rupees and a shipload of grains from the United States to India during the worst famine of 1896-97. As a reformer, he established the Gandhi Philosophical Society, the Society for the Education of Women in India (SEWI), the School of Oriental Philosophy, and the Jain Literature Society in London. As a national figure, he attended the Indian National Congress held in Pune as the Representative of the then Bombay Province in 1895, and the International Conference of Commerce in London as an All-Asia sole delegate in 1899.

Virchand Gandhi was in close contact with Mahatma Gandhi to whom he provided assistance in preparing legal briefs.

Virchand Gandhi and Swami Vivekanand passed away in 1901 and 1902 respectively. While Swami Vivekanand's work is well-known throughout the world, little is known about Virchand Gandhi. Pujya Shri Chitrabhanuji initiated the celebration of Virchand Gandhi's Birth Centenary on August 25, 1964 in Fort, Mumbai. A statue of Virchand Gandhi was erected at the Chowk in Mahua in 1993 and at the Jain Center of Metropolitan Chicago in 1995. The Ohio Historical Society presented a bronze plaque to the Jain Center of Cincinnati/Dayton in 1994, to mark 100 years since Virchand Gandhi's lecture in Cleveland on September 18, 1894.

JAINA established the Virchand Gandhi Scholarship Committee in 1997 to promote research studies in Jainism and Virchand Gandhi's unpublished literature at recognized universities/institutions. Following the joint efforts of JAINA and World Jain Confederation (WJC, India), a highly-awaited postal stamp in Virchand Gandhi's honor will be released by the Indian Department of Post on August 25, 2009. JAINA and WJC are working jointly to raise funds to convert Virchand Gandhi's ancestral home in Mahuva, Gujarat into a memorial which will house VRG's historical material, and will include a Museum of Jainism, a Lecture Hall, a Pathshala, and a Library.

Donations, which will be duly recognized, are being requested in three categories as follows: (1) Grand Donor - US \$5,000 (or equivalent) and above; (2) Patron Donor - US \$1,000 (or equivalent) and above; (3) Donor - US \$500 (or equivalent). Donations can be sent to Rita Sheth, JAINA Treasurer, 5308 E 80<sup>th</sup> Place, Tulsa, OK 74136, Tel: (918) 398-6024, [treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:treasurer@gmail.com) or Pravin C. Shah, VRG Committee Chair, 28 Dyckman, Garden City Park, NY 11040, Tel: (516) 424-1523, [pravincshah2k@yahoo.com](mailto:pravincshah2k@yahoo.com). For further information, visit [www.jaina.org/vrgcommittee/](http://www.jaina.org/vrgcommittee/)

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Wishes to  
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Jain Family**

**Jai Jinendra**

**Mangal Bhavna  
to Sakal Sangha**

सत्त्वेषु मैत्री गुणियु प्रमोदं,  
क्लिष्टेषु जीवेषु कृपापरत्वम् ।  
मध्यस्थभावं विपरीत वृत्तौ,  
सदा ममात्मा विदधातु देव ॥१॥

**Misal Miraj Nico  
Mibhali Milan Bhalala  
Meghvi Carlos Maheta Roig  
Hirav H. Gandhi**

## SPIRITUAL ECOLOGY: JAINISM

Nalin K. Shastree

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*Nalin K. Shastree is Professor of Botany, Magadh University, Bodhgaya, India. His interest in Jainology was inherited from his father, Late Professor Nemi Chandra Shastree, a noted Jain scholar. He has served in various capacities with several institutions and universities, as well as held various positions with social/religious organizations in India. Professor Shastree has been a recipient of many awards for his research and contributions to the field of Jainology.*

*The environmental crisis is an outward manifestation of a crisis of mind and spirit.*

~ Lynton K. Caldwell

Jainism aims at producing a better mind, less intensity of the passions, greater happiness and an increase in compassion, which aids in protecting the environment. The Jain *spiritual ecology* gives an insight into the nature and psychology of human beings through non-violence, reverence for life, restraint and co-operation of all, so that people do not indulge in sinful or disturbing acts that harm the natural world.

*Jayam chare jayam chitthe jayam bhase jayam saye,  
Jayam bhunjejj bhasejj evam pavam na vajjhaie.*

This means that a person should walk, stand, sit, sleep, eat and speak conscientiously. If he/she does so, he/she is not bound to *paap*.

Emotional consciousness is reflected in the concept of *Leshyas*. Purity in emotional consciousness changes the focus from I, me and myself to we and us, which is indeed the central point of the Jain Spiritual Ecology.

The foundations of Jain spiritual ecology are: 1) emphasis on inner as well as outer purity signifying a non-violent life, 2) all moral and ethical rules are equally applicable to all beings of the biological realm, 3) observing welfare of all living beings of the universe, and 4) true friendship to all is an outcome of approach towards non-violence (*Ahimsa*), which is as follows:

*'All the venerable ones (arhats) of the past, present and future discourse, counsel, proclaim, propound and prescribe in unison – do not injure, abuse, oppress, enslave, insult, torment, torture or kill any creature or living being.'*

Interdependence is: the Jain conviction of *Paraspargraho jivanam* teaches that all forms of life are bound together in mutuality and interdependence, irrespective of the degree of their sensory perceptions. The concept of a constant number of souls present in the cosmos, ranging from the smallest micro-organism to complex life forms such as human beings, with various destinies and species, is suggestive of interdependence in a closed ecological system.

Non-violence (*Ahimsa*) is: the Jain philosophy is virtually synonymous with the principle of *Ahimsa*.

Non-Attachment (*Aparigraha*) is: this non-possessiveness is the mental attitude of non-attachment to possessions, objects and attitudes. For ascetics it is a vow of non-possession, for householders it is vow of limited possession. This aspect deals with avoidance of over exploitation or abusive or wasteful consumption, without disrupting the normal life at one end, and at the other, without interfering with the rights of others. It suggests taking from the earth only what we need; Mother Earth will then be able to serve and support all living beings longer. It is related to the doctrine of renunciation, which is not measured by the quantum of possession; rather is determined by the attitude of dispossession towards one's possession. Non-attachment is a practice of self-restraint and voluntary control of wants, abstinence from over-indulgence and elimination of aggressive urges by way of respecting others' existence. This dimension inspires human beings to become spiritual agents for preserving the grace and dignity of Mother Earth and enhancing the productivity and vitality of earth as a natural phenomenon.

*Aparigraha* and austerities is: an emphasis has been laid down that wants should be reduced, desires curbed and consumption levels kept within reasonable limits. This automatically ensures a good environment.

Non-stealing (*Achaurya*) is: theft is the taking of anything which is not freely given. The doctrine is comprehensive, covering the avoidance of dishonesty in all walks of life. In addition, it also rejects any encroachment over the rights of others.

Celibacy (*Brahmacharya*) is: it literally means treading into the soul, but conventionally it is taken to mean abstinence from sexual activities. The doctrine prohibits sexual relations other than with one's spouse and restraint in things likely to stimulate sexual desires. This can be connected with the major environmental concern of the population explosion, which is an important contributor in the depletion of resources.

Protection of resources is: nonviolence protects earth, water, air, fire and vegetation, and paves the way for the protection of ecological balance and promotes environmental concerns. Hunting has been conceived as one of the seven serious offenses. Not consuming certain raw vegetables is a way to protect the natural propagation cycle of plants. A few examples of fundamental Jain practices which help in protecting natural resources are: preventing bathing and washing clothes along river banks, filtering water, eating those ripe fruits from which seeds have been taken out, not unnecessarily plucking even a leaf from trees, taking care while walking to protect

the smallest creatures, etc. The concept of the five *samitis* is a designed action to protect life forms. Another designed action is the prohibition of engaging in such trades that encourage violence. Using minimal quantities of water for daily life routines and not allowing reservoirs to dry out are examples of conserving water resources. Limiting and avoiding unnecessary travel is a step further to maximize the balance of nature.

In conclusion, the Jain model for environmental protection includes maintaining:

- A helping attitude and universal friendship
- Restraint and minimal use of natural resources and consumables
- Carefulness in eating, speaking, movements, and picking up and putting things down
- Daily penitential retreat and prayer for the welfare of all living beings and for universal peace
- Contentment, tolerance and a non-violent life-style
- Amity towards all co-habitants of the universe



## JAIN LIFESTYLE – ECOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

Swasthi Shri Bhattaraka Charukeerthi  
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There are infinite living particles existing in the world. Human beings are the wisest and cleverest among them. Man loves Mother Nature – but he is also the enemy who harms and destroys the environment.

Mahavir Swami propagated 'Live and Let Live' and showed a pathway to lead a life within that frame work. He gave a code of conduct to domestic families and ascetics. This code of conduct should be followed strictly to understand and attain the Holy Atman. When followed, this is no doubt the pathway to success!

Vastra parimana advises us to wear only enough clothes to cover the body and not possess unnecessary clothing. Dhana Vyaya parimana instructs us to avoid excessive financial spending. Jeeva Himsa parimana cautions us to minimize activities that are hurtful to other organisms. Jala

parimana tells us to use water judiciously. He advises us to live a simple life.

Globalization has brought privatization and liberalization. No limitations are in place. But Jain philosophy clearly advises restraint in all activities and ambitions. If we do not obey the rules laid down by our Tirthankars, human society will be in trouble. Human beings will suffer mentally, physically and spiritually.

The process of simple living provides a solution to all antisocial activities, violence, the economic recession and environmental pollution. We all should follow the principles of Lord Mahavir's teachings and adopt the Jain code of conduct in our lives. 'Live and Let Live' should be projected the world over. We should practice these universal values bypassing any caste, creed, religion and culture.

Bhagwan Mahavir's message is contemporary and applicable even after 2600 years. He reminds us to restrict harmful and unlawful activities against the environment, and to join together in creating a peaceful society. He also points out the dire consequences of an unrestrained lifestyle.

## SEVA PROJECT – FIRST AT A JAINA CONVENTION

Smita Doshi

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*"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."*

-- Mahatma Gandhi.

It is within this spirit and the spirit of *Jiv Daya* that a group of dedicated volunteers from the Jain Center of Southern California have set forth to make SEVA activities an important part of the JAINA convention for the first time ever.

The mission was simple. Harness the goodwill of the delegates attending the JAINA Convention to improve the quality of life for thousands of people in need. After months of planning and fund raising, plans have been formulated to engage enthusiastic teams of young children, teenagers, and adults in the form of an assembly line to carry out the following activities:

- Prepare thousands of hygiene kits for distribution to the homeless
- Make several hundred blankets (out of raw material) for use by the homeless during the winter months
- Fill several hundred new backpacks with school supplies and donate them to the

## CARE AND SHARE

Malti Maheta

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Inspired by the Jain philosophy of Paropkaraya Punyaya, our two young high school daughters - Mibhali and Meghvi – initiated a Vastra Dan community project in 1988 modeled after a Share and Care Organization of Greater New York. The concept was to collect used clothing and, with the help of their parents and community members, ship them to poor families in India. An effort to collect and ship clothes in one 40-foot container per year began in 1990, and peaked in 2001 when six such containers were shipped in one month to help the victims of the Bhuj earthquake disaster.

children who cannot otherwise afford some of the most basic supplies

- Create card quilt and care packages for young cancer patients

Additionally, the volunteers are collecting hundreds of pairs of socks for use by homeless during cold nights; prescription eyeglasses for use in developing countries; and cell phones for use by battered women to call for emergency assistance.



Finally, we sincerely hope that these activities will inspire the delegates to continue *Jiv Daya* in their own communities upon return from the convention. *Parasparopagraho Jivanam!*

Jain Center of Southern California is the collection site for this ongoing effort. The project is supported by many young Jains and several other communities. Monetary help from the local businesses – MS International, Jewel Corner, and others, and community members is crucial in meeting shipping and handling expenses. Letters of gratitude and blessing from the recipients sometime cite the fact that their sons and daughters got married in the clothes donated from here. Please donate your new and used clean clothes, and monetary funds for this successful and worthwhile Vastra Dan project. For more details, please contact Malti Maheta at (949) 551-4569 or Nayna Vora at (562) 431-8145.



**ALL ONE DAY CAN BE FREE****Robert Arnett**

Soul and Nature  
 One and Inseparable,  
 Microcosm and Macrocosm,  
 Discovering the inner mysteries  
 Affirms kinship with our mineral, plant, and animal brothers.  
 How could anyone disrespect Nature—  
 The outer extension of our very own selves?  
 The Tirthankars showed us by honoring the soul in everything  
 Jainism naturally becomes a Religion of Ecology.  
 They also knew  
 By respecting the inner essence of Nature,  
 We will discover our own indestructibility.  
 Some ascetics may not agree.  
 Some would argue that we should look from the inside out—  
 Not the outside in.  
 Which is the better way?  
 Both take us to the threshold  
 Of moksha, but not beyond.



Lord Bahubali renounced everything  
 Stood in rigorous meditation  
 Completely naked—  
 exposed to the elements  
 No food or sleep  
 Never faltered  
 Persevered so long  
 Ant hills grew around him  
 Creepers entwined his limbs  
 Still that was not enough!  
 Only after shedding his ego,  
 Did he attain enlightenment.

Moksha through Gomateshvara's way—  
 Too austere for me.  
 But by treading the Path of the Religion of Ecology,  
 All one day can be free.



**Robert Arnett**  
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[Robert Arnett, a nationally recognized author, speaker, and photographer has had an avid interest in India for over 35 years. His books, India Unveiled and Finders Keepers?, have won many distinguished national awards. Seven sets of his traveling India photo exhibits have been acquired by prestigious universities and museums. Visit \[www.AtmanPress.com\]\(http://www.AtmanPress.com\)](#)





## JAINA CONVENTION 2009 : KEY NOTE SPEAKERS



**Dr. Gary Francione** is Distinguished Professor of Law and Nicholas deB. Katzenbach Scholar of Law and Philosophy at Rutgers University in Newark, New Jersey. His primary area of research involves animal ethics and he is the author of numerous books. As a strict vegetarian based on the principle of Ahimsa, he rejects the use of all animal products. His animal rights website is at [www.AbolitionistApproach.com](http://www.AbolitionistApproach.com).

**Topic Synopsis:** Dr. Francione will discuss why Jain doctrines concerning Ahimsa and ecology militate in favor of strict vegetarianism and not wearing or using animal products as a general matter.



**Dr. Dipak C. Jain** is the Sandy and Morton Goldman Professor in Entrepreneurial Studies and a Professor of Marketing and Dean at Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management. His areas of research include marketing; product diffusion; and forecasting models. He has published numerous articles and books.

**Topic Synopsis:** "Jainism Principles: The Ladder of Leadership". Core Jain principles (*Ahimsa*, *Anekanta*, and *Aparigraha*) and the "three jewels" (*ratnatraya* - proper faith, proper knowledge, and proper conduct) can serve as a valuable framework to cultivate enlightened leadership to address a range of global issues: economic, environmental, political and others.



**Dr. Jagdish (Jag) N. Sheth** is the Charles H. Kellstadt Professor of Marketing in the Goizueta Business School at Emory University, Decatur, GA. Dr. Sheth is well known for his scholarly contributions in consumer behavior, relationship marketing, competitive strategy and geopolitical analysis. He is the author of many best seller books.

**Topic Synopsis:** Following his recent visit to India, Dr. Sheth will talk about India in the 21st Century.

આચાર્ય યજ્ઞાચાર્ય

## JAINA CONVENTION 2009 : ART GALLERY

### SHEELA BHANDARI

Sheela started painting at the age of 12. She attended *acherekar* famous classes in Mumbai. Her painting career in USA began in 1985. She has completed 50 paintings in oil medium – some of which were sold and others distributed to friends as a gift. Her other interests include music and writing. Sheela's book, originally published in Marathi, has been translated into Gujarati and is entitled *Soneri Lagani*.

### ALKA DALAL, MA., MS

Alka Dalal has been painting for over 20 years. She is a professional artist and also operates a business in Internet marketing. Her artwork has been exhibited in numerous art shows and she has sold paintings all over USA. She has created original artwork in all media - canvas, paper and other surfaces; and expanded her medium to include water color, acrylic, oil, mixed media, mono print and collage. Alka's forte is in developing novel ideas for art and challenging art techniques. Alka donates her artwork to support special causes. Some of her original artwork can now be purchased as prints which look identical to the original art.

### SULOCHANA TRIVEDI, MD

Dr. Sulochana Trivedi is a Pathologist in Paramount, CA for the past 35 years. She is interested in arts, music, and Gujarati literature and traveling. Within last five years she has made significant progress in pottery, ceramic painting, glass fusion and music. Sulochana makes pottery on a wheel by hand and does ceramic paintings on prepared plates and vases. These items are fired in a kiln, glazed, and fired one more time to create the final article. Glass fusion is created by cutting glass pieces to make a design. The glass pieces are slumped in a mold and fired to get the desired shape.