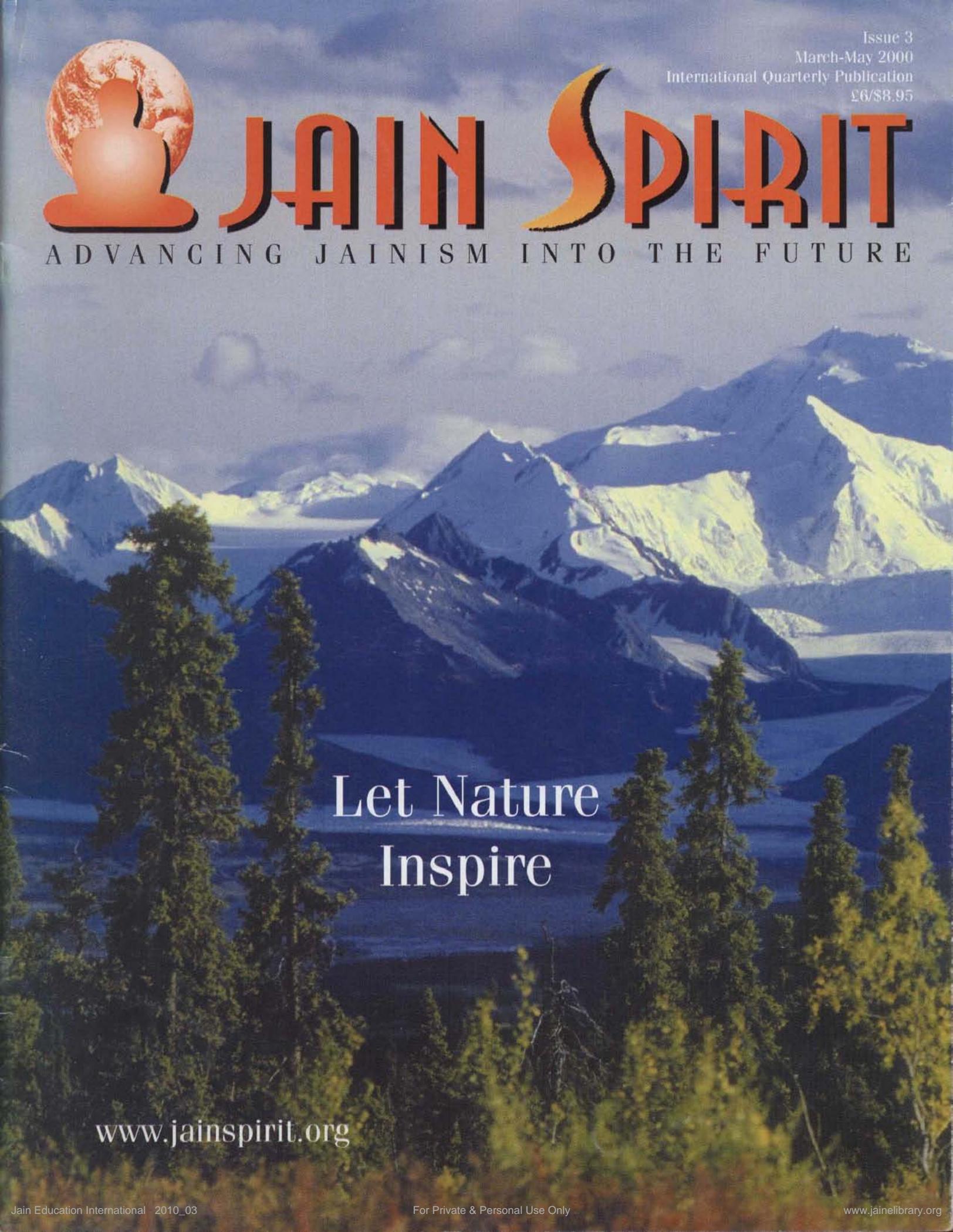




Issue 3
March-May 2000
International Quarterly Publication
£6/\$8.95

JAIN SPIRIT

ADVANCING JAINISM INTO THE FUTURE



Let Nature
Inspire

www.jainspirit.org

EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

We are happy to produce the third issue of our new international magazine. In gathering the information and articles, we have tried to collect a diverse range of topics and news from all over the world, and presented them in a format which is both simple and informative at the same time. For our art and graphics, we have tried to select the best photographs, paintings and pictures. Whilst doing our research, we have found that there is very little new material on practical implications of Jainism in existing books. We have therefore had to generate our own material, which we hope will prove a valuable resource in the future. We are also building up a network of writers, artists and photographers, encouraging them to write and paint modern Jainism in all its colours.

Our subscriber list is constantly expanding, and we are getting regular complimentary feedback from our readers all over the world. Due to space restrictions, we have only printed a few of these in our mailbox, but are grateful to all for their generosity. We have also done some promotional road shows to different parts of the United Kingdom and North America, obtaining valuable comments and ideas for future issues. So far, no-one has criticized the need for such a magazine.

We live in a world of information overload, and as printing costs have come down, there is a tremendous amount of literature. However, we are also starved of quality ancient wisdom which has stood the test of time. The Jain *Samaik* is a 48 minute meditation, a period which Jains should ideally set aside daily for their own spiritual development. I was recently surprised to hear from one of our readers Mrs. Kanta Shah of London, who said that she spent two *samaiks* reading Jain Spirit. For her, the exercise was a silent act of reflection and meditation.



CHANDU SHAH

Kaushik Khajuria, Rajvee and Ajay Punatar praying for the success of Jain Spirit at the launch in London on 13th November 1999.

We would like you to savour the articles in this issue, and very much hope that they inspire you to live the Jain spirit in your day to day life. Many of you have given gift subscriptions to your relatives and friends, who have really appreciated them as something unique. May we request more of you to do the same, so that we can spread the light of Jainism all over the world, helping Jains to get excited about Jainism. Please pay special attention to get the magazine to young people, as they are the torchbearers of our future.

Many people have helped us come this far. There is a whole team involved in the production, marketing and administration of this project, whose names are in the box attached. Our financial supporters and advertisers have been most generous. Many of our team members work voluntarily and enjoy this act of self-sacrifice. Please pray for our team and encourage us to work even harder and involve more and more people to spread the light of Jainism. We know that the Jain Spirit is here to stay, and are confident that in the years to come, it will act as an important catalyst for a whole new renaissance in Jainism. Together, we can do it.

Jai Jinendra,
Atul K. Shah
Executive Editor

We invite our readers to send excellent photos, letters, clippings and reports on events, and encourage others to subscribe. Financial support, to enable this magazine to reach every corner of the world, and every educational library is most welcome. By supporting Jain Spirit, you will be taking a pro-active step to inform everyone about this ancient and visionary culture. Please contact our Head Office for more information.

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A SPECIAL MESSAGE WAS DELIVERED BY DR. L.M. Singhvi at the Global Launch on 13th November 1999 at Brent Town Hall, London. Dr. L. M. Singhvi was the Indian High Commissioner to UK between 1991 and 1998. He is a world renowned expert on religion and inter-faith matters, and author of several books and articles on Jainism. He lives in New Delhi, India.

“It is a great privilege for me to join you this evening to celebrate the arrival of Jain Spirit. To celebrate the arrival of what could be the harbinger of a renaissance, a resurgence.

The Jain spirit requires reinforcement and self-renewal, of the kind we often find happening within ourselves when we visit a temple, and Jain Spirit is very much a temple. A temple is not brick and mortar; it is not stone and sculpture. A temple is an edifice of ideas and culture, and Jain Spirit, in that sense, could be likened to a temple, one which enshrines a tradition, and offers the opportunity for self-renewal. That is what the Jain Spirit can do for one and all. That is what Jain Spirit can bring through our doors, to our hearts and our souls.

When I received the first copy of Jain Spirit I felt my spirit uplifted, for this new enterprise is creating and sharing a message. Our life is ennobled in the sharing of that message. We need this initiative to celebrate that ennobling of our lives, through the vehicle of thought, culture and ethics, and through the vehicle of identity and self-discovery. Each issue of Jain Spirit I'm sure will be a voyage of self-discovery

Here is an enterprise with which I am very proud to be

JAIN SPIRIT GLOBAL LAUNCH

associated, for it will renew us and take us places, and it is this self-renewal which is spiritual. This spirituality is dynamism, self-renewal and self-discovery. This spirituality takes an enormous amount of maturity, both in the outside world, and in the inside world. To travel from the outside to the inner space, and to travel from the inner space to the outer space is what this Jain Spirit, as a vehicle of thought, is all about.

I am very happy that we have here some vehicle to provide us what I might call, in a very pedestrian way, ‘food for thought’. It is not as if eaten once, it is enough. It is not something that we must leave to the parasites, but something which we must internalise. It is something with which we must come face to face in this new awakening of Jainism. Jain Spirit is a vehicle for that awakening

In 1893 at the parliament of world religions in Chicago, Mr. Virchand Gandhi brought the Jain message to the representatives of all the world's religions. Swami Vivekananda brought an electrifying impact on the audience and said that ‘I represent a civilisation of tolerance. I am proud to belong to a civilisation which provides shelter to people in despair. I am proud to belong to a civilisation where humanity has been enthroned in the hearts of one and all. And when he spoke of tolerance, he spoke in a sense of Anekant, in a reverence for all life. When he spoke of the traditions of India, he spoke of Ahimsa. He spoke of humanity's pilgrimage on this earth.

This is the tradition of Jainism: one of tolerance and non-violence. I am sure Jain Spirit will share this tradition, not only with those who are born as Jains, but with all humanity, irrespective of faith, to build a community of affirmative, assertive non-violence. Jain Spirit will build a community of peace, of ethical principles, and it is through this that it will find a tremendous fulfilment. Jain Spirit stands at the threshold of a new century.

May God give Jain Spirit many years to serve the cause of non-violence and spread peace to all of humanity. Thank you very much for inviting me to come here to see so many friends and to have the pleasure of receiving the collective blessings of the community.”

ALL PICS: CHANDU SHAH



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**BRENT TOWN HALL, LONDON
13 NOVEMBER 1999**

1. Tina Shah performing a welcome dance.
2. Dr. Singhvi with Jain Spirit Directors (from left to right) Ila Shah, Surendra .Sethi, Atul Shah, Dr. Singhvi, Sulekh Jain, Satish Kumar, Pankaj Shah and Tansukh Salgia (missing Yogendra Jain and Surinder Jain).
3. Delicious vegetarian food served to guests
4. Founder Patron Mr. Keshavji Rupshi Shah lighting a candle.
5. Founder Patron Deepak Haria explaining why he is excited about supporting Jain Spirit.
6. Mr. Nilesh and Mrs. Varsha Dodhia from Brussels and Pierre Amiel from France lighting candles.
7. Jain Leaders singing along in prayer for the success of Jain Spirit.
8. A welcome rangoli by the Haria family.



Mr. Manibhai Mehta of Los Angeles, Mr. Pravin Shah from Raleigh and other dignitaries planting a tree of peace at the parliament.

JAINS PROMINENT IN PARLIAMENT OF WORLD RELIGIONS

THE THIRD COUNCIL OF THE Parliament of World Religions took place in Cape Town, South Africa between 1st December & 8th December 1999. Representatives from all the major (and minor!) world religions met, in the words of the council organisers, “to experience astonishing spiritual and cultural variety, to exchange insights, to share wisdom, and to celebrate their unique religious identities”.

The first council for the Parliament, held in 1893, was an historical occasion, as this was the first time Jainism had really been introduced to the outside world. Virchand Raghavji Gandhi gave an inspiring address explaining the principles of Ahimsa which was received with great enthusiasm by those delegates attending. This tradition of placing Jainism on the world map at the

parliament has continued, both at the 1993 revival of the council, and at the recent 1999 meeting.

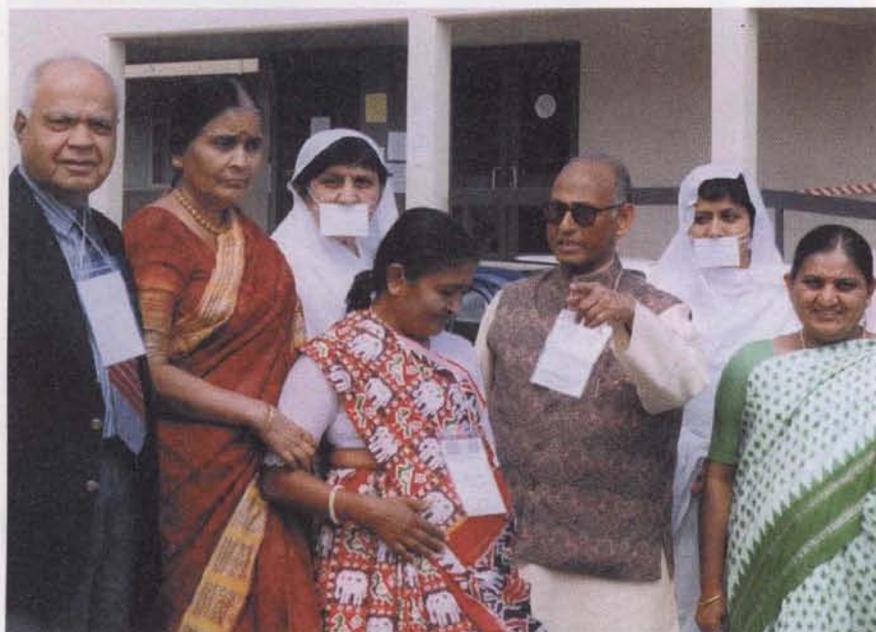
Organisers estimated that the final attendance at the council was somewhere in the region of 7,500 delegates, including over 350 journalists from all over the world. As well as discussing opportunities for achieving harmony between the world’s religions, delegates discussed some of the most pressing issues facing humanity at the present time, including the AIDS epidemic, the impending environmental crisis and issues of world aid and taxation.

Amongst the representatives present was a delegation of 30 Jains co-ordinated by the Institute of Jainology. Some of the world’s most prominent Jain leaders were present as speakers, including Acharya Chandaniji, Dr. L.M.

Singhvi, Dr. N.P. Jain, Satish Kumar and Sadhvishti Shilapiji. Shri Chitrabhanu was unable to attend, but had a lecture read on his behalf by Dr. N.P. Jain.

Over three thousand delegates attended the opening ceremony on 1st December, held in the Good Hope Centre. Acharya Chandanaji was one of many religious leaders who gave a blessing to this event. The first day of the council also saw the lighting of the International Peace Flame in Cape Town’s infamous District 6, the site of appalling violence against black South Africans in the 1960s.

Many diverse and exciting issues relating to Jainism both directly and indirectly were raised at the event. December 2nd saw Dr. Singhvi give one of his several addresses, “The Future of Faith Traditions and the State of the Future”. Speaking about the decline of



Acharya Chandanaji, Dr. Singhvi, Sadhvi Shilapi, Mr. Nemu Chandaria and other dignitaries.

faith traditions, Dr. Singhvi commented that “Humankind may have become less religious in the traditional sense, but we cannot allow ourselves to become less ethical or less spiritual”.

The same day saw Dr. N.P. Jain give an address on global commitment to the culture of non-violence. Dr. Jain spoke about the ‘Supreme Religion’ of Ahimsa, and encouraged its practise as an effective weapon in the protection of the environment.

Sunday 5th December saw Judy Sole, founder and leader of the South Africa Green Party, give an inspiring address on non-violence, and the need to re-address our attitudes to the animal kingdom as well as fellow humans. Her speech, emotively entitled “Auschwitz for Animals”, talked of the suffering of animals who are the victims of factory and battery farming. She ended her presentation with a call to all the world’s religions to firmly advocate the proper treatment of the environment. “A climate of non-violence to animals”, she explained, “will automatically extend to non-violence towards human beings”.

Delegates were also addressed by Satish Kumar, who participated in the

assembly of 300 selected religious leaders where he contributed ideas on the relevance of Jainism in solving the environmental problems of the world. Satish was also on the stage together with the Dalai Lama, Vinod Kapashi, Bava Jain and Natubhai Shah (as part of a gathering of 40 religious leaders from around the world) for a blessing of the Parliament.

Later the same day, Nelson Mandela addressed the parliament on the subject of religions, saying of the coming century, “religion will have a crucial role to play in guiding humanity to meet the tremendous challenges we face”. Mandela also received awards from the Temple of Understanding and the World Movement for Non-Violence, which he dedicated to “the millions of unsung men and women who courageously refuse to bow to humanity’s baser instincts”.

The closing plenary on December 8th was given by the Dalai Lama, known world-wide for his non-violent philosophies. His short address took the form of a call to positive action to combat religion-related conflicts, poverty corruption and other worldly

“Changes only take place through action – not through prayer, not through inter-faith relations”

THE DALAI LAMA

“Non-violence is a culture to be used as an effective weapon in the challenging task of not only protecting the environment, but upgrading it”

DR. N.P. JAIN

“[I congratulate] the millions of unsung men and women who courageously refuse to bow to humanity’s baser instincts”

NELSON MANDELA

“... there is a ray of hope in the resurgence of spirituality and global ethics, which joins us all through our common humanity...”

DR. L.M. SINGHVI

“A climate of non-violence to animals will automatically extend to non-violence towards human beings”

JUDY SOLE,

SOUTH AFRICA GREEN PARTY

ills; “Changes only take place through action – not through prayer, not through inter-faith actions”. He also commended the parliament, however, complimenting the “genuine respect for each other’s traditions seen in this gathering”. His sentiments were echoed by South Africa’s Deputy President Jacob Zuma, who challenged members of the parliament to raise their ideals from the level of “private morality” to “values of common good”.

VINOD KAPASHI

CALL FOR GLOBAL UNITY

MR. C.N. SANGHAVI, THE FOUNDER OF THE Jain Social Groups' International Federation, recently delivered a radical call for unity and active co-operation at the 7th Biennial Conference of the federation, held in Jaipur. Sanghavi, speaking at the inaugural session of the conference on 30th December 1999, spoke of the fragmentation of the international Jain community, referring to the increasing tendency as 'suicide for Jains'. The conference reacted positively to this call, and resolved to become a catalyst for the organisation of a global organisation of Jains, under the leadership of Dr. L.M.Singhvi. Below are excerpts from Sanghavi's speech.

"We are now on the threshold of the new Millennium. What will Jainism look like as we wade through the 21st Century? I have heard Boys and Girls born and brought up in U.S.A., when asked about Mahavir raise a counter question "Who is Mahavir?" Are we going to land in this situation in India also by the end of 21st Century?

What is the position of Jainism today? We are about 10 million of Deravasis, Sthanakvasis, Digambaras or Terapanthi in the world. But there are very few Jains. We are fragmented beyond recognition. It is said that there are 4 sects of Jains. Broadly speaking it may be so but otherwise there are hundreds of sub-sects - Dashashrimali, Oswal, Khartarguchh, Gondal Sampraday and what not. Each sect has their own Sadhus and own Sadhvis, own beliefs, own rituals and own projects. This is further spreading like an epidemic. These parochial and divisive tendencies are never ending. Parochial loyalties, fundamentalism and fanaticism will be suicidal for us Jains if we remain silent spectators to these tendencies. It is said that the inaction of good people is worse than the action of bad people.

The forces of divisiveness are at work. If there is nothing to divide, our crooked mind will invent something, which can possibly feed our divisiveness.

I have an action plan for the future. We should set up a global federation of Jains, under the guidance and able leadership of Dr. L. M. Singhvi.

Firstly the future of Jainism, like the future of any country depends upon young people. Young generation is not dogmatic and is ready to adapt to new ideas. If proper motivation and guidelines are given to them they will follow the same. Secondly, unlike other religions, Jainism gives equal status to women. They have to be involved at all levels.

It is aptly said that for Indian women, the sky is not the limit. There is no doubt that the information revolution will totally transform the environment for women if opportunity is given to them.

One of the main objects of the organisation should be to promote fellowship and fraternity among Jains, to strive for their progress and prosperity, to foster unity of all Jains and generally to propagate the fundamental principles of Jainism.

In doing so, we have to take care that we do not enter into sectarian controversies. We have a great role to play not only in spreading the message of Lord Mahavir but also in

propagating social, cultural and religious values. In this respect we have to be slow but steady, cautious but enlightened, liberal and progressive but at the same time idealistic and positive.

We Jains do not believe in any superstitions and our attempt should be to free the society from superstitious beliefs. We should be averse to purposeless rituals, particularly when it is accompanied by extravagance, showmanship and exhibitionism or when it is performed without understanding, because this does not fit in with our philosophy of cultivating a broad mind, broad vision and broad outlook.

I have therefore a very long-term plan. Confucius wrote that "if you plan for a year, plant a seed. If for 10 years, plant a tree. If for 100 years, educate the people. It is not only literacy that I am talking about, but it is knowledge and wisdom that is necessary. It is said

'Where is the Life we have lost in living?

Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?

Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?"

"We should be averse to purposeless rituals, particularly when it is accompanied by extravagance, showmanship and exhibitionism"



Jain pioneers Mrs. Neeta and Mr. Amu Vaghji Shah in Perth, Western Australia

AUSTRALIA: HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF

A FASCINATING EPISODE IN the history of the Jain community happened in East Africa. At the turn of this century Jains from Gujarat emigrated first to Kenya, and then later on to Uganda and Tanzania. To this day we will find Jain schools, Jain hospitals and Jain community centres in major cities throughout East Africa. It was the pioneering efforts of the early Jains, their tremendous spirit and co-operation, which enabled such a tremendous success of the community both materially and spiritually. It is often said that we rarely learn from the lessons of history or that, as time moves on, we forget the virtues of our forefathers. We are therefore excited to report on an interesting development in our history. The efforts of the pioneers in East Africa have not only been sustained, but that history has been transported to a new continent, this time to Australia.

Ever since Asians were kicked out of Uganda in 1972, there has been concern in East Africa that the future for Asians living in these countries is risky. As a result, there has been a steady flow of migration away from East Africa. Some of the early pioneers of this migration were Mr. Kanti Shah, Mr. Ramesh Shah and Aniket Shah, who tried to attract people to go to Australia. Among the people who decided to migrate to Australia were Mr Amu and Mrs. Neeta Vaghji Nangpar Shah, who went to Perth in 1994. Mr Vaghji Nangpar Shah is a great pioneer of Jain heritage. He single-handedly established the Aradhna Dham near Jamanagar, Gujarat. Amu set up in business in Perth and at the same time began to help other Kenyans and Jains who were emigrating to Perth. He would help them with setting up in business, finding jobs, homes and schools for the children

there. Very soon a community was created out of scratch. Perth is a beautiful coastal city with warm weather throughout the year, plenty of beaches and greenery – a paradise in many ways.

In 1994 some 10 families had settled in Perth, and by 1995 this number had gone up to 30 families. Dr. Paresh Mehta was instrumental in setting up regular satsangs at a community centre, and at the end of each meeting, the Jain women provide a delicious vegetarian dinner for the whole community. There were initial difficulties, but these were tackled by the mutual support and community spirit. In fact, many Jains living in Perth today say that their transition was very smooth, and they do not feel that it has been a struggle. The children have settled very well in the schools. Mr. Amu Shah predicts that another 15 families will migrate there this year and Perth is destined to become an important Jain city. In addition, there are 20 overseas Jain students in Perth and more coming each year, who are also in close touch with the local community.

The Jains from East Africa were able to migrate to a new continent and settle down very comfortably without losing much of their community spirit. Instead, they enhanced this spirit once in Australia. History repeated itself as both Amu and Neeta were the second generation East Africans who were born and raised in East Africa. They learnt from the values of their parents and reinvigorated these values in a new environment. This suggests there is great hope for the future of Jainism – its ancient history can be transported in the future through our efforts. It is good to see Jains rise to the challenge.

Amu Shah can be contacted via email on amu@wantree.com.au



Janaki Mehta at the London Rally. The event was attended by vegetarians of all ages.



PH: ATUL SHAH

Nemish Mehta and Nitin Mehta speak at the London Rally

JAINS CAMPAIGN FOR A CARING MILLENNIUM

TO MARK THE BEGINNING OF THE NEW millennium, two mass rallies have taken place, both of which attempted to highlight the world's growing environmental crisis and promote awareness of the vegetarian lifestyle and the current plight of farm animals.

On December 31st 1999, animal rights campaigners and vegetarians met in Hyde Park, London at a rally organised by the Young Indian Vegetarians. Amongst those present were writer Carla Lane, psychic and spiritualist Uri Geller and Darren Johnson, Green Party mayoral candidate for London. Representing the UK Jain community were Nilesh Doshi, Prakash Patalia, Nemish Mehta and Navin Sanghrajka of Veerayatan UK. Also present were Sharad Bakhai of Jain Samaj Europe, Raju Shah of Young Jains of America and Gulab Shah of the Oshwal Association.

Mahavir awards were presented to various organisations in recognition of their services towards the cause of non-violence. Amongst those awarded were Compassion in World Farming, PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals), the Green Party and VIVA. All those present then

recited the Worldwide Millennium Vegetarian Pledge (see below). A similar prayer was also propagated by Narendra Sheth of the Jiv Daya resource centre in San Diego, California.

The following day, January 1st 2000, saw a large *Abimsa Mahakumbh* held outside the Red Fort in New Delhi, India. Attended by over 10,000 people, the main aim of the rally was to petition the Indian government to ban exports of meat from India. The event was jointly organised by Ramesh Chandra Jain, managing editor of the Times of India, and the respected Jain muni Tarun Sagar.

"It is ironic that the government runs animal welfare boards, and yet provides subsidies for setting up slaughterhouses" commented Sagar. "The two actions are completely contradictory". The muni is not without his critics, however, mainly in the Indian press. In response to the criticism that the aims of the event were idealistic and unachievable, Sagar commented: "if Mahatma Gandhi could single-handedly organise the people of this land for the freedom struggle, the success of a far easier task should not be in doubt. What is needed is determination".

LORD MAHAVIR'S BIRTHDAY TO BE CELEBRATED IN THE MILLENNIUM DOME

NMEC



The Faith Zone of the Millennium Dome

SUNDAY 16th APRIL 2000 WILL SEE A SPECIAL performance of a play depicting the life story of Bhagwan Mahavira in the Millennium Dome in Greenwich, London. The play, timed to coincide with celebrations of Mahavir Jayanti, will highlight the central tenets of Jain philosophy, whilst vividly narrating the life story of Lord Mahavir. The 20-minute performance which will occur four times during the day will be exciting and colourful, and will incorporate elements of dance, drama and music.

The newly opened Millennium Dome has been designed as a celebration of the United Kingdom, its society and its future. One aspect of this enterprise is the 'Faith Zone', in which nine major world religions, including Jainism, have been asked to contribute a series of photographs and captions which are displayed on one of nine internally lit columns. It is hoped that approximately 12 million visitors will see the Jain display during the year 2000.

Any Jains planning to visit the Millennium Dome are encouraged to do so on the 16th. Performances of the play will take place in the McDonald's Our Town Story Theatre, and there will be no separate entrance fee for the performance. Tickets can be purchased by calling the Millennium Dome ticket information line on 0870 6062000, or through any national lottery retailer. Some local rail and coach operators are also offering special discounted packages. Entrance is free to under-5s, and tickets cost £16.50 for a child (5-15) and £20 for an adult. There are also special discounts available for groups and senior citizens; please contact the Dome for more information. Further information can be found at www.dome2000.co.uk.



A Dance-drama depicting the life of Lord Mahavir

Large Celebrations Planned in India for Mahavir's 2,600 Birth Anniversary

Preparations are currently underway for large celebrations of the 2,600th anniversary of the birth of Bhagwan Mahavir in 2001. Several Indian Jain associations have collaborated in proposing a wide variety of different events to mark the anniversary to the Indian government, who are providing money and resources to aid this celebration. Mr. Sunderlal Patwa, a Jain cabinet minister, is also keen to involve Jain leaders from all over the world. At a recent meeting of the celebration committee in New Delhi it was decided that 2001 should be declared 'Ahimsa Year', and that national awards should be instituted to recognise the efforts of leading proponents of Lord Mahavir's teaching.

Amongst other ideas mooted for the celebration year are the issue of commemorative stamps and coins, the cessation of meat exports and the hosting of an inter-religious conference in India. Also planned are mobile exhibitions on Ahimsa and vegetarianism, special pilgrimage trains, a flurry of books and publications, and perhaps most ambitious, the founding of a University which carries Mahavir's name. Many of the individuals involved in planning the celebrations are keen to emphasise the environmental aspects of Mahavir's teaching. Education projects in schools and prisons are planned to help spread vegetarianism and an ethos of environmental conservation.

SHOULD JAINS PREACH THEIR religion? This is a question which has been recently brought into the foreground of debate due to the activities of certain American Southern Baptist Christian organisations. Having already attracted great international controversy for their distribution of the anti-Hindu pamphlet 'Diwali; Festival of Light, Circle of Darkness', for which they were eventually forced to issue a public apology (but, it is interesting to note, not a retraction), Southern Baptists are now beginning a similar campaign against Jainism.

Students from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky recently travelled to India to conduct research into Jainism for the purpose of converting Jains to Christianity. Converting adherents of other religions to Christianity, or 'evangelism', is considered by the vast majority of Christians to be a central tenet of their faith- it is allied closely to an idea that Christianity is the only true religion, and non-adherents are punished by God. The seminary's magazine, *The Tie*, discusses the trip in an article that has provoked a large amount of comment from the Jain community.

The article is mainly concerned with two topics: criticism of Jainism, and tactics for converting Jains to Christianity. Missy Woodward, Student Co-ordinator of the trip, speaks about the 'hopelessness' of Jainism, while Chris Smith, another student present on the trip, curiously criticises Ahimsa for 'affecting the food Jains eat and the way they live'. Presumably referring to Anekantvada, George Martin, the leader of the trip, talks about Jains' willingness to accept new people, and advocates using this openness as an aid to conversion. Woodward starkly summarises the goals and attitude of the missionaries, saying "It's really different when you're talking to somebody and you know that this person will spend eternity in hell if somebody does not



The controversial Diwali pamphlet

SOUTHERN BAPTISTS TARGET JAINISM

come and work with these people".

Many Jains are more concerned about the misrepresentation of the religion than the activities of missionaries. Amar Salgia, former Jain youth leader, remarks that "while it seems fairly certain they won't manage to 'convert' anyone within the Shravak Jain Sangha, Jains should become more aware of how their way of life is being misrepresented". 'Nick', writing to the Jain Friends notice board (jain-friends@onelist.com, visit see WWW for details) comments that "Jainism is too non-violent, too open minded, and too

intelligent [to be affected]. Baptist philosophy is completely intolerant, very violent, and poorly thought out. Why would Indians leave a well respected religion in India for one that is not respected?"

This article is the latest event in a long line of Christian activities which are generating increasing concern in India. The proselytising activities of Christian missionaries, particularly amongst Hindus in communities in relatively undeveloped areas of India such as Orissa and Madhya Pradesh have been the subject of a great deal of discussion,

as it is the poorest and least developed areas which generally attract the attentions of Christian proselytisers. The sinister term 'ripe for the harvest' is often used to describe these communities in Christian literature.

The success of these activities is limited, however. Due to the exclusive nature of the Christian faith as preached by fundamentalist missionaries, many Hindus see these activities as attacks on their culture and react accordingly. Writing in *The Organiser*, M.V. Kamath comments that "Attempts at conversion should be considered a mortal assault on local cultures and should be totally banned". A level of violence is not unknown in the local reactions to missionaries; the world media has extensively (and indeed almost exclusively) reported the burning to death of missionary Graham Stewart Staines along with his two sons, and the recent murder of Father Arun Doss.

The issue of preaching has historically been quite problematic for Jains, due to the philosophy of Anekantwada. However, preaching should not be confused with proselytising, or converting. In the face of individuals and organisations indirectly concerned with the destruction of Jainism, many believe that spreading awareness of the religion should become a priority of the community. Indeed, much work in this direction is already underway. A report in the *Indian Express* early last year suggested that vegetarian and alcoholism projects run by Svetambar Jains in the Vadodara and Panchmahals districts of Gujarat are attracting Jain 'converts': over 200,000 in the last six years. Apparently impressed by the non-violent message of Jainism, many tribal Indians in these areas are embracing the religion to the extent that three young Jains from a particular village were recently ordained into the priesthood, and there are now more than 60 temples in the area.



The Pope with Acharya Mahapragya

PAPAL VISIT TO INDIA ENDS IN CONTROVERSY

THE POPE'S RECENT VISIT TO INDIA HAS ENDED IN ANOTHER flurry of controversy concerning the attitude of Christians towards Indian religious practices (see *Southern Baptists Target Jainism*). The Pope attended an *Assembly of the Heads of Religions*, and officially closed the three-year *Asian Synod of Bishops* over the course of the three-day visit, which took place from 5th-8th November 1999.

The first full day of the Catholic leader's visit saw him conduct a 30-minute meeting with President Narayanan, which was described as 'very cordial and warm'. The Pope also noted that there was 'more religious freedom' in India than in many other countries. Sunday November 7th saw the pontiff attend the *Assembly of the Heads of Religions* at the *Vigyan Bhawan* in New Delhi alongside several prominent religious leaders, including His Holiness Acharya Mahapragya. His Holiness spoke on the importance of tolerance, co-operation and dialogue between faiths, a sentiment seemingly echoed by the Pope, who had expressed appreciation at the 'religious freedom and tolerance' found in India.

It was the final day of the visit which attracted most controversy, however. The Pope released the 'Post-Synoptic Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Asia*', a document highlighting the plans for the new millennium for the Catholic Christian church in Asia, prepared throughout the three-year *Synod of Asian Bishops*. Containing such inflammatory statements as "Jesus Christ is the fulfilment of the yearnings expressed in the mythologies and folklore of the Asian peoples", many Hindu and Buddhist groups responded with outrage and disgust at the openly 'conversionist' tone of the document. At a meeting between Buddhists and Hindus held at Lumbini, Nepal soon after the papal visit, almost all of the speakers united in their attack of what was described as "a war against Hindus and Buddhists" and "a spiritual crime".

NEWS IN BRIEF

AHMEDABAD: JAIN AND BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY CONFERENCE.

Ahmedabad was the venue for a national conference entitled 'The Contribution of Jain and Buddhist Philosophy in Culture' which took place from 4th-5th August 1999. Organised jointly by Sanskrit Sahitya Akademi and International Jain Vidya Adhayan Kendra. In attendance were Shri Govindbhai Rawal, Dr. Gautum Patel and Shri Ramlal Parekh.

NEW YORK: PREMIERE OF NON-VIOLENCE DOCUMENTARY

A feature-length documentary entitled 'A Force More Powerful' was premiered in New York on 18th November 1999. Produced, directed and written by Peabody award winner Steven York, the film deals with the emergence of non-violence as a socio-political force in the 20th century. The documentary is part of a four-year project on non-violence, which will also include a four-hour television series to be screened in America later this year.

MADHYA PRADESH: NEW DHARMA DONKEY SANCTUARY

Mrs. Maneka Gandhi, a cabinet minister in the government of India, opened a new donkey sanctuary on 15 acres of land in Madhya Pradesh, India. The project, managed by her charity 'People for Animals', is funded by Jains living in North America, led by Bonny and Rati Shah. The sanctuary will provide full care and facilities for the donkeys, including a play area.

TORONTO: JAIN BUSINESSMAN WINS ORDER OF ONTARIO

Mr. Keshav Chandaria was recently awarded Ontario's highest civilian honour, the Order of Ontario, in recognition of his humanitarian work over the course of more than two decades. His recent work has included

founding a hospital in the Dominican Republic, sending ambulances and aid equipment to Honduras and upgrading a house for the physically disabled in Pune, all as part of his active role in both the Toronto and international facets of the Rotary Club.

ROME: JAINS ATTEND VATICAN ASSEMBLY

October 1999 saw five Jain delegates from the international Jain community attend an interreligious assembly at the Vatican, Rome, Italy. Amongst the 200 delegates from many different faith traditions were Shaileen and Harshna Shah of Young Jains UK, Nemu and Meena Chandaria from the Institute of Jainology (UK), and Dr. Virendra K. Jain from Jain Milan (India). The delegates attended several events during the assembly, including the concluding ceremony alongside the Dalai Lama and Pope John Paul II. The final declaration from the assembly spoke about encouraging spirituality regardless of personal faith, and concentrating on and encouraging family and community life, education and inter-faith dialogue.

NORTH AMERICA: INDIAN EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION OFFERS SCHOLARSHIPS

The Supporting Excellence in Education Foundation (SEED Foundation) is offering several scholarships totalling US\$12,000 to Indian-American high school students. The scholarships are variously awarded on the basis of need or exceptionally high achievement. More information can be found at www.seedfoundation.org.

LONDON: AHIMSA INITIATIVE LAUNCHED

A new initiative to spread 'Ahimsa for Quality of Life' was launched at the

House of Lords, London on 1st November 1999. AQL will initially be involved with several projects, including three aid projects in India; rural development in Eastern Bihar, rehabilitation of the physically disabled in partnership with the Jaipur Artificial Limb Centre in Rajasthan, and assistance to the VD Indian Society for the Mentally Retarded in Mumbai.

HOUSTON: MEDITATION SHIBIR HELD

A Preksha Dhyana meditation workshop was held over the course of three days from October 7-10 1999 at the Arya Samaj Temple in Houston, Texas. The event was organised jointly by the Preksha Meditation Ashram and the Arya Samaj of Houston. Covering such aspects of Preksha Dhayna as cleansing of mind and body and the need of meditation for physical health, the Shibir was considered highly successful by all who attended.

THIKA: YOUNG JAINS CARRY OUT SCHOOL IMPROVEMENTS

Young Jains in Nairobi, Kenya, have continued raising funds and providing improvements for Gatunyu Primary School, Thika. Over the past two years Young Jains Nairobi have provided scholarships for 21 students, a library, and a new block with electricity for KCPE students. It is hoped that this work will continue in the future. Funds are currently being raised to re-roof several of the classrooms, and provide electricity for two more class blocks.

GLOBAL AHIMSA DAY OBSERVED

JAINA and United Religious Initiatives combined to promote celebration of Global Ahimsa Day between 31st December 1999 and 2nd January 2000. Meditation, Bhavana, fasting and a ringing of peace bells occurred world-wide as part of the initiative, endorsed by, amongst others, Bill Clinton.

A workshop from a previous Young Jains International Convention.



YOUNG JAIN PROFESSIONALS CONVENTION ARIZONA, APRIL 21ST – APRIL 24TH 2000

The Mission Palms Resort in Tempe, Arizona, will be the venue for this year's YJP conference. The event will centre around interactive discussions and workshops focussing on the application of Jain principles in daily life, and the difficulties of retaining these principles in a professional and commercial workplace. There will also be dinner-dances and opportunities to make contact with other like-minded professionals. The early registration deadline is 5th February, but late registrations will be accepted until 15th March. There will be no on-site registration available. Further information is available from Saurubh Dalal (301 577-5215, e-mail sdalal@erols.com) or Shilpa Shah (404 321-4637, e-mail shilpashah@attglobal.net). Information about the resort can be found at www.missionpalms.com.

YOUNG JAINS OF AMERICA CONVENTION. LOS ANGELES, 30TH JUNE – 3RD JULY 2000

The 2000 conference of the Young Jains of America will be held in Los Angeles. This is the fourth biennial conference, entitled 'Four Days' Journey into the Self'. The emphasis is being placed very much on making the conference 'fun for everyone, meaning all ages and both genders'. Registration for the conference opens on 1st February (any applications received before that date will be returned), and places are expected to be in very high demand, especially considering the success of the previous conventions.

Prices for the conference are \$200 if registration takes place before 7th March 2000, \$225 before 12th April, and \$250 before 1st June. Information is available from the YJA web site (www.YJA.org/conv2000), or via e-mail on uregister@mail.com. Alternatively, details can be obtained from Sameer Shah (714 572-2304).

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

YOUNG JAINS INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION LONDON, 28TH – 30TH JULY 2000

This event will be the fourth such gathering in the UK of Jains from all over the world. The event always attracts speakers from many diverse global backgrounds, but with one thing in common; how to achieve spirituality and a deep caring for everything around us through all disciplines of life.

The convention will provide opportunities to take part in workshops designed to give delegates with a deeper appreciation of the teachings of the Tirthankaras. Delegates will be able to meet and exchange ideas with like-minded people, and also participate in the post-convention trip touring some of the most beautiful and interesting places in the UK.

Prices for the conference are as follows: registration before 25th July 2000 is £25 to YJ members, £35 for non-members and £25 for students, the student category including a free membership to Young Jains until December 2000. After this date all registrations are £40. Those registering before 7th April 2000 will also receive a free gift. All conference fees include registration, convention literature, entry to the evening entertainment programme and all meals. Registration forms are available at www.youngjains.org.uk, or via e-mail at youngjains@yahoo.com. Alternatively, information is available from Shaileen Shah on +44 (0)20 8959 5563.

JAINS SHOULD STAND UP FOR THEIR BELIEFS

I read Ingrid Newkirk's call to Jains to stand up for their beliefs. I couldn't agree more. We have a profound ancient value system which the world desperately needs today. It is important that each and every one of us Jains learn and promote the awareness of this culture in our workplace and our social lives. I also think that we have been too shy and introspective as a community. As a young Jain, I feel very proud of this heritage and would like to commit myself to standing up for my beliefs.

Shaileen Shah, London, UK

TEMPLES ARE FOR LIFE

Jain temples are beautiful, peaceful and serene. The modern world is rarely beautiful, nor is it peaceful. Cromwell Crawford's article reminded me of the importance of this sacred space, which is preciously needed in today's world. To build a sacred temple requires sacred spirits, mutuality and commitment. It is not enough that a few rich people lavish their money on temples as a bribe to God. I feel that temples should be built where there is some pre-existing community spirit and respect for the religion, especially amongst the young. We know that there are many Jain temples in India which are lying unworshipped and decaying as a result. We must avoid that mistake in the future. The Swaminarayan temple in Neasden, London, is a great example of a venture which was built by the community, including children and young people. Jains would do well to follow this example in the future.

Saurabh Dalal, Maryland, USA

WHOSE DIS-ABILITY?

Thank you for covering the issue of disability in your magazine. A number of people have contacted me after the article to say that this is one of the first times that the community is acknowledging the positive qualities of so-called disabled people. I find that there is a lot of ignorance about this issue amongst the Jains, even to the extent that many parents are afraid to bring their disabled children out or encourage them to pursue independent lives.

Living in the West, there are many opportunities for disabled people to live independent, fulfilled lives. All that is required is that the community recognises this potential and looks on disabled people not with pity or contempt, but as human beings of equal worth and ability.

Jatin Shah, London, UK



CONGRATULATIONS

Thank you very much for the first issue of Jain Spirit. The whole magazine is so vibrant and packed full from cover to cover with the kind of features that are not only of interest to Jains, but also to a non-Jain readership. The features give so much

information on the way in which Jain thought permeates all aspects of life that I found I was being 'allowed in', as it were.

I particularly enjoyed reading the articles 'Non-Violence' and 'Less Is More'. It is heartening to realise that there are more and more people worldwide who are living by these ideals.

Jasmine Koller, Ruislip, UK

I thoroughly enjoyed reading your beautiful and inspiration giving magazine; it is enlightening and spiritual. All my respects go to you and your editorial team for starting this unique magazine, and to all those who will be involved in maintaining it.

I do not have words to praise the work done by Jain Spirit. On behalf of Jain Samaj Europe, please allow me to take the opportunity to offer my congratulations to you all for doing a great job worldwide.

Thank you for your hard work and unceasing efforts for Jain Spirit magazine.

Sharad Bakhai, Leicester, UK

As it is rightly said that the 'Children of today will be the Citizens of Tomorrow', I seriously feel that this magazine is an excellent way to make the young generation of today aware of our scientific Jain principles and values using a modern approach. We extend our best wishes to you all

Reshma Bhansali, Cochin, India

Jain spirit is excellent. Well written, informative and most importantly, diverse. The combination of all these factors and the emphasis on educating the youth and encouraging their participation together with Jain Spirit's thoroughly modern outlook and approach will ensure that this magazine is a resounding success.

Vishal Sumarria, aged 17 years, London, UK.

FAMILY VALUES. BY MIKE TURNER



QUOTES & QUIPS

All traditions need to change to stay the same.

Ninian Smart, Professor of World Religions

Whereas religion usually looks for an opening to the eternal and infinite, science hopes for closure and places its faith in the capacity of the mind to sew things up. It prefers finity over infinity. The result is a world where the ego is at home and consciousness a supreme goal.

Thomas Moore, Professor of Consciousness

I think it is a central misconception of the Jain tradition to say that it is concerned with the salvation of the individual in a selfish manner. Every Jain must strive for the highest code of conduct, the highest code of restraint and the highest contribution he or she can make for the preservation of others. There is hardly any tradition which is more selfless.

L.M.Singhvi, Global ambassador of Jainism

Jainism is a religion waiting to be reborn. The likelihood though is that its rebirth will take place in the West rather than the East. Jainism has always been ahead of itself.

Cromwell Crawford, University of Hawaii

No religion of the world has explained the principle of ahimsa so deeply and systematically with its applicability in life as Jainism.

Mahatma Gandhi

Every living being has a zest for life, and we must respect this in all our thoughts and actions.

Lord Mahavir

The Jains maintain a balance between giving and taking. Throughout the community, I see a constant inclination to giving, a selflessness that is unique. The world needs such individuals and communities more urgently than ever before.

Michael Tobias, Author of 'Life Force: The World of Jainism'

Every being in the universe is important, unique and useful. Thus we should be tolerant and adaptable to other people's

views, and distribute our joy freely, whether to friends or strangers.

Reuben Thuku, Theosophical Society of Kenya

A true professional does not look up but looks down. Looking up there is only competition and aggression, but looking down, there is an opportunity to serve and help others.

Shashikant Mehta, Rajkot, India

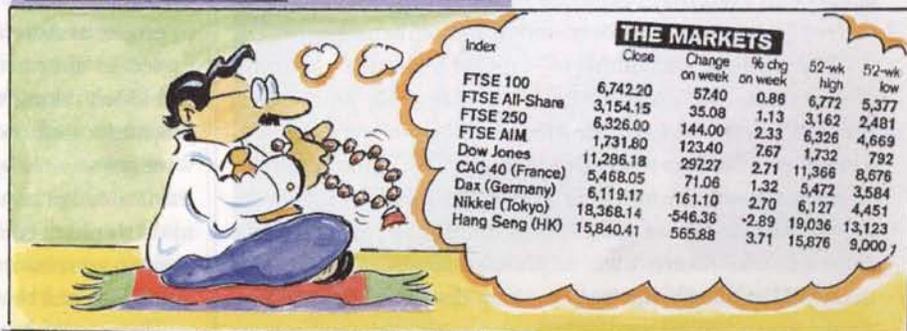
Jainism is the most powerful and profound philosophy in the world. Jains have to feel proud of their beliefs and practice them in a positive manner which eliminates suffering.

Maneka Gandhi, Cabinet Minister, India

Thinking or doing harm to another living being is to harm oneself. There is no separation between us and them in Jainism.

Padmanabh Jaini, Professor of Religion, University of California, Berkeley

MEDITATION ? BY MIKE TURNER





Jains are keeping their identity in the melting pot. Young Jains from Philadelphia who participated in the cultural programme at the JAINA Convention in July 1999

JAINS HAVE A LOT TO OFFER

Jain culture and values can truly enrich American society writes Cromwell Crawford.

In order to view the American melting pot, we must first ask: "What is America?" By one definition: "America is a country that doesn't know where it is going, but is determined to set a speed record getting there". More seriously, America is more than a country, more than a geographical reality. It is also a political reality, a moral reality, and a cultural reality. It is the first country in which people deliberately planned in principle to institutionalise the values of freedom, responsible government, and human equality.

The earliest metaphor to capture America's cultural diversity was the creation of Israel Zangwill, who called America "God's crucible, the great melting pot". A crucible is a vessel in which hard metals are fused. The vision is that of different people, pouring their differences into a pot that melts them down, and what comes out is some solid form, made in America. The motto was: *ex pluribus unum*, "one out of many". Historically, the 'one' took on the form of the White, Anglo-Saxon Protestant, WASP in short. No matter what your

background, this was the image in which you were made, and the justification was a pragmatic one: success. Nothing succeeds like success, especially in America.

It would be unpatriotic to hold on to the vestiges of the old world, especially if they appeared strange and funny, including your own name. So my Telugu-speaking friend, Devadutt, became David. Quite a fall for a god (deva)! After the Second World War, the WASP identity of America began to erode, as America encountered people from Asia and was forced to alter her Immigration laws, which previously had forbidden them citizenship. The new immigrants were much more educated and more wealthy than their predecessors, and were not so willing to renounce their cultural lineage. Whereas the Caucasian mind thinks in terms of "either/or", the Asian mind thinks in terms of "both/and". Asians felt there was no logic to your having to sacrifice the old for the new when you could have the best of both worlds.

Personally, I am of the view that while there is strength in

“I believe that out of all the diverse groups in America, Jain Americans are among the best equipped to achieve genuine diversity.”

unity, there is more strength in diversity, provided diversity is directed toward the common good. Unfortunately today, in the climate of political correctness, diversity gets defined by the squeaky wheel; some minority group that screams bloody murder that their rights are being violated. Minority rights must be respected. But the cries we have been hearing are for the most part pleas for special treatment, for favours of the welfare kind. However, that is not in the interests of the common good. I believe America must develop her diversity to confront national and world problems.

I also believe that out of all the diverse groups in America, Jain Americans are among the best equipped to achieve this task. Why? How? When? Where? Before we answer these questions which affect your daily lives, there are some housekeeping matters we must put in order. First there is the matter of name-recognition. Americans have heard of the Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists, but they do not know who the Jains are. Sometimes they are confused as a branch of Buddhism. My students often do a guessing game: “Aren’t they the people who go around, wrapped in white bed sheets, wearing surgical masks?” Or, more excitedly: “Aren’t they all nudists?” We need to set up a commission for bringing media attention to the community. Secondly, there is the matter of transmitting aspects of our religion to Christians and Jews in terms which are not open to misunderstanding. For example when we refer to a holy object on the altar as an idol, we employ a conventional translation which fails to do justice to the spiritual reality on the one hand, and on the other hand we invite its denigration. After all, to members of the Judeo-Christian tradition an idol is something false, degrading and superstitious. They will wonder how your piety could be rational when it is made up of such idolatrous nonsense.

Along the same lines, we need to rescue some of our key concepts from negative connotations. For example, out of the five *vratas*, a householder must observe, three are formulated in the scriptures in negative form - *ahimsa*, *asteya* and *aparigraha*. Outside the community mention of these values often draws a weak response. It all sounds less than resolute, even wishy-washy. That is a matter of regret, because a value such as *ahimsa* is more than a compendium of ‘don’ts’; it also mandates positive behaviour characterised by love - a value

which Christians can readily recognize and appreciate. At that point your religion begins to make sense to your friend, because the American mind is attuned to positive thinking.

A third matter of house cleaning touches on gender sensitivities. All religions face this problem because they were shaped in patriarchal societies, which viewed women in sexually belittling terms. Therefore scriptural passages, which reflect the social conditioning of their times better than the humane and non-discriminatory principles of the religion should be reappraised with the consciousness of gender equality. Jainism, at heart, is an egalitarian religion even though some of its writings on women appear demeaning. However, it is not sufficient to acknowledge this disparity; western standards of law and morality demand its immediate rectification. In the same vein, Jain speakers from India should be advised, when addressing American audiences, to use inclusive language in speech and writings. Christians have ►



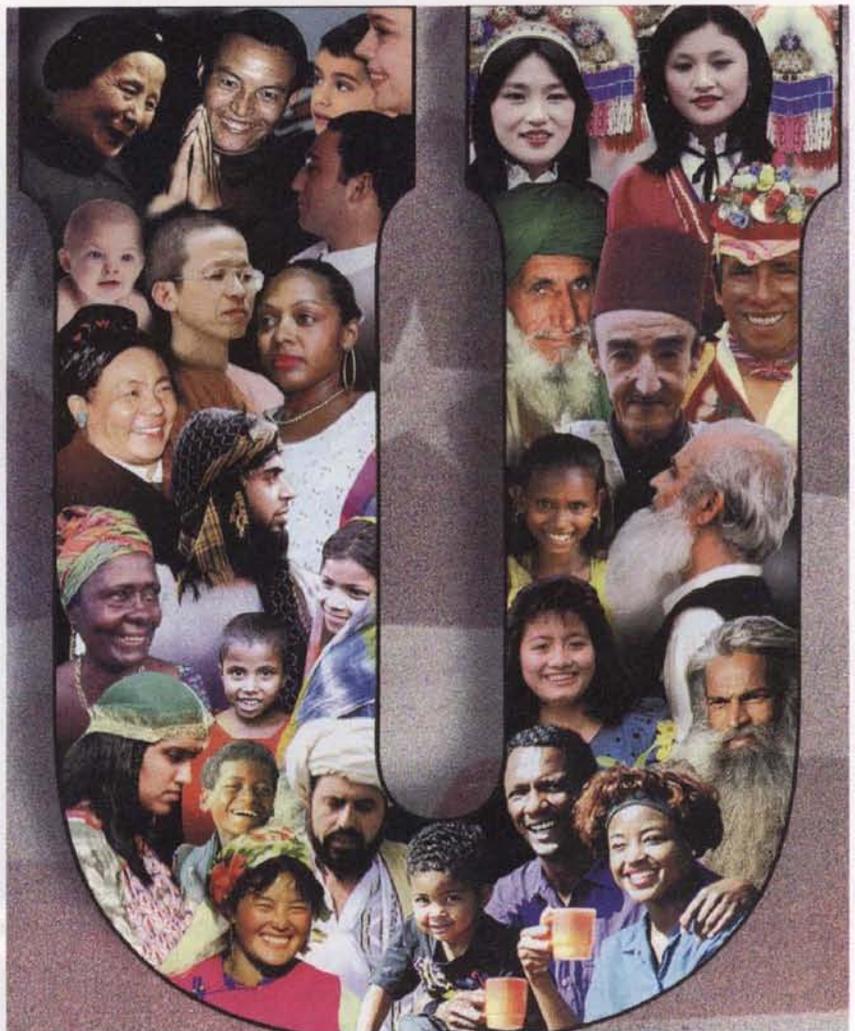
PHOTO: NARENDRA SHAH

American Jains, Dr. Surendra and Mrs. Hira Sethi, lighting a candle for Jain Spirit.

◀ had to walk down this path of rectification already, and Jains should not be left far behind.

Having drawn attention to some house cleaning matters, let us now mention areas in which we can proudly affirm our Americanism, and do it with the verve of a Jina. First is the area of education. Since most of you are students, some of whom have just graduated from school or college, and others have climbed to the next rung of the educational ladder, I start with congratulating you. You bring honour to your teachers and parents, and help maintain the Jain community as the best-educated group in all of these United States! I hasten to add there is an ancient Indian tradition that 'what you receive you must pass on to others'. You must not lock up the knowledge you have acquired in your brain; you are obligated to share it. This is the concept of *rnam*, which in Sanskrit means 'debt'. You are a debtor! In addition, Jainism places a high premium on knowledge. Right knowledge (*samyak gnana*) serves as a connecting link between right faith and right conduct, on *moksa-marga* or the path to salvation.

Related to education, a second area in which Jains can make a special contribution is civility. By civility I mean, being prepared to sacrifice one's own private impulses in the interests of the common good. The Jain emphasis on the control of passions is highly appropriate for a nation that has been brought to its knees by the Civil Rights movement. Civility, and its impulse to oblige, is at the heart of tolerance - an essential virtue in a pluralistic society. By the opposite token, incivility makes for fanaticism. Fanaticism is the enemy of culture, especially when it is the culture of someone who talks with a peculiar accent. The fanatic opposes culture, because culture is born of imagination, and the fanatic is always afraid of the imagination of others. Thus the fanatic, who uses fear, is karmically doomed to live and die in fear. Fanaticism wears three masks: racism, religious bigotry, and ethnic hatred. These three hatreds are held together by violence. These



CREDIT: HINDUISM TODAY

hatreds are on the rise in almost all countries of the world, including our own, often in the form of religious fanaticism that bombs abortion clinics, burns Black churches, and desecrates synagogues. One source of all religious fanaticism is the tendency to claim God as ally for one's partisan values and ends. A fanatic is usually a person who does what he thinks the Lord would do if the Lord knew all of the facts of the case.

This country has to come around to a Jain type of ethic of relativity (*anekantavada*). It teaches, like no western religion does, that things are not always as they seem, that contradictions abound in our everyday perceptions, that we all occupy subject worlds, that sincerity is no guarantee for truth and certainty, and that in order to claim a knowledge of the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, you must first pay your dues by becoming a perfected soul, a *siddha* - but don't bet on it in one life-time!

Jains should feel politically at home in America because, philosophically and historically, their religion is based on democratic aspirations and principles. Essentially, Jainism is a system of quiet contemplation and asceticism, in which

“The Jain community is the best-educated group in all of the United States! However, by tradition, what you receive you are obliged to pass on to others.”

persons are to free themselves from attachments to the world. Its ideal is the monk - one who withdraws from the world and seeks not its salvation, but his own. As such, there is little in the way of a blueprint for an ideal society. Even so, Jainism soon developed a form of community known as the *sangha*; the oldest voluntary religious organization in the world. Roughly, the *sangha* parallels the Church in Christianity. In addition, historically and philosophically, Jainism developed principles that have implications for democracy. Jainism and Buddhism are classified as heterodox, or heretical movements because they revolted against particular features of the prevailing orthodoxy, namely, Hinduism. Thus both movements became independent religions. In time, Buddhism was absorbed by Hinduism and survived only in other parts of Asia; but Jainism stood its ground and did not leave India.

Parshva and Mahavira, the last two of twenty-four Tirthankaras, are of historical significance. At the end of the ninth century BC, Parshva opposed the priestly dominance of Brahmanic culture by railing against the caste system, and by campaigning for the egalitarian inclusion of all people, regardless of caste, creed or gender. His concern for life and liberty extended to the welfare of animals, and opposed to their killing in ritual sacrifices. He preached the adoption of vows for common persons, thereby making religion universally accessible. Two hundred and fifty years later Mahavira appeared, continuing the tradition of a highly individualized

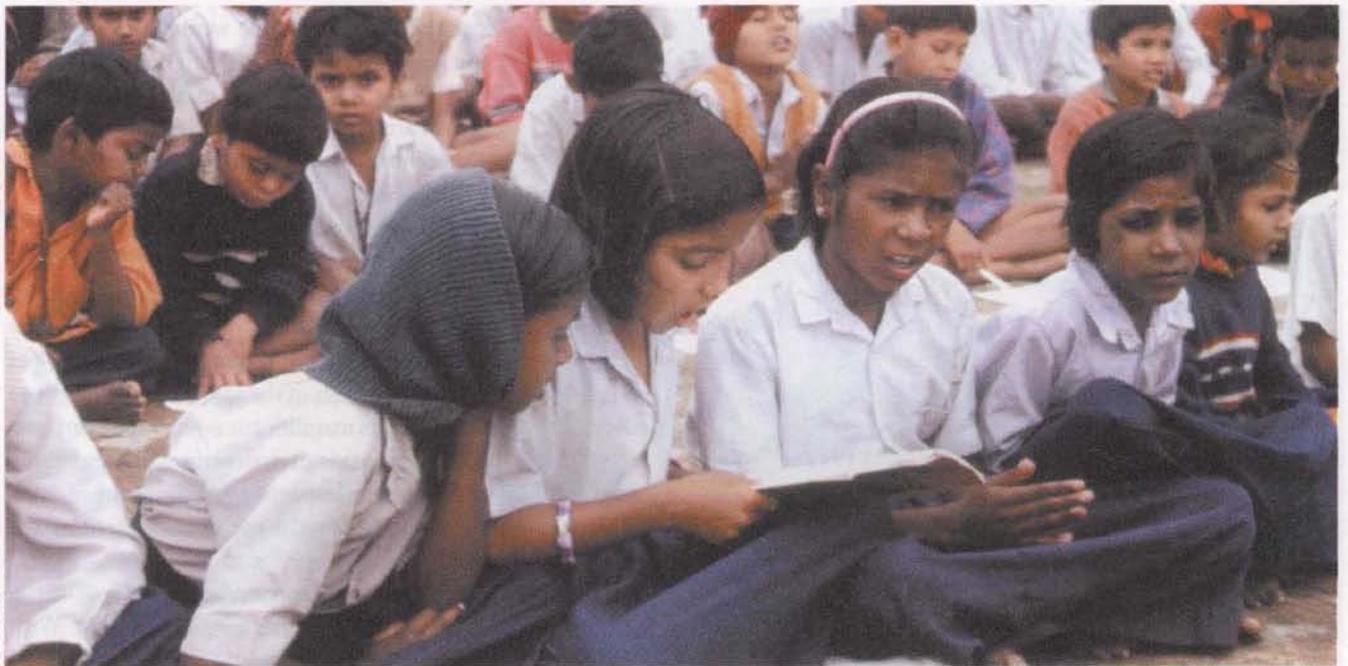
effort to overcome the bondage of the world. He was not a social reformer, but his teachings are rich with implications for personal and social living. He believed in the worth of all individuals; he advocated a casteless society; he rebelled against the establishment represented by the priestly caste; and was emphatically democratic.

In our century, Mahatma Gandhi came under the influence of Jainism, and he made non-violence (*ahimsa*) the main plank of the freedom movement in India gaining her independence from the British in 1947, and thereby becoming the world's most populous democracy. Thus Jainism's emphasis on the worth of the individual; the right to call one's soul one's own; its magnificent assertion of personal autonomy; its universal scepticism; its doctrine of the relativity of all ideas and values, and its insistence on compromise, have all contributed incalculably toward the development of the democratic spirit.

This spirit should first be expressed on the level of the family. The family is the fundamental unit of the nation. With a fifty per-cent divorce rate, domestic violence, teenage pregnancies, drugs, to mention only a few of our social maladies, it is clear that the American family is in trouble. Jainism has a tradition of making and keeping vows, which function as social cement. This stabilizing factor is all the more augmented in the Indian ideal of the extended family. Even if you should choose not to become politically engaged, the health of your family will contribute to the health of the nation.

The displacement of the model of the melting pot by the onset of multiculturalism has left the identity of what it means to be an American highly ambiguous. The most common feature one can discern, as characterizing most Americans, is that we are all consumers, and that we are all members of the greatest consumer society in the whole world. Notwithstanding our 50 years of warfare with Communism, materialism abides as the driving engine of the American Dream. The message of Jainism is that a nation sows the seeds of its own demise when it confuses spirit with matter, the *jiva* with the *ajiva*. America has a soul which must be recovered; but not in the old way when the first immigrants came to these shores, seeking religious freedom, and then wound up by establishing orthodoxy of their own, complete with persecution of dissenters. Jainism is unalterably opposed to all orthodoxy, Eastern or Western. It insists that in a pluralistic society, all religious claims must be tempered by reciprocal respect and by reason. 🙏

Cromwell Crawford is Professor at the University of Hawaii in Honolulu. He recently completed a major lecture tour of India and a book on Indian Medical Ethics. The above paper was first presented at the Young Jains of America Convention in Houston, July 1998.



JAYU SHAH

Children can be encouraged and supported such that they radiate joy wherever they go.

HUMILITY ENRICHES LIFE

An interview with Mrs. Kusum Vinod Shah, MBE

A rare leader in the UK Jain community and winner of a Queens Award, Mrs. Kusum Shah talks to Atul Shah about her experience, suggesting ways in which women could be encouraged to take an active role in the promotion of Jain values.

Where were you born?

I was born in a small town in Kenya called Kitui in 1948. I lived there until the age of twelve and it was a wonderful childhood. The majority local African population were very warm, and there was a tremendous spirit of peace and community. We then moved to Mombasa where I did the rest of my schooling. I went to India for four years to do a BSc degree, and returned to Kenya where I got married, finally settling in England in 1974.

On what grounds were you awarded the MBE from the Queen in 1998?

Ever since I arrived here, I have been working in the civil service for the Department of Health and Social Security, where I am currently an Executive Officer in the Finance Department of the Benefits Agency. There are ten people who report directly to me. My Award nomination was sent by my employers, based on the quality of my work, and any other community service.

I have been involved with the Gujarati School in South London since 1983, where I am the Headteacher. About 200 children have so far graduated with GCSE O levels in Gujarati. We also teach about Indian culture, festivals, art, music and

stories and literature. Students also perform plays and write their own songs. There are about ten teachers who work closely with me. I feel teamwork is vital to anything. We cannot clap with one hand – both are necessary.

To create a team spirit in community work is not an easy task, as often there are a lot of frictions. You clearly have been very successful. What is your secret?

With any new tasks, there will be problems at the beginning. I also think it is very important to listen to others and hear their viewpoints. In this way, everyone feels respected and a part of the team. I feel through unity, a lot can be achieved.

How has Jainism influenced your life and success?

Ahimsa and *Anekantvada*, love and tolerance, are principles at the core of my life. There is a respect for the views of others and a sense of peacefulness and friendship. Jainism gives us very positive practical guidance to happy living. My parents were never dogmatic, and they had respect for all religions. My late mother was always teaching us how best to live life with a respect for God.

Jainism is in essence a non-discriminatory tradition. However in practice, there is discrimination, especially in community activities, where it is usually men who are in charge. Also in Jain homes, women still often serve quite tradition roles. You are a rare exception, in that you have been both a professional employee and a community leader.

Was it difficult for you to do this?

I am not a feminist. I do think that there is merit in both men and women. Men tend to be more firm, and women more emotional. I think God created this variety that we may complement each other. I don't think there is anything wrong in women being behind men, in fact I sometimes prefer not to be in the limelight. It is of course not right if women are inhibited from being the best of themselves. A woman plays several roles, as a sister, a wife and later a mother. These are very noble roles, and if they fulfil these to the best of their abilities, I think that they have achieved a lot. For example, a wife and a mother are often teachers, a role which has great value in society. I think women should also come in front to equate and balance the family and community roles. Most women can afford to give some time to the community, and I believe should try to do so.

What should men do to encourage women to come forward, such that the whole community can benefit from their virtues?

Firstly, their ego should be suppressed. If a woman comes forward and does some good work, men should not feel offended or belittled by this. There should be no jealousy, but instead, a shared joy. This joy will encourage women. Men should also appreciate the major responsibilities that women have in the home and at work too, and try to accommodate these when they involve women.

What do you feel about the traditional perceptions of women?

I think there are a lot of changes already happening. For example, my husband always encourages and supports me, and the same applies to many of my women colleagues at the Gujarati School. If we look at history, the support of legendary women such as Sita for Rama or Kasturba for Gandhiji has enabled them to achieve great things. If it weren't for this support, they would not have come so far. I am therefore quite optimistic about the changes taking place in the West, and this is good news for women.

One of the secrets of your success is your humility.

Lord Mahavir was very humble, and Jainism is a very humbling tradition. Humility can win us a lot of friends. Sometimes it can be a problem to stay humble when everyone around us is very egoistic. I have always been taught humility in my family and my neighbourhood.

How can young people be positively attracted to our culture?

I think art is quite important, and children should be involved and supported. Also giving them responsibility at an early age is very important if we want to get them involved. They should feel that their contribution is important, and not ordered around, as often happens. Also the more they are exposed to our culture, the greater the chance that they will be drawn to it and be excited about it. I think the mother tongue is critical to all



*Partners in community service –
Mr. Vinod Shah and Mrs. Kusum Shah*

this, and if they appreciate their language, they will really stand up for their culture too. Between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five, there is a big void in terms of community involvement and service by young people. I think this is a serious problem, and it leads them astray. They can also lose their earlier momentum and excitement about the community. We must do something about this, and the National Hindu Students Forum is a rare exception and success.

How should we teach religion to kids?

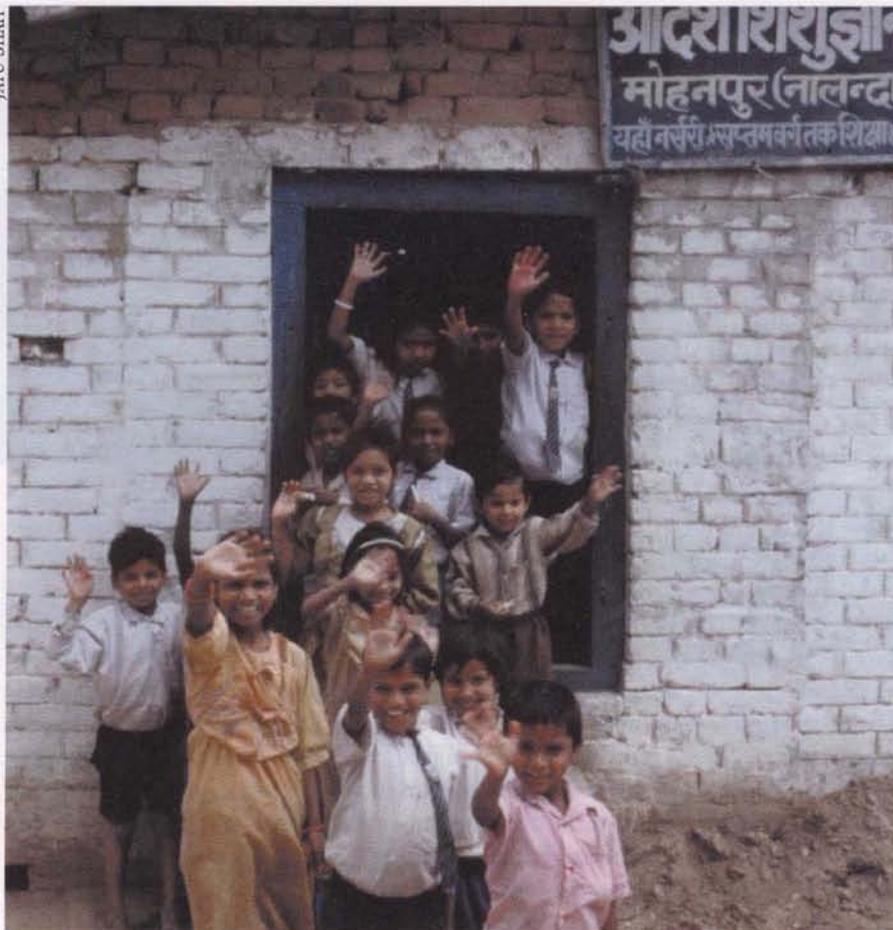
Stories are very powerful in teaching morality. Art and drawing will also attract children. Teenagers love argument, debate and dialogue. Through this, they can learn religion. Hence they should be given a platform for dialogue and debate, and the topics could be connected with Jainism. I do think however, that it is difficult to teach religion. There is a great shortage of good teachers of Jainism. We need to have a balanced approach which includes rituals, philosophy, stories, practical relevance, and history.

I feel that your own work has had an important influence on the approach to Jain education and understanding in the UK and internationally. I feel these projects should be encouraged and supported by all. In many ways, the western approach to Jain education is more positive than the *patshala*/rote learning style of Jain education in India. However, there is still a lot that needs to be done. In particular, we need to move against the tide of sectarianism and disunity. We should all come together as Jains and learn together as if we are all students of Lord Mahavir.

What is your understanding of moksha (liberation), which some people argue to be the ultimate goal of Jainism?

I personally think *moksha* is too remote an ideal, and feel it is important to live Jain values in the here and now rather than to worry about whether or not we would achieve liberation. Hence I live my life trying to do my best in the here and now and not to worry too much about the future. 🙏

JAYU SHAH



Poor people should not be pitied or ignored. Through our charity, they can become the source of our happiness.

HAPPINESS IS WITHIN REACH

Jain values need to be lived to be enjoyed, argue Gurudev and Pramoda Chitrabhanu

Today mankind is living in an interesting time, when the science of information technology is rapidly taking over and practically governing his life. The cave man has become a castle man. The days of cartwheels and carriages are being replaced by Cadillacs and convertibles. The period of stone grinding and grating has become obsolete and the modern electric grinders and graters are

taking their place. The old is being replaced by the new with tremendous speed.

As the machine is used for instant work, in the same way man works for instant happiness, fame and riches. He does not care whether it is at the cost of environmental pollution, depletion of the natural resources or animal abuse and suffering. He is under the powerful grip of greed and acts under the

intoxication of modernization, leading him to self-destruction. Motivated by ego and sensuality, he uses all of his skills in the acquisition of worldly pleasures. In this way technology and information make the rich richer and the poor poorer. When we look around us, all we see is that man has become a burden and an enemy to himself and the mother earth, rather than a friend to all. Engaging himself in anger, lust, selfishness, deceit and competition he ultimately paves the way to violence and war. As Thomas Merton has rightly said, "Violence can begin only where thought and rational communication have broken down."

Living with this pace and in this space, man has become a robot. He now has no mind of his own and works like a machine. Society thinks for him and he obeys its orders. His herd mentality blinds his vision and goads him to move about without any direction. One wonders whether he has the same element which is potentially capable of becoming Mahavir, Buddha, Ram or Jesus- epitomes of love, compassion and simplicity. How can he attain anything, if he does not take charge of his own life and discern the difference between right and wrong in the light of the truth? History tells us that no amount of wealth and fame has made mankind happy. For material happiness is fleeting and temporary. It's definition changes with man's desires and dreams. Happiness does not lie in accumulation of things, but in the art of equal distribution, simplicity and contentment.

In this New Year let us decide not to become a machine in the mechanical world, acting without thought, but instead thinking before each action. For every positive or negative action has an equal and opposite reaction. A loving thought cast in the universe has a loving response and an evil thought has an evil one. It is the law of nature that what is thrown out in the universe comes about like a boomerang. So why not prioritize



Gurudev and Pramoda Chitrabhanu with President Moi of Kenya some twenty years ago.

our life on the basis of our needs and comfort and not on our greed and luxury? In this way we can eliminate the possibility of acquiring negative vibrations and unwanted *karmas* and *channelize* our thoughts, words and actions in the positive direction, starting the millennium with a new beginning. There are two classes of people who think in two different ways. There is one class that asks every morning “what should I do to become hungry? and there is another class that asks “what should I do when I become hungry? In

any given situation neither one seems to be happy. So where is the happiness? More than 80% of mankind toils for food, shelter and protection and yet many of them go to bed hungry. There is another small percent that is affluent and simply wallows in luxury. What a disparity in the lives of the two! One has plenty and the other is empty.

To get a fresh outlook to life, one must turn towards the philosophy of Jainism as practiced and propounded by Lord Mahavir. It has profound answers to our questions. It is founded on the

law of reverence for all life (*Ahimsa*), relativity in thinking (*Syadavada*), law of cause and effect (theory of *Karmas*), law of non-acquisition (*Aparigraha*), and law of compassion (*Karuna*) through non-violence in thoughts, words and action. It has also emphasized the idea of tolerance and non-interference as its teachings. These perennial principles of Lord Mahavir are the avenues to health, healing, harmony, peace and love. They were useful thousands of years ago and will be useful for many millennia to come. In this way, putting the teachings of Jainism into practice one can renew one’s connectivity to that ancient source of teaching and live in harmony with oneself and in harmony with the rest of the world.

Let us therefore work collectively for the betterment of the whole universe by changing our focus from ‘I’ to ‘We’. The message of the new dawn is for all of us but for youth in particular, who are the hope of tomorrow. They will shape the way society thinks and feels. For, tomorrow belongs to the youth, youth that holds the promise of the future. They are the symbol of energy and zeal, openness and compassion, creativity and innovation. They have time and vigor to carry on and give life to the ancient heritage of reverence for life, understand and practice the wisdom of the seers and use the insights of the enlightened masters. They are the torch bearers and trend setters of peace, progress and prosperity for the present and future generation. So let us all think globally and act locally, making a difference in every moment of the millennium and be aware of our glorious spiritual wealth by arising, awaking and not stopping until the goal is reached. 🙏

Gurudev Chitrabhanu is a renowned speaker, writer and promoter of Jainism worldwide. Pramoda Chitrabhanu is President of the Jain International Meditation Centre New York and India



Jayu Shah gave up his lucrative professional job in London to work for children in India alongside his wife Dina Shah.

*For centuries, cows
have been treated
with love and respect
in India*

When I was a child growing up, I had one regret: not to have been born a Jain. Other children wished they had been born movie stars or astronauts – I just wished to be a Jain.

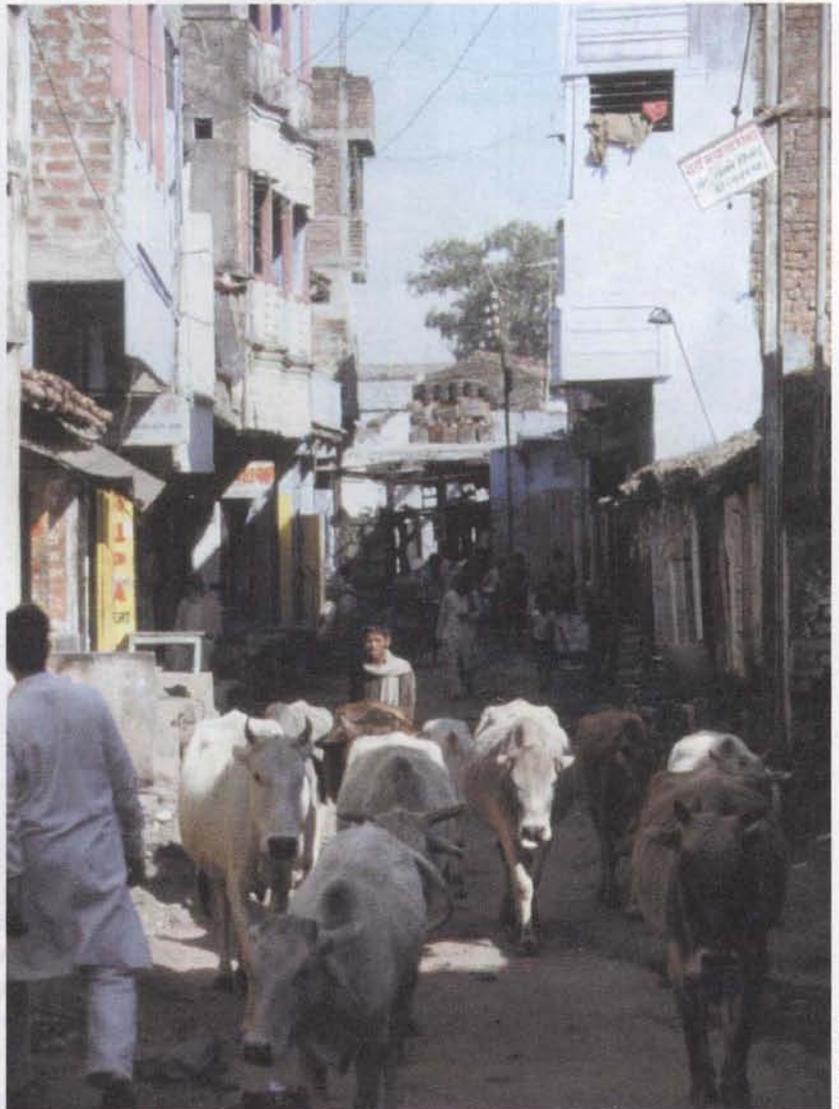
No matter what high ideals politicians may talk about, the true foundations and tenets of Jainism are the world's keys to peaceful co-existence and respect, and the practice of *ahimsa* is perhaps the most amazing and simple moral view.

So, when I hear bad news: Jains forgetting why there is anything wrong with eating meat, or – most recently – finding Jains involved in running export slaughterhouses in India, I can only think: if Jains can't get it right, what hope is there for the rest of us!

In my early years in India, the images of happy cows were everywhere. The cows who wandered the dusty streets sometimes wore garlands, symbols of respect placed about their necks by Hindus or Jains. Despite their tremendous size, they are as gentle and tame as family dogs. One day, as I walked down a filthy alley, I saw a huge bull who had walked up two steps and was standing at the entrance of the house watching the family do its daily chores. Twenty minutes later, when I returned down the same street, he was still there, blocking the entire entrance, enjoying the company of his people.

Not that life was easy for them. Overworked bullocks pulled carts through the clamour of city streets, breathing in the stinking fumes and sweating. Sometimes they collapsed under their burdens. When cows cease to be useful, off they go to auction. We visited the weekly cattle sales in India. Several thousand bullocks and cows stood confused and uncertain in a dusty field. The temperature soared to 100 degrees but there was no water and no shade. The cows, tense with fear, did not understand why they had been taken from their homes.

Such things happen where most of us never see them. But



JAYU SHAH

DAIRY INVOLVES CRUELTY

Modern milk production involves a lot of cruelty. There are plenty of healthier and compassionate alternatives which Jains would do well to embrace, argues Ingrid Newkirk

they all happen for one reason: people eat flesh and drink milk. Milk is not a vegetarian food: there is a piece of a veal calf or bull calf in every glass of milk. I say milk is not vegetarian because the calves are taken from their mothers so that we can drink the milk *they* need, and we *want*. The females are made into milk slaves, like their poor mothers, unless they die of diarrheal diseases, like scours. The boys are put in small crates in dark sheds, chained by the neck, to be made into veal

parmigiana and veal cordon blue at 14 weeks. That is the age at which they walk for the first time in their lives! Or should I say, 'wobble', for their little legs are swollen from standing and balancing on wooden slats.

There is nothing more joyful than a baby calf – jumping and wagging his long tail and enjoying life. But because of factory farms, no baby calves know their mother's love, feel the sunshine, or smell the grass ever. Our greed has condemned them to imprisonment and then to death. All of their mothers have their only joy, their calves, taken away – so that we can have cheese and milk and ice-cream.

On a recent trip to India, we watched a man with a dull knife saw into an old cow's throat. Her eyes were wide as saucers. She knew what was happening, and she could not believe it was true. After all these years of providing milk, this was her reward. And it is invariably the case – there are few retirement homes for cows and the few there are (almost all run by wonderful Jains) cannot *begin* to manage even a tiny fraction of the number of cows bred and exploited by the enormous demand of our species for the milk they produce. Milk, by nature, is meant to feed their *own* young.

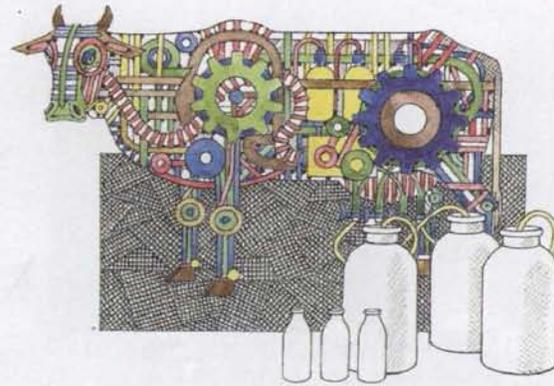
If we have one ounce of compassion in our bodies, one grain of religious or ethical thought in our minds, we will not wish to play any part in this cruelty-almost-beyond-words. We will refuse meat and – be brave! – milk. We will be vegans.

The mother cow – a dear, docile, gentle vegetarian animal – has been reduced to a meat and milk machine. In the US she is put on what farmers actually call a rape rack to be brutally violated via artificial insemination. She is hyper-ovulated, to make her body work to the breaking point and beyond. She is given injections of hormones to overload her udders – hormones that are passed on in her milk. In India a broom is thrust into her body to force milk production or she is injected with a drug that causes painful contractions. Sometimes she is so malnourished, that all the prodding and poking in the world won't bring milk. Then everyone turns a blind eye as she is sold to slaughter.

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "No matter how scrupulously the slaughterhouse is concealed, no matter how many miles away, if you eat the flesh of the animals from it there is complicity."

If we buy meat and cows' milk we must face the facts: we are *subsidizing* the violence and misery. The cows' and calves' miserable skins are, of course, made into leather handbags and shoes. To me, leather stinks of dead, suffering cows. 🙏

Ingrid Newkirk is founder of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), one of the largest animal rights organisations in North America. She is author of 'You can Save the Animals', Prima Publishing, 1999.



Cow as an extension of our greed and violence.

THINGS CAN CHANGE. I ASK THIS: PLEASE, DON'T TURN YOUR BACKS ON THE VIOLENCE OF COW SUFFERING AND SLAUGHTER. MAKE AHIMSA COME ALIVE. HERE ARE SOME SUGGESTIONS OF WHAT CAN BE DONE BY EACH AND EVERY ONE OF US:

1. We can switch to soyamilk and soy cheese, and Tofutti instead of ice-cream – there are dozens of varieties. Find one you like. It is far better for your family's health than mucous-forming, high cholesterol-inducing milk.
2. We can stay away from caveman fashion. We don't have to wear the skins of tortured beasts. Every company, from Todd Oldham to Neimans and Payless to Bata, have shoes, handbags and belts of manmade materials, as well as cotton, corduroy, satin, and so on.
3. We can cook vegan food for our friends and at the same time educate everyone we meet. Jains are leaders and can be the more so in practising good nutrition, and in conserving the water table, forestation and all the Earth's resources through veganism. Meat production is the most environmentally devastating process.
4. Please visit our Web site at: www.peta-online.org, where you will find tons of information on veganism and animal rights. Click on the "Kids" button for information on avoiding dissection in school.
5. For specific information on vegan nutrition and recipes visit the Vegetarian Resource Group at: www.vrg.org Don't forget to play their vegetarian game!
6. To find non-leather shoes, boots, jackets and belts point your browser at: www.vegetarian-shoes.co.uk You can check their list of worldwide stockists for a store near you, or order directly from their site



Delegates sharing their thoughts in the relaxed outdoors.

RE-TREAT YOURSELF

Spiritual Retreats are great ways to recharge our energy and re-invigorate the joy of living. Ravi Khanna explains the importance of re-treating ourselves on a regular basis.

“**T**his weekend I have felt love for the very first time.” So read an excerpt from a misplaced diary I was given some years ago. You might be thinking that these could have been the words of someone that had just been given an expensive gift, or perhaps had just met their ideal partner.

In actual fact the diary belonged to Mayur Shah, a 12 year-old boy who had just returned from a two-day spiritual retreat for young men aged between 10 and 25. The retreat in question had brought together around 25 young people from different parts of the UK, and they had spent their time

meditating together and in discussions and workshops involving inner reflection and goal-setting.

Retreats give us the opportunity to break from routine and spend time in a more relaxed and peaceful environment. Away from the places that have become associated with anxiety and concern, it is remarkable how fresh and light one’s mind can feel in a neutral setting. However rather than just going on another holiday which often brings stresses of its own, I have seen how retreats offer something different. Instead of being a temporary escape from one’s normal existence, retreats can actually help a participant to prepare

to go back into the world with greater skills and resources with which to live life.

I was lucky enough to take part in my first retreat at the ripe old age of 16. My mother had pushed me as she thought it would be “good for the soul”. I found myself by far the youngest attendant in a group of around 40 people, most of whom I thought (initially anyway) liked the sound of their own voices a little too much! Nonetheless as the four days continued I was very surprised by how comfortable I felt amongst these “old” people. My age and lack of experience did not seem to matter to them. Indeed for some reason (that I couldn’t fathom), they paid just as much respect to my opinions as they did to their own ideas.

This rather peculiar yet endearing



Young Jains Retreats also involve everyone in the preparation of the food.

experience instilled a good impression of “retreats” within me, and paved the way for participation in a good number over the next four or five years. In 1995, I decided to start organising similar events specifically for young people, and the joy that these gatherings have brought to me has been quite incredible.

My father is due to retire this summer, and I recently asked him how he thought he would spend the years to come. He replied by explaining to me how up to this point his life had been somewhat “automatic”. As a child he was sent to school to study, and then to college and university. Having qualified he then found work and had been working in a similar fashion for the last 45 years. It was only now that this “automatic” life pattern had come to an end, and for the first time he was having to find his own way.

Whilst listening to him, I began to think how much of our existence in the 21st century has become “automatic” or routine. Our society is so fast and so demanding that sometimes it can seem an achievement just to get through the

day! In an increasingly automated world, even human beings can appear like machines with so many tasks to perform, forever fighting against the clock. We never seem to have enough time to stop and reflect, nor to do those things we would really love to do. Ordinary things become known as urgent, often with the result that the really important things in life don’t get a look in. It is no wonder that people in later life can look back and feel that although their lives were full, they were not necessarily fulfilling.

I also believe that it is not just our actions and our time that have become automated, but also our minds have been affected too. Imagine buying a new suit: you might really appreciate wearing it for the first few days, but then within a week, wearing it becomes part of your routine and you no longer notice it anymore. In the same way it is easy for us to lose that sense of appreciation for ourselves and for those people around us, as we do not have the time, space and energy to see things as they truly are. We have lost touch with the ability to step back from what we are

doing, and look at it objectively in order to see whether the lifestyle we are following is taking us in the direction we want to go.

I have had the good fortune to attend 15 or 20 retreats in my time, and can honestly say that I have yet to be part of a group consisting of people whose company I have not thoroughly enjoyed. I do not think that this is because I generally meet like-minded people there, nor do I think that they are especially lovely people whom I could not help but enjoy being with. Rather I think this feeling has more to do with the atmosphere at such retreats. Instead of facing the relentless pressures and demands that it has become accustomed to, when exposed to a more relaxed environment, one’s mind is able to enjoy the space and time required to operate more freely. As a result I have observed that people naturally start to find themselves behaving with gentleness and consideration towards each other.

Alongside experiencing such friendly relations, another benefit of taking part in retreats is the clarity people observe in their own thoughts and ideas. When the mind is cleansed of the usual baggage of unnecessary fears and trivial worries that it normally wastes its energy upon, it is able to see and think much more clearly than usual. As a result at the end of retreats I often hear people talk of having found breakthroughs to long-term problems. Participants have often had profound and beautiful realisations about themselves and how to make a difference to their lives. I believe retreats are a necessity in modern life. Try one and see for your-self. 🙏

Ravi Khanna is an IT consultant based in London. He has led several sessions on self-reflections with Young Jains in the UK and North America. Jain Spirit is planning on starting its own retreat programme, so if interested, please write to retreats@jainspirit.org



Three generations

GOOD PARENTING

Parents often want to do the best for their children. But what is 'best' in a Jain context?, asks T.J. Salgia

When a child is born, he or she does not know right from wrong. It is the duty and responsibility of the parents to teach and provide all that is needed to help in the moral and spiritual growth of a child, so that he or she becomes a true citizen of the world. Without true parents there cannot be a true family, a true country or peaceful world.

When we talk about true parents, I consider there is more than one type. There are those who brought us into this world, and there are others who give us knowledge and wisdom, so that we can become good citizens of the world. We may get valid knowledge from various sources, and we should consider that there is an element of truth in all of them. Yet we have to have a standard of true parents. Who is qualified to set the standard? According to Jain tradition, an omniscient teacher has the power and moral authority to set such rules for the community. As the saying goes: "charity begins at home", therefore first and foremost, parents have got to make a good home for their children, and to children they are the immediate parents. When they fail in this endeavour, we all know the outcome. Therefore, true parenting is vital for the survival and the salvation of human beings.

Jain omniscience teachers, whom we call *Jinas* or conquerors of the inner enemies (anger, greed, ego and deceit), have taught a concept called *anekantavada* (multiple points of view). Apart from *ahimsa* (non-violence), this is the biggest gift of Jainism to the world. We must all understand that we should not be one-sided. The views of others may be as valid as our own. This philosophy states that no single perspective on an issue contains the whole truth. Substance, time, place and conditions of the observer, all affect the

viewpoint. Any idea or statement should be considered from different points of view. Ideally, this should result in a non-dogmatic approach to the doctrines of other faiths. Therefore a person should not denounce the view of others. Accept what is good, regardless of where it comes from. If the people of the world would accept this principle of Jainism, many world problems could easily be solved.

The external environment also influences a child's upbringing. As parents we may feel that we cannot influence this directly, yet it affects our child. This is where I believe parents should also teach the importance of community, by actively getting involved in community activities, whether they be at school, or among Jains. Parents should not draw a boundary for their caring in the home. The caring should extend to the wider community. In this way, children will not only benefit from a larger circle of friends,

but they will also learn through example the importance of serving the community. In fact, children actually love serving and helping, if they are guided and encouraged.

The founding teachers of Jainism prescribed *Maha-vratas* (ethical doctrines or vows) for us, householders, to help us keep in line with the religious beliefs. These principles are also the foundation of good parenting. It is essential for a true Jain to follow these vows. The vows are:

- *Ahimsa* (non-violence) – not to cause pain, anguish or the destruction of any living being (man, beast, bird, etc.) through mind, speech or body. Be kind and compassionate with others.
- *Satya* (truth) – truth in thought, speech and deed. Always seek the truth. Never speak an untruth or do not associate with persons who speak untruth.
- *Asteya* (non-stealing) – do not commit any kind of theft nor take anything without being given.
- *Brahmacharya* – Restraint in sexual behaviour.
- *Aparigraha* – Simple lifestyle through necessary possessions and active avoidance of excess. Charitable giving of what is in excess of our needs.

Once again it is the duty and responsibility of true parents to teach what is right and wrong. As the saying goes: "strike when the iron is hot". This means to me that from the moment a child is born, true parents should provide good and meaningful education and culture so that their child could become a good citizen of this world. 🙏

Dr. Salgia is a past president of JAINA and Director of Jain Spirit. This is an extract from a paper presented on Saturday October 30th 1999, in Washington DC.

A 1940 print
of the story

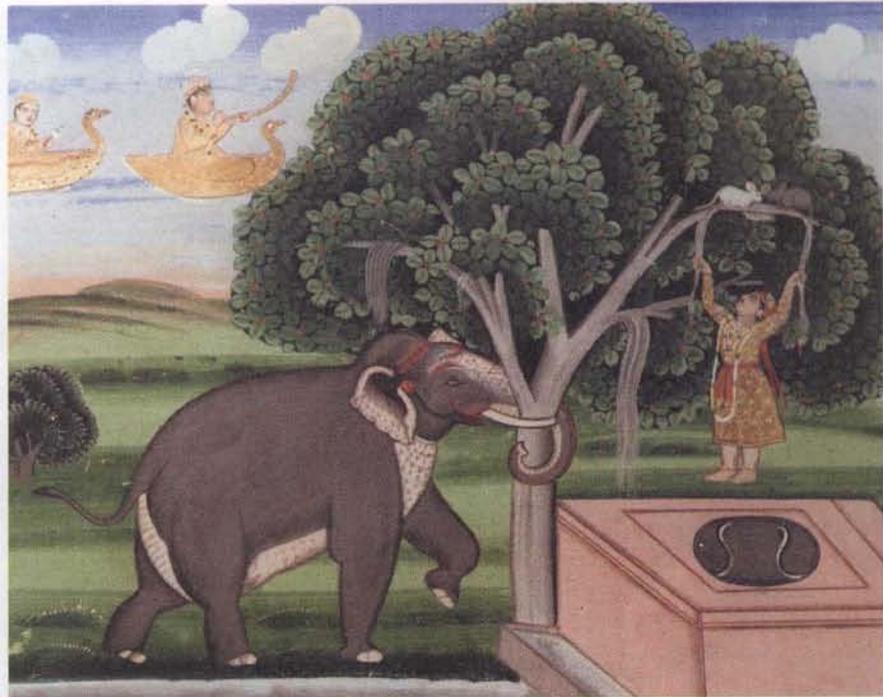


ILLUSTRATION COURTESY OF K.V. MARDIA

Once upon a time there was a man. He was travelling with a party which happened to pass through a thick forest full of wild beasts and robbers. In the middle of the forest, they were attacked by a band of robbers. The party fled for their lives in all directions; the man became separated from the group, and lost his way. When he looked back to see where he was, he saw a mad elephant running furiously towards him. He realized that if he did not find shelter, he would be killed instantly by the elephant. Noticing a well, he thought: "This elephant is sure to kill me, but I may perhaps save myself by jumping into this well." So he jumped into the well, grasping one of the branches of a banyan tree overhanging the well.

At the bottom of the well, the man saw a huge python ready to swallow him, should he fall, and at the bottom, on the four sides of the well, he could see four cobras hissing at him. Two rats, one white and one black, were eating away the branch of the banyan tree which supported him. At the top of this branch there was a beehive full of bees circling around him. The elephant was standing on the brink of the well, and as it tried to capture the man with its mighty trunk, it made the branch move

SELF-DECEPTION

K.V. Mardia presents a parable illustrating how important it is for us to distinguish between truth and illusion.

to and fro, while causing some drops of honey to fall on the man's lips. At that moment, a monk happened to arrive at the side of the well opposite to the elephant, and offered to help rescue the man from the well. However, he seemed to be momentarily satisfied with the situation whilst he had the sweet taste of honey on his lips. He did not realize that the branch of the tree would be eaten away by the rats and then he would have no support at all, or the whole tree would be uprooted by the elephant and he would fall down only to be swallowed by the python.

This whole drama is a symbol of the delusional state of man. The forest is the cycle of Birth and Death, and the man in the forest is the ordinary, worldly Man. The mad elephant that ran after him is Death; the well his earthly Life; the python the symbol of the lowest state of existence (Hell). The four cobras are the symbols of Anger, Greed, Ego and

Deceit (the four main Passions). The branch of the banyan tree represents the short duration of this earthly life. The two rats, white and black, represent Time, day and night, which exhaust his earthly span. The bees in the hive are organs of the Senses and the honey drops represent sensuous Pleasures. The monk represents the True Religion. So the whole drama comes down to this: the common man, ignoring the fact that his life may be cut off at any time by death, satisfies himself by enjoying sensuous pleasures and is oblivious to the truths offered by philosophy: he is being influenced by anger, greed, ego and deceit. 🙏

Kanti Mardia is Professor of Statistics at the University of Leeds. He is author of 'The Scientific Foundation of Jainism' (Motilal Banarsidas, 2nd Edition, 1998) and founder of the Yorkshire Jain Foundation in Leeds, England.



VILLAGE LIFE

Jain villages used to embody harmony, community and simplicity. Can we recreate them in modern western life?

“India lives in its villages,” Gandhiji would say, and he went to the villages to find the real India. Even today, when we introduce ourselves to elders, one of the first questions they ask is which village do we come from. Not long ago, villages were our homes. They were our sources of food, clothing, shelter and education. They were our community centres, our places of worship, our playgrounds, our animal sanctuaries.

Artist Chhagan Patel spent three months in a remote desert village in Rajasthan and observed the lives of the local people (adivasis). He tried to capture what he saw on canvas, in the paintings you see overleaf. He found a

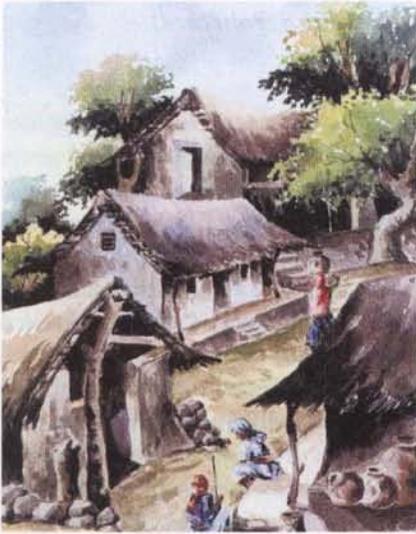
people who lived with nature, embracing it, and adapting to it. Rarely did he hear people complaining about the hot weather. He found an extremely rich village, a people living in harmony with one another and revelling in the simplicity of life. All festivals were celebrated with colour and music. The weddings, or the holi (harvest) were filled with deep joy, sharing and unity.

In the modern day, such a village may be described as poor, illiterate or even backward. However, Mr. Patel found it to be very much the opposite. It was rich, happy and peaceful – a haven which many in the West try to aspire to. The villagers did not give any lectures about the secrets of happiness and peace

of mind – they just lived it, quietly, simply. Perhaps our elders, instead of enquiring about the village we come from, should ask us which village are we building today? A village of technology and power, a village of wealth and greed, or a village of simplicity, co-operation and harmony.

In the twentieth century, we have generally done very nicely as a community, especially in material terms. Per capita, we are one of the wealthiest communities in the world, if not the wealthiest. But material wealth is the modern measure of success and happiness, not the authentic Jain measure. One of the most important steps we can take to embrace Jainism is therefore selfless charity of our material wealth. That will remind us of our higher goals in life. We also need to move swiftly from the I to the WE. This was not at all difficult in village India, but it certainly is a big problem in the modern global village. We must not

PAINTING BY CHHAGAN PATEL



(and left) *A traditional Indian village setting in Rajasthan.*

become local bigheads and global nobodies. Community and connectivity have always been our defining characteristics as Jains.

A number of Jains today are aspiring to re-create village life, through their community activities, dinner parties or charitable work. They are seeking a sense of belonging, a connection with nature, and a unity in spirit. Jains are aspiring for peace. It may be that the source of the wisdom lies in our past heritage, which was not only elaborated in our scriptures, but lived daily through our lifestyles. We need not go back into history to embrace village life – as we have already seen, there are many positive attributes of villages.

Hence it is in our communities (at home and at work) that we have the opportunities for creating the villages of tomorrow. If we take on this challenge we will learn about humility, duty and selflessness. We will also learn about patience and perseverance, about harmony and tolerance. We may in the process invent a new village, which is both modern and ancient at the same time. 🙏

Artist Chhagan Patel lives in Romford, London. He recently exhibited his paintings at the Meghraj Art Gallery. He can be contacted on 01708-750128.



PAINTING BY CHHAGAN PATEL

A modern English village in Devon.

PHOTO: CHANDU SHAH

*Caught in the Act (painted with a credit card)*

ART IS LIFE LIFE IS ART

In November 1999 Nalini Shanthi Cook had a major exhibition of her art at the Meghraj Art Gallery in London. She talks to Jain Spirit about the inspiration for her work, which embodies the Jain spirit of love for all creation.

How did you become interested in art?

I was a teacher of art for many years in schools and colleges, and then I became a manager of art, and now I'm inspector – I go around schools and colleges and look at the art there. That's one side of my life – the other side is being a practising artist, which I've always been for as long as I can remember. I was a sculptor for a while, using all sorts of materials. In the last five years I've come back to painting, but I think a lot of the sculptural influence has come through in the painting because of the materials I use. I don't use traditional oil, or traditional watercolour – I mix all sorts of materials and work them into a lot of layers to create a texture. For example, you'll find paintings which have oil paint, stains, ochre from the earth, found materials, photographs, remnants, collage – all sorts of elements go into the painting to give it layers and depth.

How do you choose the subjects for your paintings?

The inspiration comes from what I see in my travels. I travel around the world a lot: I've been to India, Italy, Australia and many other places. The inspiration comes from the landscapes and the peoples of different countries and different cultures. I take photographs and sketches when I'm abroad, and then when I'm back home, I re-create some of those images which have a universal feel. For example, the painting with the horse's head is almost an icon in itself. Many things that come from what I see in landscapes are almost universal images; Celtic stones, rocks that are very solid and stable in what is an unstable society – this is the stability of nature picked out in the work.

Would you say that your work is a bridge between East and West?

Yes, but the fusion is almost unconscious, because I don't aim to be either. What I create is what is *me* and what is *inside me*. I think the West is very strong, from the way I've been brought up, lived here and worked in this country, but the East is also very strongly in me, and this filters through the work unconsciously. It is not a conscious 'I will be an Eastern Painter' – it comes through from the works I see in the East. For example, the frescoes in Sri Lanka, the Ajanta caves, even the miniature paintings – all those things are pulling through, but not consciously. They're there in the work, for example, in the strong decorative borders in many of the paintings.

How has your art improved the quality of your life?

I couldn't live without art. I have a very difficult job, and the art is my release, my way of being in the world, and being happy in the world. It reflects love and inner warmth, and that comes out in the paintings.

So art is where you express yourself?

I express myself, but I'm also very at one with myself when I'm painting. It's a very vigorous and very difficult process, and can be quite frustrating at times. It's also a very intellectual process – there are a lot of technicalities in a painting, which have to be right for it to gel into something that can be inspiring for other people to look at. A painting is as much for other people as it is for me, for them to be able to react and respond to it, and find that warmth and tranquillity. There's a lot of ugliness in the world, and I don't want to express ugliness in my art; I want to express beauty and tranquillity, warmth and love, and I want people to look at the paintings and be absorbed by them and feel happy.

I notice your style is slightly abstract.

The recent paintings have become more surreal, I would say, than abstract, because they are images that are recognisable, that are set in an unreal context. They are not immediately

Temple view

recognisable as a landscape you would see in a photograph, for example. The colours are very much influenced by Matisse and Howard Hodgkin, both very strong colourists. The colours I used are earthy colours – ochres from the ground, which are actually mined from the ground. That produces the very warm glow of the paintings. I do tend to use very warm, evocative colours.

A lot of our readers are interested in art, have painted as a child, but stopped doing it when they became adults. What would you say to them to help them reconnect with their own creativity?

I think it's very difficult to reconnect, and I have moments like that when I'm working very hard on other things. What I would say to them is: believe in yourself, don't be put off by the competition, and if you want to create, then create. Go and look at other pictures in galleries, look at other artist's work, if you can, talk to other artists, but be confident in yourself and the confidence will show through in the work as you grow as a person. It takes time, and you get a lot of knock-backs. You can feel very sad and unhappy if things don't work out, but you've got to stick with it and it'll come. Always try to reconnect, because art is life. Without it, the world is dead.

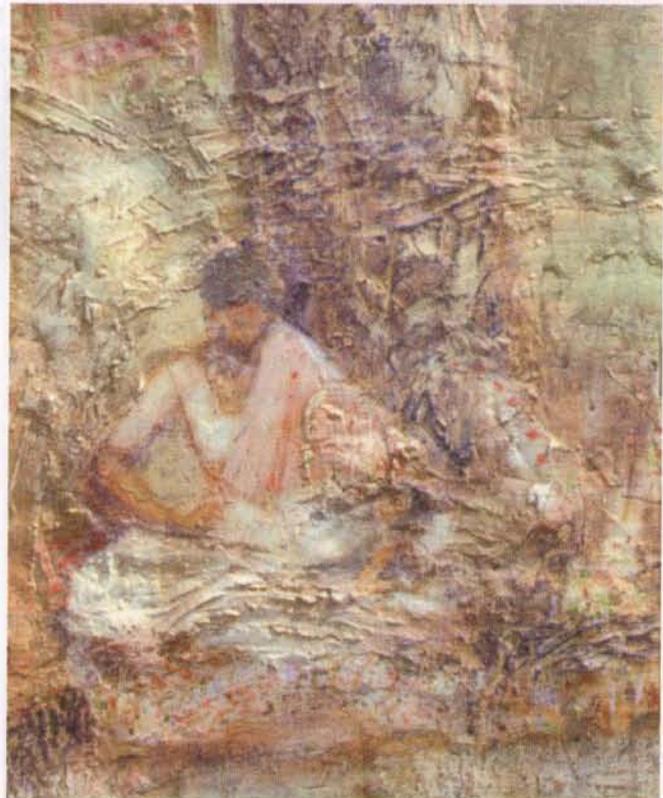
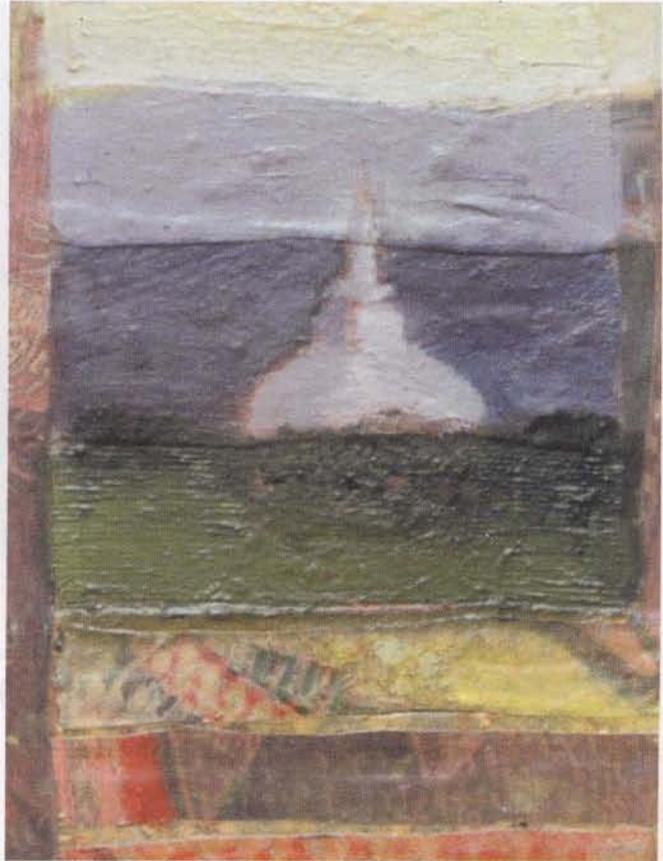
What would you say to parents whose children are interested in art and showing potential, but who are experiencing the pressure to conform to the school curriculum?

Well, that is a problem. There is always the pressure to go into business, make money – it's very difficult to make a lot of money with art. If your child is creative, and they want to create art, but you stifle that, there could be problems later on. Let them work alongside, keep it there, don't let them lose it – even if it has to take second place, and is not necessarily a priority, allow them space to do it. I have to do that myself – put a bit of time aside, and have that space for myself, when I can do what I love to do. You have to be practical about it – it's very difficult to make a lot of money out of art, and to be successful. However, there's no reason why you still couldn't do it and get a lot of pleasure out of it, and give other people a lot of pleasure.

What kind of values do you express through your art?

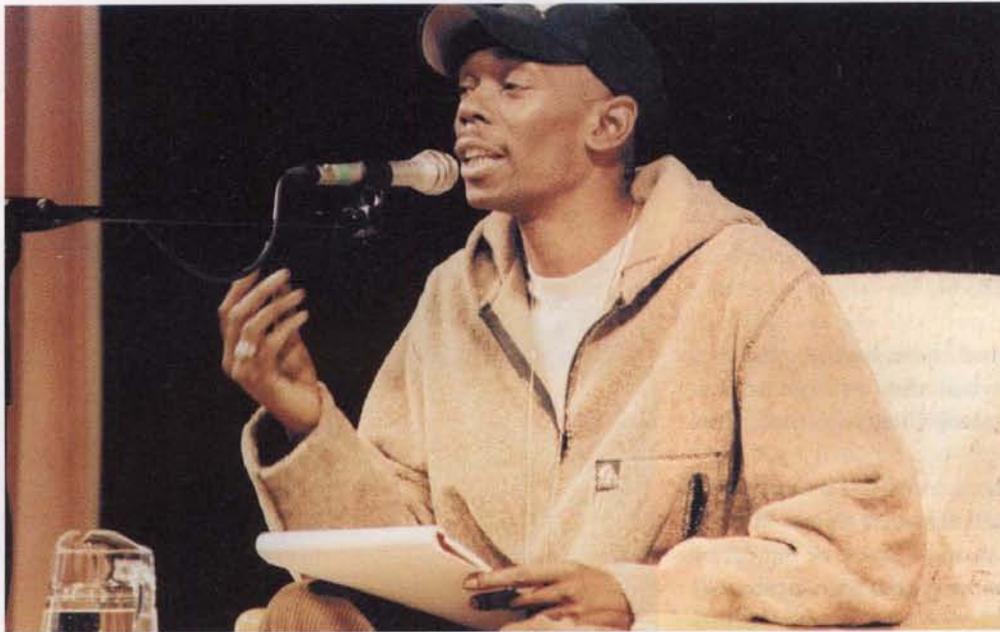
I express love, humanity and spirituality, not of a particular faith, but a universal spirituality. 🙏

Nalini Cook lives and works near Liverpool. She can be contacted at 76, Ashton Road, Newton-le-Willows, Merseyside, WA12 0AJ, UK. Tel: 01925 224243. E-mail: nalini.cook@jefc.ac.uk



Of orange light

ALL PIX: BRAHMA KUMARIS WORLD SPIRITUAL UNIVERSITY, LONDON



Maxi Jazz, lead singer of the world famous band 'Faith-Less', emphasising the importance of self-belief for achieving happiness.

GIVING POWER TO YOUNG PEOPLE

Young Jains could raise the quality of their lives if they tap into the great reservoir of wisdom that is in their inner spirit. With a clear sense of self-identity, they would live a very happy and prosperous life for themselves and positively influence all around them, writes Maureen Goodman

We live in a time when young people are being pulled in all directions, and end up becoming confused and disorientated. They often have great difficulty in choosing their education or career. They lack an awareness of who they are and what they believe. Rarely do they appreciate that their own inner conscience carries many of the answers. Adults often do not support their efforts to be themselves.

The future of our communities depends on the future of young people. Their future depends on their family, environment, education, socio-economic situation, i.e. upon the influences they are exposed to as they grow up during the most formative years of their lives. All of these factors have a profound effect on the development of the sense of identity, personality, belief systems and values. However, perhaps the most crucial factor is the ability of young people to respond appropriately to all these influences. Is the response a conscious choice that has been made, or an unconscious reaction to the situation they are in?

We must ask ourselves two key questions:

1) How can we help young people develop a strong and secure sense of identity?

2) How can we empower young people to make conscious choices in life?

In other words, how can we communicate and encourage the development of a sound value system that will create personal integrity and a better future for everyone? These are questions to ask in the context of family life, education system, media, the business, health, service and community life. It is important to consider how all elements of society can contribute to the development of young people. However, human beings are at the heart of all these institutions, and it is individuals who must be empowered for change.

Often there are good reasons why a young person may respond in a particular way. This may be for self-protection against bullying, racism or abuse, or to preserve a fragile sense of identity. A report published by 'Young Voice' examines the opinions of 1,400 young lads of what they think about life in Britain today. The views reveal the search for identity. As a 17-year-old explains: "I think what is contributing to lad culture is a kind of identity crisis...there is no position in society for us to grow into."

The search for self-identity has to take us beyond what we

do to what we *are*. Too often young people (and indeed adults, too) base their sense of identity on the values of the society in which they live; the way they would like to be seen by others, or the way they think others see them. Identity becomes centred on factors such as gender, race, culture, fashion or wealth. Much energy goes into defending this identity, and any threat can lead to anger and eventually violent behaviour. In a study in Boston, USA, young offenders were asked what made them commit crime. The most common answer was that they were dis-respected by someone, i.e. their identity was threatened. This answer was so common that it was simply abbreviated to 'he dis me'.

A stronger sense of identity, which cannot be so easily eroded or threatened by others or by circumstances, has its foundation in the positive qualities inherent in each and every individual. The innate goodness and the natural capacity to love and to serve are part of our spiritual identity. Qualities such as love, peace, wisdom, strength and joy are at the core of our inner selves. Using guided reflection, we have helped many young people to release these qualities and consciously allow them to become part of their personality, thereby empowering them to make positive choices. The outer expressions of these qualities are the spiritual values such as compassion, care, tolerance, respect, honesty, humility and co-operation. The absence of a real sense of self leads to material values, in which things such as status, position and wealth are more valuable than human life.

That our inherent goodness is so much denied by society is a form of violence towards the individual. It is at the root of so many of our social problems. This denial of our true worth leads to a lack of self-esteem and self-respect, the seed of which is the thoughts that denigrate the self, e.g. thoughts of failure or self-hate. Violent behaviour is used either as an expression of self-hate, or as defence against further threats to self-esteem.

When inherent qualities guide behaviour, a young person is much more resilient to peer pressure, as he or she now has a source of good feeling about the self. The self-esteem and self-reliance that resulted enable the young person to make their own choices based on sound moral values, such as those mentioned above. Research has shown that these values are universally desired by humanity, and are universally acceptable as basic tenets of a just and peaceful society.

This change of vision of the individual to someone with



Rajiv Mehta from Mombasa, Kenya, speaking about his own understanding of the word 'success'.

innate goodness, profoundly changes our perception of young people. From being a problem waiting to be solved, a young person, as an individual, becomes a potentially rich and vital source of creativity and goodness for our society. As is our vision, so is our world.

Reflection and the generation of positive thoughts about the self, relationships and the community is the primary method of empowering the self for personal change. Thoughts lead to attitudes, feelings, words and behaviour.

The power of thought is extremely under-estimated, yet it is at the root of all that we do in life. A five-minute expression of anger or violence can be the result of maybe an hour, a day, a week or even months of negative and angry thinking. In the process of releasing anger, a massive amount of energy is wasted. By contrast, a positive and

inspired thought can take a lifetime of good work to express, generating energy as it goes. Such is the power of thought.

Reflection and silence therefore remain the starting point in transforming attitudes and behaviour, through which we are able to access our inner qualities and values, and our spiritual identity.

Young people learn by witnessing, not by what is said to them. Children are acutely sensitive to dishonesty or double standards. For parents, teachers, youth leaders and all who work with young people in different contexts, the first requirement is to model the values they wish to encourage. This involves us to look deeply and carefully at our own values, and live them in our everyday life. We live our values when we use them in every interaction. A role model is always on show. This is the biggest responsibility we have towards our young people: to provide role models they so urgently need. Living our values creates personal integrity, and integrity is contagious.

In the words of one local head teacher: "You are like a stone thrown into a pond, and the ripples can be enormous, and you never know whose heart you are going to touch." 🙏

Maureen Goodman is the programme co-ordinator for the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University in London. This paper was delivered at a national conference on 'Empowering Young People in the 21st Century' held in London in November 1999. For more information, visit www.bkwsu.com. The Brahma Kumaris have a major book and educational programme for young people called 'Living Values'



TEENAGE REVOLUTION

A famous English public high school starts a regular Jain Assembly. Bhavin Shah and Avinash Doshi report on the events.

It was a typical Thursday morning at Haberdasher's Aske's Boys School for 16 year old Bhavin Shah. There was one difference. This time, the Jains were going to have their own school assembly. There was excitement all around, and some nervousness too! How can we make the assembly interesting for teenagers? From where can we get relevant information on Jainism in English? What different methods should we use to make it varied and fun too? A group of us decided that we wanted to have an assembly, and were going to do our best to get there. We would like to share our experience with you.

For many of us, our discussions and interest in Jainism ended the moment we entered the school grounds: it was a world of fierce academic competition, not an easy place for any teenager. Our school is lucky enough to have great cultural diversity with an already well established Christian, Hindu, Islam and Jewish assembly. However even though there was a large Jain population of some 100 students, there had yet to be an assembly for Jains. For many years Jains had the pleasure of attending the Hindu assembly, but we felt ready to embark on our own.

The assembly is organised by a committee, which consists

of Jains that are in the first year of A-levels. Even though our schedules are already busy doing A-levels it is a great challenge preparing for each week's assembly. On the committee we have a co-ordinator, secretary, public relations officer, notice board officer and two cultural events organisers. To make sure the committee is run democratically, a system of rotation has been implemented so that all members have a chance at each role. We have discovered that in giving our time and energy to this, we have learnt a lot and enhanced our personal skills at the same time. The committee members include Bhavin Shah, Kunal Shah, Mayur Shah, Nikhil Jain, Saggar Malde and myself. Our Headmaster, Chaplain and Mrs. K. Shah have all supported us to start our own assembly.

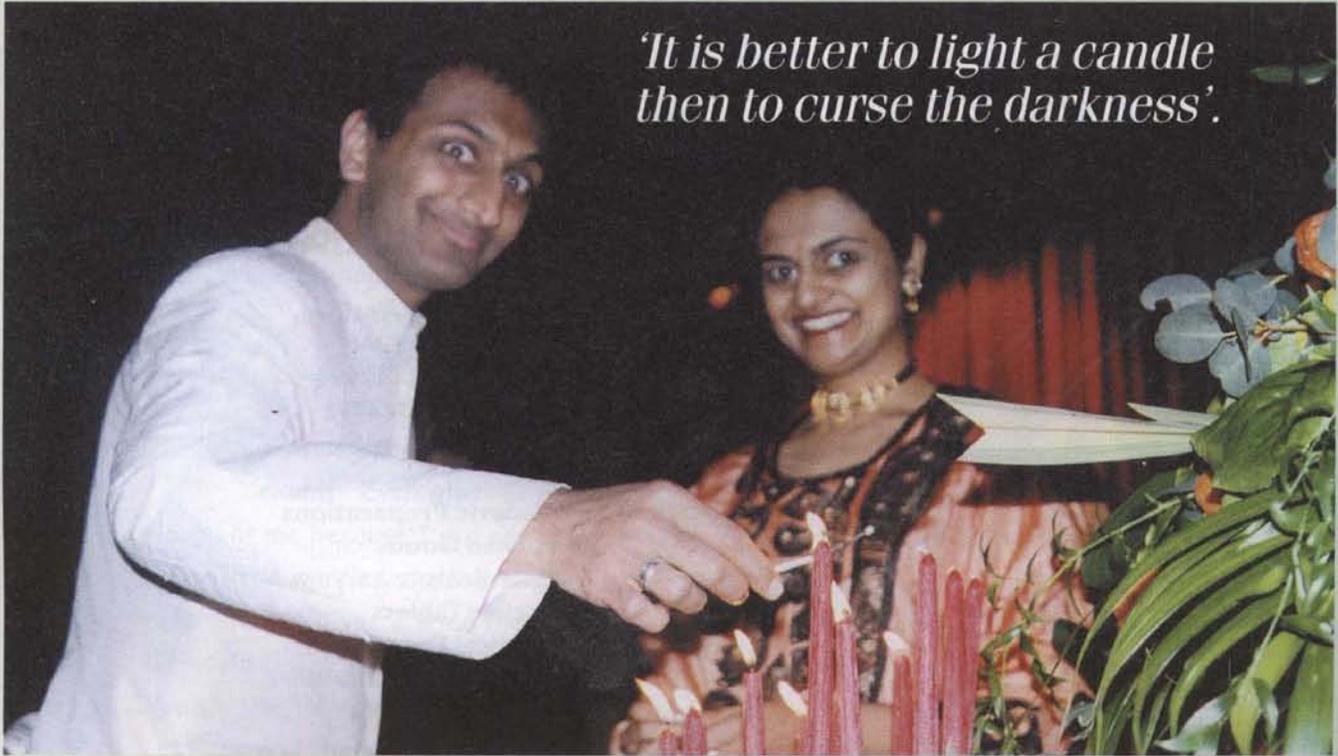
The content of our assemblies varies from musical plays emphasising the essence of the *Navkar Mantra* to upbeat ethical debates on euthanasia and abortion. These debates arouse heart-felt comments and interesting listening.

Everyone really becomes deeply involved in assemblies and has time to have their input in each session. Each person's view is taken with respect and may be followed up by a contrary argument. This enables everyone to decide for themselves what they believe. There are one hundred regular attendees of whom eighty are Jain and twenty non-Jain. Each person no matter what faith is given the same respect that they deserve, this is a quality that our assembly is proud to possess. The fact that we have so many non-Jains coming to each assembly means to us that we are reaching out to our fellow pupils. The age ranges from newcomers of age 11 to those who are 18 years old. This is a broad and challenging audience.

Our information comes from a wide range of places, from our teachers at Chandana Vidyapeeth to the Jain books we have. It is sometimes a challenge finding the relevant material. Our research helps us to discover so many interesting facts about Jainism. We hope that schools where there are large concentrations of Jains are also encouraged from our example to start on their own. We would be happy to advise. 🙏

Bhavin or Avinash can be contacted at bbhasac@dircon.co.uk

JAIN SPIRIT FELLOWSHIPS



*'It is better to light a candle
then to curse the darkness'.*

*Young Jains committee members Shaileen and Priti Shah
lighting candles for Jain Spirit*

Jain Spirit magazine has already had a significant impact in the awareness of Jainism, especially among young people. Its content, variety, openness and professionalism are becoming the talk of the town.

At present the magazine is staffed by two full-time people based in offices in Colchester, 60 miles North-East of London. We are looking to expand the team by adding **TWO DYNAMIC YOUNG PEOPLE** who are keen to take a year out from their University studies.

Time Period

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Work Location will be London and Colchester, so Jains from anywhere in the world can apply to broaden their international experience. A stipend will be payable.

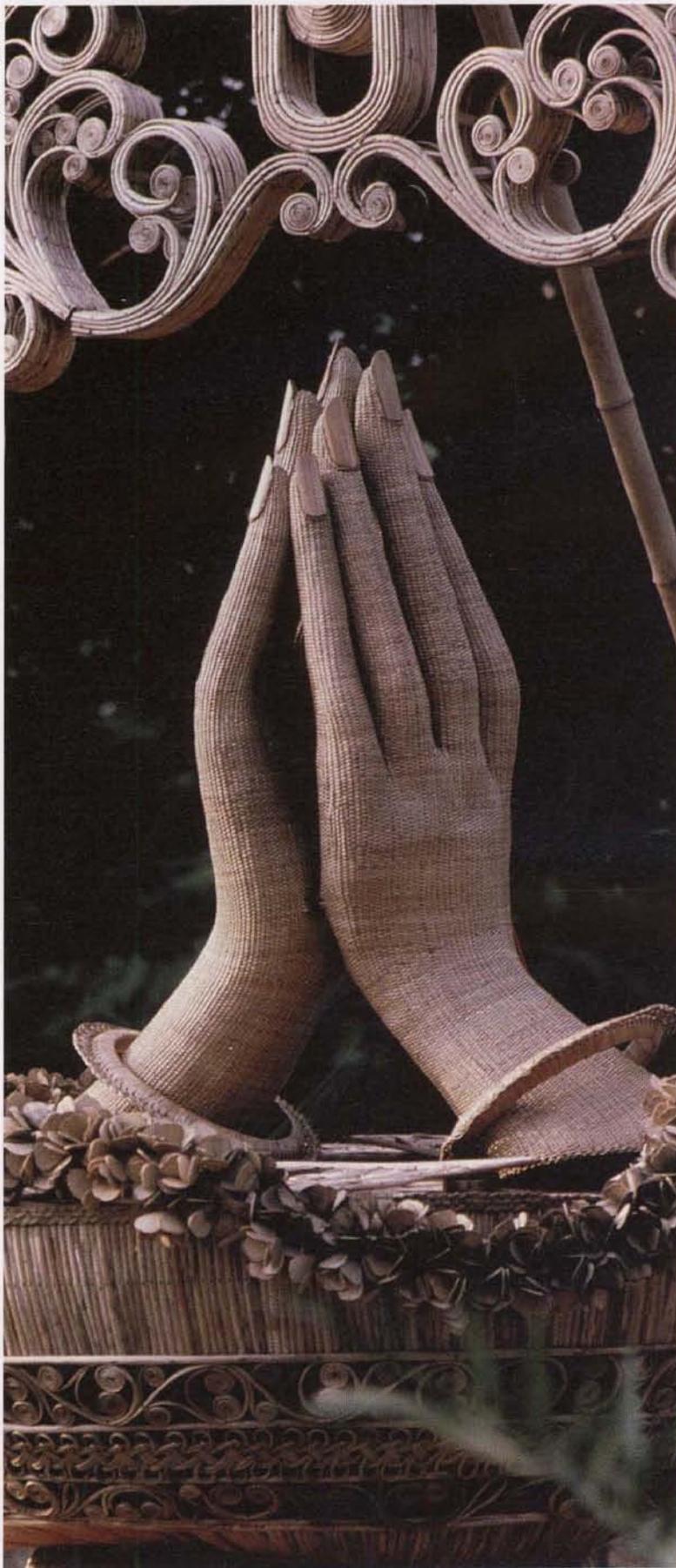
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atul@jainspirit.org right away, and send your CV
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"Labels mean little...it is the heart that really feels"

Father Valles
Jain Spirit
October 1999

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KIDS

KORNER
by Nishant Shah

The story of a little girl named Vyaadhi

I don't know when or how it happened but one morning when I got out of my bed there it was! A blue bag with a shiny zipper and long floppy handles. I opened it and it was full of little worries. After a day I noticed that I was always worried about something or other.

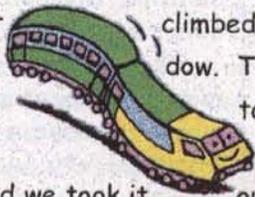
While playing in the school playground I was always worried that I might tear my dress. While riding my bicycle I worried that I might fall down and hurt myself. On the way to school I would worry that I might miss the bus. Even when swimming I would worry that I might drown! In school I worried that I might fail my exams. Even when with friends I worried that they might laugh at me because I did not have the right gear.

The little worries started to grow big and the blue bag started to fill up. I tried hiding it in the wardrobe but it would find a way out and follow me. Even when I sat down to watch the TV, it would jump up onto the sofa next to me. I told my mum but she and the other adults could not even see the bag. It got so bad that I would lie in bed worrying. I decided to throw the bag into the rubbish bin outside but somehow it climbed up the drainpipe and got into my room through the window. Then I remembered that whenever I had problems, if I went to see my grandma, Vidyaa, the problems got solved. I think Grandmas are the cleverest! She could even see the bag and we took it outside into the park. It

was a lovely sunny day. She opened the zipper and with great care and love she took each worry out of the bag one by one. As soon as she did that, some of the worries just ran away because of the cheerful and sunny park. They belonged to the miserable type. Sometimes being cheerful gets rid of the worries. Then she arranged the remaining worries into different piles. There was a pile of

worries flying away worries to be removed by studying and working hard. She put one pile into a basket labelled "Other People's Worries", they were not my worries.

Then she blew a kiss to the last pile and they all flew away. Now that there were no worries left, even the blue bag ran away!



EMBRACING DEATH

Death needs to be understood and not feared. The Jain ritual of *sallekhana* provides a positive method of embracing death, writes Bradley Kerschensteiner

Death. We'd rather not talk about it, except that it is inevitable for all of us. We may all be different in many ways, but one thing is certain – one day we shall die. Although we cannot predict the exact timing of death, we cannot say that it will not occur. This is an undisputed truth. Just as Jainism has given us a unique science of life, it has also given us a unique science of death. Knowing this science can be an enlightening experience, helping us to prepare for death, and even embrace it when it comes. We call it *sallekhana*, the conscious act of embracing death.

The first step one often takes is to take vows and ask for forgiveness from family and friends that one may have harmed in the past. Next, one is expected to abandon all worldly, external and materialistic attachments, which includes food. Food is one of man's passions, and in Jain philosophy it is believed that passions are the source of man's suffering and therefore, an obstacle to his spiritual freedom. Hence fasting is a crucial step, and *sallekhana* is often referred to as 'fasting unto death'.

The observer of *sallekhana*, in accordance with his individual capacity, then undergoes a gradual process of fasting to the point where he/she even abstains from

water. By giving up bodily attachments such as food, one's energy can be re-channeled into the purification and nature of their soul (*jiva*). During *sallekhana*, one empties his mind of all fear, prejudice, desire, hatred and regret, and focuses entirely on the soul. The purpose of *sallekhana* is not only to purify the soul, but by observing the ritual, one also helps prevent the entrance of new *karmas*. *Karmas* restrain the soul from purity and ultimate spiritual liberation (*moksha*). Meditation and prayers from families and friends often accompany *sallekhana*, helping to enforce introspection into the nature, elevation and understanding of the soul. In many ways, it is a very open and public act of dying.

The time it takes to die is unpredictable at the start of the ritual. For some people death can come very quickly, and for others, it can take up to a month or even longer. There was a recent case of a Jain woman visiting Kenya who decided immediately after her husband's death to stop eating and drinking until her own death came. Fortunately for her, she died within twenty-four hours! One thing we can say though, is that through *sallekhana*, the likelihood of death is certain, and its timing also becomes broadly predictable. When death under this ritual strikes, it will not be a surprise or a shock for the family. In this way, it becomes easier for everyone to accept it.

It is critical to distinguish *sallekhana* from suicide. One's intentions and mentality when undergoing *sallekhana* is different than those who

This is the entrance to a cave in Shravana Belgola, which is a well known Jain pilgrimage site in southern India. In this cave, many monks have observed Sallekhana.



BRAD KERSCHENSTEINER



Death needs to be understood, but not feared. It is as natural and inevitable as life itself.

commit suicide. One who commits suicide has a mind full of impure feelings such as greed, anxiety, depression, guilt and hatred. Suicide is approached violently and often clandestinely by means of cutting, hanging, poisoning or shooting. In other words, suicide is a cowardly way of escaping life while *sallekhana* is an act of purifying the soul, embracing life and facing death courageously. An observer of *sallekhana* is free of any passions, often has the consent of a guru or the Jain community, and seeks forgiveness from family and friends.

The practice of *sallekhana* is not restricted to ascetics. However, most Jains who observe *sallekhana* tend to be monks, scholars or those who are educated about the ritual. Old age and terminal disease are the two major circumstances under which one decides to observe *sallekhana*. According to Jainism, life and time develop in a cyclical manner rather than unfolding in a linear one as Western philosophy suggests. One does not simply move from birth through life to death, but as Niraj Jain, a noted Jain scholar said, “because we are born we die, because we die we are born.” Since life is cyclical and *sallekhana* is a way of perfecting Jain principles, the fear of death is minimized. It is not that death does not occur, but through it, only the body dies. Furthermore, death is embraced because the soul is given a chance to be entirely purified through *sallekhana*. Denial of death cannot occur

because in a cyclical view of life, there is no death except for a bodily death.

However, one is not guaranteed a better rebirth or *moksha* by observing *sallekhana*. The observer empties himself of expectation and desire for the quality of the next life, so if one does not practice *sallekhana* their chances of being reborn into a better life are not reduced. According to Jain philosophy, one of the five transgressions to be avoided during the observance of *sallekhana* is that one wish for a particular kind of fruit (i.e. a better rebirth or *moksha*) as a result of his penance.

Similar to many other world religions, it is usually the monks and scholars who have the knowledge of *sallekhana* and thus the opportunity to practice a ritual like *sallekhana*. Undoubtedly, it should be the individual’s choice whether or not to practice *sallekhana*, or pursue any religious aspect that suits them. Perfection and liberation of the soul should be a choice granted to all Jains. However, it appears that some Jains are not given an opportunity to make this choice because they do not have the knowledge about *sallekhana*. 🙏

Bradley Kerschensteiner wrote a postgraduate research paper on this subject after a visit to South India. He lives in Gahanna, Ohio.

We live in a world with a great divide between rich and poor, the unemployed and the over-employed. While the rich suffer from stress and insecurity, the poor suffer from hunger and destitution. Mahatma Gandhi showed us a great way of solving this problem, a new economics of work and life. He felt that good Indians should recognize their own genius, and not try to copy Western culture, which was simply a tool of colonization.

Spiritual values should not be separated from politics, economics, agriculture, education and all other activities of daily life. In this integral design, there is no conflict between spiritual and material. It is no good for some people closing themselves in a monastic order to practice religion, and for others to say that a spiritual life is only for saints and celibates. Such a separation of religion from society will breed corruption, greed, competition, power mania and the exploitation of the weak and poor.

In India, people have lived for thousands of years in relative harmony with their surroundings: living in their homesteads, weaving homespun clothes, eating homegrown food, using homemade goods; caring for their animals, forests and lands; celebrating the fertility of the soil with feasts; performing the stories of great epics and building temples. Every region of India has developed its own distinctive culture, to which travelling story-tellers, wandering *sadhus*, and constantly flowing streams of pilgrims have traditionally made their contribution.

According to the principle of *swadeshi*, whatever is made or produced in the village, first and foremost, must be used by the members of the village. Trading among villages, and between villages and towns should be minimal, like icing on the cake. Goods and services that cannot be generated within



JAYU SHAH

Why do children have to work in the modern world?

the community can be brought from elsewhere. *Swadeshi* avoids economic dependence on external market forces, which could make the village community vulnerable. It also avoids unnecessary, unhealthy, wasteful, and therefore environmentally destructive transportation. The village must build a strong economic base to satisfy most of its needs, and all members of the village community should give priority to local goods and services.

Every village community of free India should have its own carpenters, shoemakers, potters, builders, mechanics, farmers, engineers, weavers, teachers, bankers, merchants, traders, musicians, artists and priests. In other words, each village should be a microcosm of India – a web of loosely interconnected communities. Gandhi considered these communities

so important that he thought they should be given the status of “village republics”. The village community should embody the spirit of the home – an extension of the family rather than a collection of competing individuals. Gandhi’s dream was not a personal self-sufficiency, not even a family self-sufficiency, but the self-sufficiency of the village community.

By adopting the principle of production by the masses, village communities would be able to restore dignity to the work done by human hands. There is an intrinsic value in anything we do with our hands, and in handing over work to machines we lose not only the material benefits, but also the spiritual benefits: for work by hand brings with it a meditative mind and self-fulfilment.

SPIRITUAL ECONOMICS

The values by which we work and run our businesses have a direct impact on the economy. Mahatma Gandhi showed us a unique new way of economy which was at heart spiritual and nonviolent, explains Satish Kumar

Gandhi wrote: "It is a tragedy of the first magnitude that millions of people have ceased to use their hands as hands. Nature has bestowed upon us this great gift, which is our hand. If the craze for machinery methods continues, it is highly likely that a time will come when we shall be so incapacitated and weak that

we shall begin to curse ourselves for having forgotten the use of living machines given to us by God. Millions cannot keep fit by games and athletics, and why should they exchange the useful, productive, hardy occupations for the useless, unproductive and expensive sports and games?"

Mass production is only concerned with the product, whereas production by the masses is concerned with the product, the producers and the process. The driving force behind mass production is a cult of the individual. What motive can there be for the expansion of the economy on a global scale other than the desire for personal and corporate profit? In contrast, a locally based economy enhances community spirit, community relationships and community well-being. Such an economy encourages mutual aid. Members of the village take care of themselves, their families, their neighbours, their animals, lands, forestry and all the natural resources for the benefit of the present and future generations.

Mass production leads people to leave their villages, their land, their craft and their homestead, and go to work in factories. Instead of dignified human beings and members of a self-respecting village community, people become cogs in the machines, standing at the conveyor belt, living in shantytowns, and depending on the mercy of the bosses. Fewer and fewer people are then needed for work, because the industrialists want greater productivity.

The masters of the money economy want more and more efficient machines to work faster and faster, and the result could be that men and women will be thrown on the scrapheap of unemployment. Such a society generates rootless and jobless millions living as dependents of the state or begging in the streets. In *swadeshi*, the machine would be subordinated to the worker; it would not be allowed to become the master, dictating the pace of human activity. Similarly, market forces would serve the community rather than forcing the people to fit the market.

Someone asked Gandhi, "What do you think of Western civilization?" He simply replied, "It would be a good idea." For Gandhi, a machine civilization is no civilization. A society in which workers have to labour at conveyor belts; in which

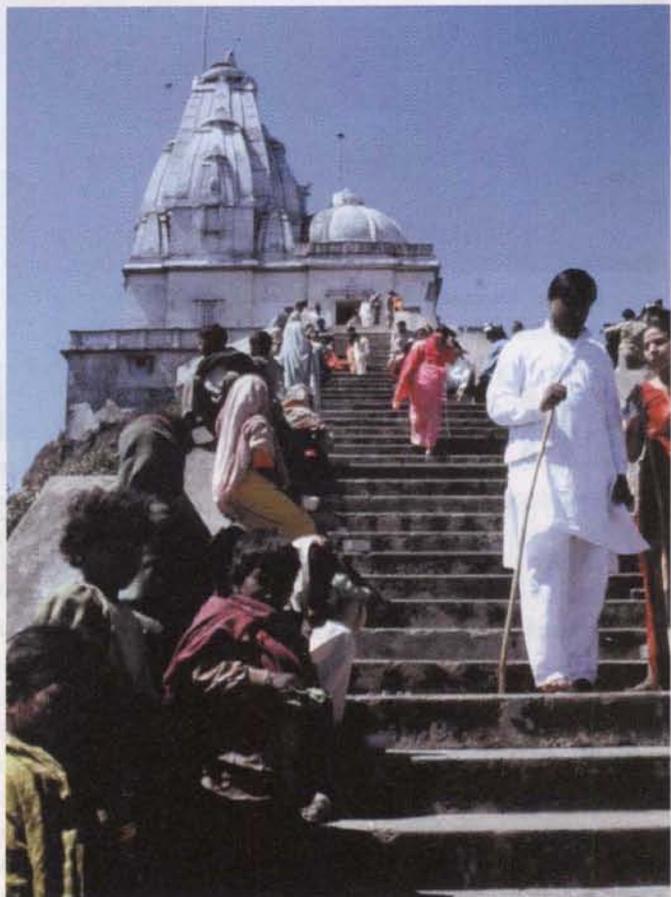
GANDHI'S SEVEN SOCIAL SINS

- POLITICS..... Without Principles
- WEALTH..... Without Work
- COMMERCE..... Without Morality
- EDUCATION..... Without Character
- PLEASURE..... Without Conscience
- SCIENCE..... Without Humanity
- WORSHIP..... Without Sacrifice

animals are treated cruelly on factory farms; and in which economic activity necessarily leads to ecological devastation – could not be conceived as a civilization. Its citizens could only end up as neurotics, the natural world would inevitably be transformed into a desert, and its cities into concrete

jungles. In other words, global industrial society, as opposed to society made up of largely autonomous communities committed to the principle of *swadeshi*, is unsustainable. *Swadeshi* for Gandhi was a sacred principle – as sacred for him as the principle of truth and nonviolence. Every morning and every evening, Gandhi repeated his commitment to *swadeshi* in his prayers. 🙏

Satish Kumar is Chairman and Consulting Editor of Jain Spirit



JAYU SHAH

The temple stands for caring and sharing, not just for self-fulfilment.



Vegetables are tasty, healthy and nourishing. In the next millenium, they will become a major part of global food.

MEAT WILL DIE

The scientific evidence of the adverse impact of non-vegetarianism on our health, environment and society is staggering. The world will have no choice but to become predominantly vegetarian, argues Ed Ayres.

When Julius Caesar made his triumphal entrance into Rome in 45 BC, he celebrated by giving a feast, at which thousands of guests gorged on poultry, seafood and game. Similar celebrations featuring exorbitant consumption of animal flesh have marked human victories – in war, sport, politics and commerce – since our

species learned to control fire. Throughout the developing world today, one of the first things people do as they climb out of poverty is to shift from their peasant diet of mainly grains and beans to one that is rich in pork and beef. Since 1950, consumption of meat per capita has more than doubled around the globe.

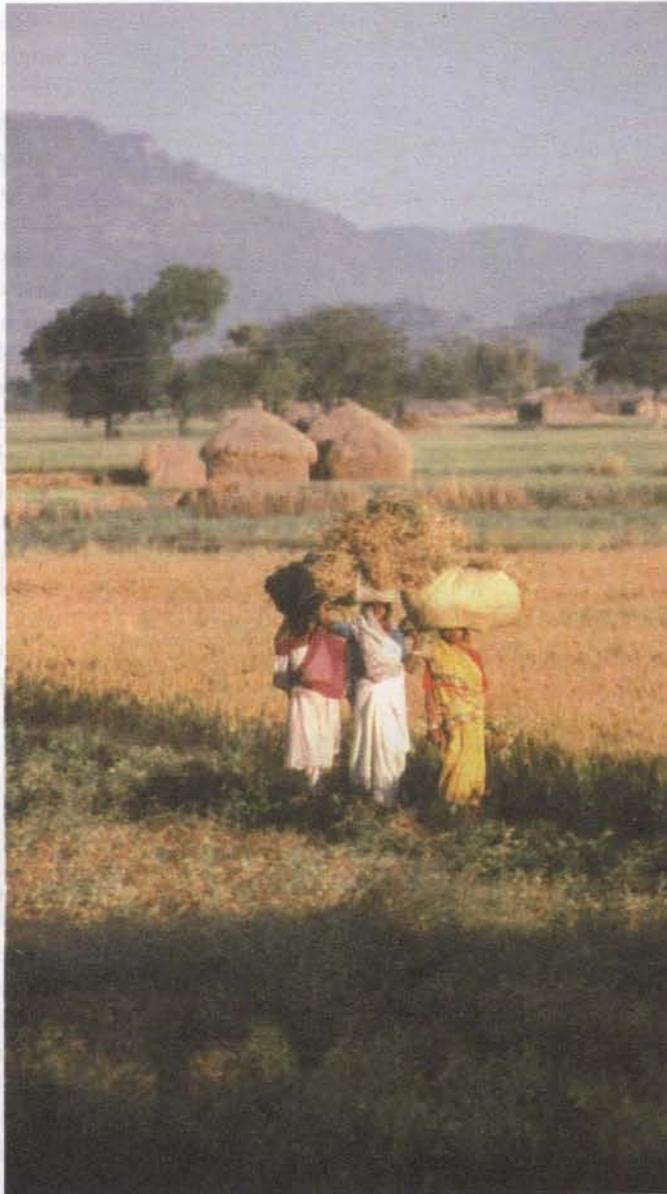
Meat, it seems, is not just food but reward as well. However, in the coming century that will change. Much as we have awakened to the full economic and social costs of cigarettes, we will find we can no longer subsidize or ignore the costs of mass-producing cattle, poultry, pigs, sheep and fish to feed our growing population. These costs include the hugely inefficient use of freshwater and land, heavy pollution of livestock faeces, rising rates of heart disease and other degenerative illnesses, and the spreading destruction of forests on which much of our planet's life depends.

First, consider the impact on supplies of freshwater. To produce 1lb of feedlot beef requires 7lb of feed grain, which takes 7,000 lb of water to grow. Pass up one hamburger, and you will save as much water as you save by taking 40 showers with a low-flow nozzle. Yet in the US, 70 per cent of all the wheat, corn and other grain produced goes to feeding herds of livestock. Around the world, as more water is diverted to raising pigs and chickens instead of producing crops for direct consumption, millions of wells are going dry. India, China, North Africa and the US are all running freshwater deficits, pumping more from their aquifers than rain can replenish. As populations in water-scarce regions continue to expand, governments will inevitably act to cut these deficits by shifting water to grow food, not feed. The new policies will raise the price of meat to levels unaffordable for any but the rich.

That prospect will doubtlessly provoke protests that the direct consumption of grain cannot provide the same protein as meat. Indeed it cannot. But nutritionists will attest that most people in the richest countries do not need nearly as much protein as they are currently getting from meat. There are plenty of vegetable sources – including the grains now squandered on feed – that can provide the protein we need.

Unfortunately, this is not just a matter of productive capacity. Mass production of meat has also become a staggering source of pollution. Maybe cow pies once were just a pastoral joke, but in recent years livestock waste has been implicated in massive fish kills, and outbreaks of such diseases as pfiesteria, which causes memory loss, confusion and acute skin burn in people exposed to contaminated water. In the US, livestock now produce 140 times as much waste as people do. Just one hog farm in Utah, for example, produces more sewage than the city of Los Angeles. These megafarms are proliferating, and in populous areas their waste is tainting drinking water. In more pristine regions, from Indonesia to the Amazon, tropical rain forest is being burned down to make room for more and more cattle. Agriculture is the world's biggest cause of deforestation, and the increasing demand for meat is the biggest force in the expansion of agriculture.

What has proved an unsustainable burden to the life of the planet, is also proving unsustainable for the planet's dominant species. In China a recent shift to meat-heavy diet has been linked to increase in obesity, cardiovascular disease, breast cancer and colorectal cancer. American and World Health Organization researchers have announced similar findings for other parts of the world. There is growing concern about what happens to people who eat the flesh of animals that have been pumped full of genetically



A meat diet has a direct and dramatic adverse impact on our food, water, land and air. Such natural beauty is rare and at times even deceiving as the pollution and damage to land and water systems is not visible to the naked eye.

modified organisms, hormones and antibiotics.

These concerns may seem counter-intuitive. We evolved as hunter-gatherers, and ate meat for a hundred millennium before modern times. It is natural for us to eat meat, one might say. But today's factory-raised, transgenic, chemical-laden livestock are a far cry from the wild animals our ancestors hunted. When we cleverly shifted from

wildland hunting and gathering to systematic herding and farming, we changed the natural balances irrevocably. The shift enabled us to produce food surpluses, but these surpluses also allowed us to reproduce prodigiously. When we did, it became only a matter of time before we could no longer have the large area of wildland per individual, which is necessary to sustain a top-predator species.

By covering more and more of the planet with our cities, farms and waste, we have jeopardized other top-predators that need space as well. Tigers and panthers are being squeezed out and may not last the coming century. We, at least, have the flexibility – the omnivorous stomach and creative brain – to adapt. We can do it by moving down the food chain: eating foods that use less water and land, and that pollute far less, than cows and pigs do. In the long run, we can lose our memory of eating animals, and we will discover the intrinsic satisfaction of a diverse, plant-based diet as millions of people already have.

I am not predicting the end of all meat eating. But the era of mass-produced animal flesh, and its unsustainable costs to human and environmental health should be over before the next century is out. 🙏

Ed Ayres is editorial director of the Worldwatch Institute, and author of 'God's Last Offer: Negotiating for a Sustainable Future'. This article is reprinted from the 8th November 1999 issue of Time magazine.



The Jain temple at Ranakpur in Rajasthan, India is a remarkable example of tranquility created with the greatest patience.

SLOW DOWN

Patience has always been a central tenet of Jainism. Donella Meadows reminds us of the importance of slowing down

Those of us who think the world needs saving – from environmental destruction, rapacious greed, decaying morals, drugs, crime, racism, whatever – keep very busy crusading for our favourite remedies. School vouchers. Carbon taxes. Campaign reform. The Endangered Species Act. A lower capital gains tax. Strong regulation. No regulation. You know. That long list of mutually inconsistent Holy Grails with which we like to hit each other over the head.

There's one solution to the world's problems, however, that I never hear frenzied activists suggest: slowing down.

Slowing down could be the single, most effective solution to the particular save-the-world struggle I immerse myself in – the struggle for sustainability, for living harmoniously and well within the limits and laws of the Earth.

Suppose we weren't in such a hurry. We could take time to walk instead of drive, to sail instead of fly. To clean up our messes. To discuss our plans throughout the whole community before we send in bulldozers to make irreversible changes.

Suppose we went at a slow enough pace not only to smell the flowers, but to feel our bodies, play with children, look openly – without agenda or timetable – into the faces of our loved ones. Suppose we stopped gulping fast food and started savouring slow food, grown, cooked, served and eaten with care. Suppose we took time each day to sit in silence. I think, if we did those things, the world wouldn't need much saving.

We could cut our energy and material use drastically, because we would get the full good out of what we use. We wouldn't have to buy so many things to save time. Have you ever wondered, with all our time-saving paraphernalia, what happens to the time we save? We wouldn't make so many mistakes. We could listen more, and hurt each other less. Maybe we could even take time to reason through our favourite solutions, test them, and learn what their actual effects are.

A friend in India tells me that the onslaught of Western advertising in his country is a cultural blow, not so much because of the messages of the ads, but because of their pace. The stun-the-senses barrage of all TV programming, especially ads, is antiethical to a thousand-year-old tradition of contemplation. I can imagine that. I have been driven crazy by the slow pace at which things get done in India. Don't these people know that time is money? What they know, actually, is that time is life, and to go zooming through it is to miss living.

Slow . . . d o w n. Do that first. Then quietly, carefully, think about what else might need to be done. 🙏

Donella Meadows is a Professor of Environmental Studies at Dartmouth College, USA.

AN ECOLOGY OF BEING

In recent years, life has become much more sedentary and compartmentalized. To practice Jain values we need to move to more a holistic life writes Matt Maxwell.

To say that we live in a box is not a metaphor, but the truth. Let us follow the course of a day of the typical modern male. In the morning he wakes up in his heavily mortgaged house (box 1), catches the latest report about the crashing stock-market in the Far East on the TV (box 2) while gulping down instant cereal (which is poured from box 3) with a cup of milk (which comes from factory-farmed cows in box 4). He steps into the garage (box 5) and into his car (box 6). He passes by a thousand box-like factories and warehouses, and arrives at the underground parking lot of his office building (box 7). He gets into the elevator (box 8), arrives at the office (box 9) and stares at a computer terminal (box 10) for the better part of the day. In the evening when he returns home he puts his pre-packed dinner (box 11), made with factory-farmed food (box 12), in the microwave (box 13). Finally, before retiring to bed, he flips on his personal computer (box 14) and surfs the net.

It is only logical that this would lead to an urban culture where the large bulk of residents live in structures known as “apart-ments”. It is just as logical that – if our prime mode of competition is to see how much we can each consume with minimal regard for the others – that these patterns of behaviour will result in profound ecosystem destruction around the Earth, as well as in a plethora of economic and social injustices.

So how do we “unbox” our lives? It doesn’t really come with a set of instructions, but we must be rooted in an understanding that I like to refer to as an *ecology of being*. By this I do not simply mean being ecological in our

actions, although this is a critically important element, but rather that we understand intellectually, emotionally and spiritually the dynamics of ecology, typified by such qualities as interrelatedness, complexity, diversity, co-evolution and balance. Such an integrated perspective is essential to make one’s actions, words and thoughts part of a cohesive whole. Moreover, the recognition by different parties within the environmental movement of the need for a holistic perspective would create common ground along the



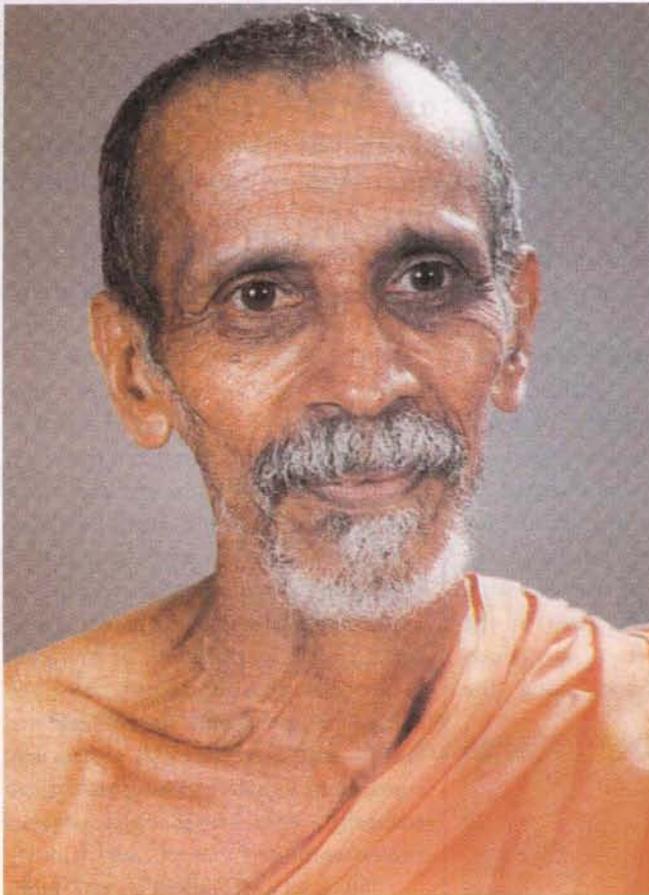
*Nature knows no boundaries.
We create them.*

“blue-green”, “green-green”, and “red-green” continuum. In this view, ecology is not a separate discipline but a way of living one’s life, thinking one’s thoughts, and being present to the world. Such an experimental/conceptual framework

calls for philosophers to become activists; activists to become philosophers; and engineers, scientists, teachers and everyone else to become both. It calls for groups and organisations to focus on relatedness and commonality, rather than on dissimilarities. We must see that all of our lives are of one fabric – living bioregionally, drinking fair-trade coffee, supporting organic agriculture, walking in the wild, working in the garden, using sustainable transportation or investing in green mutual funds. Just generally using less space and consuming less stuff, and directly or financially supporting activist organisations, will all naturally flow from this deeper understanding.

This is all well and good, you might say, but how does one go about shaping such an understanding? It begins with those of us concerned with issues of an ecological nature stepping back a bit from our particular areas of interest and seeing the whole within the parts. It requires of the scientists, who “just want to get on with the job” of designing a more sustainable infrastructure, to explore their inner territory. It calls on academics to bridge the gap between the theoretical and the practical, and to make their work as accessible as possible. And it asks for each of us to take off our blinders, and to see what Bateson referred to as the *metapatterns* which speak of the dynamism and interrelatedness underlying all things. The boxes that define our physical existence were created in our minds and hearts. This is where they must first be disassembled! 🙏

Matt Maxwell is a PhD student at the University of Toronto.



Swami Chidananda

TO LIVE IS TO LOVE

A bold inter-faith message from Hindu saint
Swami Chidananda.

At the time I write this, the whole world is waiting and looking forward to the dawn of the 21st century, the advent of the third millennium. What do they have in store for mankind? What will they bring to this world where the common man is wearied of war and violence, and longs to see an era of peace, friendship and goodwill prevail upon earth? This has been the dear dream and the fond hope of all human beings throughout the world over many centuries. The law of jungle must cease to be. A humane humanity all people wish to see.

If a major world-catastrophe is to be prevented in time, the foremost philosophers, saints and men of goodwill of the world must come forward. Theirs is this sacred duty. For the light of divine knowledge, the radiance of the universal power – that

holds all beings together, supports the whole universe and sustains it – expresses itself through them. Their personalities are the manifestations of the great cosmic law. In ages past, whenever there was need to prevent the decline of righteousness, there have appeared on the scene great prophets and messengers of God. Lord Krishna, Lord Buddha, Lord Jesus, Lord Mahavira, Lord Zoroaster and such beings —so many of them appeared, when and where divine intervention was needed in the affairs of mankind. There is such a need now. But times have changed. The world has shrunk considerably. The pace of life has been greatly accelerated. Even benevolent autocracy and monarchy have had to yield to democracy. Not a king or any such individuals rule anymore. People themselves rule the nations, through an elected representative body. It is no wonder that divine intervention too, might take a similar form. Not an individual prophet, but the united body of world philosophers and mystics can solve the present-day problems of the world, and give the proper lead to those who govern the nations, their businesses, their social life etc.

Today, it is not enough if His message is delivered on a battlefield (Gita), or on a mount (New Testament), or in a holy place (Sarnath), and is allowed to take its own time to spread far and wide. Simultaneously, everybody should hear the word of god all over the world, and take to the right path. This is possible only through the agency of a united body of world philosophers and leaders and therefore, divine intervention might well take that form.

The philosophers, saints and men of goodwill of the world must come now to the rescue with their spiritual insight. For they have the impartial eye of rational intellectual discrimination, and dispassionate guidance of human society for the good of all. They discern what is right and what is wrong. To them the laws of God are living realities. They know that love is divine and hatred is undivine. They know that God has created the world in order that men might love one another and not kill one another. Their word alone, endowed with the authority of their inner communion with God, can save the world from the worst calamity. The problem is serious and urgent. Philosophers must act at once.

The first thing is to set the house in order. The foremost philosophers, belonging to the various major religions of the world, must organise and conduct research into the

Sharing and enabling is an expression of selfless Love. It is also a way to learn humility.



NARENDRA SHAH

fundamental tenets of their own religions. Interpolations and accretions – that tilt the scale of values the wrong way – have to be removed. The spirit must be rescued from the mere form, reality must be re-discovered and the appearances negated.

Secondly, the philosophers of all religions must confer and exchange their ideas. This conference might well prove to be the Collective Descent of Divinity to save the world from ruin and destruction. They will not only discover the common thread that links all the religions of the world, but also the spiritual needs of the different nations and religions, and the ways and means of supplying them. Such a conference will enable each individual philosopher to view his or her own religion in a new light. Without altering the fundamentals of the religion in any way, they will be able to bring about a synthesis of all the religions, each religion taking what is best from the others. Thus, through a new unity of religions a new world order will emerge.

Thirdly, this world philosophical congress will provide the correct philosophical basis for the scientists, economists and politicians to build their systems. Thus guided by the philosophers, scientists will work for the happiness and welfare of humanity, economists will plan for the commonwealth, politicians will discover ways and means of living at peace, and maintaining the peace of the world. This is the need of the hour. I pray to all the people of the world to urge and persuade the philosophers to bring about this event on the above lines, and serve the cause of world-peace and brotherhood. May God bless the whole mankind with peace and prosperity!

Now I bring my holy master, Swami Sivanandaji's words to you; "Love is the law of life. To love is to fulfil the law. And to

fulfil the law means universal welfare, peace and happiness. This world has come out of love. It exists in love. It finally merges in to the Great Love. Love is life. Love is joy. Love is warmth. Love is the golden tie which binds heart to heart, soul to soul. Love is constructive and creative. Love binds and builds. Love is the principle of regeneration. Love is an actual spiritual force you can use with confidence. Love is a positive, concrete thing. He who applies the law of love with scientific precision can work wonders. The law of love is far greater a science than any modern science. The law of love prevails among saints, mystics and men of good heart.

To live is to love. To love is to live. You live so that you may learn to love. You love so that you may learn to live in the eternal. Life without faith, love and devotion is a dreary waste. It is real death. There is no virtue higher than love; there is no religion higher than love; because love is truth; love is God. God is an embodiment of love. In every inch of His creation, you can verily understand His love. Love is the immediate way to truth or the kingdom of God. It is the life-principle of creation. It is the highest expression of soul-force. It is the sum total of all the duties of religion. It is the magic wand in the hand of a devotee by which he conquers the whole world. It was the driving force behind Mira, Radha, Tukaram, Tulasidas, Gouranga, Jesus and the God-intoxicated Sufis, Mansoor and Shams Tabriez. Love one, love all." 🙏

Swami Chidananda is the Head of the Divine Life Society based at Rishikesh in India. He was given the prestigious award of Hindu of the Year 1999 by Hinduism Today magazine. www.sivanandadlshq.org



Jain Terapanthi Shramanis with young delegates at the JAINA Convention in Philadelphia, July 1999.

ANUVRAT: A JAIN ATOM BOMB?

Acharya Tulsi started a radical movement based on self-commitment and self-discipline. All change must begin with ourselves, writes S. L. Gandhi

In the 1950's, many western celebrities, like Bertrand Russell and Martin Luther King, were organizing huge peace rallies exhorting the people to raise their voice against the senseless genocide caused by the nuclear holocaust in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. At the same time, by a strange coincidence, a relatively unknown religious saint of the East, heading a Jain sect, seated far away in a remote town of the Thar Desert of Rajasthan, was engaged in an identical mission. He was Acharya Tulsi. He heard the inner call that commanded him to throw off the yoke of sectarian dogmatism, and launched a crusade against caste, untouchability, subjugation of women and religious intolerance. This inner voice directed the Acharya to launch a

movement for liberating the individual from a bigoted sectarian outlook, fanaticism. The Acharya realized that society couldn't be purged without an inner transformation of man. Instinctively he was motivated by the maxim "In small proportions we just beauties see, And in short measures, life may perfect be."

Acharya Tulsi began his mission by carefully drawing up a code of conduct for all individuals in society. This code consisted of atomic or small vows (*anuvrats*). He launched what came to be known as the Anuvrat Movement urging the individuals to pledge themselves willingly to observe the *anuvrats*. The movement embodied a vision of a harmonious society free from exploitation and conflict. It strives for

the middle path, steering clear of the two extremes of absolute asceticism (*mahavrats*) and unbridled materialism. The Acharya carried his message far and wide covering thousands of miles on foot, encouraging the people to practice the *anuvrats*.

There is a critical difference between trying to live by Jain principles and taking a vow to observe them. A vow is a promise, an act of commitment made before a God or a Saint. This prevents the commitment from wavering in the future. Acharya Tulsi encouraged people to take vows, not just agree with the principles. A lot of people today say that they live an ethical life but when questioned further, we find that their principles are very fluid and pragmatic. The importance of a vow is a unique aspect of Jainism.

'Like some men at various other places, here is an Indian, lean, thin, short-statured but with shining eyes,

who is very much worried about the present state of the world. He is Tulsi, aged 36, the preceptor of the Jain Terapanth, which is a religious organization having faith in nonviolence. Acharya Tulsi founded the Anuvrati Sangh in 1949... When he has succeeded in making all Indians undertake the vows, he will try to convert the rest of the world to the life of a *vratī*, wrote *Time Magazine* published from New York in its issue on 15 May 1950 under the caption 'Atom Bomb'.

The editorial comment was prompted by an unusual event that had taken place on the last day of April within the sprawling precincts of the Municipal Corporation in Chandani Chowk – the busiest centre of Old Delhi. The occasion was the first All India Conference of the *Anuvratīs* organized after one year of its inception. Seated on the dais was the Acharya, young and extremely handsome. His disciples, wearing their traditional dresses characteristic of their profession, had gathered to listen to his special message on this historic occasion. The young Acharya declared that he had resolved to launch a crusade against immorality in social life, and dedicate his entire life to the cause of nonviolence and unity of all human beings. He exhorted his disciples to volunteer for the disciplined life of an *anuvratī*.

Acharya Tulsi said: "If an atom has in it the monstrous power to destroy the world, amply demonstrated in the unprecedented holocaust at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, I want to tell the world that we have its counterparts in *anuvrats* – a small or atomic vow – which alone has the power to ward off and counter the threat of an atom bomb."

The appeal had a magical effect on the audience. It was astounding that more than six hundred of his disciples, mostly businessmen, stood up, as if they had all been propelled by the force of a divine power, and accepted *anuvrats*

(small or atomic vows) pledging themselves never to resort to black marketing, bribery, exploitation, communalism, adulteration and violence.

The Anuvrat Movement has since grown into a mighty banyan tree with its branches spreading in all directions. It has shown light to thousands of people all over the country. We have hosted four international conferences on Peace and Non-Violent Action. More and more people are looking upon the Acharya as a beacon to light their path to a bright tomorrow, with peace and love reigning everywhere. The Acharya realized in the wake of his experiment to encourage the people to practice *anuvrats* that a radical attitudinal change in man was not possible merely through the advocacy of the *anuvrat* code of conduct. It must be accompanied by another effective tool that can gradually induce him to introspect.

After the death of Acharya Tulsi his successor, Acharya Mahapragya, is the new spiritual patron of the Movement. Acharya Mahapragya came up with a bright idea of a unique technique of meditation, called *Preksha Dhyān*, as a means to bring about a mass psychological transformation. Acharya Shree added Preksha Meditation to his programme of reconstruction of moral and spiritual values. Fortified with this potent means of an attitudinal change in man, the Anuvrat Movement has added a new and important dimension. A follower of the *anuvrats* code has to practice Preksha Meditation every day, which inclines him naturally to imbibe the *anuvrats* discipline. It ultimately becomes an integral part of his character.

Acharya Mahapragya has launched a new scheme of Jivan Vigyan for educating youngsters in the doctrine of *anuvrats* so that they may grow up as disciplined, broad-minded and

● WHAT ARE THE ANUVRATS? THESE ARE BASIC VOWS TAKEN IN THE PRESENCE OF SAINTS.

1. I will not willfully kill any innocent creature.
2. I will not attack anybody.
3. I will not take part in violence or any destructive activities.
4. I will believe in human unity and not discriminate.
5. I will practice religious tolerance.
6. I will observe care in business and the workplace.
7. I will set limits to my possessions and acquisitions.
8. I will not encourage evil customs.
9. I will lead a life free from addictions.
10. I will always be alert to keeping the environment pollution-free.

responsible citizens, free from the narrow prejudices of caste, colour and sect. He pins his hope on this young generation to transform mankind into one family. As head of a religious sect he has set the pace for other religious leaders. If they take their cue from him, the world that lies steeped in communal and ethnic violence today is certain to awake into a 'heaven of freedom'.

In conclusion, we might remember Neil Armstrong's spontaneous utterance on first stepping on the soil of the moon, 'One small step for a man but a giant leap for mankind'. Who knows, Acharya Tulsi's small steps (*anuvrats* or basic vows) may eventually turn out to be a giant leap for mankind. 🙏

Dr. S.L. Gandhi has travelled all over the world to promote Jainism. He has written a number of articles on Jainism and is the Secretary General of the Anuvrat Global organisation, based in Jaipur.

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KANJI SWAMI – A REFORMER

Narendra Shah reviews the life and message of a monk who has had a major impact on the twentieth century Jain history of Gujarat.

Kanji Swami was born to a Sthanakvaasi family in Umralla, a small village in the Kathiawar region of Gujarat in India in 1889. He showed a great capacity for learning and was usually at the top of the class at school. Eventually he took renunciation as a Sthanakvaasi monk in 1914 at the hands of Shri Hirachandji Maharaj. Swamiji embarked upon a rigorous study of the Shwetamber scriptures and finished a detailed study of the 45 Agams (Jain Scriptures) including a deep analysis of several hundred verses. Being a believer in *purusharth* (personal effort) for achieving emancipation, he quickly became a learned and famous monk and, backed by his seventeen renditions of the Bhagvati Sutra with its 100,000 verses, came to be known as the Jewel of Kathiawar. But all this time he could never completely engage with the scriptures he was studying and continued his search for the still evasive Truth.

Then, around 1921, he came upon Acharya KundKund's *Samaysaar* - 'Essence of the Doctrine' - the study of which was like "drinking the nectar of Truth" for him. He followed on by studying the writings of other Digambaras such as Todermaal and Shrimad Rajchandra. During his discourses he began to incorporate the ideas picked from these studies and began to lead a kind of double life, nominally a Sthanakvasi monk but referring to the Digambar literature. His assertions that "vows, giving and fasting were ultimately worthless if performed without any understanding of the soul" did not endear him to the Sthanakvasi community.

This led to a great turmoil in his life and in the lives of his followers. He began experiencing distress about his own self and about his behaviour as a Sthanakvasi monk. This came to a head at the small town of Songadh on Mahavir Jayanti day in 1934, when he formally removed his Muhapatti, left the Sthanakvasi monk-hood and proclaimed himself to be a Digambar layman.

He started discourses, many of which are recorded on tapes in the form of running commentaries on Acharya KundKund's writings. He never wrote any books and did not claim to say anything new but merely reiterating the words of Mahavir Swami and KundKund Acharya.

In an interview in 1977 he denied being hostile to the traditional Jain monk-hood and regarded them as personifying the fundamental principles of Jainism. However, he also pointed out that taking up formal initiation and behavioural practices, like the abandonment of clothes (common for Digambar monks) and other possessions, could not make an individual a true monk unless he had abandoned internal possessions as well.

By now the following had grown quite large and the small house became inadequate so his devotees started a building project at Songadh in 1937, which culminated in the 'Digambar Swadhyay Mandir'. In honour of his favourite scripture, one of his devotees, who was later to become the leader of his following, Bahenshri Champaben, installed the Samaysaar in the main temple and the words of Acharya KundKund's five main treatises have been engraved on its walls. A temple dedicated to Shrimandhar Swami was consecrated in 1941.

Kanji Swami travelled on pilgrimage throughout India where he gave discourses and consecrated many temples. In 1980 he visited Kenya and installed many images of Tirthankars at temples in various towns. He had a profound impact on one particular family in Mombasa, the Bhagwanji Kachra family, who have continued their support to-date and even in London take a very active role at the Digambar Jain Mandir in Harrow.

After a very dynamic and undoubtedly a revolutionary life, Kanji Swami died in a state of Samadhi on 28th November 1980. 🙏

Narendra Shah is a Youth Editor of Jain Spirit and an IT consultant living in London.

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*Jains start their day
with a peaceful pooja.*

*War is far removed
from their thoughts.*

Any Irish person who is drawn towards Jainism must sooner or later wonder about how its principles might be applied to the Northern Ireland situation. Jain philosophy, with its many-pointed (anekanta) view of the world, would not find the Irish problems so intractable since it recognises that the way we regard any issue is a function of our own innate attachments and prejudices. Western religion is, by contrast, too often hamstrung by its insistence upon absolute statements that are demonstrably true. This applies, to a lesser extent, to Western philosophy with its millennia-long search for axiomatic truths, upon which a sound interpretation of the world can be built. Such a black and white view of the world is not one that encourages openness and debate, since 'absolute' truths or principles are there simply to be accepted without question.

The current peace process in Northern Ireland is, in effect, the painfully slow easing of both communities away from their absolutist positions towards the middle ground where accommodation is possible. However, in the zero-sum game of Northern Irish politics, where what is regarded as good for one community must be bad for the other, the moderates of both traditions are always in a precarious position, and can be shoved to one side by the hard-liners at any time. But as Jainism teaches us, the world is prone to continuous change. So points of view that held sway yesterday may be obsolete tomorrow. In a province where the words 'compromise'



CHANDU SHAH

WAR & PEACE

Where there is deep distrust between people, there needs to be a positive commitment to peace through forgiveness and nonviolence. In such situations, Jainism offers excellent practical solutions, argues Ciaran Reilly

and 'surrender' are regarded as almost synonymous, the leaders of both communities need to be brave enough to explain how the process of moving forward is not some shoddy betrayal, but an acceptance of new realities.

No discussion of Northern Ireland would be complete without a mention of violence. Its eradication is the

ultimate challenge facing the province, because normalization of the relation between the two communities is impossible while violence continues to poison society. The debate on violence in Northern Ireland tends to split depressingly along the usual sectarian lines. One side claims that the violence is merely a symptom of the historic social

injustices, and insists that while these injustices persist, engaging in the 'politics of condemnation' is futile. Those on the other side, responding that no progress is possible while violence or the threat of violence remains, often ignore the violence of their own community – or dismiss it as being merely reactive to the violence of the 'real' terrorists.

Jainism, in its absolute condemnation of all forms of *himsa* (violence) gives short shrift to both points of view. The deliberate infliction of injury and pain on another being (be it human or insect) is always gravely wrong. No religion or philosophy is as rigorous as Jainism in its analysis and condemnation of the act of murder. Jainism teaches us that only human beings are capable of obtaining enlightenment (moksha). To be reborn as a human is a great privilege. Hence to take the life of any human is not only an act of extreme and horrible violence, but also means cutting short the very rare opportunity of a soul to break out of the cycle of rebirth. The Jain view on violence is also broadened to include

violence of thought and word. Such a definition provides little comfort for those politicians whose puritanical refusal to have any contact with former terrorists rests uneasily with their fiery speeches and continuous exploitation of inter-communal tensions.

Ultimately, at the heart of the problems of Northern Ireland lies the age-old sectarianism between the two major Christian sects in the province. The history of Ireland and indeed much of Europe is littered with religious wars – be it between Protestants and Roman Catholics, Western Christians against Orthodox or Christians against

Muslims. The participants of these countless wars have all had one thing in common – a fierce belief that they were carrying out the will of God in the battle against heresy. Part of the process in reaching such a firm conviction involves the projection of human attributes, such as anger and jealousy onto God.

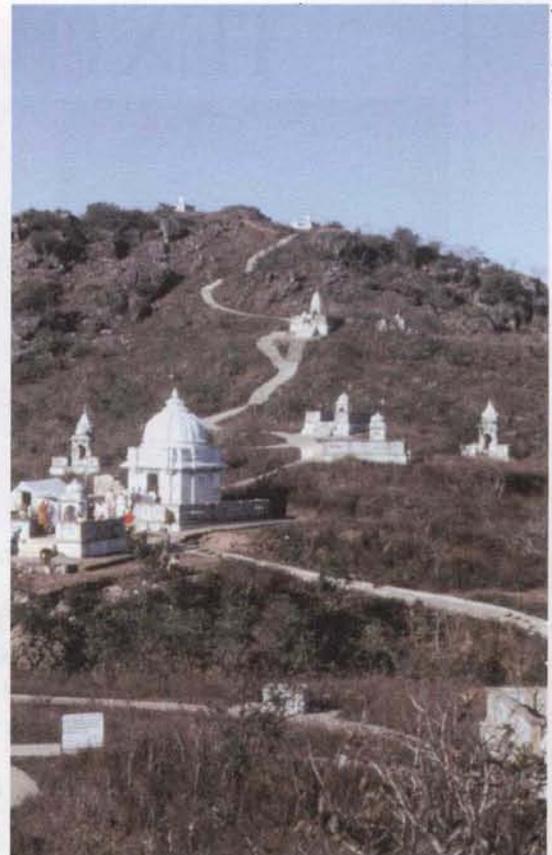
All religions present their followers with a set of high-minded yet simple rules they are urged to follow. I mean no disrespect to theistic religions whose contribution to the world has been immense. Yet in the case of these (especially monotheistic) religions, where God is regarded as an all-powerful entity watching over human society, these rules have often been obscured by a fear of God, and a consequent desire to please and placate this Supreme Being. This second-guessing of the will of God has led to many serious deviations from the original beliefs, which would have deeply shocked those who first revealed them to the world.

Jainism, by contrast, rejects the existence of either a creator or interventionist God. Nowhere in Jain

“No religion or philosophy is as rigorous as Jainism in its analysis and condemnation of the act of murder.”

scriptures is there any speculation on the 'will of God' or whether God is angry or pleased with his people. Hence no holy wars have ever been declared in the name of Jainism, no minorities persecuted, no promises of paradise made for the murder of a non-Jain. The attainment of moksha ultimately lies with the actions

of the individual by adherence to the five vows and principles, such as ahimsa. Equally, the *anekanta* principle described above reminds us all how our



*‘There is no way to peace. Peace is the way.’
Mahatma Gandhi*

worldly attachments limit our ability to see this ever-changing universe clearly, thereby denying any of us the right to claim a monopoly on absolute truth. Non-absolutism, nonviolence and non-sectarianism – these are all principles from which any polarised society could greatly benefit. While they can create the environment that permits them to flourish, monarchs, governments or Gods cannot impose these ideals. The starting point must be at the level of each individual in that society. In Northern Ireland where the conquests of the 17th century are commemorated or relived as if they happened a few months ago, this calls for a new, far more gentle battle – as each one of us fights to free ourselves from the bitterness of history. 🙏

Ciaran Reilly lives and works in Dublin. He is a committed vegetarian and keen to promote Jainism in the western world.

TEXTBOOK ON JAINISM



Worshippers at the Jain temple in Nairobi, Kenya.

JAINISM: AN INDIAN RELIGION OF SALVATION

An English Translation of *Der Jainismus*

Eine Indische Erlosungsreligion

By Helmuth von Glasenapp

Translated by Shridhar B. Shrotri

549 pp. Delhi 595Rs. Motilal Banarsidas Publishers

www.mlb.com

In an age when many Jains have accepted the faulty notion that Jainism was established by Lord Mahavir, the western world can benefit from this work by one of the early German scholars.

Mr Glasenapp had made it his mission to make German people acquaint with Indian culture and philosophy. To that end, the study of Jainism is essential, and this book – first published in 1925 on the occasion of 75th birthday of Herman Jacobi – does a masterful job in explaining to the uninitiated

some of the most complex concepts in Jainism.

The book is divided into seven sections. It has a bibliography running into ten pages, numerous illustrations and photographs. The reader is taken patiently through the history of Jainism, and the book then moves on to a comprehensive discussion of the canonical and non-canonical literature of Svetambara and Digambara. Almost 200 pages are devoted to explaining the Jain doctrine. From time to time, Glasenapp has played the role of a scientist in explaining cosmology and ethics, but his respect for the fundamental principles of Jainism shines through. He has painstakingly drawn distinction between Hinduism/Buddhism and Jainism, and rejected the early scholar's conclusion that Jainism is nothing more than an offshoot of Hinduism. In explaining the concept of God in Jainism, he brings up the different belief systems of Hindus, Buddhists, and even Christians, and shows with admiration how logical the Jain thoughts are.

As one of the western pioneers of Jain studies, and one of the few who visited India, we are struck by the amount of research Glasenapp must have done for his multifaceted study. He has acknowledged help of many Jain Acharyas, Munis and Scholars, but he could not have produced this work without studying Prakrit and Sanskrit. He has meticulously detailed world history enumerated by Jainism. He has done a superb job of reciting the lives of 24 Tirthankars of the present era and given glimpse of other eras.

This book is an excellent working tool for readers whose first and sometimes only avenue is a written work in English. In translating this book into readable English, Shridhar Shrotri has done an excellent service to the students of Jainism.

DILIP V. SHAH

JAINISM: GIVE LIFE, TAKE NOT

By Sri Chinmoy

110 pp. Available from: Agni Press, 84-87 Parsons Blvd., Jamaica, New York 11432

Considering Sri Chinmoy's remarkable catalogue of achievements, it is not surprising to find that he is an accomplished writer. This book forms part of an astonishingly prolific catalogue- this is the 1,249th Chinmoy has penned since his first was published in 1970.

'Give Life, Take Not' deals mainly, but not exclusively, with different facets

of Ahimsa; its concepts, history, practice and current application. Sri Chinmoy explores these different facets through the diverse media of poetry, prose, music and images. This gives the book an engaging amount of variety; one feels that it would not be best appreciated by being read cover to cover, but rather dipped into and reflected on at leisure.

The prose sections include stories from Mahavir's life, comments on Ahimsa and a fascinating chapter on the relationship between Buddhism and Jainism. Chinmoy does not only limit the writings to his own; also included are articles by Dr. Singhvi and a chapter

of quotes about Jainism.

Perhaps most interesting is the conclusion of the book, which is a chapter of Chinmoy's songs. These are mostly in a simple, monodic style; anyone with a small knowledge of western notation could gain a great deal of pleasure from singing some of the prayers Chinmoy sets. They are also eminently suitable for group singing.

These songs added to the poetry, images, quotes and comments which Chinmoy provides make this publication a wonderful means for reflection and consideration of the concepts central to Jainism.

RICHARD WALLEY



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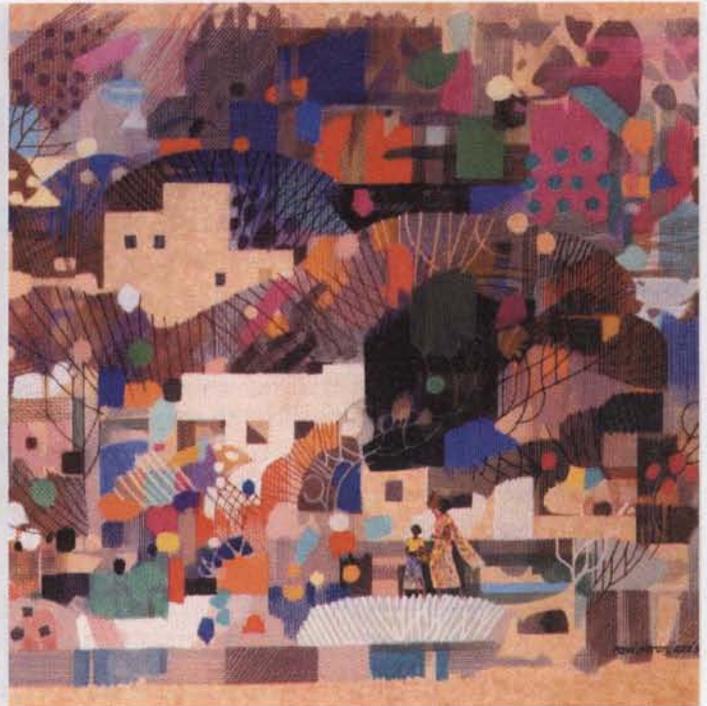
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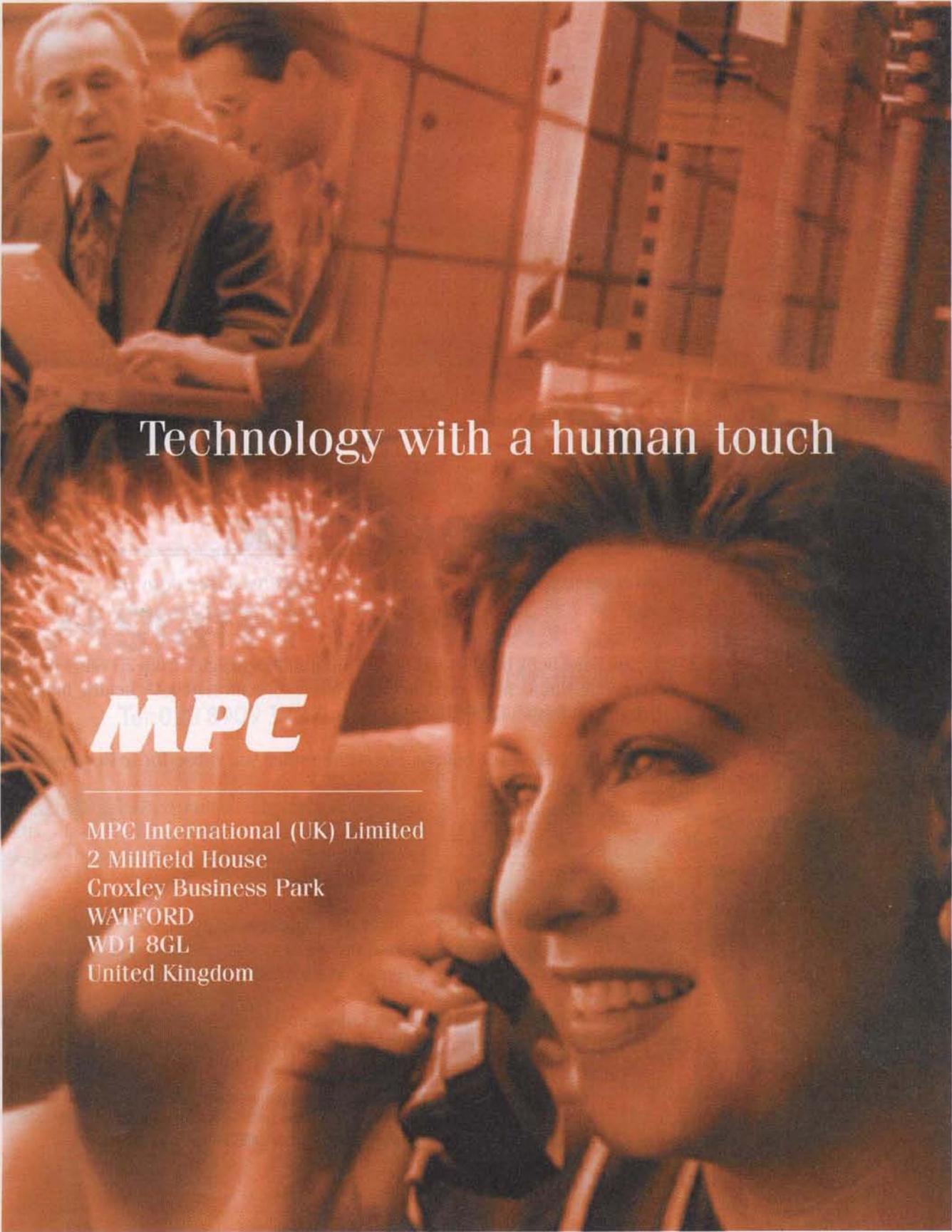
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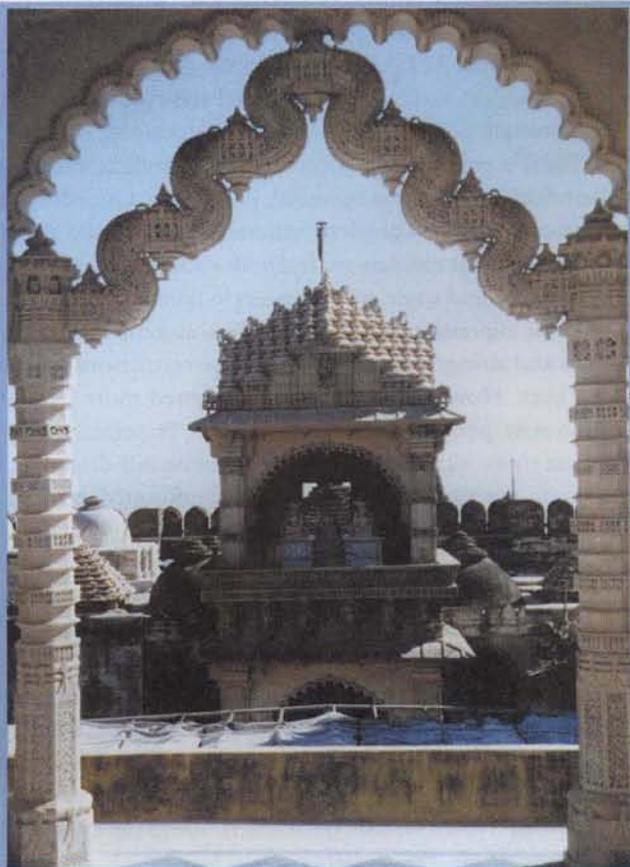
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IT'S OK TO BELIEVE

The Jain tradition provides young people with valuable principles to help us deal with practical day-to-day problems. It can be a path to real success, argues Kajal Sanghrajka.

“Another thrilling morning of double physics and here I am once again in the cafeteria, happily munching on my eggless muffins and minding my own business when I am approached by the school terror himself...’ Hey! You’re in my seat...move NOW!” followed by a quick shove and there I lie on the floor, bewildered and left to contemplate how to tackle the situation in hand...should I retaliate to salvage my pride or walk away in peace? A hundred and one thoughts ran through my mind but finally I picked myself up, stared at my tormentor and walked away. My actions were then proceeded by taunts of ‘coward’ and ‘wuss’ by the half-witted students whose preferred source of amusement is watching fights. As I passed them in the corridors, I ignored their comments and realised that I had achieved something I never thought possible: control over my emotions.

Today’s youth are confronted with conflicts every day whether it be at school at university or at home. Our education will teach us the laws of science, literary criticism, and algebra but who or what can help us deal with such practical conflicts effectively? I find some good answers in Jainism. Students are under the impression that religion merely amounts to tiresome rituals and stringent rules which impose restrictions on their daily lives. However, if Jainism is examined more closely a whole new perspective comes to light. Principles such as Ahimsa (non-violence) allow us to exercise self-discipline so that our reactions to conflicts are conditioned positively. Restraint of human emotions, especially in provocative situations, is one of the most difficult responses. By applying Ahimsa, we can learn to think first and then channel our energy away from anger and hate so that regrettable consequences are avoided.

As a student, I realise that today’s generation find it difficult to understand how philosophies dating back to 2500 BC can be of any value in modern day society. On the contrary those very philosophies could not be more relevant. The concept of *Anekantvada* (pluralism) allows us to observe situations from the other party’s viewpoint so that a



ARJUN SHARMA

Children performing an aarti at a Young Jains event in London, October 1999.

compromise can be established. This concept may go a long way to resolve those conflicts that arise at home. When the relationship between parent and child becomes strained, the blame is all too often directed towards the ‘generation gap’. Although this factor is significant, disagreements with parents must not always be attributed to differences in background but also to differences in attitude. The outcome of a situation depends on how we see things rather than how they are.

A common conflict for young people arises when they are denied their freedom. For example, by the age of 18, most students are keen to stay out late and explore nightlife, especially in London. Inevitably, parents are concerned about their children’s welfare and the harmful influences they may encounter. When parents impose restrictions, we must respect their concern in protecting us from detrimental influences. However, where possible, parents must also allow their children the freedom to make their own mistakes so that their learning and judgements attain a new level of maturity.

At university, I witness conflicts everyday. However, young people rarely know how to deal with them and progress. Many students are too concerned with their mobile phones, what looks impressive on their CV and ways in which they can get into the blue chip companies and climb the corporate ladder after graduation. However, I do not think they will achieve lasting success and happiness by behaving this way. What many people disregard is that employers consider personal characteristics such as problem-solving and teamwork as critical. Our values are as important as our intelligence, if not more. 🙏

Kajal Sanghrajka is a first year student at the University of London.

WWW

According to some of the latest statistics, the internet is doubling in size every 100 days, and from the look of things Jains world wide are keeping pace with this development. Here are some sites and services which you may find useful and interesting.

ClipArt

<http://www.cs.colostate.edu/~malaiya/jainclip.html>

Have you ever wondered how to make your documents or newsletters more visually exciting, or give your presentations that crucial 'Jain' feel? This site, part of the large Jain site based at Colorado State University, has a wide range of Jain clip art for downloading, including images of temples, Tirthankaras and various Jain symbols.

Vegetarian Information

<http://www.vegsource.org>

If you or anybody you know is even slightly interested in vegetarianism, this is a wonderful site to visit. It contains information on practically every aspect of the vegetarian lifestyle, from over 5,000 vegetarian recipes to chat rooms and discussion forums. The site also has more interesting and obscure sections; did you know, for example, that the Roman army, which conquered almost all of western Europe and Asia minor, was almost entirely vegetarian? Or that there are links between vegetarianism and other world religions, such as Mormonism? This is a fascinating and useful site from any perspective.



Jain Mailing List

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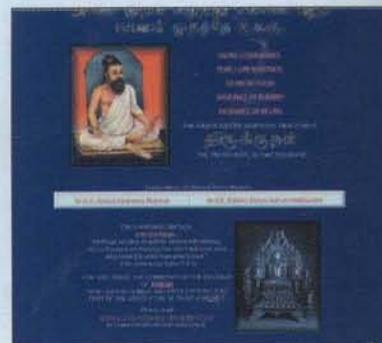
Mailing lists are becoming a more common way of communicating with different people across the internet.

E-mails are sent to a central source, and then distributed to all those participating in the list. This particular list is a wide-ranging forum for discussion on all sorts of topics, ranging from current affairs to interpretation of scripture. To subscribe to this list and start receiving mail, send an E-mail to jain-friends-subscribe@onelist.com with 'SUBSCRIBE' in the subject line and no text in the message.

Ahimsa Web Site

<http://www.wizard.net/~cthan/ahimsa.htm>

This is a fascinating and interesting site, covering a wide variety of faiths and traditions. Concerned principally with the idea of non-violence, the site details not only Jain involvement with this principle, but also the precedents for it in Christian, Jewish and Islam traditions. Here you can find out about its history, its application and its place in modern society and politics. A hugely diverse and wide-ranging site, there is sure to be something to interest and fascinate most visitors here.



Jain Spirit Site Expands

<http://www.jainspirit.org>

The Jain Spirit site has recently undergone a major overhaul, and is fast becoming an enormous reference source for all things Jain. Included on the site are all the articles from back-issues of the magazine plus a lot of exciting content, including some free desktop wallpaper to download! We have big plans for the site in the future, so keep visiting...



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