

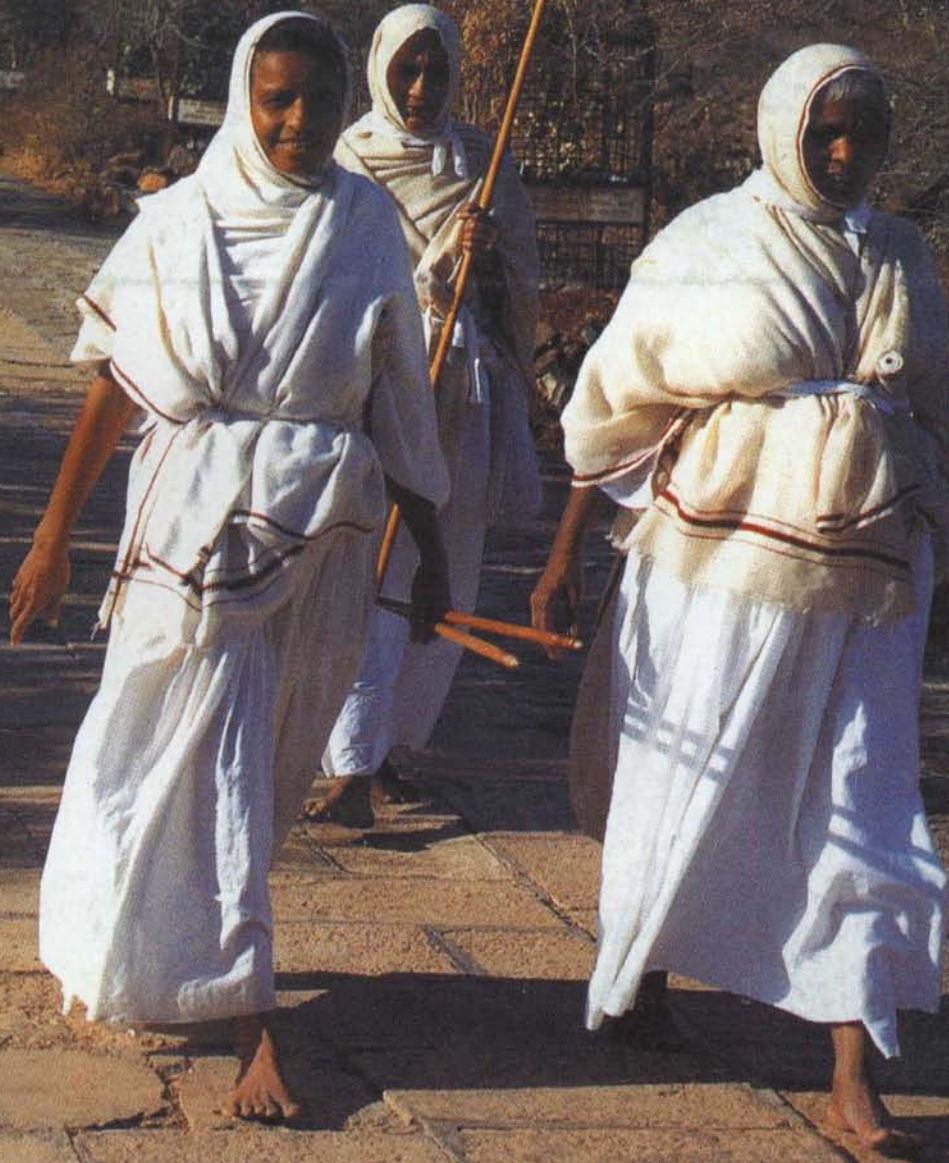
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Issue 13  
December 2002 - February 2003  
Non Profit International Quarterly Publication



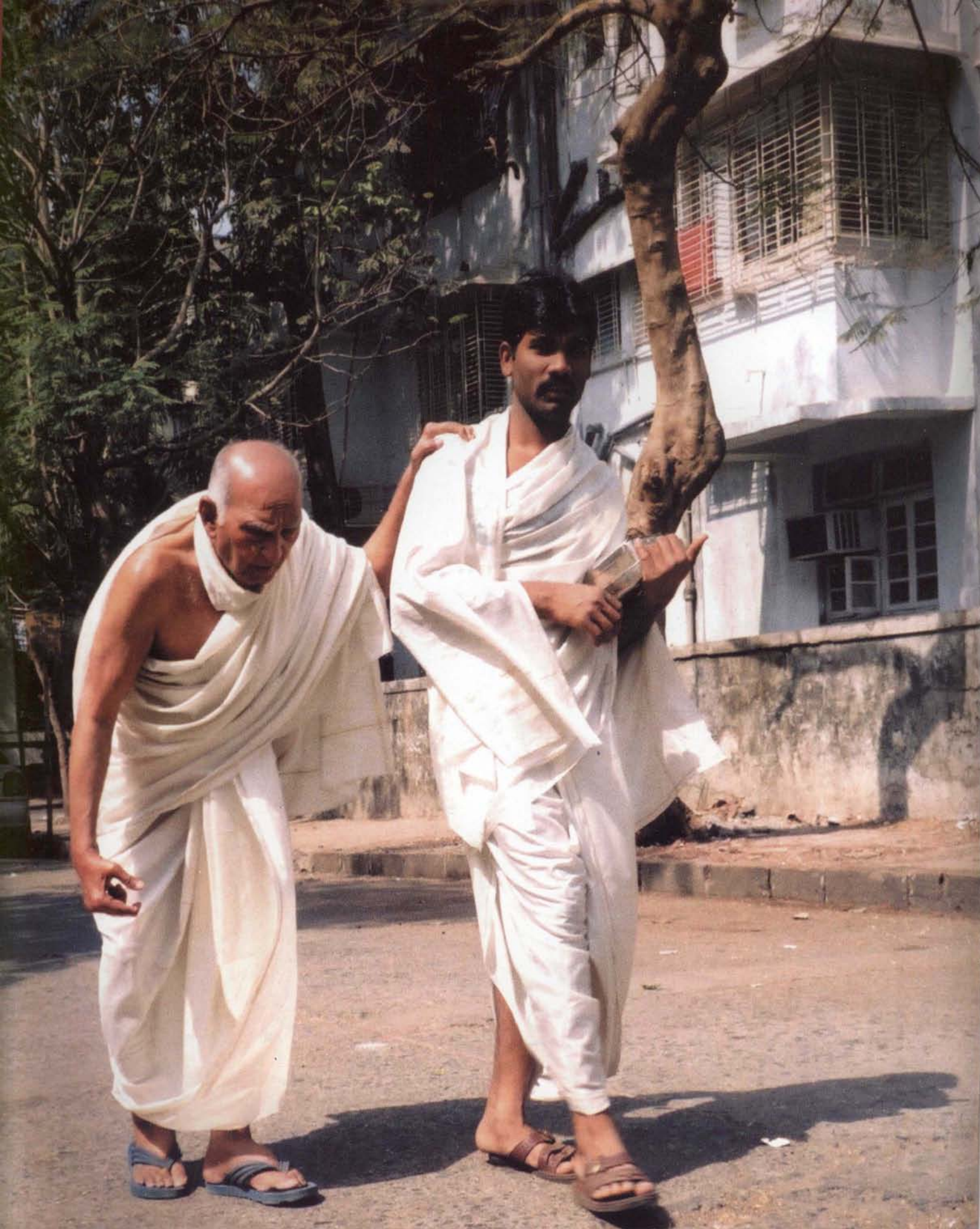
# JAIN SPIRIT

SHARING JAIN VALUES GLOBALLY



CHITRABHANU  
REUBEN THUKU  
VILAS SANGAVE  
LAWRENCE BABB  
DHARA KOTHARI





*Cover Photo: Tarun Chopra: Nuns at Palitana, Gujarat, India.  
From the new book: 'Jain Temples in India and Around the World' by L. M. Singhvi,  
Himalayan Books, New Delhi. Available from Jain Spirit at £30 plus p&p.*

*Son taking father to the local temple  
in Sion, Mumbai for his daily pooja.*



# WELCOME

Dear Readers,

Jainism is a very ancient tradition, but its values are very timely and 'modern'. The world is beginning to acknowledge the beauty of non-violence, the health benefits of vegetarianism, the need for respect and tolerance, and the potential of forgiveness. These values lie at the core of the Jain tradition, which is so often misunderstood or even ignored or forgotten. Even among religious teachers and experts today, Jainism is little known and understood. We have a very big challenge ahead of us to inform and educate.

*Jain Spirit* has a unique role to play in raising the awareness and removing the misunderstanding or misconceptions of Jainism. At the same time, through its non-sectarian approach, it enables Jains from different sects to appreciate the beauty and strength of other world-views without necessarily compromising their own. It presents the tradition as a unified whole with many different parts, without distorting its inner beauty and unity. In the years to come, this approach will reap huge rewards for the upcoming generation, removing their confusion and empowering them to be the best of themselves with a deep sense of soul identity.

I have spent a lot of time in August with young people in UK. I am amazed by their thirst for wisdom, their desire to come together and learn about their own tradition. The students organising the Jain assembly at Haberdashers Askes School in Hertfordshire near London (both boys and girls) are begging for Jain speakers to come and address them, because they are hungry. University students at Manchester, Warwick and even Leicester and Birmingham want to set up a national body of Young Jain Students to keep alive their culture on campus, in the same way that the National Hindu Students Forum is doing so ably for Hindus. This gives all of us a lot of hope. A young boy called Dhruv Shah recently came to the UK to study from Mombasa, and was able to recite the whole Pratikraman flawlessly and confidently during Paryushan.

His local community in London was spellbound by this mastery, and he gave them tremendous hope for the future. These are the benefits of globalisation. In North America, the Young Jains of America convention in New Jersey was attended by 900 delegates. It attracted a lot of new young speakers, giving them a vital platform. In San Francisco, Dar-Es-Salaam, Singapore, Perth, and many different world cities, Jains celebrated their Paryushan festival with energy and vibrancy.

In this issue, we have articles on Pilgrimage, Mindfulness, Motherhood, Art, Venture Philanthropy, History and Philosophy. I am always amazed by the deep well of knowledge that lies in the tradition and the beauty of our openness. Not all writers in *Jain Spirit* are born in the



*Young people are thirsty to learn about their culture and roots. The above photo was taken at the Young Jains post-convention trip in Yorkshire, England in August 2002.*

Jain tradition. For example, Reuben Thuku who has written an outstanding article in our inter-faith section is a Kenyan African who happens to be blind. However, his knowledge of spirituality is inspiring, and he is able to communicate this very simply and beautifully. Reading this article will make you realise how unique his vision is.

I strive to ensure that *Jain Spirit* practices what it preaches. I am very grateful to the entire team of staff and volunteers within the UK and worldwide who constantly support and promote the magazine as if it were their own. Thank you very much. We would like every Jain anywhere in the world to take ownership of *Jain Spirit*, and not only subscribe and read it for themselves, but actively pass it on to others and encourage them to subscribe too. If others

understand our culture better, it will unite and strengthen us even more. We appeal to leaders of Jain organisations all over the world to take similar ownership and promote the magazine actively, without waiting for us to contact them. In turn, the local

Jain organisation will benefit from an enlightened membership. For news coverage, we rely on readers all over the world to send us quality news and photos on a timely basis, with accompanying text and captions. If you don't tell us, we will be unable to tell the world.

**The poster in this issue is for you to display at your local Jain centre, business or home.**

Jai Jinendra,

*Atul K. Shah*

Executive Editor  
editor@jainspirit.com

**Take ownership of  
*Jain Spirit* and spread it  
wherever you go**



We invite our readers to send photos, letters, news 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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Secure credit card subscription facility is available on the website.

ISSN : 1532-0472

Jain Spirit is a company limited by guarantee incorporated in the UK

# Contents

Issue 13 ~ December 2002 - February 2003

## GLOBAL NEWS

**PARYUSHAN  
CELEBRATIONS....4**

**FEATURE:  
TASTING THE  
MANGO.....6**



## NEWS

GENERAL NEWS.....8-16

## REGULARS

NEWS IN BRIEF.....18

QUOTES & QUIPS .....21

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED .....22

PHOTO COMPETITION .....31

FINANCIAL SUPPORTERS .....63

## FEATURES

### TOP TEN BOOKS

Christopher K. Chapple .....24

### TIRTHANKARAS WERE REVOLUTIONARIES

L. M. Singhvi .....26

### WALKING THEIR TALK

Atul K. Shah .....28





## LIFESTYLE

### JOY OF FAMILY PILGRIMAGE

*Tushar Shah* .....32

### MINDFULNESS

*Gillian Dunne* .....34

### JUST A MOM

*Namrata Vora* .....36



## ART & LITERATURE

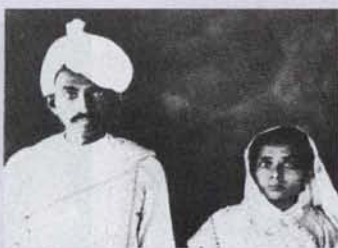
### KENYA INSPIRES ME TO PAINT

*Mayuri Dodhia interviews Avni Shah* .....38



### AN UNUSUAL MATCH

*Mira Kamdar* .....40



## YOUTH

### CHILDS PLAY

*Meera Shah* .....42

### SENDING OUT AN SOS

*Reana Shah* .....43

### A VEGETARIAN IN PERU

*Neetal Mehta* .....44

### CYCLING FOR CHILDREN

*Paarul Shah* .....45

## WORSHIP

### SYMBOLS CAPTURE THE SPIRIT

*Dhara Kothari* .....46

## WORKPLACE

VENTURE PHILANTHROPY .....48

## ENVIRONMENT

### BOOK REVIEW - JAINISM AND ECOLOGY

*Rajesh Shah* .....52

## INTER-FAITH

### LIVING IS A GREAT PILGRIMAGE

*Reuben Thuku* .....54



## HISTORY

### WISE WRITERS AND ADVISERS

*Vilas Sangave* .....56

## PHILOSOPHY

### BIOLOGY WAS CRITICAL

*Lawrence Babb* .....58

## VIEWPOINT

### UNITY OF MINDS

*H.E. Abdul Kalam* .....64

All back issues can be ordered by completing the subscription form.





# PARYUSHAN : COMMUNITY CELEBRATIONS



1



2



3



4

1. Dhirubhai Shah from India giving a lecture in London

2. Acharya and monks grace the community's Paryushan celebrations (Mumbai)

3. Temple worker prepares *chandan sukhad* (sandalwood paste used by temple worshippers to mark their foreheads) (Mumbai)

4. Preparing for *Samvatsari pratikraman* at Oshwal Centre, London

5. *Snatra pooja* at Wembley High School, London

6. Community meal served after the fastbreaking ritual (Mumbai)

7. Visiting Jain nuns (*Shramanis*) from India give a talk to mark Mahavir Jayanti at Kingsbury High School, London

8. Assembled community members listening to the monks' discourse (Mumbai)



7



5



6



8



# B RATIONS IN LONDON AND MUMBAI



9

9. A little boy helps his mother break her Paryushan fast - *parna* (Mumbai)

10. A worshipper symbolically opening her third eye before entering the temple (London)

11. Celebrating Mahavir's birthday at Kingsbury High School (London)

12. & 13. Preparing food (Mumbai)



13



10



12



11



# TASTING THE MANGO

The Young Jains organised a creative convention in London which inspired a number of young people to understand the modern relevance of Jain philosophy and science



*Mango dancing: playing full out*

**Y**OUTH AND JAINISM often don't go together. Very often, Jainism is perceived to be a religion for old people. Many young people do not see any relevance in Jainism. I often find that for a large number of people, the moment we mention Jainism, a certain light inside switches off and ear plugs are switched on. Yet, the values of Jainism are eternal. Its message is very modern in many ways. The world is beginning to acknowledge the health benefits of vegetarianism, the need to protect the environment (*ahimsa*), the insatiability of greed (*aparigraha*), the vital importance of integrity and sincerity especially among leaders (*satya*) and the importance of sustainability. So the question is: why it is that young people

feel this way, and what can we do to reverse it? I believe many young people have at best a patchy knowledge of Jainism. They see elders going to the temple and then preaching to them not to eat meat, to fast if possible, not to eat underground vegetables. In short, a religion of do-nots rather than of do's. This is very often perceived negatively, and thereafter young people are put off by the word Jain. In addition, they find that elders are rarely able to answer their questions, so they get frustrated and feel that it is a very dogmatic and irrational tradition. For those who know and understand Jainism and its history, this is a shocking experience, as Jainism is a very positive, scientific and authentic tradition. How do we reverse this misconception? What can we do to show the scientific and positive aspects of Jainism?

One organisation founded in the United Kingdom and now having a global reach, has been addressing these very concerns for fifteen years. They have succeeded in attracting and inspiring young people to live a Jain life, and more are enrolling every year. This is the Young Jains movement. Their latest international convention was a unique statement on the modern-day relevance of Jainism, and inspired

hundreds of young people to get excited and live by Jain principles. Over one hundred of the delegates to this two-day event were teenagers who came on their own free will, rather than under the pressure from their parents. And what's more, they loved every minute of it.

The organisers used modern techniques of life coaching and positive thinking, and combined these with Jain philosophy to educate participants to 'taste the mango' - based on a quote from Lord Mahavir: "Just as a mighty mango tree is hidden within the stone of a mango, so too does every soul have divine potential. Rest not until you uncover it." Many of the methods used to conduct the conference were derived from the techniques of personal development leaders like Steven Covey, author of *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* and Anthony Robbins, a famous American life coach who has written a number of books including *Unlimited Power*.

Every session started with a mango dance, where English pop music with a Jain message was used to get everyone to dance, loosen their bodies and 'play full out'. From the beginning people were asked to go with the flow of the convention rather than doubt or question it, the idea being that if we are too sceptical, we will not learn anything. In an age of intellectualisation where young people have loads of questions and are sceptical about everything, this formula gave the organisers a chance to convey their own interpretation of Jainism in a fun way. Explaining the importance of goal-setting, they showed that the ultimate goal for every soul was





*Delegates absorbed in a drama workshop*

enlightenment (*moksha*). To attain *moksha*, one has to shed karmas and remove the hindrances from the soul. The concept of soul and its innate quality of bliss and happiness were directly experienced through an acting exercise, where delegates were asked to pretend to be angry, sad and happy in turn. When asked which was the easiest action to perform, everyone said that it was happiness. Happiness was the easiest because it is innate to the soul. In this way, they all had a soul experience and were able to understand its in-built quality. To illustrate the concept of reincarnation and soul progression, an entire workshop was devoted to the past lives of Lord Mahavir where delegates had to act and role play some of these experiences. This gave them a direct understanding of transcendence.

We may not be able to control fully what happens to us, but we can certainly influence the way we react to these situations. From the beginning, it was explained that we all have choices over how we respond to particular situations. It is up to us to exercise these choices and thereby influence the quality of our life. In whatever we do, the *bhava* or inner spirit is very important. Our physiology and senses can be used to change our state – this was demonstrated through role-play.

A whole session was devoted to the understanding of vices (*kashayas*) and how to overcome them. Anger, Ego, Deceit and Greed were attributes which hindered our own happiness and

prevented us from achieving salvation. These vices could be conquered with positive qualities like Truthfulness, Forgiveness and, Humility, Integrity and Contentment. The 'Star Wars' analogy was used to illustrate this with the concept of the Dark Side

and the Light Sabre, Evil and Good. This was very innovative, and for those who had seen the film, a truly uplifting and educational experience. Stories, visuals, skits and music were used throughout to convey the messages.

The complex concepts of karma including shedding (*ashrava*) and bondage (*bandha*) were also explained within this context. There was constant reminder and reinforcement of key concepts and the journey to *moksha*. *Samyag Darshan*, the concept of complete self-awareness, was also explained as an achievable target in this life. The life and teachings of Shrimad Rajchandra were used to illustrate this.

A visitor to the event may have thought – is this really Jainism? Is this authentic? But once they go with the flow, they would have discovered the efforts made by the organisers to be authentic and sincere to the philosophy of Jainism. The convention was conducted by young people for young people, and this was also a key to its success. Many people bought books at the event, a sign that they were thirsty to find out more about Jainism.

As a founder of Young Jains, I have had many years of experience of organising events and conferences which would appeal to young people. Often, these approaches have been live experiments where the audience are shown a new approach to learning and living Jainism. This convention was a

very creative and noble experiment. The organising team worked for almost a whole year to give structure to the event and to design creative and stimulating workshops which would educate as well as inspire. This was a tremendous act of *seva* for the benefit of the community. In the process, a large group of young people drew inspiration from Jainism, learnt about leadership, teamwork and innovation, and obtained self-fulfilment from realising the fruits of a significant challenge. At the end of the event, many delegates were inspired to get involved in Young Jains and take on new projects and challenges.

The entire weekend was lived in a Jain way. The food was vegan Jain, there was no alcohol anywhere, the elders helped with the cooking and



*Older community members enter into the mango spirit and happily prepare food for the hungry masses*

serving giving a family atmosphere, and people talked with everyone without feeling inhibited. The large number of games and workshops and mango dances enabled delegates to relax and feel rejuvenated. "I hope Young Jains continues its excellent skill in showing Jainism as a modern, practical, relevant and fun way of living," remarked Shailan Shah, one of the delegates. Above all, the event was full of hope. 🙏

To find out more about Young Jains, visit [www.youngjains.org.uk](http://www.youngjains.org.uk)

*Atul K Shah*



## New Jain Community Centre Opens in Manchester

The opening ceremony of the new Manchester Jain Community Centre was held on 21 September 2002. The event was attended by over 500 people, including guests from both Jain and non-Jain communities in other parts of the UK, as well as several local dignitaries. The centre was officially opened by Rt. Hon Gerald Kaufman M.P., in whose constituency the centre is located. During the evening's proceedings, the community was congratulated and the new centre welcomed in speeches by visiting dignitaries, including an official message from the City of Manchester, which was delivered by the Lord Mayor.

There was an almost tangible sense of excitement as Jain Samaj Manchester celebrated the opening of the centre: it marked the beginning of a new era as this is the first time the community has had its own building, complete with custom-made facilities for community events and activities. The evening included a programme of dance and music, including performances of classical, folk and modern dance by youth members of Jain Samaj Manchester. Guests and members were treated to a vegetarian dinner, and also enjoyed the opportunity to browse through a specially mounted exhibition on Jainism and the activities of Jain Samaj Manchester.



Young Jain Samaj Manchester members dressed in traditional costumes for their Gujarati folk dance at the opening ceremony

# The BBC and Jainism



Alan Bookbinder, Head of Religion and Ethics at the BBC, met with *Jain Spirit*

In conversation with *Jain Spirit* in July 2002, the BBC's Head of Religion and Ethics, Alan Bookbinder, reflected on how organised religion is being affected by "a broad wave of secularism and scepticism" in modern society, particularly in the West. Mr. Bookbinder observed that there has been a growing trend over the last two generations "of the individual being important, and working things out for yourself, and testing established beliefs against your experience rather than just accepting them because they are tradition." In this context, Mr. Bookbinder said that the BBC's religious and ethical programmes include those that address a broad

spirituality of life rather than just established religions. Such programmes "start from the standpoint that, although we're often driven by material needs, there is an inherent dissatisfaction there as well." Mr. Bookbinder went on to say that, in the tradition of the BBC, programmes like these are intended to provide a service by bringing the more profound questions of life closer to the surface for listeners and viewers.

Mr. Bookbinder also expressed a keen interest in Jainism and the lay Jain community, and was pleased to have made contact with *Jain Spirit*. It was agreed that the BBC could use *Jain Spirit* as a conduit for making further contacts within the Jain community worldwide, and for adding Jains to the BBC's Diversity Database, which is used for inviting representatives of different U.K. groups to contribute to BBC programmes.

During the meeting, *Jain Spirit* pointed out that the BBC's Religion & Ethics web site did not include a section on Jainism, and Mr. Bookbinder immediately agreed that this should be rectified. As *Jain Spirit* went to print, we learnt that plans to add a Jainism section to the web site were already underway.

## INDIAN VICE PRESIDENT URGES JAINS TO LAUNCH NON-VIOLENT MOVEMENT

The Indian Vice President, Bharon Singh Shekhawat, urged Jains in India to launch a countrywide movement against all kinds of violence, and to unite other like-minded people in this effort. The Vice President was addressing a national gathering of Jains at an event organised by the umbrella body Jain Mahasabha to celebrate Universal Brotherhood and Forgiveness Day at the end of the festival of *Paryushan* in September 2002. On this last day of *Paryushan*,

Jains seek forgiveness for their mistakes and take a pledge to promote brotherhood and friendship with all.

Dr. L. M. Singhvi also delivered a keynote address at the event, in which he emphasised every person's right to freedom and to live without fear.

Monks representing all the Jain sects offered their blessings at the event. In their address, they focused on Lord Mahavir's message of respect for all life, not just human beings.



## GOING DUTCH FOR CHARITY



*Cyclists persevered with their challenge despite injuries and other obstacles*

On Sunday 28 July, an extraordinary sight filled the streets of Zeist, Holland, bringing the town to a halt as a spectacular convoy of 140 cyclists sped towards the Town Hall. There was tremendous elation as the cyclists came to the end of the exhausting but exhilarating journey. On 25 July 2002, these cyclists started off in a convoy of 160 people from London to Berg en Dal in Holland to begin a challenging three-day 200km sponsored cycle to Zeist. The group had come together under the banner of a project entitled Cycling for Children, a joint charitable venture between Veerayatan UK and Shishukunj International Projects. The money raised by the sponsored bike ride in the Netherlands will fund eight charities that support and educate disadvantaged children in the UK, the Netherlands, Kenya and India.

In the Cycling for Children group there were 80 pupils who had pledged to help less fortunate children by raising funds through personal endeavour, and 60 adult riders to help boost the amounts raised. Each child had pledged to raise at least £500, with adults raising at least £1250 and in the case of business people at least £2500. The cyclists were accompanied by a team of twenty volunteers who helped with the organisation of the event.

All the cyclists, from Anuj Dodhia (11) the youngest to Chandrakant Shah (57) the oldest, successfully met the demanding challenge of the 200km ride without any major mishaps. To date, a staggering £150,000 has been pledged in sponsorship.

The organisers of Cycling for Children were pleased to be able to demonstrate that these relatively privileged children participating in this event care enough to make such a personal effort to help improve the lives of less fortunate children around the world. The participants, in turn, felt that their time and effort had been well spent. For instance, Prakash and Geeta Mehta reflected that "every second, minute and hour that we spent together with the whole group of Cycling for Children was truly inspirational and has positively contributed to our outlook on life." Rahul Patalia, a fellow cyclist, admitted that "the team spirit was fun and very rewarding."

## ROYALS VISIT LEICESTER JAIN TEMPLE

On 3 September 2002 – the first day of the Jain Shvetambara Paryushan festival – the Earl and Countess of Wessex visited the Jain Centre in Leicester, England. Prince Edward and his wife Sophie were representing the Queen in her Golden Jubilee year, and this event was one of several recent visits by the members of the royal family to non-Christian faith institutions in the UK. Each of these visits were part of the

Queen's Golden Jubilee Tour of the UK, their purpose being to demonstrate that Christian and non-Christian communities are central to contemporary Britain.

During their visit, the Earl and Countess of Wessex were taken on a guided tour of Leicester's Jain temple, which is the headquarters of Jain Samaj Europe. The royal couple met the representatives of the Jain community,

## POP STARS HELP ESTABLISH INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE

The first ever day of global ceasefire and non-violence took place on 21 September 2002, a date which is now firmly fixed as the UN International Day of Peace. To celebrate and propagate this message of global peace, international pop stars including Annie Lennox, Dave Stewart and Neneh Cherry lined up to perform at a special concert in London. The show also included video messages from United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan and the Dalai Lama.

Peace One Day, an apolitical, non-sectarian organisation which drove the initiative to establish the International Day of Peace, asked the people of the world to honour and celebrate the Day on 21 September. Its vision was that the Day would extend far beyond the cessation of violent conflict and represent an opportunity for the people of the world to create a moment of global unity. According to the organisation, the response was overwhelming. Support for this peace initiative was offered by many celebrities, including international music stars Dave Stewart and Jimmy Cliff, who collaborated to produce a special Peace One Day song.

[www.peaceoneday.org](http://www.peaceoneday.org)

who then informed them about the main principles of Jainism, in particular the principle of non-violence.

The Earl and Countess enjoyed their visit to the Jain Centre, and especially admired the architecture and the carvings inside the temple.





# THE GOLDEN THREAD

## Jains in the World

John E. Cort

Oxford University Press, New Delhi, India

## Jain Temples

in India and Around the World

Text: L.M. Singhvi

Photographs: Tarun Chopra

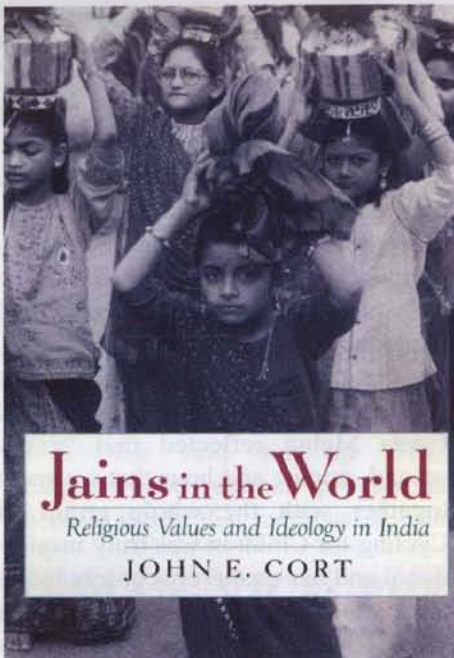
Himalayan Books, New Delhi, India

Books on Jainism in the English language are few and far between, and the ones which exist are mostly rather academic and technical. Therefore, John Cort's *Jains in the World* is a welcome step in the right direction.

The focus of this study is the Jain community of Patam, a small town in the state of Gujarat, in North West India. Patam has a large number of Jain households with a rich tradition of temple worship, religious festivals, sacred rituals and everyday practice of the Jain way of life. Therefore, Patam is a microcosm of the macro Jain tradition (albeit of a particular Jain tradition called Shvetambara Murtipujak, in which the monks wear white robes). The book is an authentic, detailed and penetrating explanation of the way the Jains of Patam practise their religion. John Cort's profound dedication and commitment to his subject is clearly evident on every page of this book. His sympathetic and keenly observed analysis of Jain principles will be of enormous help to future scholars and students of Jainism. The book is informative, engaging and full of insights.

During his lengthy research John Cort discovers two parallel strands in this ancient religion. One is the path of liberation and the other is the path of worldly well being. A small band of ascetic monks exclusively follow the

first while the majority of lay Jains follow the second. These two paths, according to Cort, are complementary. The lay Jains feel no guilt in embracing a way of life which is joyful, beautiful and celebratory, while the monks forsake the world and pursue a life of penance and purity. In much of the literature on Jainism the path of liberation has been amply emphasised. John Cort's unique and admirable contribution is to illuminate the idea of worldly well being as an integral part of the Jain tradition.



John E. Cort/Joy Taylor

However, monks and lay people alike consider non-violence as their guiding principle. Avoidance of harm to all beings is the cardinal concern of all Jains. Unconditional adherence to non-violence (*ahimsa*) is the most prominent goal for Jains. They may compromise on any other areas of their religion, but not on non-violence. This is the foundation stone upon which the entire edifice of Jainism is built.

This same notion is emphasised by L.M. Singhvi in his extended introduction to *Jain Temples*. Mr Singhvi calls non-violence the 'golden thread of Jain tradition'. He asserts that non-violence enjoys singular centrality in the Jain faith, it is the supreme religion and is an unequivocal teaching that is at once ancient and contemporary.

Dr. Singhvi's essay is a most informative and inspiring writing on Jainism, which I would recommend to everyone.

*Jain Temples* contains some of the most exquisite photographs of Jain architecture and sculptures. It is a feast to the eyes and an invitation to make pilgrimage to the mountains and forests where these temples were built.

Although Cort's study and Singhvi's essay are valuable contributions to the understanding of our insufficiently known religion, nevertheless they still fall within the scholarly, academic and specialist category. There is still a need for a book which is easy to read and understand by a larger number of people in the west, particularly non-Jains who know very little about Jainism. An authentic yet simply written book of this kind is urgently needed and I hope that either Mr Cort, Mr Singhvi or someone else will soon come forward and fill the gap.

At a time when the religions of materialism, consumerism and fundamentalism rule the world and when ecological sustainability, social justice and spiritual renewal are of paramount importance, Jain values of non-violence, frugality, inclusiveness and restraint can make an important contribution to the well being of the planet. These two books make this point crystal clear.

*Review by Satish Kumar*



# New Publications

## The Yogasastra of Hemachandra. A Twelfth Century Handbook on Shvetambara Jainism

Olle Qvarnstrom

Publisher:

Harvard Oriental Studies, Vol. 60, Cambridge:

Harvard University Press, 2002.

This new book is a translation of Hemachandra's *Yogasastra* into English. The *Yogasastra*, the most comprehensive treatise on Shvetambara Jainism, was written in the 12th century by the polymath Hemachandra. It is a systematic presentation of a set of ideas and practices originally belonging to the Shvetambara canonical scriptures and traditions, into which Hemachandra integrates innovations of his own as well as non-Jain elements of pan-Indian and Saiva provenance, attesting to a strong Tantric influence on mediaeval Jainism.

## Teerth Darshan

Publisher:

Shree Jain Prarthana Mandir Trust

This publication is an illustrated encyclopaedia of 256 selected ancient Jain pilgrim centres. The featured sites include some that are more than 700 years old, some which are associated with significant events in the lives of the *Tirthankaras*, as well as some which are famous the world over for their art and architecture. As this is not a commercial venture, there will be limited copies printed, and those interested in buying a copy are advised to register their details

by contacting the Trust through:

Mr. U. Pannalal Vaid

Tel: (+91) 44 640 4148/ 643 2523

Fax: (+91) 44 640 4338

Email: teerth\_darshan@yahoo.com

## The Jains by Paul Dundas

Publisher:

Routledge 2002, ISBN 0-415-26606-8

The fully updated and revised second edition of this excellent book has just been published by Routledge. All aspects of Jainism are covered in this comprehensive book: from history to science, from philosophy to community, scriptures and recent developments. Like the first edition, this book is a must for anyone interested in studying Jainism, including any intelligent beginner. Paul Dundas is Senior Lecturer in Sanskrit at the University of Edinburgh.

## The Scientific Foundations of Jainism by Kanti Mardia

Publisher:

Motilal Banarsidass, New Delhi, 2002, Second Edition

This is a unique book which uses axioms to examine and analyse the scientific foundations of Jainism. Professor Mardia is an eminent Professor of Statistics at Leeds University and a dynamic and tireless founder of the Yorkshire Jain Foundation. This book integrates his mathematical and scientific knowledge with Jain wisdom and is a rare contribution to knowledge.

## UNITED NATIONS CELEBRATES MAHAVIR'S 2600TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY

On 25 April 2002, a celebration of Lord Mahavir's 2600th Birth Anniversary was held under the auspices of the United Nations in New York, U.S.A. At the request of Gurudev Chitrabhanu, this event was coordinated by four key organizations: JAINA (Jain Associations in North America), JCA (Jain Center of America), Long Island Multi-faith Forum and Temple of Understanding. The event was attended by representatives of Jain communities across North America, as well as from other faith groups.

As part of the celebration, Gurudev Chitrabhanu recited some of Lord Mahavir's sacred verse, and the audience was treated to a dance recital of the well-known Jain song

*Maitri Bhav Nu Pavitra Zarnu*. In addition, four of Gurudev Chitrabhanu's disciples gave a presentation on how they had benefited from Jain teachings. Two young American Jains, Ronak Shah and Sanjay Mehta discussed the relevance of Jainism in business and in modern society.

Special mention was given to five representatives of different faith groups for their contributions to furthering inter-faith understanding.

These five people were:

Reverend Donald Beckmann (Roman Catholic), Reverend Mark Bigelow (Protestant Christian), Werner Reich (Judaism), Raj Singh (Sikhism), and Dr. Faroque Khan (Islam).





## AMERICAN DOCTOR PAYS INDIA BACK



*Gurudev Chitrabhanuji with Devendra and Meeta Peer and friends at the opening of the rehabilitation centre*

In February 2002, Pujya Shree Chitrabhanuji inaugurated a rehabilitation centre in Pune, the first of its kind in India. The centre was an addition to an existing state-of-the-art hospital and research centre, originally set up by the legendary Indian singer Lata Mangeshkar in memory of her father.

The addition of the rehabilitation centre was made possible by the contributions of Devendra and Meeta Peer, MD. Dr. Peer practises rehabilitation medicine in Philadelphia, USA. This rehabilitation centre has been built in memory of her father Dr. Pralhad M. Bhanagay, who practised medicine for sixty-five years. Dr. Bhanagay believed in the values of physical fitness and discipline. This centre will cater for patients of strokes, spinal cord injuries,

head trauma, joint replacements, muscular-skeletal disorders and will also provide physical, occupational and speech therapies.

The Centre was inaugurated on 9 February 2002 by Param Pujya Gurudev Chitrabhanuji in the presence of chief guest Dr. N. P. Jain, the former Indian Ambassador to the UN, and a distinguished gathering of citizens, leading members of the medical profession, corporate world, hospital organisers and staff. Gurudev Chitrabhanuji stated that a doctor's help in positive thinking and developing physical skills is very important in the recovery of a patient. Prayers and offerings followed the inauguration. The event closed with blessings by Gurudev Chitrabhanuji.

Miss Roopa Malde celebrated her *arangetram* – an important rite of passage in the classical Indian dance tradition of *bharat natyam*, marking a student's coming-of-age or graduation. The *arangetram* is an occasion where the *bharat natyam* student performs solo to an invited audience of family and friends. Roopa's *arangetram* was held on 1 September 2002 in Hayes, England. Mr. Ramnik Shah, a family

friend who was present, told *Jain Spirit* about the significance of this special event: "No doubt that she is on the threshold of a promising career, but the wider implication is the spurring effect this would have on other aspiring youngsters. Let me add one final comment from the perspective of our diasporan concerns: Roopa is a thoroughly British child, a product of privileged parents with an East African

## Achievements

Professor Kanti Mardia of Leeds University was recently featured in a rare full-length interview published in the eminent journal *Statistical Science*, 2002. He has made pioneering contributions in many areas of statistics and is a founder of the internationally renowned Centre for Medical Imaging Research at the university. He has been elected Fellow of the American Statistical Association and the Institute of Mathematical Statistics. He is author of several textbooks in statistics, and is on the board of many scientific journals.

Mira Kamdar was announced as one of ten winners in the 2002 Washington State Book Awards. The annual awards are given to the best books published by Washington writers. Mira Kamdar was chosen for her acclaimed book *Motiba's Tattoos: A Granddaughter's Journey from America into her Indian Family's Past*.



*Roopa Malde's arangetram performance*

background, who is equally at home in both cultures – not just in musical terms but across the whole spectrum of life. She represents the best of the second generation British Asians. We have every reason to be confident that people like her will consolidate and improve the good name of our community here in the UK."



## DISPATCH FROM DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA



**Giant rangoli brightens up Lord Mahavir's birth anniversary celebrations in Dar Es Salaam**

*On a visit to Tanzania, Neel Shah found a vibrant Jain community celebrating the birth of Lord Mahavir;*

In August this year, I visited Dar es Salaam in Tanzania and witnessed something quite extraordinary. I decided to go and pray at the local Jain temple (*derasar*). It was Friday evening and I found a great crowd already assembled at the Jain Sangh, with the entire local Jain community present. It turned out that this was the opening night of Lord Mahavir's 2600th Birth Anniversary celebrations. In front of me lay one of the biggest Jain *rangolis* I had ever seen: 26 feet wide and representing a thousand hours of artistic labour. It illustrated many different Jain symbols as well as scenes from Mahavir's life. The entire community had gathered to admire the beautiful work of Pushpaben Haria and her helpers from Mombasa who had

worked day and night to have this masterpiece completed in just one week.

This was just the start of what I was going to see at Shree Jain Sangh, as I later found out that the following evening there was to be a dramatisation of Mahavir's life entitled *Shree Mahavir Darshan*. The play was performed very successfully to an appreciative full house.

The hard work of all the 108 participants (a very auspicious number), certainly paid off. Pritiben Punatar, the choreographer of all the dances and Pushpaben Shah, who was in charge of the scripts and dialogues, should be especially commended for their efforts. Both performances of this play were sold out. In fact, just as I was leaving Dar es Salaam, they announced a third performance due to popular demand. It was very impressive to see all the members of the Jain community coming together in this way to convey a positive message about Jainism. I truly wish there was some way they could take this show all over the world as it really was one of a kind. Special congratulations should go out to Shree Jain Sangh, for their hard work, creativity and initiative, and for touching the heart of hundreds with the inspiring life story of Lord Mahavir.



**Scene from Shree Mahavir Darshan, performed at Dar Es Salaam Jain Sangh**

## INSPIRING FIGURES OF MODERN JAINISM GRACE YJA CONVENTION

*Mahwah, New Jersey, USA, 4-7 July 2002:*

The 5th biennial YJA (Young Jains of America) Convention, this year entitled *Walking the Path of Jainism*, was a grand success. The opening ceremonies took place on the first evening shortly after registration. The 800-strong delegation felt honoured and privileged to have such distinguished Jain personalities as Gurudev Chitrabhanuji, Sadhviji Shilapiji and Satish Kumar amongst them. Gurudev Chitrabhanuji and Sadhviji Shilapiji both delivered inspiring keynote speeches. For his part, Satish Kumar enthused the delegates with a motivational discourse on his walk for peace across Asia and Europe.

Delegates then enjoyed a myriad of activities during the Mela Night festivities, complete with cultural booths, games and prizes. Each day nearly 800 young people took part in six interactive sessions as they walked the path of Jainism. These sessions provided in-depth discussions about Jain principles and the origins of Jain values. Many of the sessions were taught by learned Jain scholars, while those discussing how to apply Jain views in daily life were led by members of youth groups from across the country. The cultural atmosphere also proved to be a treat as the convention delegates dressed up in traditional Indian clothing such as *lenghas* and *kurtas* and embraced their cultural heritage at the *raas garba*. There was an America twist to the entertainment during the last evening, when modern popular music was played and everyone had a great time dancing the night away. This event was a truly spiritual and enlivening experience and reflected the hard work and dedication of all those who devoted their time and efforts.





**Mira Kamdar, author of *Motiba's Tattoos*, enthralled Canada's Shabdasetu literary group**

Mira Kamdar, the author of *Motiba's Tattoos: A Granddaughter's Journey into her Indian Family's Past*, impressed 75 Gujarati language lovers at a meeting of Canada's Gujarati literary group Shabdasetu (meaning: literary bridge), as she compared her grandmother's (*Motiba's*) early 20th-

# A GUJARATI JOURNEY INTO THE PAST

century life with her own generation's *fin-de-siècle* situation.

Mira described her family's historical background and her own upbringing. She vividly explained different situations and her childhood memories. The audience felt as if she was conveying their own feelings for their grandmothers!

Mira selected three interesting portions from her book and read them. The first part was the description of how the book was written. Then she explained in detail her visit to *Kuldevi*, her own clan goddess, mentioning the social customs and traditions of weddings then and now. She also spoke briefly about her forthcoming novel.

The organiser, Prakash Mody thanked the guests on behalf of

*Shabdasetu*. Local immigrant writer, Mr. M. G. Vassanji, who chaired the meeting, narrated his own experiences of moving from Africa to Canada. Ms. Debby de Groot of Penguin Canada, the publishers of *Motiba's Tattoos*, introduced Mira and shed some light on Canadian book publishing.

Multicultural Toronto welcomed Mira Kamdar with open arms. Judging from the number of interviews Mira had with the press, radio and broadcast media during her two-day visit, and from the number of books autographed at the book-reading venue, there was a keen interest in Gujarati social customs and traditions.

As we go to press, Mira Kamdar is arriving in the UK to launch her book at a special event on 21st October at the London School of Economics.

## DELHI SUMMER SCHOOLS

During the period 26 May –16 June 2002, BLII (Bhogilal Leherchand Institute of Indology) of Delhi, India held three successful summer schools in Prakrit Language and Literature, Jain Religion and Philosophy, and Manuscriptology and Research Methodology. The schools were inaugurated on 26 May 2002. Dr. V. Kutumba Sastry, Director of Rashtriya Sanskrit Samsthan, N. Delhi presided over the proceedings. Dr. Prem Singh, a retired Professor of Delhi University, was the chief guest.

Thirty-six teachers and research scholars from universities and colleges all over the country participated in the event. Dr. Prem Singh, associated with the BLII since its inception, informed the audience of the literary, research and publication activities of the Institute, and talked about the interdisciplinary relationship between the three summer school themes. He also spoke of the

value of critical and comparative studies between the Vedic-Brahmanic and the Buddhist-Jain Sramanic traditions of India. Dr. V. Kutumba Sastry threw light on the influence of Jain Acharyas on the development of dialectic, linguistic, lexicographical, literary and cultural heritage of India from ancient times through to the modern era. From his discourse it emerged that their contribution to the literary, cultural and architectural wealth of southern India is so great that it is essential to any comparative and critical study of the development of the Indian subcontinent.

The approach of the summer schools was uniquely rewarding: the highly disciplined educational and training system under Acharyas in the ancient *gurukulas* was combined with the comparative and critical methodology of the Western university tradition.

At the valedictory function, Dr.

Sompal Shastri delivered a thought-provoking speech on the value of both the Vedico-Upanashadic thought and the Jain-Sramanic ideas in the modern world. The Vedic *Rishis* advocated reverence towards nature in all its forms. They established an intimate relationship between mankind and nature as different aspects of the Divine. Mahavir preached existence of life in all forms of nature - their oneness, their dignity and their equality. He emphasised non-violence, non-possession and non-absolutism in order that all could live, develop and attain divinity by their own efforts. Dr. Shastri urged it was high time that the world understood the universality of life principle and the unity between ourselves and the world around us. The programme thus ended in an atmosphere charged with spirituality and the inspiration to preserve India's cultural wealth and heritage.



## A REJUVENATING PARYUSHAN

3-10 September 2002:

Jains belonging to the Shvetambara sect of Jainism celebrated their eight-day festival of forgiveness, known as *Paryushan*, in various ways around the world. In London, England, the Young Jains marked the festival by organising a thoroughly enjoyable modern eighth-day event.

During *Paryushan*, Young Jains UK organised special sixty-minute-long evening programmes to capture the essence of one of the most important festivals of Jainism. With many people working during this period in the UK, and thus unable to return home to attend *pratikraman*, or due to not understanding the meaning of the *Pratikraman sutras*, this provided an essential alternative. They are ideal for those that have been to work, and still want to get as much benefit as possible from *Paryushan*.

The programmes were conducted in English. It began with the *Namokar Mantra* and *Mangalik*. The atmosphere was peaceful and tranquil, creating a space for contemplation. The *Irya Vahiya Sutra* was recited simultaneously with the English translation, so that everyone could understand the significance and power of the words and thoughts. There was

then a reading in Gujarati, followed by English explanations, from the *Kalpasutra*. The readings emphasised lessons that we can take into our own lives. This was very interesting and the younger children enjoyed the 'story telling' very much. *Bhakti* was a central part of each evening's activity, and the atmosphere during the devotional singing was rousing and vibrant, with *stavans* provided in English and Gujarati in order to encourage everyone to participate. The evenings concluded with guided reflections on different topics each day, allowing contemplation, quiet time, a period to reflect and let go – all very important parts of *pratikraman*. Each evening ended with the collective recitation of *Kshamapna* – again both in English and Gujarati. The activities over the eight days were put together by a young team, all under the age of 25, and the *bhakti* was also led by a number of talented young singers, all brought up in the UK. People of all ages attended the celebrations, and many commented on their enjoyment of the evenings. As one person put it, "I am so glad I came - I feel alive".

Courtesy: [www.youngjains.org.uk](http://www.youngjains.org.uk)  
[enquiries@youngjains.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@youngjains.org.uk)

## Nations Pays Homage to the Father of the Nation on his 133rd Birth Anniversary



*Gandhi Jayanti, Patna (2nd to 11th October) nine days Stamp Exhibition dedicated to Gandhi life and time through stamps were inaugurated by Sri Surendra Prasad Singh, the Chief Postmaster General, Bihar Postal Circle, at the Gandhi Sangrahalaya, Patna.*

## AMITABH BACHHAN AND ISHA DEOL VOTED HOTTEST VEGETARIANS

In an Internet poll conducted by PETA India on its website 15,000 voters cast their votes for their favourite vegetarian personalities. The eventual winners of PETA India's 2002 Hottest Vegetarian Alive Contest were film star Amitabh Bachhan and actress Isha Deol. More than 15,000 voters participated in the PETAIndia.com poll during a two-month period, with the winners announced in July 2002.

Amitabh Bachhan has become a living legend in the Indian film industry, having played lead roles in more than 70 films. He has been vegetarian for many years. PETA India says that the Bollywood star "lays to rest the notion that there's anything 'manly' about eating meat. The tall, lean actor, whose classics include *Zanjeer* and *Deewar*, has too much respect for himself to poison his body with the fat, cholesterol and pathogens found in animal flesh."

Isha Deol, daughter of another famous film star, Hema Malini, is also a strong advocate of vegetarianism. Other celebrities who were in the running for the Hottest Vegetarian Alive title included top model John Abraham, South Indian film star Madhavan, actress Pamela Anderson, actor Netaly Portman, Gladiator star Joaquin Phoenix and supermodel Yana Gupta.

[www.petaindia.com](http://www.petaindia.com)







*Tina Fox of The Vegetarian Society of the U.K. emphasised the role of education in spreading vegetarianism*

The 35th World Vegetarian Congress, held in Edinburgh, Scotland from 8-14 July 2002, issued a plea to the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) to "take active steps to reduce meat consumption globally". Three hundred Congress participants sent a collective statement to the WSSD,

## VEGETARIANISM LEADS TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

which met at the end of August in Johannesburg, South Africa, arguing that a reduction in meat consumption "...is needed in order to reduce the adverse effects of factory farming and meat production on the environment, on human nutrition and health and on animal welfare. The world's population can then live more healthily on a plant-based diet, scarce global food resources can be fed directly to humans rather than wastefully to farm animals, and also water, land and air quality would be enhanced."

The Congress takes place every other year providing a forum for vegetarians from different cultures and an opportunity to highlight the global culture of vegetarianism. The

Edinburgh Congress in July brought together over 100 vegetarian societies and 300 participants who share grave concerns regarding the effects of factory farming and meat production. Tina Fox, Chief Executive of the Vegetarian Society of the UK stressed the importance of education in spreading vegetarianism: "Vegetarianism is a global movement that crosses many boundaries of race, religion and political inclination. It is so important that we unite to educate people across the world on the issues that relate to this healthy and liberating lifestyle."

Saurabh Dalal of Washington D.C. has become Secretary of the International Vegetarian Union.

[www.ivu.org](http://www.ivu.org)

## SCHOLARLY PRESENCE AT JAANA SHIBIR

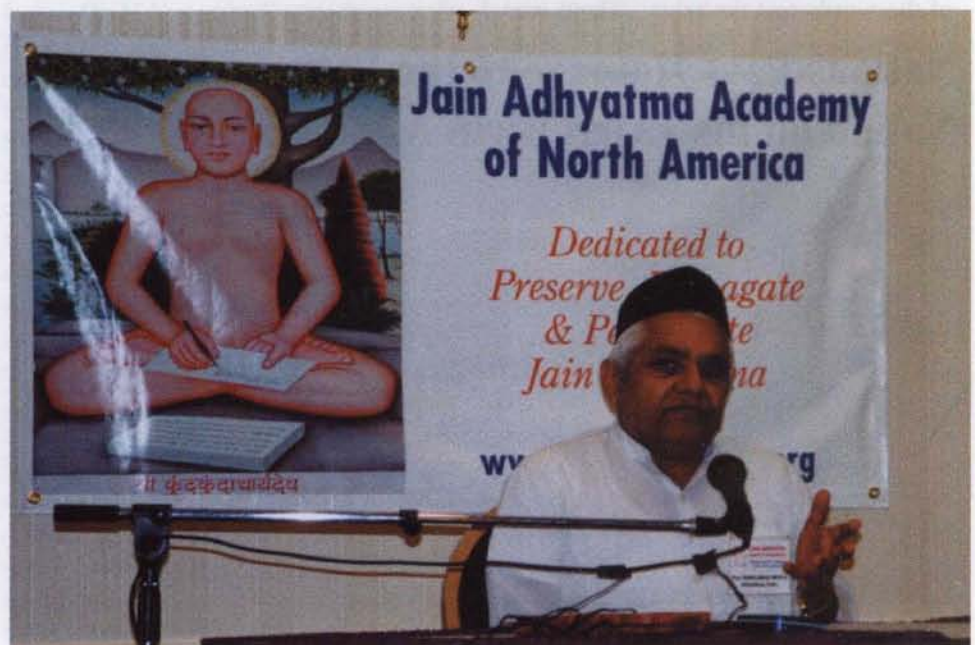
The JAANA (Jain Adhyatma Academy of North America) Adhyatmic Shibir welcomed three renowned Jain scholars from India to North America. Panditji Hukumchand Bharill from Rajasthan, Panditji Abhaykumar Jain from Madhya Pradesh and Panditji Dhirajbhai Mehta from Gujarat all brought their considerable knowledge of Jainism to bear upon a hugely enriching weekend of learning.

On the first day, Dr. Bharill delivered detailed discourses on the forty-seven strengths of the soul. Dhirajbhai Mehta then explained the concepts of *karmavipak*, *jivsthanak* and *marganasthan*, followed by Abhaykumar Jain's lecture on *nayachakra*.

Over 130 people attended the shibir, held in New Jersey during the first weekend of July, with the common purpose of learning more about how to rid their souls of *mithyatva*. As well as the keynote addresses by the visiting

Indian scholars, the shibir participants benefited from activities such as *bhavpuja*, panel discussions, the

question and answer sessions and *bhakti*. The next JAANA shibir will take place in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 2003.



*Dhirajbhai Mehta speaking at the JAANA shibir*



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"I wish I had thought of that."

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Mr Hasmukh Gardi and family have given a gift of a one year subscription to Jain Spirit for every Jain family living in Dubai.

Mr Amu Vaghji Nangpar Shah and family have given a gift of a one year subscription to Jain Spirit for every Jain family living in Perth, Australia.

Mr Kiran Kochar and family have given a gift of a one year subscription to Jain Spirit for every Jain family living in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Mr Anant M. P. Shah and family have given a gift of a one year subscription to Jain Spirit to 250 Jain families living in the U.K.

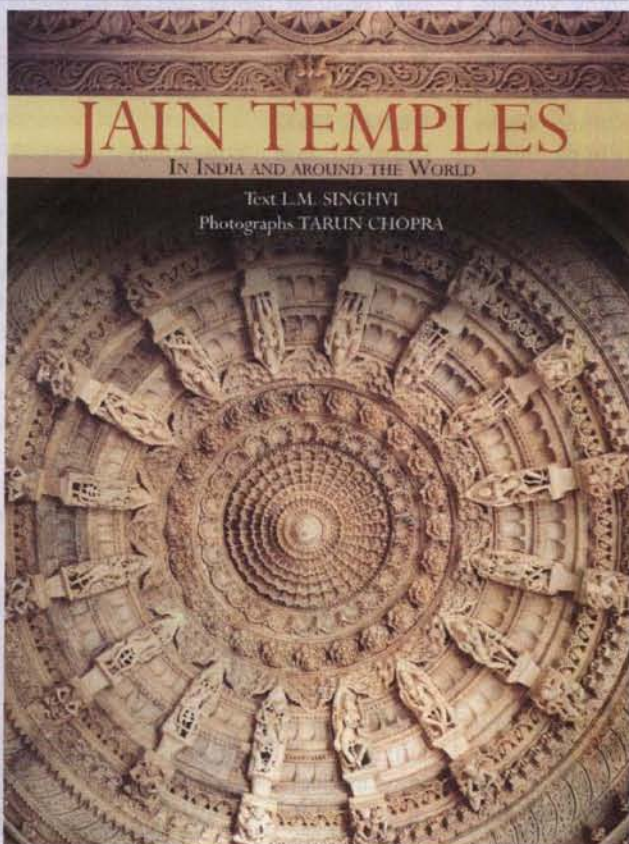
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*Founder, Jain Meditation International Centre, New York*

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*Chairman, The Times of India Group of Publications*

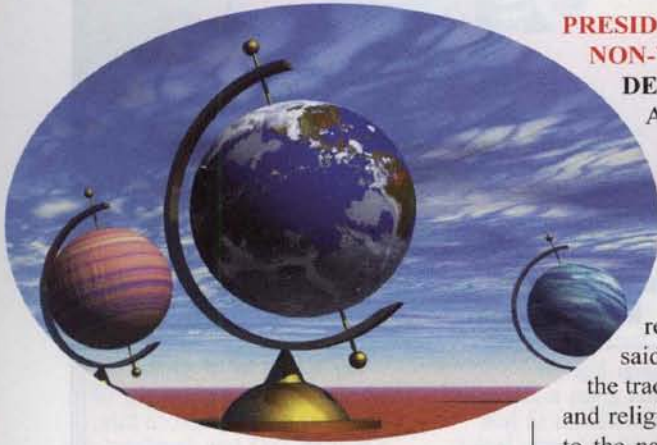
• This marvellous virtual journey makes you want to throw off the cumbersome burdens that weigh you down, pack your bags and probably spend a good time in the study of Jain philosophy and the peaceful environs of each one of these places.

- **Dr. Parveen Kumar, Jain**

*Chairman and President, Jain Centre of Northern California*



# NEWS IN BRIEF



## **PRESIDENT CALLS ON INDIA FOR NON-VIOLENCE AND TOLERANCE DELHI, INDIA**

Addressing the nation through the radio and TV channels on 14 August 2002, the eve of the anniversary of Indian Independence, the President of India A.P.J. Abdul Kalam called upon the nation to protect the eternal values of *ahimsa*. Mentioning the recent communal clashes at Gujarat, he said that any act against the protection of the traditional Indian values of non-violence and religious tolerance could prove disastrous to the nation's secular structure. Addressing members of the Parliament and legislative assemblies, he called upon them to be role models for the younger generation, the future citizens of India.

## **SPREADING AMITY, LOVE AND COMPASSION IN RAJASTHAN RAJASTHAN, INDIA**

Karuna International, the humanitarian organisation wholly devoted to spreading vegetarianism, non-violence, compassion, love and tolerance, has opened its first centre in Rajasthan, in the city of Jodhpur. There are already 331 centres, called Karuna Clubs working with children in schools in the Indian states of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. Karuna's Head Office is in Chennai. The inauguration of the Jodhpur Karuna Club, founded by Jains, was held on 14 July 2002.

## **14TH CENTURY PARSHVANATH STATUE FOUND MADHYA PRADESH, INDIA**

A statue of Lord Parshvanath, thought to date from the 14th century, has been found at the base of the river Shivna near Mandsore town in Madhya Pradesh. The stone statue, according to archaeologist Kailash Chandra Pande, is about 800 years old and belongs to the Jain Digambara sect. The statue is to be installed in the Yashodharman museum for public viewing. Along with this one, two other statues of the Hindu deities Ganapathi and Vishnu-Laxmi have also been recovered and have been placed in the same museum.

## **BHADRESHWAR JAIN TEMPLE DEMOLISHED IN GUJARAT GUJARAT, INDIA**

The world-famous Jain Temple of Bhadreshwar was recently demolished as the structure had been rendered unsafe due to the extensive damage from the earthquake in January 2001. The main temple, which was nearly 2,500 years old, used to attract people from all over the country. "It is shocking not only for Jains but everybody in Kutch," says Vanechand Mulchand Doshi, the Manager of the Seth Vardhman Kalyanji Trust, which manages the Bhadreshwar Temple. The demolition work has been completed and a temporary arrangement has been made from where pilgrims can worship at the shrines of Mool Nayak Bhagwan Mahavir and Bhagwan Parshvanath. It is reported that over 146 icons, most of them between 500 and 2500 years old, could be saved from damage. Despite the fact that the temple does not exist anymore now, pilgrims have been visiting the place from across the country for worship. The Bhadreshwar Temple Managing Committee has taken up the project to reconstruct the Temple as early as possible.

## **A FESTIVAL FIRST IN DUBAI DUBAI, UAE**

Dubai's Jain community marked the Shvetambara *Paryushan* festival by erecting a makeshift 'temple' in a public hall for eight days. Over this time, a programme of daily meditation and worship was organised, as well as activities for children. A famous Jain singer and his band were flown in from Mumbai, India especially for the festival. The average daily attendance of approximately 500 people was a first for Dubai, where such a high turn out has never been experienced before. With the festival of fasting and forgiveness ending on 10 September, the ritual of breaking the fast was organised for the following morning. This event was another first in Dubai, and this too attracted a large number of community members.



## **ACHARYA ADMONISHES POLITICIANS JUMPING ON THE NON-VIOLENCE BANDWAGON GUJARAT, INDIA**

On 25 August 2002, at an *Ahimsa Yatra* function in Gandhinagar, Gujarat the Terapanth sect leader Acharya Mahapragya admonished politicians: "Who is a competent political leader? One who follows the principle of non-violence. We should not adopt the path of violence for petty political gains." Congress Party President Sonia Gandhi, who had come to seek Acharya Mahapragya's blessings, was present to hear this critical remark. In her speech at the same function, Mrs. Gandhi appreciated the task of social integration taken up by the Acharya. In turn, the Acharya expressed his pleasure at Mrs. Gandhi's participation in the *Ahimsa Yatra*.

The 83-year-old Acharya Mahapragya is also reported to have offered a word of advice to Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi in August 2002. The Acharya asked the Chief Minister to cancel his *Gaurav Yatra* programme, which was to begin on 3 September from Phagvel village in Kheda district, or at least to ensure there would be no violence during the trip. The Acharya is said to have conveyed this to Mr. Modi in a letter dispatched on 24 August. Furthermore, the Acharya is reported to have spoken out against the "current communally-surcharged atmosphere in Gujarat" when the Chief Minister met him on 23 August at the Preksha Vishwas Bharati Kendra at Koba, near Gandhinagar.



# Compiled by Falguni Patel

## A REALITY CHECK IN SOUTH KOREA

**Dr. S.L. Gandhi**, of Anuvrat Global Organisation (a trans-national centre for peace and non-violent action associated with the UN Department of Public Information), plans to organise an international conference from 23 February 2003 in Rajsamand, India in co-operation with UNESCO and UNICEF.

Dr. Gandhi's resolve to organise such an event was made after he realised just how little these principles are known in the wider world. When Dr. Gandhi attended an IPRA (International Peace Research Association) conference in July in South Korea, he was astonished to find that hardly anyone of the 400 delegates from 80 countries had heard of Jainism or Lord Mahavir. He found it difficult to believe that even amongst such dedicated researchers of peace and non-violence, as were present at the South Korea conference, knowledge of Jainism should be so limited. This reality check led Dr. Gandhi to comment: "Jains have to think beyond governments and temples. The people who really matter and who are working to establish universal peace through non-violence know very little of us Jains. Something practical has to be done to spread Mahavir's message globally." The conference in February 2003 is intended to contribute to this endeavour.

The theme of the conference will be "The Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World". Dr. Gandhi hopes that this conference will be a turning point for modern Jainism as well as children everywhere. He urged for the support of the global Jain community in this venture.



## ADIDAS ACCUSED OF KILLING FOR KICKS

### BRIGHTON, UK

On 31 August campaigning organisation *Viva!* co-ordinated an international day of action against ADIDAS. This year alone, seven million adult kangaroos will be shot to supply the kangaroo leather industry; the largest massacre of land animals on the planet. ADIDAS is the industry's biggest customer, making their Predator boot and other footwear out of kangaroo skin. *Viva!* supporters across the UK and as far afield as Zimbabwe, the USA and Australia staged demonstrations outside sports shops stocking ADIDAS goods, and urged shoppers to boycott all ADIDAS products until they stop using kangaroo leather. Tens of thousands of leaflets were distributed, spelling out the gruesome facts behind every pair of Predator boots.

"People don't realise that kangaroos are, quite literally, being killed for kicks," says *Viva!* campaigner Claudia Tarry. "Football players who wear kangaroo skin boots have the blood of millions of gentle and unique animals on their hands - and feet." Without the football boots underpinning kangaroo skin prices, the entire industry would be at risk. With 70 per cent of the market for professional football boots, ADIDAS is the driving force behind the kangaroo skin business.

## JAINA EDUCATION AND LITERATURE CD RELEASED IN USA

The JAINA Education and Literature CD contains over 2000 files, which consist of more than 10,000 pages of printed materials covering a variety of information on Jainism in English. It is intended to be a resource for everyone interested in Jain philosophy, including teachers and students of Jainism around the world. The main objective of the JAINA Education committee in compiling this CD is to make the Jain principles known to Jain communities at large and to make Jain literature widely available in English. In countries like the USA, Canada, UK and also in Africa where many Jains have settled permanently, children do not have easy access to Jain literature in English. It is hoped that this CD will fill that gap. For more information and to purchase the CD, please visit the JAINA web site on [www.jainism.org](http://www.jainism.org)

## DO YOU KNOW OF ANY HIGH-FLIERS IN YOUR JAIN COMMUNITY?

People of talent, people who have made outstanding contributions to society? If so, contact us at *Jain Spirit* and we will write about their achievements in future issues of the magazine.

E-mail: [news@jainspirit.com](mailto:news@jainspirit.com)

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR CORNER OF THE WORLD?

Have you had any exciting, inspiring, Jainism-related events in your community? Then share them with us and spread the *Jain Spirit*! Contact us at the *Jain Spirit* office with your news and photographs.



## PLANS FOR 12TH BIENNIAL JAINA CONVENTION UNVEILED OHIO, USA

The Federation of Jain Associations in North America (JAINA) in co-operation with the Jain Centre of Cincinnati and Dayton has decided to host its 12th biennial convention at the Greater Cincinnati Convention Centre on 3-6 July 2003. The theme of the convention is to be "Jainism - the Art of Living".

Preparation for the 12th JAINA Convention is now underway. This international Jain event is expected to attract over 6000 people from all over the world. The four-day event will include a colourful opening ceremony and religious discourses by prominent Jain scholars from North America, the UK and India. In the day time, in addition to the speakers, the focus will be on participatory events such as yoga, meditation, art and vegetarian cooking. In the evenings, professional entertainment is planned in conjunction with drama, songs and dances to be performed by members of Jain communities across North America.



# WE CAN SEE

In a few years time, *Jain Spirit* will be read by thousands of people worldwide.

- \* Young people will take a positive interest in their tradition, and start writing essays, plays and drawing fresh images of what their culture means to them.
- \* Jainism will become recognised as a major world religion and culture and *Jain Spirit* will be available in libraries and schools all over the world.
- \* Environmentalists, animal rights activists and vegetarians will increasingly quote Jain scriptures in their writings and speeches.
- \* There will be much greater media coverage of Jain culture on TV, Radio and Newspapers worldwide.

## CAN YOU?

If so, we urgently need your support. As *Jain Spirit* is a professional venture, financial support to maintain the infrastructure and marketing of the magazine is essential. If it is run purely by volunteers, we would not have such a high quality and timely magazine. Ask why it is that the Jains had never produced such a magazine before?

Yes, finance is our most pressing need, and as fellow Jains, you are our soul partners. Please be generous and send us your donations, as we feel that it is time Jains took Jainism out of their pocket (literally!) and into the world, and *Jain Spirit* is a premier vehicle for doing so.

Please contact Anant Shah in UK on 0207 269 5520

or

[anant@jainspirit.com](mailto:anant@jainspirit.com)



MIKE TURNER

COMMISSIONED BY JAIN SPIRIT



# QUOTES & QUIPS

## SOUL

The soul is the architect of one's happiness and sorrow. The soul on the right path is one's own friend and a soul on the wrong path is one's own enemy.

## SELF CONQUEST

Fight with your own self. What is the use of fighting with external foes? One who conquers one's own self enjoys happiness.

The five senses and four passions (anger, pride, deceit and greed) are difficult to conquer. But the most difficult is to conquer the self. When the self is conquered, they all automatically get conquered.

At the end of every day, an awakened person should contemplate thus: What noble deeds have I done and what have I not done? And what deeds remain to be done which I could have but did not accomplish?

Just as a child speaks of his good and bad acts in an innocent manner, similarly one ought to confess one's guilt with a mind free from deceit and pride.

## RIGHT KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge is that which helps to understand reality, controls the mind and enlightens the soul.

Knowledge is of no use in the absence of right conduct, conduct is of no use in the absence of right knowledge. When a lame man and a blind man in a forest are caught in a conflagration, both get burnt because the lame cannot walk and the blind cannot see.

Without right faith, there is no right knowledge; without right knowledge there is no virtuous conduct; without virtues there is no annihilation of karma and without annihilation there is no liberation.

He only is a right believer who knows what is to be accomplished and what is to be relinquished.

## QUIPS

Can we get to moksha on a Mercedes?  
Do we really have to walk on foot?

Climbing Palitana requires energy, commitment and dedication. So does achieving enlightenment.

## BODY & SOUL

In its youth, the body is tempted by worldly life and concerns. Approaching death, the body is frightened by the world and fearful of the future.

Learn the truth. Set your goals. Walk the path. Liberate your soul.  
That is the essence of Jainism.

A true monk is one who is not proud of his own lineage, beauty and scriptural knowledge. Thus discarding all pride, he remains deeply immersed in spiritual contemplation.

Modern society is driven by selfishness and ego. Regular seva or selfless service is a very important way of overcoming this weakness.

Charity is selfless when it is done without any expectation of return of any kind whatsoever.

*Many of the quotes above have been extracted from Springs of Jaina Wisdom by Dulichand Jain, Motilal Banarsidass Publications.*



# YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Pujyashri Chitrabhanuji answers the questions of today



## ***Is Jainism a religion or a science?***

Jainism is a scientific religion of loving compassion and non-violence. It is a way of living and thinking in tune with nature. In Sanskrit we call it *Jain Dharma*. We designate it religion because we do not have an equivalent English word for *Dharma*. *Dharma* means nature, nature of the Self. The nature of the Self is consciousness, love, amity, peace, appreciation, understanding, etc. The practice of *Jain Dharma* is being in tune with these qualities; through this practice one becomes loving, peaceful, friendly, appreciative, understanding and liberated even in daily living.

## ***Why is Jainism so serious? Is there no fun or joy in the religion?***

*Jain Dharma* is neither serious nor funny. It is a balanced life – *sambhav*. In *sambhav* we perceive our potentiality. We realise our freedom of choice. Accepting our life as it is, we make the best of our life. ‘Make it or break it’ is our choice. Fun often entices people by offering pleasures and flitting rewards. In pleasure of excitement people lose the awareness of its consequences and get into a mess in the end. Fun can be replaced by pleasant living, loving relations and innocent joy.

## ***What is the difference between Jainism and Hinduism?***

Hinduism believes in *Vedas* and God as a Creator. Jains believe in Self, the teachings of the *Tirthankaras*, their own experience, and not blindly in books only.

## ***Why should Jains not eat underground vegetables?***

When you use certain vegetables, they are plucked and not uprooted. With underground vegetables, the whole plant is uprooted and along with the roots the earthworms and insects are also disturbed. So to minimise *himsa*, it is better to take that which grows above the ground.

## ***Why are there so many speeches in Jainism?***

Because there are so many people. Different folks and different strokes. There are many ways of disseminating religious teaching: through art, theatre, classes, workshops, even film and television. We need to explore and use these alternatives.

## ***Is there a God or a Bible as in Christianity?***

In *Jain Dharma* there are books of Agamas. They are replete with the wisdom and insight of life and its purpose. Among them are *Acharanga*, *Dasvaikalik*, *Uttaradhyan*, *Samay-sara*, *Kalpasutra*. All are commonly known. Jains believe in the Peaceful Liberator – *Jina*. God is an English word. Jains believe in *Jina* – God not as a Creator but as an Illuminator of the Truth. God is like the sun that shines the light on the path to peace and liberation. It is up to each of us whether we open our eyes and use the light or we close our eyes and stumble down into a pit. The *murtis* of the *Tirthankaras* remind us of the inherent power of our Self and of the freedom of choices. In Sanskrit there are many names for God: *Jina*, *Arihanta*, *Paramatam*, *Tirthankara*.

## ***Isn't Jainism out-of-date and out-of-step with the modern world (e.g. not eating after dark)?***

In reality, *Jain Dharma* is up-to-date and its guidance helps to direct a healthy, balanced life. Instead of eating late at night, it is better to have supper before sunset for health reasons. Late eating causes poor digestion and the food may create nightmares, illusions and may disturb the sleep. In addition, you might have noticed that in the absence of the ultraviolet rays of the sun, insects are attracted by the smell of the food and in that way eating after dark is unhealthy both for us and for the small insects.



### ***Why can't Jain monks and nuns travel to other parts of the world where Jains live?***

First of all, travelling by jet and modern vehicles, the monks' and nuns' peaceful life is jeopardised and it becomes difficult to practise the five vows. The peaceful life of meditation, simplicity of living, and life in nature are lost.

### ***As a Jain, should I dissect animals for my biology class or participate in it?***

The progress of science should not be at the cost of the suffering or vivisection of animals. Animals have the right to live peacefully as do human beings. More and more doctors who are aware of the painful exploitation of animals are now refusing to prescribe medicine where animal enzymes or by-products are involved. In America, millions of people are aware and are working with compassion for animals and have become a voice for voiceless animals: doctors of PCRM (Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, [www.pcrm.org](http://www.pcrm.org)), dedicated workers of PETA (People's Ethical Treatment of Animals, [www.peta.org](http://www.peta.org)), and ASPCA (American Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals). The advice is: live in the awareness of the present, minimise the violence, be aware of the vices that generate disease, and meditate on life.

### ***Are all meat-eaters evil?***

According to *Jain Dharma* nobody should call any other person 'evil'. To use harsh words is violence. And besides that, who gave the right to whom to call anybody 'evil'? People change. Change is the law of life. Yesterday somebody may be a fleshetarian. If the person is convinced, today he becomes vegetarian. Without judging, if we share our deep feeling of reverence for life with compassion, it may help the person to think without resistance and that will bring change.

It is a pity that fleshetarians by eating meat hurt themselves and hurt innocent, helpless animals. They are not aware that any violence done to any life has a consequence and comes back like a boomerang to the doer. Violence begets violence and in the moment of violence the effect of the cause is forgotten but the result is inevitable.

The universal law is: what one sows, that is what one reaps. So, it is better to be a vegetarian and have compassion for the people who eat meat and are not aware of the consequences. It is not blaming; it is showing understanding and compassion.

### ***Can Jains ever be fundamentalists, as in other religions?***

*Jain Dharma* is *anekantvada*, which respects differences in practices so there is no room for fundamentalists. Jains are not dogmatic. Jains practise *anekantvada*. *Anekanta* shows that reality is multi-faceted; its perception varies, depending on the state of mind of the viewer, the time, the place and nature.

What is right from one point of view can be open to question from other points of views. Absolute truth cannot be grasped from any one particular point of view. Absolute truth is the sum total of all different viewpoints that make up the universe. *Anekanta* respects different perspectives which are harmonious with respect for life.

### ***Why do we do aarti?***

*Aarti* is swaying the lighted lamps in front of *murtis* of *Jinas* with devotion before the night engulfs the world in its peaceful arms. *Aarti* is done to have the imprint of *darshan* on our mind before the temple is closed. In the performance of *aarti*, the devotee enjoys the divine presence of Bhagwan. Those who carry the *darshan* in their being have a peaceful night. This presence of *darshan* protects the devotee from nightmares, bad dreams and fear. Light is the symbol of divinity, and the ever-growing light of *aarti* dispels darkness, signifying the overcoming of negativities. 🙏

*Pujya Chitrabhamuji has written a large number of books on Jainism and has done a lot to promote Jain knowledge and understanding all over the world. He lives in New York and Mumbai. His books and cassettes can be ordered from [chitrabhamuji@aol.com](mailto:chitrabhamuji@aol.com)*

**If you have any questions you would like to ask please email them to**

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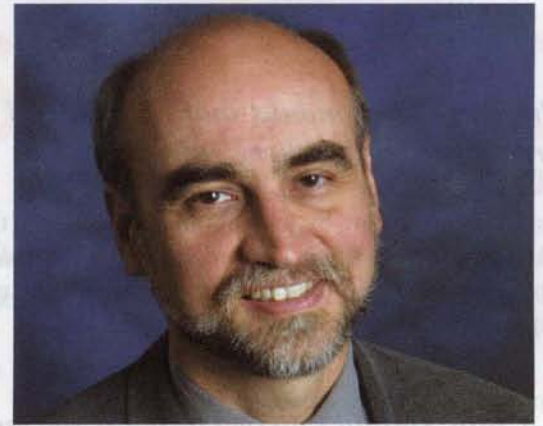
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# TOP TEN BOOKS



**Christopher K. Chapple**  
recommends the top ten  
scholarly books on Jainism  
ever written in English

**W**E ARE VERY FORTUNATE TODAY TO HAVE A large number of excellent books in English on Jainism. In this article I selected ten of my personal favourites, without giving a particular order.

*The Jaina Path of Purification*, by P.S. Jaini, conveys a picture of the tradition that is rigorous yet fun to read. It begins with a dramatic description of *sallekhana*, then outlines the basic Jain teachings and describes with flair the process of spiritual ascent through the fourteen *gunasthanas*. Though I had been familiar with some earlier studies on Jainism, this book brought the tradition alive for me when it was published in 1979. It helped inspire further studies of this important religion by a whole new generation of scholars.

*The Jains*, by Paul Dundas, provides a comprehensive historical survey. When I first met Paul at a Jain conference in Amherst, Massachusetts, shortly before the release of the book, I was quite dazzled with the depth of his historical knowledge and his familiarity with the primary figures of the extensive Jain literary tradition. The book brought to me new understanding particularly of the medieval and early modern periods. Gladly, a new edition of the book has just been published by Routledge 2002 with diacritical marks, a necessity woefully absent from the first edition.

*Absent Lord: Ascetics and Kings in a Jain Ritual Culture*, by Lawrence Alan Babb. The book combines fieldwork with historical research to produce an award winning account of

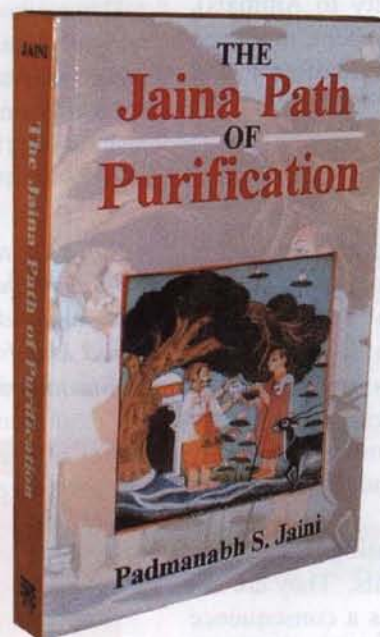
Jainism. Babb, an anthropologist by training, developed this study while engaged in field research in Rajasthan. He gives a wonderfully complete account of the relationship between Shvetambaras and Digambaras in northern India and provides a detailed account of the Dada Gurus, the prominent leaders of the Tapa Gacch, who wielded considerable influence in the court of some Mughal emperors. He combines this historical perspective with close observance of contemporary ritual practices.

*The Outlines of Jainism*, by Jagmanderlal Jaini, published in 1916, provides an excellent brief overview of Jain thought. Written with great elegance and concision, this book needs to be republished. It includes helpful charts and summaries of key Jain stories and parables that add texture to one's study of the faith.

*That Which Is* is a translation by Nathmal Tatia of Umasvati's *Tattvarthasutra*. It summarises the Jain worldview in a manner accepted by both Shvetambaras and

Digambaras. I used it with an undergraduate class on Hindu and Jain theology and the students loved it. It includes the root text with the original Sanskrit and summaries of the major commentarial traditions. The book is beautifully produced and well indexed.

The *Acharangasutra* was translated by Herman Jacobi over one hundred years ago. Even in its somewhat antique





phraseology, it conveys a sense of rigour and urgency that accompanies a life of ritual behaviour rooted in the avoidance of harm to any being, whether moving or still. This oldest surviving Jain text provides a glimpse into the thorough manner in which Mahavir analysed the cosmos, and conveys the great ethical sense that arose from his definition of life. Reading portions of this material helps the student of Jainism capture a sense of the gravity and beauty of Jainism's cosmo-ethical sensibilities.

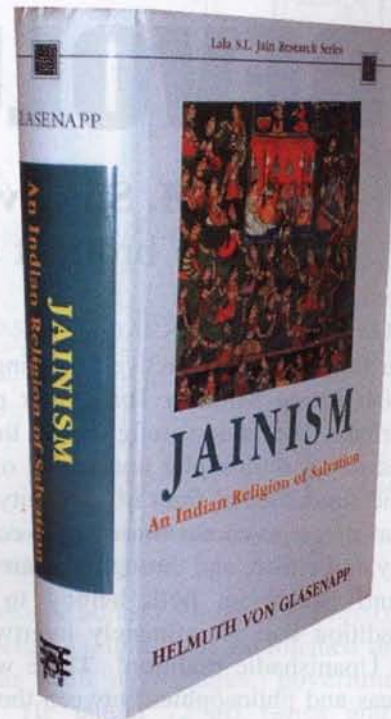
*Open Boundaries*, edited by John Cort, provides an excellent in-depth glimpse into Jainism in historical perspective and introduces the reader to several important researchers, including Cort, Peterson, Davis, Orr, Meister and others. Through the inscriptions, one learns of the past prominence of Jainism in Tamil Nadu. Through a study of temple architecture, one learns about the 'conversion' of religious buildings from one faith to another. Through a close study of texts, one learns in this book about Jain aesthetics, its relationship with the royal court of Kumarapala, its interpretations of Yoga, and of Tantra and Mantra in the Jain tradition.

*Organizing Jains in India and England*, by Marcus Banks, presents a delightful and well-researched study of the move on many Jain families from western India to eastern Africa and then ultimately to England. In contrast to the life of an American Jain, which is generally a life of assimilation into the mainstream, one gets a sense of isolation among British Jains,



who - as described by this social scientist - generally seemed to occupy a well defined ethnic niche, at least in the 1980s. This book includes marvellous photographs and detailed descriptions of the role of Jain gathering halls for worship and social events, from Gujarat to eastern Africa and Leicester.

*Jainism: An Indian Religion of Salvation*, by Helmuth von Glasenapp, was originally published in German in 1925 and newly translated into English by Shridhar B. Shrotri in



1999. It provides a nearly encyclopedic resource for learning about Jainism. Von Glasenapp, renowned for his detailed studies of Jain karma theory, provides a historical and philosophical survey of the faith with some sociological observations. He provides somewhat more technical detail than Jaini or Dundas on certain topics yet conveys this information in a readable style. With over 550 pages and 30 plates, this sizable book collates a broad range of important information.

I want to round up this list with mentioning a Sanskrit medieval text from the 8th century, with which I have spent a significant time: *Yogadrstisamuccaya* of Haribhadra. This book, available in English translation by Dixit through the L.D. Series published in Ahmedabad, surveys different styles of Yoga (Patanjala, Jaina, Buddhist, Vedantin) and suggests that some Yogis might tend to go astray by participating in rituals of dubious merit. However, Haribhadra does suggest that all well-meaning faiths share the common goal of spiritual liberation. He implicitly calls upon his readers to respect the views of others, to offer words of reconciliation and seek not to offend those with whom one disagrees. A sound piece of advice in our present times. 🙏

*Christopher Key Chapple is Professor at Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles. He is a prolific writer and speaker and his latest book is reviewed in this magazine.*



# TIRTHANKARAS WERE REVOLUTIONARIES

L. M. Singhvi writes about the social reforms brought about by early ford-makers

**T**HE LUMINOUS MESSAGE OF THE JAIN Sramana tradition is instructive, inspiring and relevant. As British Prime Minister Tony Blair put it recently, Jainism is perhaps the oldest religion of the world. Its uniqueness lies in its philosophy and ethics of non-violence (*ahimsa*), as the fundamental faith of humanity in its striving for peace. That message comes through the core concepts of Jain philosophy and ethics, and through Jain art and culture.

Jainism and Buddhism both belong to the Sramana tradition, a tradition that is intimately intertwined with the Vedic and the Upanishadic tradition. There was a profound dialogue of ideas and philosophies between the two traditions that freely inter-mingled with each other and blossomed as flowers of the same soil. Both of them belong equally to the ancient Indic Aryan society, though there were many points of departure and convergence between them in the creative process of osmosis and assimilation.

The Sramana tradition did not fully accept the absolute authority of the Vedas, although there is a great deal in common between the Vedic Brahmana traditions and the Jain Sramana traditions. They together were a part of the larger Indian discourse, often sharing the same concepts, precepts and vocabulary. The Jains and the Buddhists did challenge many of the prevailing practices and the underlying assumptions of the Vedic Brahmana tradition within the mainstream of the Indian discourse, and they had an immense influence on the course of India's composite social evolution. R.P. Ranade and S.K. Belvalkar have pointed out in their *History of Indian Philosophy* that Jain asceticism greatly influenced the philosophical speculations of the Upanishadic period. The philosophy of turning away from worldly life (*nivrtti*); the total abstinence by body, mind and speech (*trigupti*); reclusive renunciation (*pravrajya* or *sanyas*); the state of homelessness (*anagaratva*); and the idea of casting of one's body by prolonged fasting (*salekhana*) led to an emphasis on penance as the means of liberation from the bondage of karma and rebirth.

The Jains are followers of the Jinas or *Tirthankaras*, who are the pathfinders, ford-makers and the worthiest exemplars. They are the conquerors of the Self (*Arihantas*), who have in the evolutionary apotheosis attained the transcendental state of body, mind and soul (*kaivalya*), in which an individual is

completely emancipated and is endowed with cosmic consciousness.

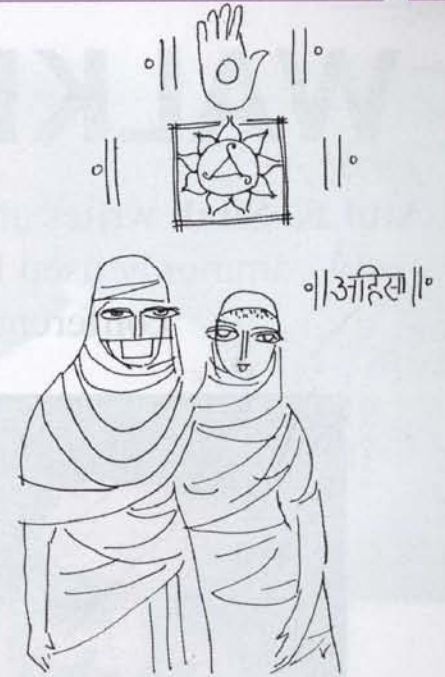
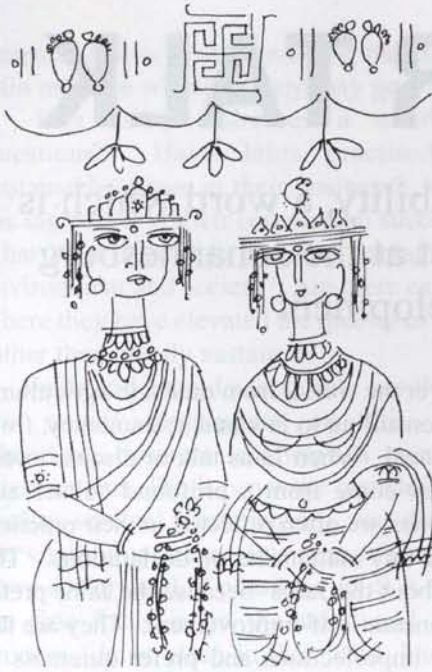
Unlike Buddhism, which traces its origin solely to Lord Buddha, the Jain Sramana tradition is represented in its legendary glory by 24 Jinas or *Tirthankaras*, the first of whom was Rshabha or Adinath and the last of them - Vardhamana Mahavir. They are acclaimed as the great pathfinders and their teachings have been the living legacy of Jainism. Western historians and many of the Indian historians do not accept the historicity and the precise chronology of the first 22 Jain *Tirthankaras*, mainly because of lack of archeological evidence. Also, the time span assigned to them in the Jain tradition was beyond reasonable belief. Until Herman Jacobi established the date and the historical authenticity of the twenty-third *Tirthankara*, Lord Parsvanath, many historians lacking in deeper scholarship of Jain literature and tradition found it convenient to describe him as a mere mythological figure.

The Jains, however, subscribe as a matter of faith to the firmly entrenched tradition of 24 *Tirthankaras* as historical personages. There is an abundance of literature in the Jain tradition relating to each of the 24 *Tirthankaras* and the vivid details of their parentage, birth, marriage and children, their kingdoms and the significant events in their lives, including renunciation, *kaivalya* and *nirvana*. Each *Tirthankara* has a distinct name, colour, symbol or emblem (*lanchna*), by which he is identified.

Rshabha was the first of the *Tirthankaras*. His name occurs or is implied in certain hymns of the *Rgveda*. An eminent scholar, Dr. Sagarmal Jain suggests a meaningful rendering of the metaphorical Rshabha: "Vrsabha (*Rshabhadeva*) bound by the three yogas of *manas*, *vacana* and *kaya*, announced that the Supreme Lord resides in the mortals; its four-fold form of infinite knowledge, infinite philosophy, infinite happiness and infinite strength (*virya*), are the horns. *Samyak* knowledge, philosophy and character of steadfastness are the three foundations or legs. The Supreme Lord's two heads are knowledge-based and philosophy-based. Its seven hands represent intelligence, desire and the five sensory perceptions."

The Vedas undoubtedly constitute the oldest literature





*On their wedding day, Aristanemi and Princess Rajul renounced the world to avoid unnecessary suffering to animals being sacrificed for their feast*

of humankind. If some of the Vedic hymns are construed as references to *Tirthankara* Rshabha and to the renunciates in the Sramana order (Vatarasana-munis also described as Kesin), the Vedic and pre-Vedic antiquity of Rshabha and the Sramana tradition is beyond any doubt.

Bharat, the elder son of Rshabha, was a sovereign ruler after whom the land around and eastwards of the river Indus came to be known as Bharatvarsha or Bharat. The Constitution of India refers to India that is Bharat; perhaps it would be more accurate to refer to our country as Bharat that is India. King Bharat's younger brother, Bahubali was the great apostle of renunciation. His colossal sculptural image, one of the tallest in the world, has a majestic presence in Shravana Belgola in Karnataka.

Rshabha dates back to a pre-historic period. Legend associates his name with the Ikshvaku dynasty of Ayodhya as its primordial ancestor. In all probability, he lived before or contemporaneously with the Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Hittite, Mittani and Sumer civilisations. As noted by Pandit Sukhlal Sanghavi, during an excavation in 1949 in Cyprus a bronze statue of Rsabhadev was found from around the second millennium, cca.1250 BC. Recent marine archeology in the Bay of Cambay threw up underwater discoveries of submerged civilisations that existed before almost all other known ancient civilisations. The *Bhagawat Purana* describes Rshabha as an incarnation of Vishnu. A seal from Mohen-jo-daro is often referred to as the seal of Rsabha as well as that of Pashupati Siva. Rsabha's abode of penance is Mount Kailash, the fabled abode of Lord Siva.

As a ruler, Rshabha encapsulated his vision of civil society in three rhyming words: *asi* (sword or civil defence); *masi* (ink, representing writing or language and script) and *krishi* (agriculture, animal husbandry or the means to settled social

life). To these he added commerce (*vanijya*), the arts (*kala*) and architecture (*shilpa*). He established the institution of marriage as well as villages, government, laws and penology. He taught 72 art forms and imparted the knowledge of scripts and numerals. In a sense, that was the beginning of human civilisation.

After Rshabha, the founding father of the tradition and the twenty other *Tirthankaras*, Aristanemi, Parsva and Vardhamana Mahavir carried forward, refined and consolidated the Jain doctrine. Aristanemi, the twenty-second *Tirthankara* belonged to the Andhak-Vrisni clan of the Yadavas. He was a younger cousin of Lord Krishna. His father, Samudravijaya and Lord Krishna's father Vasudeva were brothers. Their families moved from Mathura to Dwarka under the threat of annihilation by a retaliatory attack of Jarasandha. Aristanemi grew up to be a strong and handsome prince. While on his way to get married to the beautiful princess Rajul (or Rajimati), Aristanemi heard the plaintive wailing of animals about to be slaughtered for the banquet in celebration of his wedding. He renounced the world, became a monk and attained *kaivalya*. His bride-to-be also became a nun. The temples at Girnar commemorate the compassion and renunciation of *Tirthankara* Aristanemi... *To be continued* 🙏

*Dr. L. M. Singhvi is a ambassador of non-violence and inter-faith dialogue and a member of the advisory board of Jain Spirit. He lives in New Delhi. The above essay is extracted from his beautiful new picture book 'Jain Temples in India and Around the World', published by Himalayan Books, 2002, available from Jain Spirit at £30 + p&p.*



# WALKING THEIR TALK

**Atul K. Shah** writes about the Jain view of Sustainability, a word which is very commonly used today and was the key concept at the Johannesburg conference on World Sustainable Development

ALAY GUJRA



**W**HEN EXAMINING SUSTAINABILITY, IT IS important to look at ancient traditions and their values. In the huge cacophony of environmentalism that exists today, it is easy to become suspicious of the real motives of modern environmentalists. Traditions that exist today have stood the test of time and somehow sustained themselves. They provide us with an interesting case study of how this was achieved and what the underlying survival instinct is. In this essay, we focus on one such community and culture: the Jains.

For thousands of years, the Jains have been living a simple life with a strict vegetarian diet, a deep respect and love for nature and an aspiration towards wisdom, enlightenment and liberation. Their life has not succumbed to greed or materialism, but instead focussed on charity and selflessness. Mahatma Gandhi, one of the greatest leaders of the twentieth century, drew upon Jainism for his thinking and practice of non-violence. In Jainism, there is a constant ambition to elevate life from everyday mundane routines and obligations to spiritual worship and wisdom, art and aesthetics and finally, liberation. For many, business has been their primary source of livelihood, but instead of using it to build their empire or their ego, they have raised social welfare, given valuable community leadership and built lasting social and cultural institutions. This small but vibrant global community has leaders in many

business fields all over the world, from media to agriculture, from management consulting to law and accountancy, from diamond trading to steel. When Jains talk or discuss issues of sustainability, they come from a profound culture and history and these values are often reflected in their practical actions much before any statements or declarations. The world knows little about the Jains because the Jains prefer introspection and constant self-improvement. They are too aware of their own imperfections and prefer quietness to publicity. It is easier to change oneself, but much more difficult to change the world.

Jainism was founded in India at least three thousand years ago. Mahavir was the latest in a series of twenty-four prophets or ford-makers (*Tirthankaras*) who guided civilisation on the path of self-realisation with minimal violence and maximum compassion. He was born in 599 B.C. and lived primarily in the modern Indian state of Bihar. Mahavir explained that every living being has a zest for life, therefore humanity has a vital role to play as a humble steward of nature (*ahimsa*).

He explained that violence (*himsa*) first started from the mind and injury to another is injury to oneself – all life is inter-dependent (*parasparopagraho jivanam*). Further, Mahavir argued that any kind of possessiveness is bound to lead to unhappiness. If one truly wishes to be free, one needs to detach from this and live a very simple life with very limited possessions (*aparigraha*). He was a tremendous role model, giving up his royal kingdom, to walk into the forest, meditating and fasting for twelve years in search of the genuine path to sustainable living and everlasting happiness.

After attaining enlightenment, he founded an order of monks and nuns which numbered in thousands, and today there are two main sects – the Shvetambara and the Digambara, living all over India. Jain monks live the most simple and austere lifestyle, have no possessions and go begging for the limited amounts of vegetarian food they need to survive. They walk thousands of miles every year, spreading the message of peaceful coexistence and take great care not to hurt anyone, even the minutest insects. Digambara monks even to this day do not possess anything and travel naked and barefoot, living a

***“The Jain tradition does not merely sustain life, but elevates it.”***



nomadic lifestyle and spreading the authentic Jain message wherever they may go.

This essay addresses a number of questions. Have Jains practised their sustainable values in their business? What is the ingredient of their commercial success? In what way have they avoided damaging the environment and society? Are there examples where they have elevated the quality of all life, rather than merely sustain it?

Jains understood a long time ago that they are merely passengers on this planet. Therefore, business is always a means and never an end. Profit is not the overriding aim; quality service, workmanship and discipline are vitally important. Business is a means to serve society and, if possible, uplift it. Hence the first focus is on the mind and thought process. Jains, deep in their soul, know that they are passers-by. They know it and feel it. Their monks walk barefeet, thus leaving a light footprint, not just in theory, but in everyday practice. Right Knowledge and Understanding (*Samyag Gnan*) is crucial to their livelihood. This is the first and most important road to sustainability. It is also very practical. Let children learn about the sacredness of life, about its physical limitations, about death and salvation, and they will respect all life. *Ahimsa* will not just be a theory but a personal value and mission. To hurt another, is to hurt oneself – there is no difference.

The trade or the professions Jains choose to pursue are determined by their values. They avoid the meat industry or anything that is directly or indirectly connected to the killing of animals. They tend to specialise in trading businesses, import/export, wholesaling and retailing. One of the largest newspapers in the world, the *Times of India*, is owned by a Jain family. From their base in Antwerp, Jains dominate the global trade in polished diamonds. A lot of business is conducted on the basis of relationship and trust, avoiding the need for expensive lawyers and contracts. There is a desire to benefit the opposite party in any deal, not to squeeze them and exploit them. Inter-dependence is a natural law, even in business, and business transactions adhere to this. A lot of businesses tend to be family run, with many continuing and evolving for generations. There is a deep sense of loyalty to the locality from where business is done, and there is active charitable contribution and community patronage. Employees are treated and trained as colleagues, and those who leave are helped in setting up their own businesses.

Through a daily 48-minute *Samayika*, Jains reflect on their actions, seek forgiveness for any transgressions and actively attempt to renew and rekindle their intelligence so that harm is avoided and good is done. This is a daily act of humble worship and meditation. It is an inner bath and cleansing, removing the grime of greed, of ego and selfishness. It is part



*Jains believe that wealth and financial profits earned by their businesses do not belong to them*

of the process of constant self-improvement. It keeps the ego down and raises the soul up. In this way, right understanding is retained and even elevated.

Jain monks are the role models and examples of selflessness. They possess nothing, and hence do not suffer from financial insecurity. They have firmly put their faith in the wisdom of the inner soul and its capability to transcend life. As nomads, they have to beg for their food and provide knowledge and wisdom to people whom they meet along their journey. Many a businessman feed the monks with their own hands and spend valuable time with listening to their discourses and resolve any personal questions or dilemmas. All over India beautiful temples have been built, hospitals, schools, orphanages and libraries by businessmen who have been inspired by Jain monks. Their very life is one of unconditional giving, and they spread this vibration wherever they set foot. This is elevation, not sustenance. It is an act of ecological stewardship with the highest sense of planetary responsibility and care.

Jains believe that the wealth and financial profits earned by their businesses do not belong to them. Just as the monks are simple and selfless, entrepreneurs detach themselves from their business and believe that success is not because of effort or personal intelligence but due to their good merit earned from past lives (*punya*). Profit is a reward and not a return. It is nature's dividend and not a performance measure or benchmark. It has no connection with any person or ego, as no one person is the performer. Thus charity becomes a natural act for Jains, not requiring any active sacrifice. Nature's fruits need to be replanted, so that more trees and fruits may grow in the future. They are certainly not meant for hoarding. Accumulation leads to rotting, insecurity and, finally, loss. For Jains, business is not solely for profit.





*Is your work harmonious with nature?*

Thus the standard measures of accounting, the profit and loss account and the balance sheet do not hold much significance. In fact, the limitations of quantitative measurement have been understood a long time ago, and business is practised with strong qualitative criteria which do not appear on any financial statement. Values like trust, relationships, human capital and employee morale, service and loyalty, have long been recognised as vitally necessary to business success and longevity. Through private ownership, there is a strong sense of responsibility – very few Jain businesses are quoted on stock markets anywhere in the world, even though they may be bigger than some quoted companies.

Ownership and the related responsibility are rarely delegated. In such a scenario, the importance of financial and ethical accounting standards is much less. Similarly, auditing is done by owners themselves visiting various branches and seeing how operations are conducted. Typically, Jain businesses stay within controllable human limits and do not get overtaken by greed and desire for growth and expansion for its own sake. If entrepreneurs were unfair or unjust, they would find out very quickly as the supplier or customer is not a remote but a relationship partner. Hence actions would be revised and mistakes corrected if necessary.

Charity leads to personal contentment and encourages the entrepreneur to give more and see the fruits of their harvest, reminding them of the need to circulate wealth and not accumulate it. Some of the greatest artistic triumphs of the human soul have been inspired by Jain businessmen – witness the temples of Mount Abu in Rajasthan or Palitana in Gujarat. This is social and ecological elevation, not private exploitation or greed. Neither is it purely about sustenance. Very often,

Jain entrepreneurs involve themselves directly in their local communities, sharing their skills and expertise and also their financial wealth. This direct involvement helps them to keep their feet on the ground and to understand the needs of the community. Here again, like business, charity is rarely at arm's length but a direct extension, which empowers the Jain to fulfil the needs of the people and the environment in every which way.

Financial surpluses, if they exist, are re-invested in the business or the community, and there is a bias towards ethical investment. Wherever possible, Jains like to know where their money is used,

and where they are unsure, they would not invest.

The word 'greed' is related to hunger, and primarily relates to food, although today it has been translated to business and materialism. Jains have a very strong sense of restraint where food is concerned. They understand it as the root cause of greed and so keep it at bay, eat very moderately and fast very often. Of course the food must not harm or injure, but it must not lead to indulgence either. Restraint of food is another reminder of the temporality of life on this planet and so too is the importance of focussing on salvation through self-discipline and self-improvement. Hence all Jain businessmen actively control their greed through self-restraint. It is believed that desire for food is a root cause of violence and active restraint helps one to keep such tendencies at bay. Jains practise hunger to avoid greed.

True Jains do not just leave a light footprint on the planet. They raise the quality of all life, inspire others through their own wisdom and example, and keep things simple, trusting in nature for salvation and liberation. They elevate life. Modestly, silently and selflessly. Ancient traditions are often quiet and humble, preferring to act rather than to talk or preach. It is possible that the true wisdom of sustainability lies in their belief systems. We must endeavour to uncover it and share it with the world. 🙏

*Atul K. Shah wrote the above essay for a forthcoming book on Sustainability by Michael Tobias. He is Executive Editor of Jain Spirit.*





Atul Shah



Hughes Serve



Chandu Shah

## CALL FOR ENTRIES

# JAIN SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

### Classes

**Adult:** sixteen years old and above.  
**Junior:** below sixteen years old.

### Adult Categories

- Roots and identity.
- Peace and conflict.
- Ahimsa, Aparigraha and Saiyam principles in action.
- Festivals and rituals, where is the colour of Jainism?

### Junior Categories

- Adults by children. How do you see adults?
- Animals and nature. Are animals naturally kind?
- Festivals. What is the role of young people in festivals?
- Hopes and dreams. What are your dreams for your future?

### Prizes

Photographs from both classes will be published in Jain Spirit. The winners will be given a digital camera. Jain Spirit reserve the right to publish any pictures entered into the competition, full credits will be given.

### The Aim

The aim of the competition is to find the best photographs taken by Jain Spirit readers throughout the world. The judges will be looking for aesthetic appeal, originality and photos that illustrate a Jain angle. The search is on to find Jain Spirit Photographer of the year.

### How to enter

You will need a copy of the rules and an official entry form available from the web site: [www.jainspirit.com](http://www.jainspirit.com)  
**Closing date 28th February 2003.**



## It's not the winning; it's the taking part.



# JOY OF FAMILY PILGRIMAGE

**Tushar Shah** recalls the fulfilment of his family reunion pilgrimage to India



*Pilgrimage to Sammet Shikhar*

**E**leven members of our family recently returned from India where we undertook a twelve-day pilgrimage through the state of Bihar, starting from Patna and culminating with the completion of the Shikharji Jaatra. We want to share our thoughts, not on the many religious sites themselves (see Mr. Sobhag Shah's wonderful article on a pilgrimage to Sammet Shikhar in Issue 5), but rather on the merits of a family pilgrimage in general. All together we were four sisters, two brothers, two husbands, two wives and a son, ranging in age from twenty-eight to over sixty-five and coming from different parts of the world - London, Toronto, Boston and New York City. Most of the members of the older generation grew up in Kenya before migrating west during their 20s. I grew up in the US where I still live. About two years ago, a few family members came up with this idea. After much research and planning the trip became a reality in March 2001.

In spite of the increasing geographic separation, our family has been fortunate to maintain close ties through the aid of telephone, email, and of course the many experiences we share. Whether we come together at a family wedding (almost a yearly experience lately!) or at a shared vacation, we all cherish

the precious times we have together. Our family pilgrimage to India, however, was in many ways a much more intense and fruitful experience than the others we have had. We were visiting important Jain sites on a daily basis, interacting with an environment very foreign to the one we now live in, witnessing the extreme poverty and extreme beauty of India. We were bombarded by the shouts of our bus driver's assistant as he helped make way for our bus through a never-ending sea of people, animals and vehicles. We delighted at the smells of intense spices emanating from the kitchens of the dharma shalas we stayed at. We appreciated the sights and smells of the flowers that had recently bloomed. Besides these many experiences, our minds were challenged by spiritual, philosophical and economic thoughts. How could it be that in this place of Mahavir's birth there are so few Jains left? How could it be that Bihar is now one of the poorest states in India? What must have this land

been like when Mahavir lived in it? What part of this land and its people is part of us, part of our identities? What could we do to help the people of Bihar? These were but a few of the questions we posed to ourselves and to each other as we made our way along our journey.

We often discussed Jainism, which helped even the most knowledgeable among us become more familiar with Jainism and closer to it. We started many of the days with a 'thought for the day' inspired by Jain teachings. These thoughts included control of anger, listening carefully to others, forgiveness and respecting each other's point of view. These are the teachings that we all try to live by every day. However, being on vacation without the many responsibilities of everyday life gave us all the time to reflect on these teachings and focus on actually practising them.

We stayed at the wonderful Veerayatan Ashram at Rajgir for four days. We were very impressed by the charity work they do and the serene and peaceful environment they have created. In addition to a hospital and a library with many volumes of important Jain scholarship, they have built a Jain museum, which includes a series of beautifully



crafted images depicting the many stories of Mahavir and other important Jain figures. We spent long hours walking through these halls while discussing the stories. Particularly one of them was the source of much discussion: the story of extreme charity of Shalibhadra and Dharna Sheth.

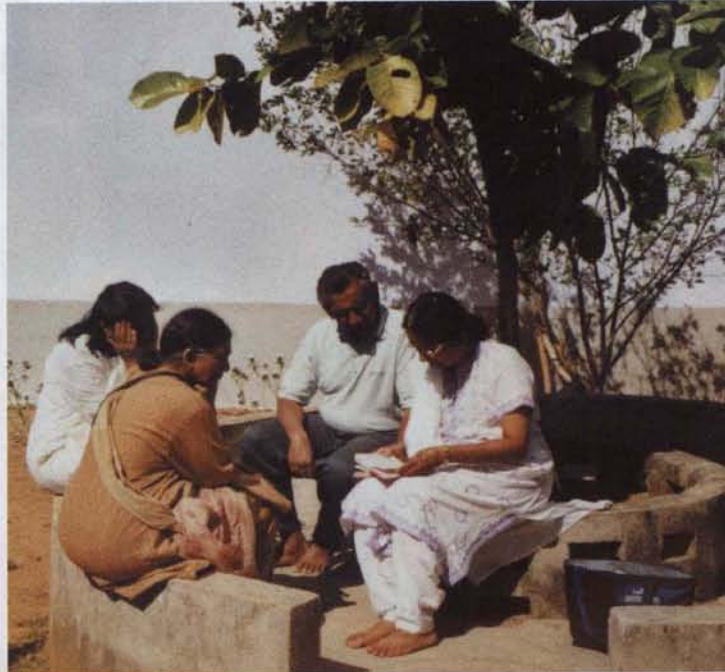
In his previous life, Shalibhadra was a young boy in a poor family. He liked rice pudding very much but his mother was not able to afford it. Finally one day she could make it and gave it to her son. When a sadhu knocked on the door, even though he had very little food, the boy offered half of the rice pudding to the sadhu. As he gave the food, his plate slipped and he ended up giving all his food to the sadhu. The boy became sick from hunger that night and eventually died. In his next life Shalibhadra was born into a very rich family that lived an extremely ostentatious life in a large house. Ultimately, spurred on by *aparigraha*, he gave up all of his wealth and soon thereafter reached enlightenment.

This story at a basic level teaches us about the importance and value of charity, the belief that our deeds in one life, whether good or bad, have consequences on our following life, and that eventually we need to renounce worldly attachments to reach enlightenment. One member in the group questioned this interpretation and wondered if the story also served the purpose of acting as a convenient way to assuage the concerns of poor people. Indeed the story suggests that even if one starves to death he/she will be rewarded in the next life with vast riches, which can then be given up in the pursuit of enlightenment. Would not a true Jain in fact have taken back some of the food and fed himself as the purely selfless act while benefiting the sadhu who ended up killing the boy? This more skeptical reading of the story was not accepted by another member of the group, and like so many other times on the trip, we had a lively discussion which helped us all to learn more about the topic as well as each other's perspectives.

In addition to the many intellectual discussions on Jainism, we also shared with each other many rituals and customs that are part of the practice of Jainism. One member of the group shared with the rest of us a concise summary of the *Navkar Mantra*, which helped those of us who had forgotten it to memorise and learn it again. We prayed together at the important Jain sites we visited. We discussed the images in the temples and the significance of the distinct symbols representing specific *Tirthankaras*.

We also had many discussions about the political and economic state of India and specifically the towns and cities in Bihar we visited. Bihar is one of the poorest states in India with an annual income of less than \$300 per capita. A striking memory we share from our walk down from Sammet Shikhar is seeing long lines of local women and children carrying heavy bags of sand up the mountain on their heads to be used for repair work on a temple. We later found out that these people received less than \$1 US for their day's labour. From our hostel window we saw young boys playing with dollies in a field. In an act that foreshadowed their likely

occupation when they are older, they practised carrying their friends on the 'dolie' from one side of the field to the other. This job will offer them the potential for \$3 per day - much more lucrative than their other job options. It was depressing to hear that most of the children in the town did not go to school and most of the local people were illiterate. It was hard to reconcile all these facts with the significantly large investments that were taking place in constructing large new temples. Presumably, some of this money could go toward providing education for the local people. We wondered what our response should be to this poverty? As



*Reading scriptures under the tree where Mahavir attained enlightenment near the Rijuwalika River*

Jains who have all left India and prospered economically, what should be our responsibility to give back to our ancestral land? Should we feel responsible toward the towns in Gujarat where our ancestors moved 300 years ago or the towns of Bihar, where our great religious teacher Mahavir lived and preached? What would Mahavir's response be if he were to live today?

Ultimately, whether discussing aspects of Jainism, the Jain folk stories or the many contradictions of India, we were certainly not always able to answer all the questions that this journey elicited. However, our family pilgrimage did offer us ample opportunities to share experiences that helped us further understand each other and connect. We now recognise the value of religiously and culturally orientated activities. We all agree that they are a beneficial way to maintain the deep ties our family is so fortunate to have. 🙏

*Tushar lives in New York City and works with Geocapital Partners, a venture capital firm.*



# “MINDFULNESS”

Gillian Dunne gives practical suggestions on how to replenish our souls regularly if we wish to avoid withering

“**S**top the world, I want to get off!” A saying we use tongue-in-cheek when life gets on top of us and the natural order of our day-to-day chores suddenly becomes the ‘business’ of living. It is one of those clichés that come when the demands of home, work and extra-curricular activities all mount to the extent that we can’t seem to get up from under.

Engaging in a regular form of spiritual practice is a very real and practical way to hit the off-switch on the ever-accelerating merry-go-round of life. Most of us want to find the time to be still, to meditate, to listen for the inner voice. For many, by the time the business of the day has been accomplished, finding the energy (for spiritual energy is what it takes) for a form of daily practice becomes just another chore instead of a celebratory occasion for divine communion. We truly want to find the time and inclination, but how do we go about creating the opportunity for a ‘sacred space’ to become a regular part of our lives?

One reason for our inertia is that we do not appreciate the consequences of spiritual inaction. The damage of stress is rarely immediately noticeable, especially when we are young. Similarly, working long hours may be stimulating for a time, bringing very good monetary rewards, but the family consequences of breakdown or rebellious children will only be felt later. Often, when we realise what we have done to our lives and our bodies, it is too late. To get us to do something now, we need to understand the pain and suffering of inertia.

The concept which seems to crop up across the traditions and which sums up the very essence of all spiritual practices is ‘mindfulness’. It is the giving of our full attention to a point in time, however brief, and allowing the gifts of that moment to manifest themselves. Those experiences may reveal themselves in

JAYU SHAH



*Nature inspires*

the form of insights received, a sense of spiritual union with our perception of the divine or simply the feeling of being at peace in the midst of a hectic world.

Mindfulness can be practised in almost any context: either by engaging in the formal prayer and meditation practices common to the traditional religions, or by way of a practice which is meaningful for the individual – walking, yoga or some other form of physical discipline. In fact, almost any situation can be transformed into an opportunity for mindfulness.

People who say they have no time to devote to any spiritual practice are surprisingly mistaken! The opportunities are myriad. All that is needed is a little imagination and a good commitment to regular practice – whatever helps to ground and connect us to the sense of the divine can be as

diverse and personal as the individuals themselves.

Recent conversations with friends and colleagues have highlighted a variety of practices. Some practitioners engage their families, some practise solo and some combine the two. But for each practitioner, how they connect to the divine as they see it, is a deeply personal experience. For instance:

- A former colleague who worked long and hectic days rose early and visited the pool daily for a 6.30am swim. In a schedule of back-to-back appointments and meetings, and evenings spent catching up on the day’s work, it was the only way she could create some personal time in her life.
- Another Hindu colleague tells me that he chants while driving alone to the office each day, but visits the temple with his family so that they may all participate together in the practice of their faith.



- The forty-eight minute Jain *samayika* is a beautiful meditation which is not difficult to learn and is rich in sacred *mantras*. It is also open in the sense that during the *samayika* individuals have the choice either to read, pray, meditate or reflect on the day's events and transgressions. A daily *pooja* is also a rich and colourful meditation.

- A senior executive of my acquaintance also works long hours, travels long distances and has myriad extra-curricula activities assisting in the administration of his church. The time that he and his family spend at Sunday services not only reaffirms his beliefs and the family values central to his faith, but offers the family as a whole the chance to share exclusive time together without external distractions.

- I have recently begun the practice of reading from a spiritual text on my way to work. The twelve-minute train journey is just enough time for me to read and reflect before arriving at the office refreshed and spiritually geared for the day!

Even on the busiest days, if we can't actually hit the off-switch, a daily spiritual practice at least helps us to pull on the brake for a brief time. In fact, shifting down a gear (to extend the motoring metaphor) is a form of practice in itself and we might all want to think about how we can slow our lives down so that we engage with the process of living a little more.

I recently read an essay by a respected Quaker thinker who commented that acquiring knowledge via the internet was little more than data gathering. It is not an opportunity to learn on a deep level or to acquire wisdom in any real sense. It is an arguable point, of course, but the underlying tenet of the essay does indeed reflect our attitude to the high-speed way in which many of us live these days.

We run around, ticking off chores on our personal 'to-do' lists, working at top speed to try and get through the pile of paperwork on the desk and getting frustrated when we have to pick up a piece of paper more than once (contrary to the advice of 'minute managers' and the like). We need to slow down, examine how we actually utilise our time and discover the opportunities that exist for creating sacred space in our day. Here are some suggestions:

- Simply set aside some time for a regular prayer or meditation practice each day. Try and schedule a regular 15 minutes (or more if you can) for the meditation or prayer disciplines of your particular tradition.
- Engage in some form of physical discipline: either one of the meditative practices such as yoga or tai chi; or consider some other form of solo sport such as swimming, jogging, etc.
- Do you enjoy walking? Walking meditation is observed as a specific discipline in several eastern traditions. Adapt it if you like as a celebration of nature. Take a regular walk in the park and watch the seasons change from verdant summer to golden autumn.

Enjoy the sense of peace as the natural world slumbers through the depths of winter, recharging itself to be born again in a glory of blossom when the spring sunshine warms the earth. Connect more deeply with your surroundings by learning about the plants and wildlife that live in your environment. Buy or borrow from the library a book on botany to help you identify the flowers and herbs that grow in your neighbourhood.

- Are you creative? Do you write, paint, draw, do pottery? All of these can be transformed into opportunities for spiritual practice.

- We all have to cook in some form or at least prepare food to eat. I have always found chopping vegetables a particularly meaningful and harmonious pastime (vegetable therapy, my husband calls it!). Cooking, particularly the preparation of vegetables or vegetarian meals can be an astonishingly mindful experience if the time is used to consider the miracles of nature which have brought those gifts to your table.

- Do you value the opportunity to practise in community with others? Consider joining a local temple, church or synagogue where you can share in the spiritual energy of others and enjoy the fellowship of like minds.

- What about the opportunity to contribute in a very practical way to

the well-being of your community? Regularly volunteering at your local school, charity shop or residential home for the elderly or disabled can also be deemed a form of practice when performed with a genuine commitment to the welfare of others.

To sum up: practice makes perfect. If you acknowledge that you are a spiritual being then try to set aside some time each day for you inner Self. I am sure you will begin to experience a significant difference in the quality of your life. 🙏

*Gillian Dunne is a community health worker and a mother of two. She lives in North London.*



***“Almost any situation can be transformed into an opportunity for mindfulness.”***



# JUST A MOM

**Namrata Vora** discovers in motherhood a joyous and spiritual experience

**“SO YOU’VE GIVEN UP EVERYTHING? JUST sacking out at home now?”**  
I used to react rather violently to this question but now I guess I have mellowed down. I just smile and think something along the lines of: “Forgive him Father, for he knows not what he says.”

Four years ago, armed with a degree each from an IIT and an IIM, I had big dreams of reaching the top of the corporate ladder. Life was a fairy-tale – I married my college sweetheart and we had the breezy life that couples with double incomes and no kids do. Till one fine day my doc gave the verdict – I was going to be a mom! It was a bolt from the blue, completely unexpected. I had my share of the usual pregnancy problems so much so that I had to give up my job in a management consultancy since the travel schedules were too hectic for a would-be mom. I quit, vowing to return once the baby arrived.

Little did I know what was to come – my hubby got an offer based in London, and after some deliberation we decided to take it up. That is how we landed in London, our four-month-old bundle of joy in my arms. His job requires him to travel almost 15 days in a month, which leaves me with the kid, home alone. No cooks here, no live-in maids. Add to that my total inexperience in matters of babies and running a home – having spent half my life in hostels.

More than a year since the birth, I got top grade in the ‘annual performance appraisal’. After her routine check-up yesterday, the paediatrician said that my 18-month-old was doing ‘phenomenally well’, she was as sound as a child can be – mentally, physically and emotionally.

Motherhood is hard work, backbreaking hard work. The required primary qualifications are infinite patience and oodles of stamina. There is no cash compensation, no leaves, no glamorous designation – you are ‘just a mom’. Nobody gives you an appraisal sheet with things written on it like ‘exceptional problem-solving skills – deserves promotion’. Sure it was a tough decision to put my career on the back burner and take up the challenge of parenting. But I simply could not get myself to trust my treasure with day-care or a professional carer. Do I regret it? Would I have things different? The answer is a resounding ‘No’!

Giving and receiving unconditional love is something that

cannot be put into words. I have grown so much as a person as my baby grew. My planning, time- and crisis-management abilities, creativity and much more – all the ‘valued skills’ in a corporate scenario, have improved dramatically. My ‘boss’ gives me instant feedback – if she is happy, there is a huge big hug; if she is hungry/sleepy/bored, she lets me know in no uncertain terms.

The confidence I had in my abilities has shot through the roof, having helped a tiny baby grow into an energetic toddler. Oh, the joy I got from watching her first attempts to crawl, stand, walk!.. I remember how I called up my hubby who was fast asleep in Hong Kong when she took her first steps. If I bump into a woman with a kid about the size of mine, and especially if she is a *desi*, we become instant pals; this way I make acquaintances at the rate of 3 a week, some of whom I know will be friends for life. I take my kid

to baby music sessions, we go together to the zoo, to the park to feed the ducks, or just for long walks with no particular destination. Going to the local supermarket is a big adventure, it takes us two hours to do what would normally take me less than 20 minutes. I have all the time in the world for her and so go along at her pace – she stops on the way to watch leaves flying in the wind, inspects ants in a hole on the pavement, stares at people getting

on and off a bus, grins back at grannies who stop and smile at her indulgently. I have rediscovered so many of life’s little things. We go to the ‘libaby’ together – she chooses her books herself. She looks hard at the pictures, points to them and asks ‘yeh kaun hai?’ a few hundred times a book. She chatters non-stop all the time she is awake – even invents ‘shorees’ like that of a donkey and a lion who met each other in the forest and said good morning to each other!

What about the man of my life – my hubby? The simple things we did together like lazing around till mid-morning on Saturdays are out of question now; the kid has to be fed her breakfast on time, her tummy does not differentiate weekends from weekdays. We can no longer rush off at a moment’s notice to catch the latest movie or play or

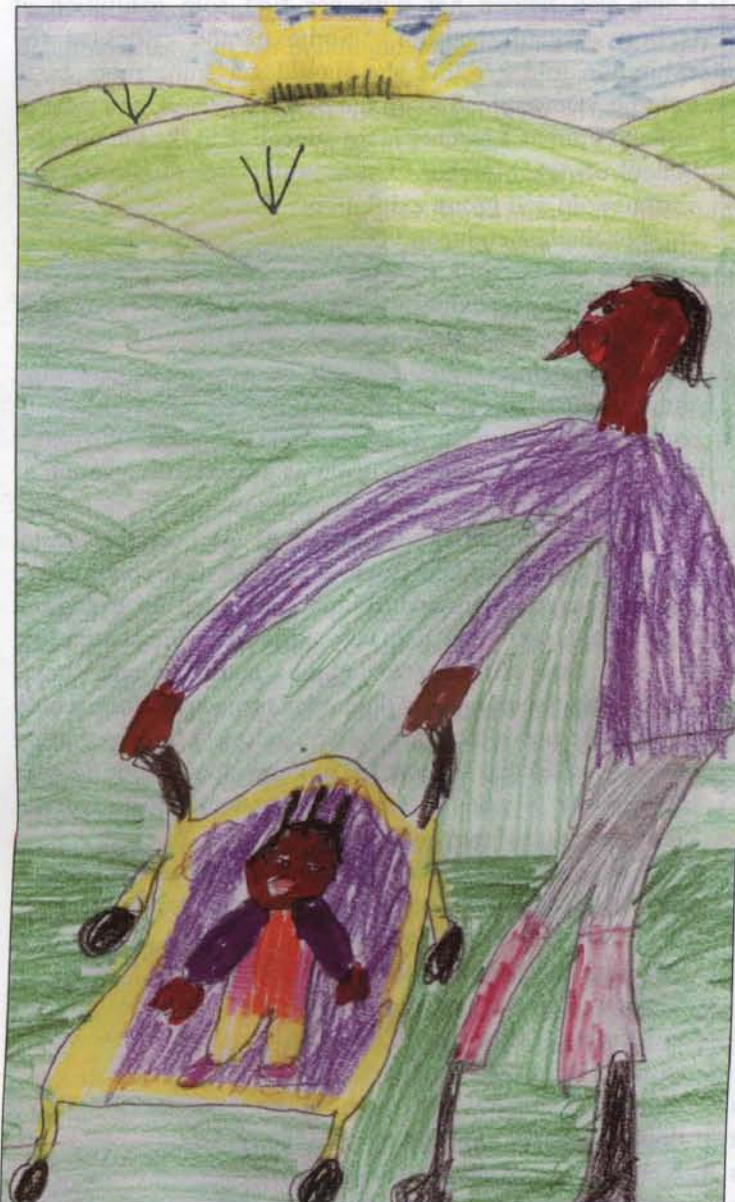
***“Four years ago, I had big dreams of reaching the top of the corporate ladder. Instead, I became a Mom”***



go for walks in the rain, it takes quite some pre-planning to venture out of the house with a toddler. My hubby stood next to me holding my hand throughout my labour (the best pain relief there can be), he changed the baby's nappies at night so that I could catch up on my sleep, told me how much he envied me because I can spend all my time with our child and how much he admired my efforts. Yes, my relationship with him has changed – we have become even better friends. When I eventually get back to work (the paid types), I will be several rungs below where I could have been. But the countless moments of unhurried happiness with my little one are something I would not trade in for anything in the whole wide world.

It is not a sacrifice; it is a privilege to be a parent. 🧡

*Namrata Vora is more than just a Mom.*



*Illustration by Jaina Shah, aged 9*

# GUDSONS

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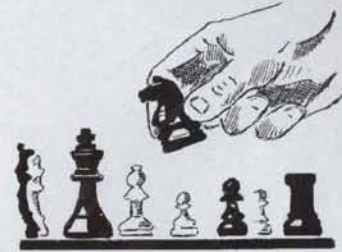
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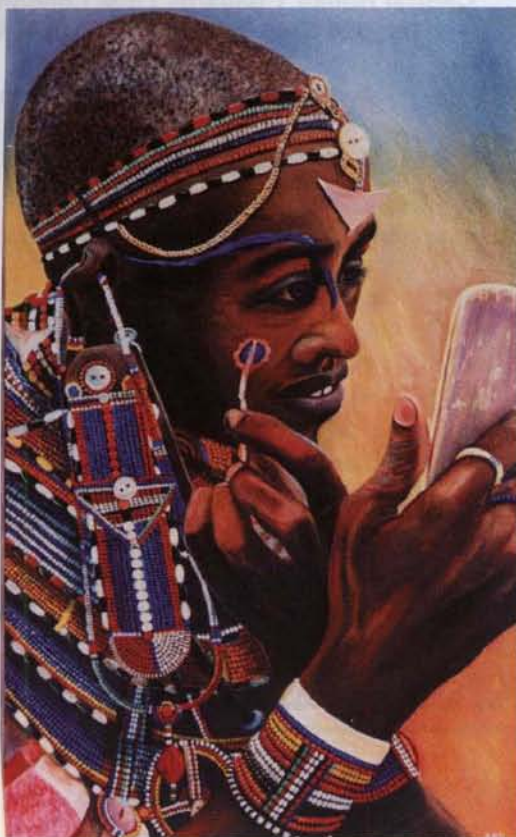
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# KENYA INSPIRES ME TO PAINT

Mayuri Dodhia writes about Avni Shah and how her hobby became a career



*Maasai Beauty*

**C**HILDREN ARE OFTEN FULL OF IMAGINATION. They love variety and play very creatively. However, we tend to lose these qualities as we grow up. Avni is a rare example of a person who has still got that spirit of childhood and creativity in her heart.

Avni grew up in Thika, a small town near Nairobi, Kenya where she spent her main years of education. Thika was a rural town and art was never taught as a subject at school but used as a means for illustrating studies, especially in sciences. However, she always enjoyed drawing and painting.



*Avni presenting 'Unusual Friends' to the Mayor of Berlin*

When she was 16, she started to admire greatly her sister-in-law's paintings and wished that one day she could paint like her. This is how her interest in art started. She was always very determined in what she wanted to learn, so she

decided to go to Nairobi and join the Creative Art Centre for some formal training in art. Alongside this, she also studied accountancy to please her parents who were not very keen on Avni making a career out of painting. Art is often looked upon not as a career but only as something one takes up as a hobby. After a year, though, she decided to take up art as a fulltime study.

She then joined Studio Zenium where along with other budding artists she was taught by Keith Harrington, a retired university lecturer in Fine Arts. He had greatly influenced her style in painting with watercolours, as that was his forte. Keith also helped her with her first solo exhibition at Gallery Watatu, Nairobi. Some of the critics at the exhibition told her that she should get some more basic training. Determined to do the best for herself, she went to India to train as a teacher in art education at the famous J. J. School of Art, Mumbai. On returning from India she had various solo and group exhibitions.

For the last eighteen years she has been teaching art to young students from the age of 5 to "A" level. She has even organised an exhibition for 60 of her students, some of whom have continued to study for various degree courses at international universities and colleges. She feels that giving small children the knowledge of art is like giving them something they can use at any time in the future. When they are older they may want to use it as a form of relaxation or meditation to free their spirit.

Her main interest in her paintings has been the coastal scenes of Lamu and Old Town, Mombasa. She continued to paint in watercolours and did not care much for trying out other mediums. She had very little knowledge of using those or how different techniques could enhance one's work. Two years ago, as the tables turned and luck would have it, she met a local artist, Mr. Andrew who was willing to teach her all that she wanted to know about painting with acrylics and oils and all the different techniques that she could use for different subjects.

She continued to paint the coastal scenes and dhows but now tried out the newly acquired techniques and mediums. One thing that has remained constant in all her works is her eye for details and colour. She joined up with Severin Sea Lodge in Sundern, Germany, who were doing a coastal promotion of Kenya, *The Kenyan Week*, where she displayed 30 of her paintings.



*Unusual Friends*



The Kenyan ambassador to Germany, Mr. Frost Josiah was greatly astonished by her work and suggested that Kenya also promote artists and craftsmen and not just the touristic attractions, as it is a country of many talents. He suggested that in the following years at the International Tourist Fair in Berlin they display the attractions of Kenya through art work. Again her art career took a new turn when the Kenya Tourist Board asked her to display paintings of wildlife at the Kenyan Stand, a subject she had never thought she could paint.

Whilst preparing for the exhibition, a most unusual thing happened in Samburu Game Reserve. A lioness had adopted a Beisa Oryx as its own family instead of preying on it. The Beisa Oryx was separated from the lioness as another lion preyed on it. Following this, the same lioness has tried to adopt Beisa Oryx calves three more times over the last few months. Avni wondered whether this bonding was a result of karmic occurrences over many lives: was it a childless mother's need to adopt a baby or a genetic defect. She has tried to depict this bonding in three of her paintings: *Unusual Friends*, *Wonder of the World* and *Together We Can Survive*. *Unusual Friends* was presented to the Mayor of Berlin, while the *Wonder of the World* to the Ambassador of Kenya.



*Mud Bath*

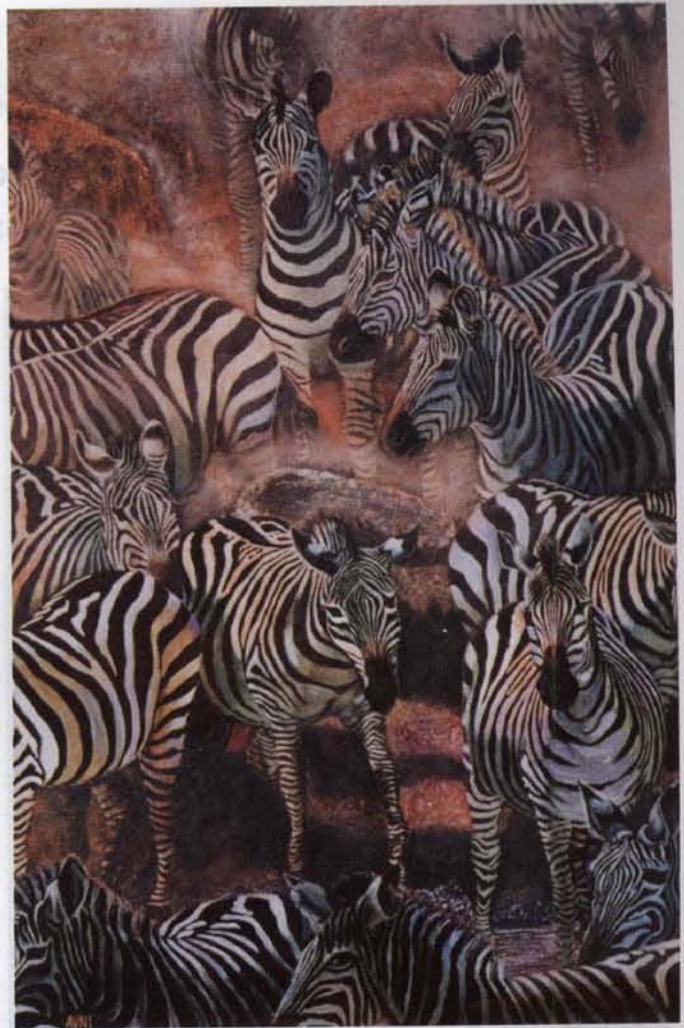
Her wildlife paintings portray unique behavioural patterns which are similar to those in human nature. Her two paintings depicted the Wildebeest Migration and the confusion of zebras crossing a river, not knowing whether death lies ahead by the stampede from behind or the

crocodile's teeth. She tried to capture the risk through her art, as the animals have to cross to get to greener pastures on the other side of the Mara River. Have we not all come across such difficult paths where many options and confusion lie ahead and making the right decision is difficult? Especially one that would help liberate our soul?

Another painting, *Mud Bath*, is about a mother elephant and her baby dusting their bodies with mud and dust to protect their skin from sunburn and the insects. For them it seems that nature has its own way of providing protection from the sun. As humans we have been influenced to believe that animals haven't got the power to think. Yet they do think, they do have similar needs to us and we should protect them for the future generations.

Avni's art cannot be categorised as African or Jain style, as art is about portraying whatever the artist's innermost thoughts are about their subjects. In her case, the motivation is her country's natural heritage and wildlife, which is slowly being destroyed and becoming extinct.

She has thoroughly enjoyed painting the old streets of Lamu and Mombasa with their intricate details, carved doors, small alley ways. Many of the buildings she had painted years ago have disappeared as they have been pulled down for newer



*At the water's edge*

developments. She feels that some of our Jain heritage, especially the temples, could also go through such destruction. It would be important to preserve this historic religion through photography, paintings and documentation.

Life has taken Avni on many diverse directions and into a career that she didn't know would be her future life-long passion. She started off with painting coastal scenes, moved on to dhows and then got the opportunity to start painting wildlife, which allows her to spend many days in the Game Parks and amongst nature. She has met the local tribes, the Masais and Samburus who live the contented, simple life of nomads with very little possessions. They seem to live in a manner which is more like the Jain way and yet they have no knowledge of the existence of Jainism. She hopes one day she will be able to paint the slums of India, where life exists in minimalism and Jain values are practised unknowingly.

She hopes that what lies ahead in future will take her towards more new directions and one day she may also be able to live a more spiritual life. 🙏

*Mayuri Dodhia lives in Nairobi and organises unique wildlife tours in Kenya.*



# AN UNUSUAL MATCH

In her path-breaking book, **Mira Kamdar** discovers the major influence of **Mahatma Gandhi** on her grandfather



*Gandhiji and Kasturba*

**W**HEN MOTIBA MARRIED HIM IN 1924, Prabhudas Kamdar was a headstrong youth of nineteen who had as fully as possible embraced the teachings of the *guru* his family had not allowed him to join: Mahatma Gandhi. Born in 1905, Bapuji was ten years old when Gandhi returned to India from South Africa to begin his movement for India's independence from British rule. A Gujarati by birth, Gandhi published his fiery tracts in both the English and Gujarati language versions of his magazine, *Young India*. Bapuji, who attended the first English-medium school in his native town of Jetpur, read Gandhi both in English and Gujarati during his formative teenage years and was extremely aware of the Mahatma and his movement. By the time he reached young adulthood, my grandfather had become a full-fledged supporter of Gandhi's cause.

Muljibhai Khara heard that Bhagwanjibhai and Ambaben Kamdar were looking for a match for their son. He was impressed by the reports he had about the family and the boy. He had become quite an ardent supporter of Gandhi himself, and the boy's reputation as a supporter of *Satyagraha* pleased him. This might be the right young man for his daughter Jayakunver. Muljibhai went to Jetpur and met Bhagwanjibhai. The Kharas were by now quite wealthy people. Bhagwanjibhai made it clear that his family had little to offer in terms of material comfort, but Muljibhai protested that his daughter would bring a substantial dowry and that his foremost criterion in a son-in-law was quality of character. The match was agreed upon. Motiba, who was all of fifteen years old, was not told about her impending marriage until the week before the ceremony.

Naturally, the Kharas wanted to put on a wedding for their eldest daughter that reflected their now substantial wealth. Hundreds of people were invited. Special foods were ordered from caterers as far away as Bombay and Calcutta. Multiple sets of jewellery in twenty-two-karat gold set with diamonds, Burmese rubies and pearls were ordered from the family jewellers. In all, Motiba was given eighteen *tolas* of gold by her father. (A *tola* is equal to 11.66 grams.) A trousseau of sixty *saris* in the finest silks imported from China, Japan and Europe was collected.

Alas, Motiba would never get to wear any of the silks in her magnificent trousseau.

Gandhi had made the wearing of *khadi*, crude cotton cloth hand woven in India, central to his independence movement. In his 1909 *Hind Swaraj*, he attributed India's impoverishment under British rule to the economics of cloth, and he applauded the voluntary return to the wearing of Indian dress – something theretofore thought terribly backward by the educated Indian elite – by members of the Bangali *swadeshi* or self-rule movement. When he returned to India in 1915 from South Africa, he did so in the dress of a Kathiawari peasant, and he made spinning cotton and weaving cloth a centrepiece of life at Sabarmati Ashram. All through the early 1920s, Gandhi exhorted India's people to wear *khadi* as a patriotic act. Gandhi described the '*khadi* spirit' as one of 'self-sacrifice' and 'fellow feeling with every human being on earth'. According to Gandhi, it was a national and even a religious duty to wear *khadi*. Foreign cloth was synonymous with temptation, evil, luxury and sin. To wear imported, machine-made cloth was to sell out your (Indian) self.



Somehow Bapuji learned about Motiba's extensive trousseau of silks. He sent a message to the Khara family that he would never accept a bride who came with clothing made of imported cloth. He let it be known that he himself would wear nothing other than locally produced *khadi*. (Apparently, one or two non-*khadi* saris were stuck in, pieces that were simply too fine to let go. For years, they remained folded away at the bottom of her heavy teak dowry chest.) In the end, Motiba, the eldest daughter of what had become a very wealthy family, was married in the crudest of hand-woven. Yet, because of the tenor of the times, Bapuji's eccentric demand only served to raise the esteem in which his father-in-law held him. In fact, Muljibhai Khara, who could have worn any clothing he liked, even custom-made suits from Saville Row, took to wearing *khadi* himself. He was the only one of the three Khara brothers to do so. It seems his idealistic son-in-law exerted some influence over the successful man in this regard.

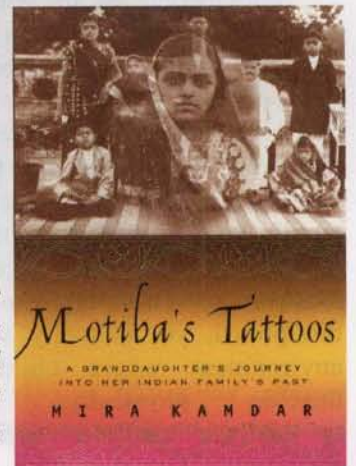
Bapuji didn't stop the Gandhian business with *khadi*. At the end of the wedding ceremony, he untied the silk cord that had been ceremonially knotted between himself and his new bride to signify their union, led my fifteen-year-old grandmother by her end of the cord over to his mother, and said, "You wanted a daughter-in-law? Here she is." He then announced his intention to take a vow of religious celibacy, to practise *brahmacharya*. This is something Gandhi himself had done in 1906, and that he encouraged his disciples to do. In 1924, the year my grandparents were married, Gandhi wrote that to become *brahmachari* meant to 'search after Brahma' or God, through control 'of all the senses at all times and at all places in thought, word and deed'. *Brahmacharya* went well beyond sexual denial to encompass all desire. Gandhi wrote that true "*brahmacharis* are perfectly sinless. They are therefore near to God." Gandhi had embraced *brahmacharya* twenty years into his marriage and after the birth of five children, however. For my grandfather to proclaim this on his wedding day at the age of nineteen was a far more radical act than even that undertaken by Mahatma.

What my fifteen-year-old grandmother made of all this can only be imagined. When I asked my grandmother before she died what it felt like to be married at fifteen years of age to a man she had never even seen before, she seemed puzzled by my question. "You are born, then you marry, then you die," she answered. I persevered, finding her experience totally incomprehensible. After all, when I was fifteen I was living the decadent Southern California lifestyle of the post-pill 1970s. The freedom to do as I pleased was near total, notwithstanding my parents' efforts to control me. It came out that for Motiba the moment of her arranged marriage had been anticipated her whole life. She had been prepared for such an event for years. Her main concern was to 'do a good job' for her in-laws. She was entirely conscious that her relationship with her husband's parents was much more important than her relationship with him. She was being married *into* a family, not *to* a husband. As she spoke about her 'training', I suddenly understood that my



*Gandhiji always wore Kadhi and this strongly influenced Bapuji*

grandmother approached marriage at the age of fifteen the way a freshly minted M.B.A. approaches an entry-level job with a reputable multinational: she had got a good assignment, an opportunity to prove what she was worth in the area of expertise for which she'd been prepared: marriage. 🙏



©2000, Mira Kamdar

Mira Kamdar is a Senior Fellow at the World Policy Institute of the New School University in New York. She is a regular broadcaster on Los Angeles radio.



# CHILD'S PLAY

A member of the *Shishukunj* family since childhood, **Meera Shah** talks about the give-and-take relationship she has formed with the organisation



child is all-important, and the role of the *Karyakar* – often mistaken as that of a teacher – is actually that of a big brother or sister. The *Karyakar* does not instruct the child, but assists his/her development through fun: what we like to call *gamat saathe gnaan* – learning through fun.

It is sometimes difficult to write about something as close to one's heart as *Shishukunj*. Considering I've been a member of the organisation since the age of seven you would think that writing a paragraph or two would be a piece of cake. However, when I was asked to write about my involvement with the organisation, it meant having to reflect deeply on all that I had achieved, experienced and become through my experiences with *Shishukunj*. I came up with a long list full of memories – mostly good, some scary, but none of which I would trade for the world.

Many people ask me what exactly *Shishukunj* is and why I am still such an active member. To understand this, one has to understand the ethos of *Shishukunj*. Ask any active member and one of the words that will immediately come to mind is 'family'. Family and a sense of belonging are central to everything we do at *Shishukunj*. The aim is to create a disciplined, yet mutually supportive environment where children can develop physically, mentally, spiritually, culturally and socially. The

The roots of *Shishukunj* go way back to the early 1940s in Karachi, but the major building blocks were formed in East Africa in the 1950s by a group of young individuals who saw the need to provide an outlet where children could channel their energies into purposeful and fun activities. From East Africa, centres have been formed in several countries all over the world and *Shishukunj London*, founded in 1976 has evolved from a humble centre (*Kendra*) in Turnpike Lane to the two formidable *Kendras* we have today. Based in Brent and Muswell Hill, we have an active membership of well over 400 children aged 6-18.

After about six years of being a *Shishukunj* member, which involved very little work and a lot of fun, I realised that my involvement was about to change. Instead of simply taking, I needed to also start giving back, especially to the younger members. Thus, over the years, I have accumulated transferable skills such as interacting with children, team building, leadership, managing key activities and undertaking major projects.

Today I am a *Karyakar*, someone who has graduated to be a part of the overall active workforce, and also a *Kendra Nayak* of Muswell Hill. I am involved in the management of the *Kendra* and in overseeing a young workforce that plans and carries out the activities every Sunday.

Furthermore, a *Karyakar* has the opportunity to manage other events outside of regular Sunday activities. These include the annual Children's Day (*Baal Din*) held every autumn close to the birthday of Jawaharlal Nehru, and the annual four-day camp called *Jeevan Ghadar Shibir*, where four days of intensive activities help to forge life-long friendships and to create experiences etched in our memories forever. Events such as these involve months of preparation and teamwork, skills that are constantly developed throughout one's life with the *Shishukunj*.

The results of this input are clearly visible every Sunday when I notice one of the younger members performing a *bhajan* for the first time, outwitting an opponent with a new tactic during a games session or just greeting you on a Sunday morning with arms outstretched. Without teaching or instructions, you have managed to sow some important seeds, including values such as respect, kindness and trust. It is awe-inspiring to be part of something so close-knit and so rewarding. 🙏

*Meera Shah has just completed a Masters degree and is embarking on a new career in development. For further details about Shishukunj, contact the London office on 020 8459 1545.*



# SENDING OUT AN SOS

Motivated by her Jain values, **Reana Shah** draws attention to the plight of mistreated animals



*The polar bear was forced to perform in the totally unsuitable conditions of Puerto Rico*

IT WAS ONLY A FEW MONTHS ago that I found myself opening what I thought to be just a routine piece of mail. It was from PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals), and contained something that ended up having a big impact on my life.

An adorable white polar bear graced the top of the enclosed note, but soon my pleasure turned to horror. The note was about the tragic kidnapping of polar bears a few months earlier. It turned out that the Suarez Brothers, of the Suarez Bros. Circus, captured seven of these furry friends and took them to be trained for their circus in Puerto Rico. If being kidnapped was not tragic enough, the bears were then subjected to the difficult and unfamiliar climate of Puerto Rico. The prefix 'polar' refers to the cold climate of the north and south poles. Temperatures routinely drop below zero and the inhabitants (mainly polar bears and penguins) of the area are happy and comfortable in this climate. Puerto Rico, on the other hand, regularly experiences humidity levels of around 100%. On top of being displaced from

their habitat, the kidnapped polar bears were also subjected to solitary confinement in individual cages. When they weren't confined, the bears were inhumanely trained to perform in the circus as entertainment for the locals and tourists.

Luckily PETA informed federal agents of the illegal kidnapping, and one of the polar bears, named Alaska, has been rescued. Alaska now resides in the Baltimore Zoo with a companion named Magnet. Unfortunately, there are still six bears in Puerto Rico that need our help and support. I am

***“Animals  
have no voice  
against human  
injustice.”***

confident that with aggressive though not attacking letters and phone calls, these bears can be rescued and returned to a rightful home and treatment.

With all the turmoil, death and warfare going on in the world today, one might wonder why the kidnapping of polar bears is significant. The reason is simple: as Jains, we believe that every act of violence, no matter how small, is wrong. Even though the kidnapping of a bear might not be as

significant to some as nuclear warfare or suicide bombings, we must realise that all three are acts of violence. As Jains, when we see any act of violence, our job is to correct it to the best of our abilities. If we do not eat meat because we do not support the cruel treatment of animals then there is no reason in my mind that we should not protest against the kidnapping of animals. As living beings, we are all equal whether we walk on two, four or eight legs.

Humans have an easier time dealing with injustice, because we are able to express ourselves through speech. It is sad to see that the world still cannot get along even though we are given many chances to resolve our differences. Animals, on the other hand, do not have the same ability or opportunity. Therefore, as Jains, we should be willing to devote time to help needy animals. Compassion is always returned, and an act of kindness, no matter how small, is never wasted. I hope reading about the tragic kidnapping of the seven polar bears also inspires you to do something about it. There is a lot of injustice done against animals in different parts of the world. As Jains, I feel it is our duty to make a difference, and speak out wherever and whenever possible.

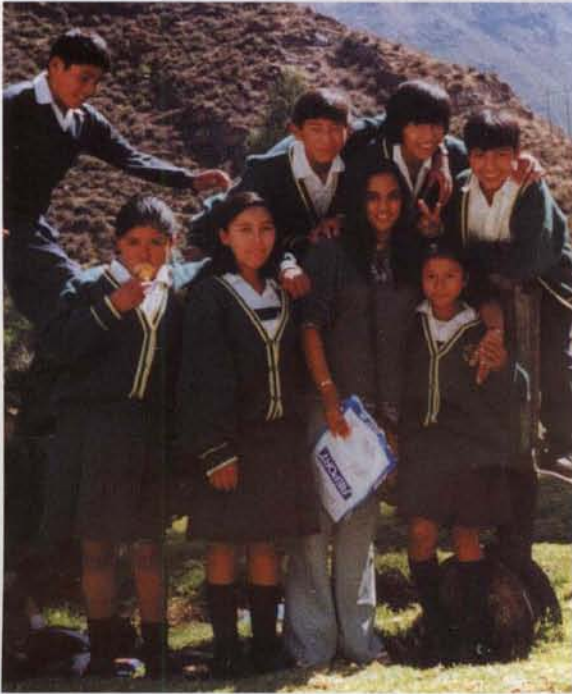
If you would like to make a difference, please visit [www.peta.org](http://www.peta.org) for more information or enquire with local animal protection groups in your area. You will discover a lot of animal lovers who are keen to make a difference. This will also be an opportunity for you to share with them the deep compassion of Jainism. 🙏

*Reana Shah is a determined student living in Redland, California.*



# A VEGETARIAN IN PERU

Neetal Mehta recounts her gap year experience and recalls the kindness of strangers in a foreign land



Neetal with the Peruvian children she loved to teach

**I**N JAINISM, THE PHRASE *parasparopagraho jivanam* means that 'all life is interdependent'. It is the law of nature that souls depend on one another for their survival. My gap year adventure in Peru, a land and people very far from my own culture and history, demonstrated very vividly to me how this ancient wisdom is so true. I discovered a whole culture of interdependence where everything was shared with much joy and humour.

On venturing to a country as remote as Peru (in our eyes) for four months I was very anxious about what to expect. I found myself thinking a lot of the language barrier, the culture shock and the fact that I was vegetarian. To be honest, I kept imagining the worst scenario, living in a mud hut with no water and an outside toilet! After an exhausting thirty-hour journey, I found myself in a town named Cusco, about an hour and a

half's flight south of Lima. I was picked up by the organisation and taken to what was to be my home for the next four months. To my surprise, as soon as I walked into the house, I saw a television, hi-fi system and a karaoke machine. "This is going to be a breeze!" was my first thought. Little did I know what lay ahead!

Luckily, there were already three volunteers staying in the house, which made it a lot easier for me. I slowly got to know all of them. I also learnt that there was no hot water – I had to have a bucket bath with cold water. The soup was made with chicken stock as the family did not understand what vegetarianism was. And I repeatedly awoke in the mornings to the sound of the toilet being unclogged!

My first project was teaching children aged 2-11 at a summer school. I can honestly say that this was the hardest thing I have ever had to do. On top of the age gap, I did not speak a word of Spanish, so communication was a problem. As the weeks passed, I picked up more and more Spanish, but was glad when school finished – trying to please 30 children of different ages is a task! There was then an Easter period when no schooling occurred so I engaged in small projects such as developing rainforests and decorating buildings.

As Easter Friday approached, my host family told me about the twelve-course lunch we would be having on that day. Peruvian food is hardly appetising and the thought of it made my stomach turn, especially as guinea pig was the main delicacy. Luckily I am vegetarian, so that got me off the

hook! However, the family really did not understand this concept and often asked me if I wanted meat 'just this once!'

My final project lasted nine weeks teaching English in a school for children from deprived backgrounds. This was the most incredible experience of my life. I loved every minute of it and as I had almost become fluent in Spanish I could easily translate the topic if they did not understand it.

As my host family started to become my second home, I could readily speak with them about anything. They were so hospitable – I have never received so much love from strangers. They would do anything for me, including travelling for two hours and back to buy a meat substitute so that I got enough protein. At the end of my wonderful experience, I became extremely tearful and the fact that the family hid my bags so that I could not leave really did not help at all! I had to say goodbye to the beautiful mountains I had been surrounded by, to the wonderful people I had met on the street every day – and I had to say goodbye to the family who I longed to take back with me. I had the most amazing time in Peru, one which I will never ever forget and it always puts a smile on my face to know that I am welcome back there with open arms at any time.

I feel deep down that interdependence is much more fun than independence. We do ultimately depend on one another. Through sharing, we truly enrich ourselves in the process. 🙏

*Neetal Mehta is 18 years old, and is a Psychology student at the University of Surrey, England.*



# CYCLING FOR CHILDREN

**Paarul Shah** tells us about the challenge and satisfaction of cycling for charity

**I**N THE EARLY MORNING OF 25 July 2002, 140 eager cyclists and 21 excited volunteers gathered with their friends and family outside Harrow Civic Centre in London to embark upon a five-day journey to the Netherlands. It was the grand finale to the plans that had been evolving for months. The joint project by Shishukunj and Veerayatan UK entitled 'Cycling for Children' had drawn in a far greater number of supporters than expected. The aim was to raise the majestic sum of at least £100,000 that would benefit deprived children all over the world, especially in India, Kenya, the U.K. and Holland. This was to be achieved by individuals being sponsored to cycle no less than 200km over a three-day period around the Netherlands.

The whole experience for me as a participating cyclist was truly amazing. I saw only some of the hard work and commitment that had been put into the project from the beginning, but even this was immense. The carefully planned meetings led by volunteers not only informed us of what we would be doing, where we would be staying, when we would be leaving and so on, but also allowed us to meet fellow cyclists and make acquaintances before the trip itself.

To be quite honest, my emotions on the day of departure were dominated by nervousness. Judging by practice runs in England, I was not confident that I would make the whole

200km, but I soon forgot my inhibitions when I encountered friendly faces everywhere I went.

The first day of cycling was not bad at all. I did not seem to be suffering from aching muscles and sore bottoms like a few of my

make use of the facilities, eat and enjoy the after-dinner entertainment. I tried to get an early night in preparation for the next day, but my room-mates would not hear of it!

The final day seemed to fly by. We all set off enthusiastically to complete and surpass the 200km challenge, knowing that our efforts would benefit the future of children across the globe. The

temperature was 30 degrees centigrade, and there was hardly even a breeze, but everyone persevered till the end. I was certain that I would complete the challenge, as the run on the fourth day of the trip was the shortest, but I still felt a sense of relief when I did. Reaching the end gave us all a buzz, largely because everyone made it.

I believe that selfless service (*seva*) elevates the quality of my life. It helps me to contribute to society and gives me skills and training which I would never get at such a young age. I would like to encourage young people to get involved in such projects and enhance their own skills and self-confidence. My parents encouraged and supported me throughout and I would like to recommend parents to support young people in such endeavours. This is good training, for life. 🙏

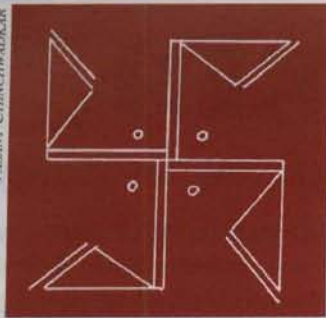
*Paarul Tushar Shah is fourteen years old and lives in London. She was a delegate at the Young Jains International Convention and trip in August 2002.*



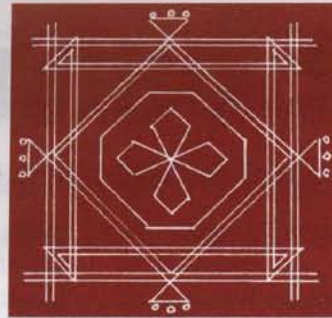
fellow cyclists. The food along the way and for dinner was absolutely delicious and, in my opinion, well earned by all of us. Although the Dutch scenery was not all that interesting, it was definitely very beautiful and the flat paths made cycling much easier.

It was a slight struggle to wake ourselves up on the second morning of the tour, but the early start gave us a chance to return to the hotel in time to





Swastika



Shrivasta



Nandhyavarta



Vardhamanaka

# SYMBOLS CAPTURE THE SPIRIT

Dhara Kothari explores Jain symbols and their significance in everyday life

**W**HEN A PERSON IS LOST AND NEEDS TO FIND a way, he/she looks for a sign. The path of spirituality also needs signs at the initial stage to guide the traveller further on. These symbols also create trust and faith within oneself. Jainism is full of these guiding lighthouses that act as a beacon for the lost ships of one's life.

## PRIMARY SYMBOLS

**The wheel of religion:** Bahubali, son of Rishabhdev the first Jain *Tirthankara*, first moved this wheel at Takshashila. This wheel of religion is brighter than the sun and has seven to twenty-four spokes (some scriptures point to a thousand). It heralds the religious campaign of every *Tirthankara*. It flashes light and moves in the sky while the *Tirthankara* has a religious walk (*vihaar*). This wheel is created on a golden lotus in front of the *Tirthankara* in *samavasarana* - the religious auditorium of the Gods. It's the symbol of spreading religious light, also found on the *samavasarana* gates. The movement of the wheel reminds us to always move towards our ultimate spiritual goal. Over time this symbol was forgotten. The government of India has adopted it from Buddhism.

**Aum Hrim:** These are the *beej mantras* widely used in *yantras*, *jaap*, meditation and *pooja*. They have to be written on the earthen altar during the *shanti snatra* ceremony. Aum is identified with the five categories of religious head, also known as *Panch-parameshtis*, and Hrim with the twenty-four *Tirthankaras*. A number of books have been written on its meanings and methods of worship.

**Ashtamangal:** These are eight auspicious symbols (see above): *Swastika*, *Shrivasta* (an auspicious sign on the chest), *Nandhyavarta* (complex swastika), *Vardhamanaka*, *Bhadrasana* (a holy seat), *Kalasha* (Holy pitcher), *Minyugala* (Fish-couple) and *Darpana* (Mirror). They have been auspicious since time immemorial and have been depicted in the *Kalpasutra*. According to the scriptures every Jain has to draw them with pure un-broken rice-grains before the icon of the *Tirthankara*. Some have reduced this custom to the drawing of a swastika, along with three heaps of rice-grain symbolising knowledge, vision and character. Over this a digit is drawn, a half moon, symbolising the *siddhashila*. Drawing

all the eight symbols was proving to be time consuming, so the temple community introduced metallic benches in the temples embossed with these auspicious symbols. These are not to be worshipped but drawn on the embossed figure with sandal paste. These auspicious symbols are found on the divine aerial cars, gates of the *samavasarana*, chariot procession, doors of the temple and Jain mansions. Today they are also drawn or carved on anything religious.

**Pratiharya:** These are eight divine accompaniments. The word *pratiharya* is derived from the word *pratihari*, which means the door-keeper. Gods create eight divine accompaniments when a *Tirthankara* realises omniscience. No *Tirthankara* is shown without them, especially if they are in *samavasarana*. The accompaniments are: the Kalp-vruksh tree, under which the *Tirthankara* sits, especially during *samavasarana*; the golden lotus seat on which the *Tirthankara* sits; a group of three divine umbrellas (*chhatras*) that hover over the *Tirthankara*. (It is a symbol of honour and the topmost umbrella is the smallest.) The next is the Halo or the Aura that circles behind the *Tirthankara* to denote the omniscience level; Gods and Goddesses dancing with the divine *chamar*; divine musical instruments being played to create divine melodious music; shower of divine flowers from heaven and, finally, a divine scent perforating the atmosphere with its sweet smell.

**Tirthankara emblems:** Each *Tirthankara* has a symbol of their own for their unique identification. Otherwise, all temple *murtis* of the *Tirthankaras* would appear the same. However, the symbols that are found in the centre right below each statue signify the particular *Tirthankara*.

**Symbol of Jain Religion:** The Jain Symbol is a congregation of various symbols, each having a deeper meaning. This symbol was adopted by all sects of Jainism while commemorating the 2500th anniversary of the nirvana of Lord Mahavir. The outline defines the universe. The lower part represents the seven hells. The middle contains the Earth. The upper part contains the heavenly abodes of all celestial beings. The raised hand means 'stop'. The word *ahimsa* in the centre of the wheel means non-violence. The four arms of swastika mean the four destinies, namely -

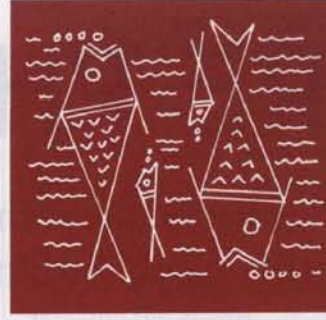




**Bhadrāsana**



**Kalasha**



**Minyugala**



**Darpana**

**Ashtamangal – Eight auspicious symbols : Vasant Chinchwadkar**

heavenly being, human being, animal and hellish being. Our aim is liberation not rebirth. The three dots represent the golden rules of right faith, right knowledge and right conduct. The curved arc represents the abode of the Siddhas, the final resting place of the soul (*siddhashila*). The dot above represents the Siddh. Colours represent the Jain religion flag: red for Siddh, yellow for Acharya, white for Arihant, green for Upadhyay and blue for Sadhu.

**Yakshas and Yakshinis:** They are the deities that are found as images besides those of the *Tirthankaras*. Yakshas are male and Yakshinis are female. They are also called Shashandevtas and Shashandevtis. They are guardian deities. They protect the *Tirthankaras* and the order of Jainism.

**Jain flag:** The flag of the temple is placed on the 'mountain' (*shikhar*) and changed during the temple's anniversary. It is unique and different from the other types of flags. The flag is very long and dangling.

**Kalash:** symbolises all spiritual wealth and complete knowledge.

**Nandyavart:** The complex swastika. It indicates the treasures of nine kinds of material, physical, mental and spiritual. This symbol is used during installation of the Jain icons and for many other religious ceremonies.

**Bells:** The bells (*ghants*) have a particular chime of their own that is considered auspicious. There are a number of times the bells are chimed. Those not engaging in *pooja* ring the bell thrice, to focus attention through mind, body and spirit. After worshipping the bells are struck to express the joy. They are continuously rung during the *aarti* ceremony.

**Mirror:** We look into a mirror to see the face of the *Tirthankara* symbolising that we may attain the state of non-attachment like them. It symbolises the true self that is our own.

**Chamar:** This is used for the chowri dance. The chamar is swayed before the *Tirthankara* to express devotion and respect.

**OTHER SYMBOLS**

- **Lion:** It is the emblem of Lord Mahavir. The lion has an honourable place in all icons of stone and metal in Jain art. It is also one of the eight auspicious symbols in the world.
- **The holy pitcher:** Invokes peace and prosperity.
- **The elephant:** Usually found at the doorstep of all temples. This is one animal that is found in all temple architecture. It is the holiest of all animals and a favourite of the gods.
- **The swan:** It is mostly seen in sculpture and architecture. In

Jain temples, the lowest strip in domes is called *hamsa-thar*, which is a whole line of swans carved out.

- **Shehnai:** Auspicious wind musical instrument. Earlier this was played thrice a day at temples and palaces.
- **Lotus:** The most auspicious flower. *Tirthankaras* sit on the lotus when giving sermons. It is also a symbol to depict how to live unattached in the world. Lotus leaves remain untouched by water, though they are born and live in water.
- **Vidyadhara God:** These demi-gods can fly and usually carry garlands and flowers. Today they are found as sculptures in a temple.
- **Cymbals:** Musical instruments made out of bronze. They are used in music on occasions of prayers, *poojas* and religious festivals.
- **Drums:** They are also considered auspicious musical instruments, demi-gods playing them when in audience of the *Tirthankaras*.
- **Aarti lamps:** An artistic metallic lamp for *aarti*. The lighted lamps are waved before the icon for worship during the *aarti* and after. Wicks saturated with clarified butter are also used in temples in India. On great religious ceremonies huge *aartis* with 108 lamps is utilised. The five lights also represent the five great vows (*panch maha vrat*) and the restraining of the negative activities of the five senses.
- **Rosary:** It consists of exactly 108 beads. Scriptures point out the type and colour of the rosary (*mala*) to be used and the method of moving it.
- **Coconut:** It is known as *shreefal* and means fruit of wealth in Sanskrit. It is one of the most auspicious items needed during ceremonies and *pooja* in a temple. A coconut is placed on the swastika figure made of rice-grain. It is also offered to goddesses like Lakshmi or as a gift.
- **The crocodile mouth:** Two similar figures are placed at the threshold of the inner sanctum sanctorium of the temple, signifying attachment and hatred. These need to be stepped upon before entering, leaving behind the two most evil emotions.

Jainism has an extensive representation of visual symbols at all steps to constantly remind us of our final destination. The bottom line is that once our own mind, body and soul join in complete harmony to reach the ultimate goal, nothing can stop us. 🙏

*Dhara Kothari is a freelance writer and a Jain Spirit representative in Mumbai.*



# VENTURE PHILANTHROPY

Through direct involvement entrepreneurs can play a very useful role in the non-profit sector and obtain self-fulfilment at the same time, reports *Jain Spirit*



*Direct involvement is key –  
Ajay Gudka (far right) at the school construction site*

**C**HARITY IS A VERY IMPORTANT SOCIAL responsibility, one that should not be neglected during these times of economic and geopolitical uncertainty. The Jain community can be proud of the prominent examples set by many of its members in undertaking philanthropic work. This article looks at a specific approach to charity, which is sometimes called 'Venture Philanthropy'. The article explains the nature of venture philanthropy, and then makes it more concrete by giving a profile of an excellent Jain involved in it.

An important role model in the community was Mr. Meghji Pethraj Shah, the founder of Meghraj Group. He donated not just his own money, but also gave his time and effort to encourage others to co-donate. He took an active role in the building and running of projects in which he was involved.

## Active Charity

Looking at the current trends in philanthropy in the US, we can unravel some interesting ideas about a more disciplined and active approach to charity. There are numerous ways to undertake philanthropic work, ranging from simply signing a cheque to taking an active involvement in the fund-raising and distribution process, the management of a charity, or a direct relationship with the ultimate recipient. It is this idea of active involvement that we will explore.

'Venture Philanthropy' is a term that is used to describe active involvement with the projects to which one donates,

particularly for business people, through the transferral of business skills to the charitable domain. The basic analogy is to apply some of the disciplines of business and venture capital to philanthropy. While we should not become too caught up in this analogy, it still provides some interesting insights and pointers. The goal for anyone making a donation should be clear - to create as much benefit for the recipients as possible for the amount of money given. Venture philanthropy takes this objective very seriously and suggests some approaches of how to achieve it.

Rather than a family charitable foundation just acting as a conduit for funds to reach a registered charity, venture philanthropy suggests that in addition to money,

the individual donors offer their time, contacts and business skills to increase the efficiency with which the charity is managed and undertakes its various projects. The resultant benefit to the recipients can be seen as the leveraging of financial capital (the donation) with intellectual and human capital (the business skills and contacts), the combined effects of which should be far greater than the donation itself. This tends to require a longer-term, relationship-based approach rather than the transaction-based approach of a one-off donation.

The approach is more about teaching than just giving – the old adage very correctly says that it is better in the long term to teach someone to grow food than to provide him with food. The impact is far more profound and long-term, the lessons can be shared with others, and it benefits a greater number of people. Many venture philanthropic activities are therefore focussed on education, whether for adults or for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

## Examples

What kind of active roles can individuals play to assist charities?

- Guidance on the running and management of the charity, teaching and sharing basic business skills;
- Help with 'marketing' through the provision of contacts and introductions when the charity is collecting donations;



- Setting a focussed approach to fund raising;
- Assistance with managing the charity's finances (both its own and those of the projects it is running);
- Developing a cost-conscious culture;
- Keeping a focus on maximising 'return on investment' (i.e. teaching the staff to try to ensure that each pound donated gives the greatest possible benefit to the recipient);
- Involving one's own business by mentoring students, running internship programmes to teach basic job skills, sending staff to guide and educate the charity or the final recipients, offering job placements to disadvantaged people.

VP requires much more of the donor, but should be much more beneficial to the recipients and also inherently more satisfying to the donor. Since many Jains are involved in running their own businesses and have unique skills that could be shared to a great effect, venture philanthropy is a particularly suitable approach for us.

in life. This would help both the children and their families in the long term.

Ajay with two other trustees Dr. Chetan and Shobhna Shah, has built a charitable organisation in London, Bhagvatinandji Education and Health Trust (BEHT), which is running projects in Gujarat. It works through five charitable foundations set up in India, each with a different focus, including education, health, environment and assisting the elderly. In the last three years some £250,000 have been raised mainly from the UK, sometimes through sponsored events like a swimathon.

Ajay takes a very active role in the distribution of this money to achieve the specific purposes determined for it. He always finds valuable time every day to spend on his charitable work, and also uses his holidays to go to Gujarat to work on the projects that are very important to him.



*Seeing the results of one's actions first hand, encourages givers to do more*

There are many excellent examples in the Jain community of people who have proven the value of venture philanthropy. They have increased many-fold the benefits derived from financial donations by donating also their business skills and experience. To give an example of just how well this can work, we would like to profile here one such modern-day philanthropist, Ajay Gudka, a businessman from London, Director of Caprin Printers.

## Case Study: Ajay Gudka – BEHT

Ajay's charitable work is mainly in the fields of healthcare and education, principally in Gujarat, India. Education has been given a particular priority since it provides a foundation of skills and tools for children to develop themselves and progress

## Projects

Examples of the main projects undertaken:

- Building an education centre in Visavadar Taluka, Junagadh District which includes a dining hall, two boarding houses, primary and secondary schools and a library – this can educate over 600 students per annum;
- Building another education centre, in Adhoi Kutchh, including a school, boarding school and dining hall. This will educate 600 students per annum;
- Buying an ambulance unit serving about 50 villages in Visavadar Taluka.

Different donors have given funds for different parts of these projects.



## ◀ Business Skills

Many of the people working in charities or on charitable projects may not have the experience or skills necessary to manage large-scale projects. Their backgrounds are unlikely to be in project or financial management, in marketing or other such business disciplines. This is where the real value addition of venture philanthropy lies.

What are some of the business skills that Ajay has brought to his charitable work?

### Management

- Establishment of clear management structures with proper responsibility to the key people. This is a fundamental tenet of good business management.

### Administration

- Overall improvement in administrative skills;
- Requirement for proper record keeping;
- Devising practical forms for recording data;
- Establishment of the importance of regular meetings to ensure good communication between management teams and Trustees, and developing reporting guidelines for the flow of relevant information to the Trustees – this is like the effective communication between a company's Board and its management;
- Emphasis placed on time management – using time effectively maximises the benefit of the donations. The funds raised can pay for a certain number of staff – the more effectively they work, the greater the output per pound of donation. This equates to a focus on productivity in a business.

### Marketing

- Documenting and showing donors information about the projects where their funds are being used, using photography and video where possible. This has significant benefits when going back to them for further donations as they have greater involvement with these projects;
- Provision of relationships for fund raising – going to people directly to get donations.

### Finance

- Decisions about how to allot funds across projects to give the maximum benefit. This is like making asset allocation or investment decisions in a company to maximise returns;
- Evaluation of projects and budgets, and ensuring that projects are completed within budget.

## Donor Relations

- Ensuring credibility and transparency – the six different Trusts are all registered with the relevant Charity Commissioners and have accounts audited annually. This makes donors more comfortable about giving to BEHT;
- Maintaining links with donors and providing them with information so they remain interested and carry on donating – this is similar to the investor relations function of a listed company.

## Project Management

- Project management skills, both for fund-raising (e.g. organising a swimathon) and at the execution level (e.g. organising the various constituencies for planning, building and managing the various projects, such as the schools). So far, Ajay has managed to successfully complete all the projects undertaken.

These skills, whilst essential to successfully run charities and complete major projects, were lacking in the agencies that were working on the assignments. Ajay has clearly demonstrated the necessity for this wide variety of management skills and the benefits that accrue when they are introduced into the various schemes.

## Personal Results

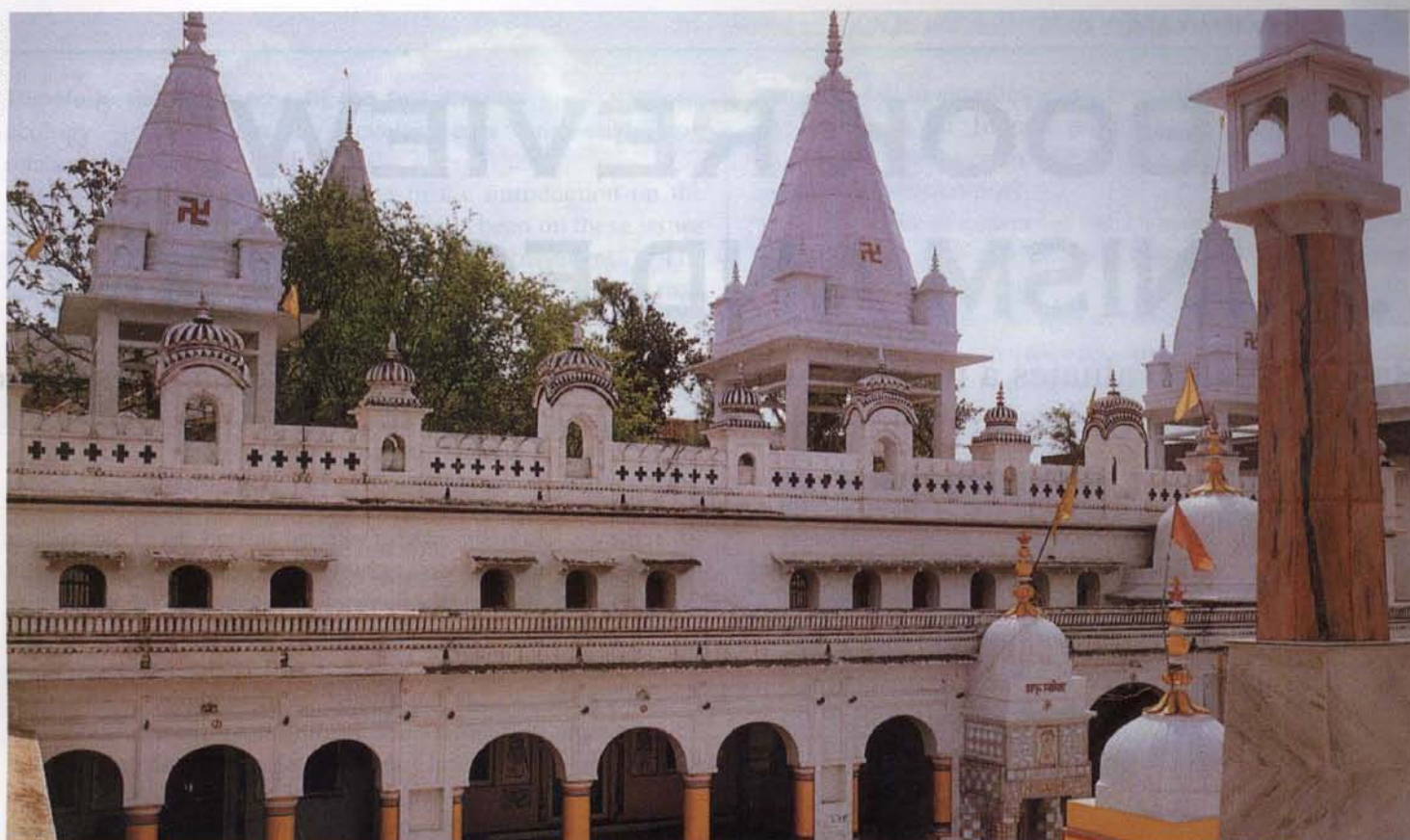
Ajay has personally found this active approach to charity to be extremely rewarding, and this has led him to devote to it almost all of his free time and holidays. On the fund-raising side, the project has its own momentum: people are regularly sending donations, since they can see the value of the work that he is doing. He ends up acting as an intermediary and co-ordination agent for their donations, ensuring that the money is used effectively for the purposes intended. With funds still being donated to BEHT, he is happy to carry on with this good work, and he has no plans to scale back his activities.

We must stress that it is possible to achieve good results without such a significant time involvement, but this is an example of the way how a committed individual can achieve meaningful results for a large number of people in need of help: using his business skills to leverage the benefits derived from the money donated.

The impact of his work will be felt for years to come by the many communities he has helped.

We hope that this article has given you some ideas you can use in planning your own charitable activities, and some thoughts as to how you can increase the effectiveness of your giving and the satisfaction it gives you. 🙏





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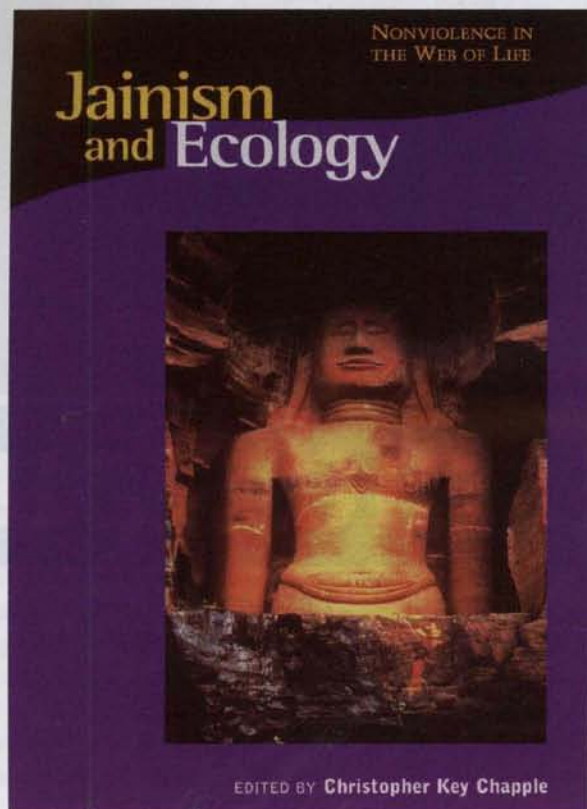
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# BOOK REVIEW: JAINISM AND ECOLOGY

Rajesh Shah evaluates a major new book on this subject, based on a conference at Harvard University where the *Jain Spirit* project was first discussed



**W**HAT HAS JAINISM GOT TO SAY ABOUT THE increasing poverty, inequality, social injustice, pollution, ecological destruction and extinction of thousands of species in the modern world? From 1996 through 1998 a group of ecologists and religious scholars asking similar questions convened academics and leaders from all major religions to ask a set of questions regarding the current ecological crisis, one that threatens the very existence of all life-forms on earth. Why have religions not guided their followers in modern times in which we have plundered the natural resources and other life on this planet? How could the wisdom in the various religions be resurrected to provide guidance out of a situation that threatens our own existence? The Centre for the Study of World Religions at Harvard University convened these conferences, with Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim as series editors.

The result of these meetings was a book on each major religion (Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Indigenous

Religions, Confucianism, etc.) and their relationship with ecology. *Jainism and Ecology*—edited by Christopher Chapple—contains essays by various authors around several themes, including Jain theories, challenges to the possibility of a Jain environmental ethic and voices within the tradition.

The essays can be divided into two camps. One camp, consisting of scholars and leading practitioners, states that Jainism is ecological. Among other proponents, Nathmal Tatia in *The Jain Worldview and Ecology*, John Koller in *Jain Ecological Perspectives*, and Kristi Wiley in *The Nature of Nature: Jain Perspectives on the Natural World*, describe Jain ecological concepts, the value placed on each life and even on inert elements. Since Jainism advocates against harming any life, it is ecological. Satish Kumar in *Jain Ecology* describes his mother's rural lifestyle, and Sadhvi Shilapi mentions the tree-planting project at Veerayatan in Bihar. Others talk about historical principles and the practice of vegetarianism to show Jainism as ecological.

The other, smaller camp of scholars state that the Jain principles can be ecological but, as John Cort states in *Green Jainism?*, there is no Jain environmental ethic per se. For example, Jains are against killing individual life-forms, but Jainism does not have holistic views of environmental ethics. Paul Dundas in *The Limits of a Jain Environmental Ethic* states that Jains see nature as the reason “for the degradation of humankind,” while Christopher Chapple would like us to have “an approach to the natural world that engenders feelings of tenderness, respect and protection.”

These are not opposing camps and both sides are very supportive of Jainism. Both camps focus mainly on historical thinking and practices and do not analyse the present state of Jainism or the lifestyles and values of modern Jains.

This book is not intended to be a historical or explanatory text on Jainism. It provides a very good, though non-linear, background on Jainism and its principles with most of its contributors referring to the primary texts, and quoting historical scholars such as Hemachandra and Haribhadra. It also presents the thinking of modern ecologists and some opinions on where the solutions lie.



Hopefully the confluence of the two streams – religion and ecology – may help us develop new and sustaining relationships with the earth.

One important question raised in the introduction on the ecological crisis is: “Where have religions been on these issues and why have they been so late in their involvement?” The book assumes that the reader agrees there is a crisis. This may be a problem since the majority of Jains today, along with most world leaders and economists, still deny there is a crisis, one in which the basic elements sustaining life – sufficient water, clean air and arable land – are at risk. Most Jains are unaware of the 1992 Warning to Humanity signed by over 1000 scientists (including 105 Nobel laureates) from 70 countries. Umasvati says in the *Tattvarthasutra*, “A person with a deluded world-view is like an insane person who follows arbitrary whims and cannot distinguish true from false.” An important discussion would centre on how to make people aware that if current trends continue, humanity will not.

For those Jains who admit life on this planet is at risk, this book will be useful in building a common understanding of issues. For those who want to do something, it will provide guidance for action, both at a personal and at a societal level. There is a lot to be done. As John Cort observes, “For those concerned with the environment ... the historical record of the Jains is on the whole not a positive one.” To put it more strongly: today’s Jain community, as a whole, is accelerating the crisis. How Jainism answers another question in the introduction, “Does the search for otherworldly rewards override commitment to this world?” will reveal whether the religion aids us in our actions or it hampers us to save the planet.

Among the books in the series this is the thinnest one. *Hinduism and Ecology*, for example, has several chapters on activism, from a discussion of Gandhi’s ecological values and actions, to the Chipko and the Save Narmada movements. This book has no similar stories of struggles in the Jain community.

Some topics brought up are a welcome surprise such as feminism and the role of women in Jainism. Sustainability is not only about the natural environment, but also about the social one. However, there are some important issues which are not raised:

- An examination of modern Jain lifestyles and values – the inevitable gap that arises between theories and practice. While Anne Vallely, in *From Liberation to Ecology: Ethical Discourses among Orthodox and Diaspora Jains* does discuss some new questions by Jains, some important ones on today’s Jain community are not raised. How come the Jain business community shows unbridled ambition and greed? Why, despite

Jainism’s call to simplicity, has it become so prosperous (at less than 1% of India’s population, it is the richest community and pays around 80% of India’s personal tax) and now is ostentatious?

- A couple of essays list the 15 occupations unsuitable for Jains, but does not mention that these guidelines are completely ignored today. For example, Jains are into diamonds, chemicals (poisonous ones that have byproducts that devastate the environment) and finance (money that shows no character and can chase weapons, mining, land, etc.). Should this list of unsuitable occupations be modified for today’s world? Instead of not being involved in the construction and sale of cars, should we not avoid automobiles?

- Jainism’s approach to ecology and systems: while focusing on every life, it ignores species and behaviour at a macro level. A tree sends out hundreds of thousands of seeds, but does it expect each one to grow into a tree? If a mosquito lays a thousand eggs, should each one reach maturity and lay a thousand each? Nature produces abundance with the intent that the species flourish in harmony with others, not grow in numbers and overwhelm the planet.

Reflecting on these issues may be “an unhappy process of historical exploration,” as Cort states, but it is necessary to take Jainism and the

Jain community from the crisis of today into a sustainable tomorrow. I feel that the book should have included a summary, a list of practical and theoretical questions to be answered for next steps.

In conclusion, it is heartening to see ecological questions being asked across all religions. Jains should read this book and resolve to take the next step themselves. Not to prove that Jainism is ecological, but to prove that Jains today are capable and actually can do more than their share to restore the earth and bring peace and harmony to all life-forms on this planet. Jains currently can be described as passive but as Cort states, “Introducing *anumodana* and *ninda* into the understanding of *ahimsa* means that Jains are expected to be interventionists in their ethics.” We should strive to publish the next book ourselves, include some answers and display some actions and results. 🙏

*JAINISM AND ECOLOGY* edited by Christopher Key Chapple has been published by Centre for the Study of World Religions, Harvard Divinity School and Harvard University Press, 2002 ISBN 0-945454-34-1. Rajesh Shah is a freelance writer and environmental activist based in California.

***“How come the Jain business community shows unbridled ambition and greed?”***



# LIVING IS A GREAT PILGRIMAGE

Reuben Thuku vividly explains the universal concept of pilgrimage



*Pilgrimage nourishes the spirit*

**T**HE OCEAN COMMENCES PILGRIMAGE AS A tiny droplet of water in a mountain streamlet. Similarly, no sooner has the acorn entered into the soil than the gigantic towering oak starts the prodigious venture. The tiny oscillating atom targets the magnificent universal galaxies. In nature, all beings are pilgrims.

Though history indicates that humanity has been transformed from gatherers and hunters into enthusiastic interstellar space explorers, the number of spirit-of-sphere aspirants is multiplying fast. Globally, people of diverse enterprises are merging into corporates for survival. Later this tendency will flower into altruistic and self-sacrificing service, a major ingredient for spiritual growth of the human species. Our civilisation's pilgrimage centres on consciously shifting our focus from negative, selfish, exploitative relationships to positive, loving, helpful fraternisation. Debilitating wars, grinding poverty and degenerative diseases can only be remedied by compassionate and loving hearts. The endless

round-table conferences are a bubble of vanity! Besides, the massive paperwork involved in these meetings greatly contribute to the world's deforestation and desertification.

## What is pilgrimage?

Pilgrimage is defined as: standing in the presence of God. The ever creative Plato styles God as the 'universal good'. Many sages and saints of all ages have equated God with love - indeed, they say: God is Love and Love is God. Thus the process of pilgrimage entails the arduous yet benevolent self motivated task of raising one's consciousness from the narrow, inhibitive and destructive abyss of hatred into the vortex of all-beneficent, liberating and life regenerating cosmic love. No other reform is so glorious. The very attempt is highly commendable irrespective of the degree of achievement.

## When to start the pilgrimage?

Before embarking on a pilgrimage some cardinal soul-searching questions are worth pondering upon:

- Is the quest egocentric? If the main motive is to gain personal good health, financial boost or name and fame, then the expedition may be quite disappointing and deflating.
- Does the mob pressure induce the attitude and urge? To avoid being subjected to mass-hypnotism and thus losing clarity of spiritual vision, one's soul-selector must be very sensitive. Be cautioned and warned: independent thinking is precious; all forms of hero-worship are soul enslaving. The path of spiritual awareness is over-crowded with breathtaking doctrines and luring preceptors. Proper choice and right perception will depend on your inner conscience.
- Do the sorrows of the world send a quiver and a chilling shiver through your heart? That signals the ripening of time for commencing the pilgrimage. Jinas and Avatars of all climates were ignited for the great search by their immortal compassion for all suffering beings. The prompting has to arise from within.



### Where to go on pilgrimage?

Geographically, whether the shrine is in an aquatic environment, a desert, deep in the forest, subterranean cave or on a mountain range, one encounters some formidable and prohibitive obstacles - physical and psycho-spiritual. To access the shrine the seeker has to summon unwavering determination and unflinching will.

The naturalness of the surroundings calls the soul to revert to the original pristine state of consciousness so as to comprehend the language of Mother Nature – the source of wisdom. Hippocrates says, “All knowledge, science and arts are derivative of nature.” Our aloofness from nature generates insecure feelings and fear in us. We are solitary among the myriads of universal benevolent companions on all sides and everywhere. The stone, the flower, the bird and the beast are lovingly caressing us as we insensitively trudge along life's path.

In the ashrams the devotees have to perform their manual tasks such as washing clothes, cleaning the place, fetching water and firewood, etc. Self-reliance is thus inculcated, and also one learns the sanctity of those daily unattractive tasks normally despised and approached with contempt. A reverent attitude towards the labourers and servants is a valuable lesson thus taught. Only minimum necessities for sustaining physical life are available at these centres; greed, which is the obnoxious weed choking the world's spiritual maturing, must be rooted out at all costs. While journeying through life, clutteredness has to be avoided. Simplicity eases the travel. Plato claims, “Simplicity is beauty, and beauty is simplicity.” Artificial abundance has made us lose the sense of direction. Are we the mansion or the soul?

Psychologically, the emotional and mental atmosphere of the shrine is bubbling with the devotional faith and feelings of the pilgrims, pure vibrations of the *mantras*, holy prayers and songs are regularly chanted and sung coupled with ennobling thoughts due to the study of the scriptures and great philosophies conducted by the gurus and the disciples. These offer and advance the best and most effective formula for psychotherapy. Victims of depression usually experience elevation and are revitalised.

However, the holiness of these sacred spiritual homes is due to the meditation and contemplation routinely engaged in by the preceptors, initiates, disciples and visiting pilgrims, supplemented by the invisible devas ever present in the inner environment of such places. These angels help to conserve and distribute the spiritual energy present, and also magnetise the sacred statues with the divine power and virtues.

### How to prepare for the pilgrimage?

#### Physical purity

Regular cleaning of the body, exercises and fasting pure natural diet are very useful for developing a body that can endure the

gruelling and energy-depleting trip. Circumstances permitting, if you are to go by air, part of the journey could be by water and land. This will make you aware of the various sufferings and needs of other people, and also provide you with the opportunity of sharing your blessings with them directly.

#### Psychological purity

Develop goodwill feelings towards all; pray for the well being of all in nature. Fill your mind with hope-generating thoughts. Do not anticipate miracles since they are a great detractor and may also trigger doubt and suspicion.

#### Spiritual enrichment

The daily consistent meditation and contemplation should be centred on plunging into the universal dimension of cosmic awareness – bliss and potent dynamism.

Carry and present these three gifts to the ashram. The spiritual soil there will enhance their growth infinitely on one condition – that is: henceforth you will return to the outer world with a strong resolution of serving all selflessly, thus making their karma tolerable.

*“In nature  
all beings  
are pilgrims.”*

#### Pilgrimage always and everywhere

Many a blunder down the ages has humanity committed but the most desperate and crippling one is the confining of sacredness and divinity only to certain specific places, objects, aspects and beings – thus arbitrarily cutting others from the holy birthright. Politically, commercially and technologically our evolution has progressed with leaps and bounds almost riotously. This astronomical development now has to be paralleled by spiritual awakening in all. The sacredness of every being has to be affirmed and encouraged. In religious circles for instance, the devastating hostility between different groups, only triggered by a ‘holier than you’ attitude, has spilled a lot of blood.

See, hear, smell, taste and feel the love/compassion force universally existing at home, working place, market, everywhere and at all times. By and by a mysterious, hitherto unsuspected, effulgent light will illumine your consciousness, turning on the spiritual sense within you that in turn will switch on the divinity and sacredness in others. 🙏

**YOU ARE THE PILGRIM AND THE WHOLE UNIVERSE IS THE HOLIEST PILGRIMAGE CENTRE.**

*Reuben Thuku lives in Nakuru, Kenya and is a lecturer for the Theosophical Society in Kenya. He has travelled widely to promote spiritual understanding and tolerance.*



# WISE WRITERS AND ADVISERS

Vilas Sangave recites the significant  
Jain literary contribution to Indian heritage

JAIN ART FROM INDIA



*A Jain monk receiving a prince, Rajasthan, circa 1640, from 'The Peaceful Liberators: Jain Art from India'*

IT IS EVIDENT THAT JAINISM IS AN ANCIENT religion of India and that right from antiquity to present day it has continued to flourish in different parts of India along with other religions. Jains, the followers of Jainism, are therefore found all over India from ancient times and are also known everywhere for their strict observance of their religious practices in their daily lives. That is why Jainism could survive in India for so many centuries. Jains, in this way, succeeded in continuing to exist as devout followers of a distinct religion in India. This, however, is not the only distinguishing feature of Jains in India. In fact their most outstanding characteristics is the very impressive record of contributions to Indian culture. In spite of the limited and small population of Jains, their achievements in enriching the various aspects of Indian culture are very significant.

Perhaps the most creditable contribution is in the field of languages and literature. It is quite evident that right from the Vedic period two different currents of thoughts and ways of life were prevalent in India, known as Brahmana and Sramana. The Sramana culture is mainly represented by the Jains and the Buddhists, and among these two the Jains were the first to propagate that culture. That is why from ancient times we have the Sramana literature besides the Brahmanic literature. The characteristic features of the Sramana literature are as follows:

it disregards the system of castes and *asramas*; its heroes are, as a rule, not Gods and Rsis but kings or merchants or even Sudras. The subjects of poetry taken up by it are not Brahmanic myths and legends, but popular tales, fairy stories, fables and parables. It likes to insist on the misery and sufferings of *samsara* and it teaches the morality of compassion and *ahimsa*, quite distinct from the ethics of Brahmanism with its ideals of the great sacrifices and generous support of the priests, and of the strict adherence to the caste system.

The authors of the Sramana literature have contributed enormously to the religious, ethical, poetical and scientific literature of ancient India. A close examination of the vast religious literature of the Jains has been made

by M. Winternitz in his *History of Indian Literature*. In this masterly survey of ancient Indian literature, M. Winternitz has asserted that the Jains were foremost in composing various kinds of narrative literature like *puranas*, *charitras*, *kathas*, *prabandhas*, etc. Besides a very extensive body of poetical narratives, the non-canonical literature of the Jains consists of an immense number of commentaries and independent works on dogma, ethics and monastic discipline. They also composed legends of saints and works of ecclesiastical history. Being fond of story-telling, the Jains were good story-tellers themselves, and have preserved for us numerous Indian tales that otherwise would have been lost. *Kavyas* and *mahakavyas* of renowned merit have been composed by Jain poets. Lyrical and didactic poetry are also well represented in their literature.

Apart from these, invaluable contributions have been made by the Jains to the Indian scientific and technical literature on various subjects like logic, philosophy, poetics, grammar, lexicography, astronomy, astrology, geography, mathematics and medicine. Special attention has been paid to the politics (*arthasatra*) which is considered to be a 'worldly science' par excellence. Thus there is hardly any branch of science that has not been ably treated by the Jains.

Jain literature is also very important from the point of



view of the history of Indian languages for they always took care that their writings were accessible even to the masses of the people. Hence the canonical writings and the earliest commentaries are written in Prakrit dialects. At a later period Sanskrit and various modern Indian languages were used by the Jains. That is why it is not an exaggeration when the famous Indologist, H.H. Wilson says that every province of Hindustan can provide Jain compositions, either in Sanskrit or in its vernacular idioms. It is an established fact that we have enriched various regional languages, especially Hindi, Gujarati, Kannada, Tamil and Telugu.

Regarding our contribution to the Kannada literature, the eminent Kannada scholar R. Narasimhacharya has given his considered opinion: "The earliest cultivators of the Kannada language were Jains. The oldest works of any extent and value that have come down to us are all from the pens of the Jains. The period of their predominance in the literary field may justly be called the 'August Age of Kannada Literature'. Jain authors in Kannada are far more numerous than in Tamil. To name only a few, we have Pampa, Ponna, Ranna, Gunavarman, Nagachandra, Janna, Andayya, Bandhuvarma and Medhura, whose works are admired as excellent specimens of poetical composition. It is only in Kannada that we have a *Ramayana* and a *Bharata* based on the Jain tradition in addition to those based on Brahmanical tradition. Besides the *kavyas* written by Jain authors, we have numerous works by them dealing with subjects such as grammar, rhetoric, prosody, mathematics, astrology, medicine, veterinary science, cookery and many others. The number of distinguished Jain authors in Kannada is nearly two hundred."

As the Jains have produced their vast literature in these languages from very ancient times, they have certainly played a very important part in the development of the different languages of India. The medium of sacred writings and preachings of the Brahmins has all along been Sanskrit and that of the Buddha's Pali. The Jains alone utilised the prevailing languages of the different places - besides Sanskrit, Prakrit and Apabhramsha - for their religious propagation as well as for the preservation of knowledge. It is thus quite evident that the Jains occupy an important position in the history of Indian literature and civilisation.

In philosophy the Jains take a distinct position between the Brahmanic and Buddhist philosophical systems. This has been shown very clearly by Dr. Hermann Jacobi in his paper on *The Metaphysics and Ethics of the Jains*. Regarding the problem of Being each of them hold different opinions. The Vedantins consider that underlying and upholding from within all things there is one absolute permanent 'Being' without change and with none other like it. On the contrary the Buddhists hold that all things are transitory. The Jains, however, contend that the 'Being' is joined to production, continuation and destruction, and that they call their theory of multiple view points (*anekantvada*) in contra-distinction to the theory of permanency (*nityavada*) of the Vedantins, and to the theory of transitoriness (*ksanikvada*) of the Buddhists. The Jains think

that the existing things are permanent only as regards their substance, but their accidents or qualities originate and perish.

As the Jains have evolved a philosophy of their own, they follow a distinct ethical code based on this. Jain ethics stand as a class by itself in the sense that it is the only system which is founded on the main principle of *ahimsa*. It has already been noted how the principle of *ahimsa* forms the basis of various rules of conduct prescribed for both the laymen and ascetics.

Thus one of the most significant contributions of the Jains is the *ahimsa* culture and it must be said to the credit of the Jains that they practised and propagated that culture from ancient times. In fact, the antiquity and continuity of *ahimsa* culture is mainly due to the incessant efforts of the Jain ascetics and householders. Naturally, wherever the Jains were in great numbers and wielded some influence they tried to spread *ahimsa* culture among the masses. That is why we find that the States of Gujarat and Karnataka, which are the strongholds of Jains from the beginning, are mainly vegetarian. In fact, it is admitted that as a result of the activities of the Jains for many centuries, *ahimsa* still forms the substratum of Indian character as a whole.

The Jains also distinguished themselves in giving their continuous support for the improvement of political and economic life in the country. Especially in southern and western India, the Jains produced a large number of eminent and efficient monarchs, ministers and generals and thereby contributed to maintaining and improving the political importance of their people. Not only the ordinary Jains but their saints also aided materially to create the proper political environment based on *ahimsa* culture necessary for the resuscitation of the life in the country.

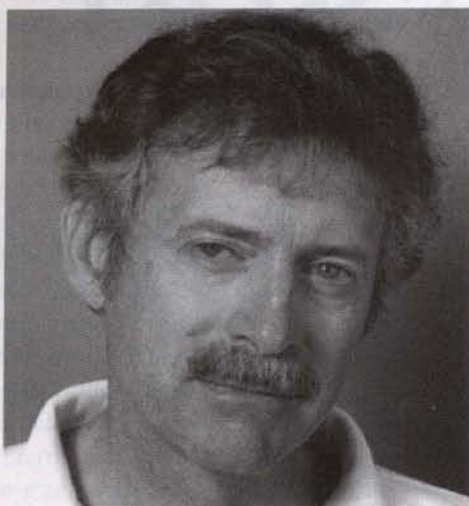
It is considered that due to the keen interest taken by the saints (*Acharyas*) in political affairs of the country, Jainism occupies an important place in the history of India. The ascetics were never indifferent towards the secular affairs of the government and the state. We know from the account of Megasthenes that in the 4th century BC the Jain ascetics, who lived in the woods, were frequently consulted by the kings through their messengers. So far as Karnataka is concerned Jainism throughout its course of more than one thousand years was an example of a religion which accepted the importance of worldly concerns and public affairs. That is why in Karnataka we find that the Jain *Acharyas* ceased to be merely exponents of dogmas, and turned themselves into creators of kingdoms. Jain saints were primarily responsible for the founding of the Ganga kingdom in the 2nd century AD and the Hoyasala kingdom in the 11th century AD. 🙏

*Extracted from the book 'Aspects of Jaina Religion' by Dr. Vilas A Sangave, published by Bharatiya Jnanpith, New Delhi 1999. Dr. Sangave lives in India and is an eminent professor of Jainism.*



# BIOLOGY WAS CRITICAL

Lawrence Babb analyses the detailed classification of all living beings



**T**HE JAINS HAVE CREATED A COMPLEX SYSTEM of biological knowledge. It is a system that includes concepts of physiology, morphology and modes of reproduction, but its main focus is taxonomy (classification). It should not be thought of as a system of scientific analysis. Its basic motivation is soteriological, and the system may be seen as a conceptual scaffolding for the Jain vision of creaturely bondage and the path to liberation.

The beings of the world (*jivs*) are divided into two great classes: liberated (*mukt*) and unliberated (*samsari*). Liberated beings are those who have shed all forms of karmic matter while unliberated beings are those who are in the bondage of karma. In turn, unliberated beings are divided into two great classes: beings that cannot move at their own volition (*sthavar*) and beings that, in order to avoid discomfort, can move about (*tras*). The beings of the *sthavar* class possess only one sense, the sense of touch, and are of five types: earth bodies (*prithvikay*) that inhabit the earth, stones, and so on; water bodies (*apikay*) that inhabit water; fire bodies (*teukay* or *tejkay*) that live in fire and electricity; air bodies (*vayukay*) that inhabit the air; and finally plants (*vanaspatikay*).

Plants come in two general types: *pratyek*, in which there is one soul per body, and *sadharan*, in which there are infinite souls in a given material body. The multiple-souled forms of plant life (*sadharan*) are of two types: gross (*badar*) and subtle (*suksam*). The gross varieties include such common root vegetables as potatoes, carrots, onions, garlic and yams. This taxonomy, therefore, is extremely important from the standpoint of dietary rules. Because potatoes and similar vegetables harbour tiny forms of life in infinite numbers, they are – in theory – forbidden to Jains. The ban on eating root

vegetables is one of the principal markers distinguishing Jain vegetarianism from that of other vegetarian groups in India. The plant category also includes tiny beings of infinite number, called *nigods*. They are the lowest form of life and exist in little bubble-like clusters that fill the entirety of the space of the cosmos. They live a short time, perish and then take rebirth as *nigods* again. They are a teeming sea of invisible life everywhere around us, even within our bodies.

*Tras* beings are classified on the basis of the number of sense organs they have. The *viklendriy* class, consisting of beings of two to four senses, opposes the *pancendriy* class, consisting of beings with five senses. Two-sensed animals have taste and touch; three-sensed animals add smell; four-sensed animals add vision; five-sensed animals add hearing. A somewhat different principle of animal classification is based on the manner of giving birth. Those born from the womb (and this includes eggs) are called *garbhaj*. Beings called *sammurchim* are born by means of spontaneous accretion of matter into a body. All beings of fewer than five senses are born this way, as are some five-sensed animals and human beings.

Coexisting and consistent with the above scheme is yet another system of classification. In many ways this is the most important of all. This is the system of the four conditions of existence (*gatis*). These four categories are: hell-dwellers (*naraki*), animals and plants (*tiryanc*), humans (*manusya*) and deities (*dev*). They are ranked on the basis of the relative happiness (*sukh*) or sorrow (*dukh*) experienced by the beings within them.

The most miserable of all beings are the hell-dwellers. They exist in perpetual darkness and suffer from unrelenting hunger, thirst and extremes of heat and cold. They are tortured in various ingenious ways by demon-like beings who perform this function. The punishment is often of the ‘punishment-fits-the-crime’ variety. Picture books exist in which the punishments for various sins are depicted in vivid and rather disgusting detail, a sort of pornography of punishing. Hell-dwellers take birth (as do the gods) by means of instantaneous creation, and their terms of punishment are aeons long. An Ahmedabad informant once told me that hell-beings remember their torments after they are reborn as humans, which – he said – is why babies cry. He then went on to say that the parents give the child a doll to stop the crying, and the child clings to it and says, “Mine! mine! mine!” Then, he continued, “at the age of twenty-one or so they give you a bigger doll, and the same thing



happens.” The result is attachment to family and other worldly things, and so the cycle goes on.

The animals and plants (*tiryanch*) experience somewhat less misery than hell-beings do, or at least this seems to be true of the five-sensed animals. However, birth anywhere in the *tiryanch* category is extremely undesirable. Their natural place of habitation is the world-disc, but they can live in many areas barred to human beings.

Human beings experience more happiness and less sorrow than those in the *tiryanch* category. As noted already, humans occupy only the restricted central area of the world-disc; they are distributed, of course, between the two moral zones of *karmbhumi* and *bhogbhumi*. The humans in *bhogbhumi* are born as twins of the same sort that exist in our world during the paradisiacal age: their lives are spent in sensuous enjoyment, and liberation is impossible for them. Humans can be either womb-born (*garbhaj*) or born by spontaneous generation (*sammurchim*). The latter are generated from various impurities (such as excrement, urine, phlegm or semen) produced by the bodies of womb-born humans. They are without intelligence and cannot be detected with the senses; their bodies measure an uncountably small part of a finger's breadth. They die within forty-eight minutes (one *antarmuhurt*) without being able to develop the full characteristics of a human body. Certain rules of the ascetic discipline are based on the injunction to avoid harming these beings. For example, after

eating, some ascetics and extraorthoprax laymen drink the liquid residue from washing their hands, plates and bowls. This is to prevent in the meal's remains the spontaneous generation of millions of little replicas of themselves, for whose deaths they would then be responsible. Just as the category of multiple-souled plants invest Jain vegetarianism with a distinctive character, this category provides the basis for certain distinctive features of Jain asceticism.

The truly crucial fact about human existence, however, is that liberation is possible only in a human body. As we know, liberation is not possible for *all* humans, but it is possible *only* for humans. This is a fact with momentous consequences.

The gods and goddesses are, in some ways, mirror images of the hell-beings. Hell-beings are being punished for their sins; the gods and goddesses are being rewarded for their virtuous acts in previous existences. It is sufficient to note that

the gods and goddesses, as well as the hell-dwellers, are stratified. The lowest are those who dwell in buildings and live in the uppermost of the seven hells but are not subjected to hellish torments (*bhavanvasis*). Residing in an intermediate level between the uppermost level of hell and the earth are deities (*vyantars*) who inhabit jungles and caves. They can help human beings, but can be malicious,

too. The planetary deities (*vyotisk*) dwell in the region between the earth and the heavens above. They belong to two basic categories: moving and stationary.

The most important deities are the *vaimaniks*, so named because they inhabit heavenly places (*vimans*) of various kinds. They too are divided into two basic types. Lowest are the *kalpopapans*, those who are born in paradises (*kalpas*). Residing in palaces above the *kalpopapan* deities are the *kalpatit* deities (without *kalpas*) who are of two kinds: the *graiveyaks*, who dwell in nine palaces above the topmost of the palaces and the *annuttars*, who live in five palaces higher still. The *kalpopapan* deities perform the celebrations of the *Tirthankaras*' *kalyanaks*. They also live in organised societies in which there are kings, ministers, bodyguards, villagers, townsmen, servants, and so on. The *kalpatit* deities do not participate in rituals and are not socially organised. Goddesses are found dwelling only in the first and second heavens of

the *kalpopapan* deities and below, although they may visit higher levels, sexual relations become progressively etherialised: from mere touch, to sight, to hearing, to thought and finally to no sexual activity at all.

The Indras are the kings of the gods. There are sixty-four of them in total: twenty who rule the *bhavanvasis*, thirty-two for the *vyantars* (and a subcategory known as *van vyantars*), two for the *vyotisks*, and ten for the twelve paradisiacal regions. The Indras and the Indranis, their consorts, are symbolically central to ritual action among Jains. 🙏

Extract from the book 'Ascetics and Kings in a Jain Ritual Culture' by Lawrence A Babb. Published by Motilal Banarsidass, First Indian Edition 1998, copyright University of California Press.



*Cosmic Man (Lokapurusha) – a visual representation of the Jain cosmos and life forms, Rajasthan 1884, from 'Peaceful Liberators – Jain Art from India'*



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A concise website which combines the Jain religion, Jain Society and philosophy of *Ahimsa*. The site contains a range of modules that are easy to follow, offering Jains across the world an opportunity to increase their knowledge on *Samaj*, and provides succinct information for the benefit of new Jains. The site contains a comprehensive list of Temples across the world, profiles on the Saints from all sects, a Matrimonial area provided by the Ahimsa foundation and profiles of Jain celebrities. There is also a Jain Members Directory, a photo gallery, E-shop, and E-greetings, a list of Vegetarian Restaurants and a useful page on Jain institutions. You will find a fun module dedicated to Children, to which children are encouraged to add their suggestions! And for those that need up-to-date and further information on Jain Samaj there is a FAQ section, Discussion forum and monthly News Bulletin 'Ahimsa Times', which is circulated to thousands of Jains around the world.



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*The above is based on information available as of mid  
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# UNITY OF MINDS

The new President of India, H.E. **Abdul Kalam** gave the following address on Independence Day, a message which is very relevant in the modern day

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“My salutations to all of you both in India and abroad. After Independence, India has made significant achievements in agriculture and food production, energy, healthcare, education and various fields of science and technology. We have made our mark in the international arena particularly in the fields of pharmaceuticals, information technology, mass media and communication, space, defence and nuclear science.

Similar to the first vision, which created a movement to achieve freedom with unity of minds of our people and the unity of purpose in actions, we need a second vision, which will integrate people from all walks of our society towards a common purpose. The second vision of our nation is to transform it from the present developing status to a developed nation by integrated actions simultaneously in the areas of agriculture and food processing, education and healthcare, infrastructure development including power, information and communication technologies and also critical technologies. This greater vision will aim to alleviate poverty, illiteracy and unemployment. When the minds of the people of our country are unified and fused towards this vision, the dormant potential will manifest as a mammoth power leading to a happy and prosperous life of a billion people. This vision of the nation will also remove the conflicts arising out of differences and small thinking.

I would like to share with you, friends, another crucial requirement and necessity for our country. We cannot sustain the second vision for the country without Unity of Minds of all our people. Our great strength is our pluralistic tradition and civilisational heritage of nearly 3000 years. I have always been asking myself what the strength of our heritage is. A unique fusion has taken place with multiple cultures, religions and the ways of life in many parts of the world and that has become the foundation of the Indian life.

I have just returned from Gujarat after interactions with various cross sections of people, leaders, officials and rehabilitation workers in the areas affected by recent distur-

bances and earthquake. I also visited the Sabarmati Ashram which was established by Mahatma Gandhi for the purpose of our countrymen to carry on the search for truth and develop fearlessness. I sat in silence for a while in the ashram and remembered the life of Gandhiji. One dominant thought came to my mind. If we can go above our own personal hardships, see the problems of others and decide to work for a larger cause, then there is natural elevation of our minds. When we are lax in this, then our level of thinking goes down. I felt confident that all of us can be elevated to the level of noble minds, if we just decide to understand others and to practise tolerance. I realised that Gujarat has given the noble leader Mahatma Gandhi, unifier of the nation, Vallabhbhai Patel and Vikram Sarabhai, the great visionary in science and technology, and many others. Time has come for every one of us to put the thoughts of these great souls into action for the nation's welfare.

Non-violence, tolerance, acceptance of all religions and the different ways of life, search for truth and fearlessness are the values Mahatma taught us. They are the cornerstones of our civilisational heritage and, therefore, of Indian policy. Any act by anyone anywhere in India that runs counter to these eternal values would pose a threat to the fabric of the free Indian nation which was born and nurtured by supreme sacrifices of countless noble souls. We should all work together to achieve the mission for Unity of Minds to preserve what we so preciously earned and reach greater heights in the future. When I interact with schoolchildren and youth, wherever I go, one question very often arises: “Who are our role models?” Parents and teachers have to show them by their example to live as enlightened citizens.

I am sure, our leadership and our people can achieve the second vision of developed India. Let us take a vow on this Independence Day that the nation is more important compared to any individual, party or organisation.

Jai Hind. 🙏🇮🇳



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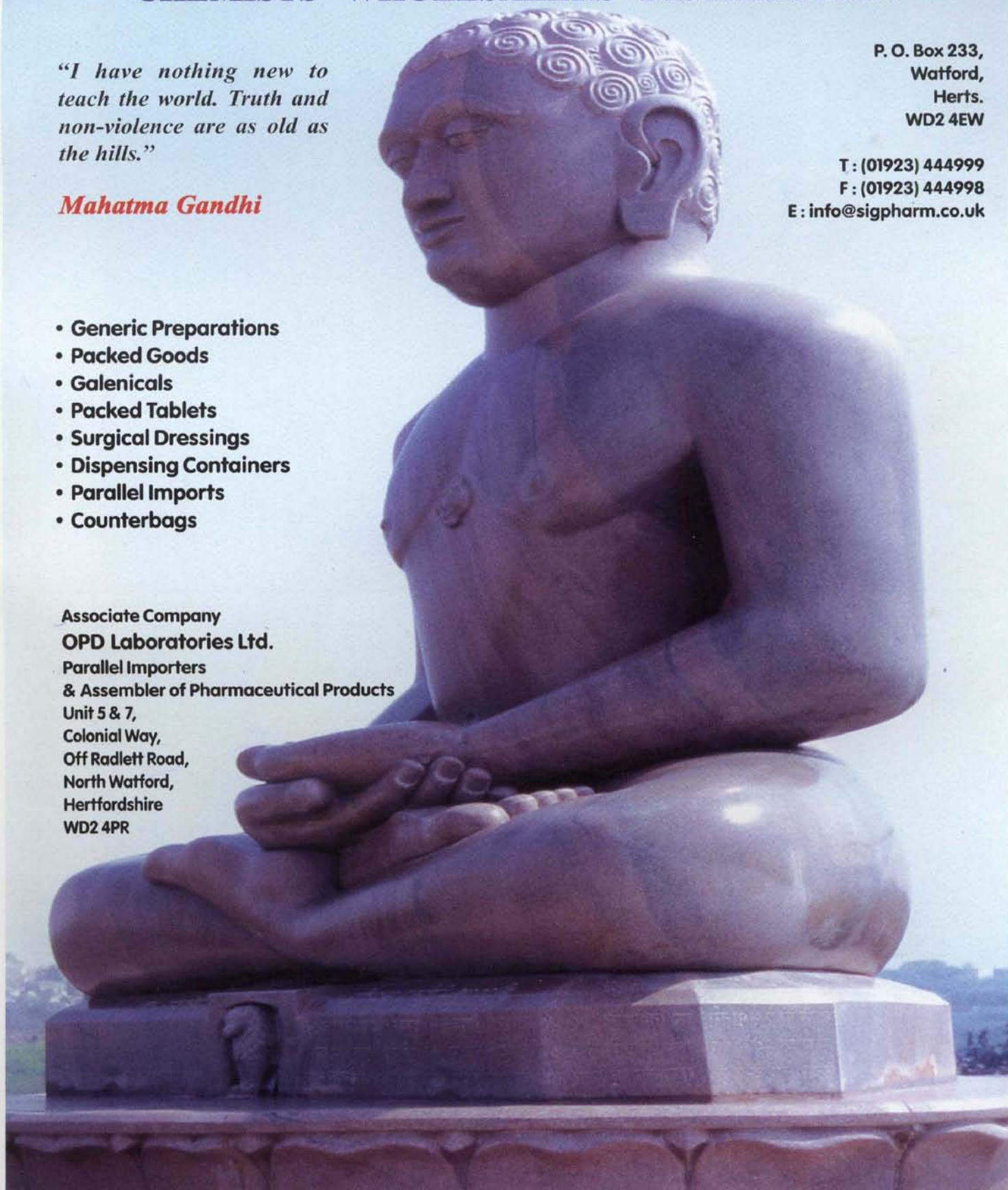
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## www.indiatravelogue.com

A visit to the web site [www.indiatravelogue.com](http://www.indiatravelogue.com) is a voyage of discovery in itself. This bustling Indian travel portal not only has the usual facts and information about booking holidays, it also boasts a host of traveller's tales and photographs. Whether you are in India or outside it, there is a wealth of useful information and ideas to be found on this site. Its easily navigable sections cater to the full spectrum of travellers: from the pilgrim to the package holiday tourist, from the intrepid adventurer to the environmentally concerned visitor. Through the sections 'Passage to India' and 'Faces of India', the web site is particularly successful in bringing alive the culture, spirit, diversity and charm of India in both historical and contemporary contexts.

## www.yja.org

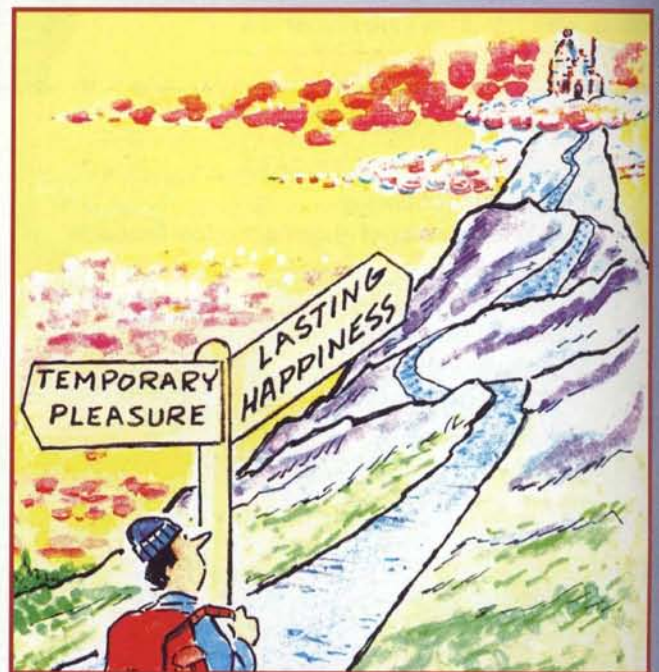
This is the web site of YJA (Young Jains of America), an umbrella Jain youth organisation for North America. Jain youth networks across North America are represented on this site, which brings together news of activities and events from across the continent.

YJA has started up its own youth-oriented newsletter, YoungMinds, which is available online via this site. In addition, the web site hosts an education page, which includes sections on the festival of Paryushan, frequently asked questions and a glossary of Jain terms. In fact, YJA is so keen on promoting Jainism that the education page of their web site even includes tips for students on how to start up a Jainism course at their own universities! It also has a very active discussion board.

## www.youngjains.org.uk

The colourful web site of Young Jains U.K. offers treats for mind, body and soul. It is full of ideas on interesting things to do, book recommendations, links to thought-provoking articles – all with Jain values and perspectives in common. You can also find out about Jain-friendly consumer goods and read vegetarian restaurant reviews – like the organisation itself, this site highlights practical ways in which you can weave Jain values into everyday life.

If you want to learn about more about Jainism, this web site is a good place to start – click on the 'Prayers' section for an explanation of the most commonly recited prayers, as well as a very informative Question & Answer segment. Here, you have the chance to pose your questions to the knowledgeable Young Jains team, who will endeavour to answer even the trickiest ones and will post their response on the site within a week. And, of course, there is regularly updated information on Young Jains events for those living in or visiting the U.K.



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