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Issue 14
March - May 2003

Non Profit International Quarterly Publication

JAIN SPIRIT

SHARING JAIN VALUES GLOBALLY



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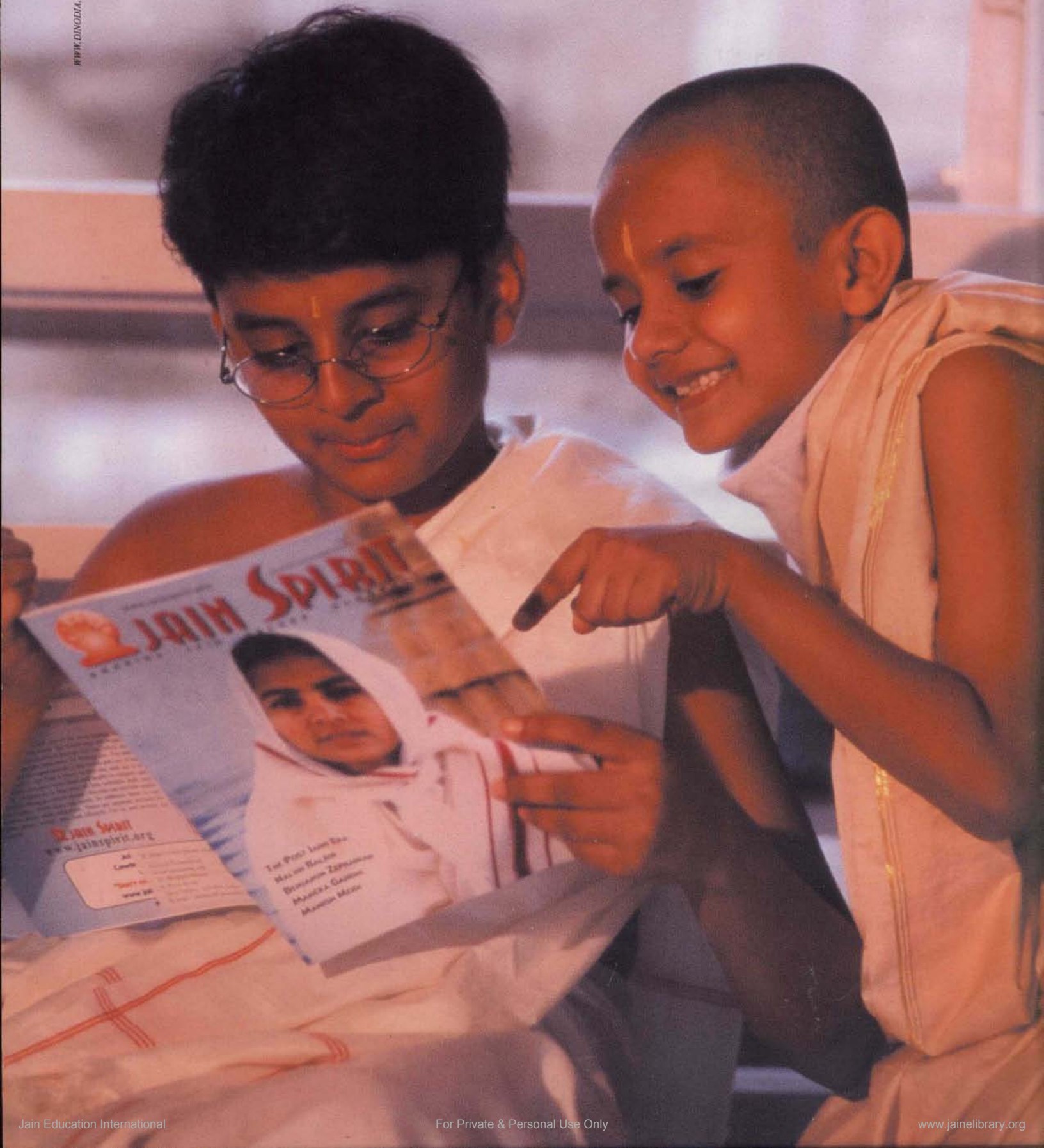
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WELCOME

WHAT IS YOUR CQ?

Jains all over the world place a strong emphasis on IQ – Intelligence Quotient. We spend valuable time and money to ensure our children get the best education. Even parents today are very well educated and professionally accomplished. Looking forward into the 21st century of unprecedented change and globalisation, alongside IQ, the ingredient which is really going to help sustain personal success is going to be CQ – our knowledge of culture and self-identity. Without this, we will be swept aside by the pace of external changes and lose our own self-esteem and self-understanding. We may all be fully literate in a modern sense, but are we suffering from cultural illiteracy?

From my global travels, I have come to understand that outside India, our knowledge about our culture is sliding fast because we are too busy with attaining commercial and material success. This will give us all the temporary symbols of success, but underneath it, the cracks are already appearing. Children are stressed out by over-education. Youth depression is on the increase, alcoholism and drugs are not uncommon, and confusion about career and life goals is increasing. Families are breaking apart too and marriages are suffering.

How do we develop our CQ? Reading, writing, reflecting, discussing, travelling and observing are the basic tools of education. Our adviser, Prof. Padmanabh Jaini always laments to me how weak we are at reading. This is very true today, and with the media world that we live in, people prefer to watch TV and movies than to read. We need to address this, by spending some time each week reading about our culture and cultivating this habit among our children. If we will not read, we will fade culturally and may lose our bearings and sense of place in this fast changing world.

Debate and discussion is common among young people today, but on what subjects, and to what end? Often, I find that debate is there for the sake of showing intellectual prowess rather than developing actual learning. There is often an underlying anti-culture bias, and culture is seen as representing the past and out of date, rather than the future which is where young people wish to go. The article by Tanuj Shah in this issue demonstrates the weakness of intellectualism for its own sake. Good debate requires good homework, which we do not seem to like doing.

Writing and reflection about culture is also declining. Mobile phones, emails and text messages reduce the importance of considered thinking, reflection and writing. Right Understanding (*Samyak Gnan*) requires sustained effort. When we visit India, do we spend time talking with Jain monks and nuns? Do we visit our temples to worship,

observe and to study or as mere tourist attractions? How much time do we spend trying to understand and soak in our culture?

Art and culture are directly entwined, and art is a very important route to understanding our culture. In the article on Festivals in this issue, we explore the need for celebration and common worship among the Jains on certain days in the year. It is important to educate our children about these festivals and to participate in them as a part of our cultural education and development. When I recently visited Jain temples in Mumbai and Ahmedabad, I was mesmerised by the numbers of children attracted to them. They were really enjoying the peace and the artistic beauty, and loved participating in the worship.

JAIN SPIRIT is a carefully filtered and compiled package of cultural education which combines text and pictures. It enhances peoples' CQ. Thousands of our readers already take advantage of this bargain package. However, thousands of Jains have inertia about subscribing as culture is not their priority. Some even think it is a birthright, and they should get Jain Spirit for free. We need to educate people about the benefits of cultural investment and subscription. A gift subscription from you will give friends and relatives the first

step on the ladder, after which they are very likely to continue on their own. Rajesh and Asha Mehta in Antwerp have given 120 annual gift subscriptions to local Jains, and they received 120 Thank You's! You too can do this in your city. As Editor, it is my personal target and priority to ensure that this magazine reaches 10,000 homes within the next two years. I need your help in attaining this target. We have databases of Jains to whom we could send gifts on your behalf, but we need financial assistance to achieve this.

I have a very simple request. If each of our subscribers gives three gift

subscriptions to their friends and relatives at a cost of £30 (\$45), we can hit our target in three months. All you have to do is phone UK 01206-500037 or email us, with the names and addresses and we will do the rest.

To give me a chance to plan the magazine over the next two years and continue to publish fresh informative articles, we have appointed a Guest Editor for issue 15. Falguni Patel is a very talented young Jain living in Manchester, and she is already the News and Youth Editor of *Jain Spirit*. In issue 15, she will be the overall editor and you will get the opportunity to experience an alternative approach.

Have a Happy and Prosperous 2003!

Jai Jinendra,

Atul K. Shah

Executive Editor
editor@jainspirit.com



Reading is vital

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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www.jainspirit.com

Secure credit card subscription facility is available on the website.

ISSN: 1532-0472

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

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NAIROBI REVIVAL

Although the port city of Mombasa had a strong religious influence, Nairobi lagged behind until young parents took a new initiative

THERE ARE ABOUT 13,000 Jains living in Kenya; the vast majority being concentrated in the capital city Nairobi and the rest living in Mombasa, Kisumu, Thika, Eldoret, Nakuru and Kitale. Although there are different sects of Jains living in Kenya (Shvetambara Murtipujaks, Sthanakvasis, Digambaras and a few who follow Srimad Rajchandra), staunch sectarianism is absent.

The first Jains, predominantly Shvetambaras, migrated from Saurashtra, Gujarat in India, around 1890. Their main means of livelihood in India was farming and their formal education, in terms of reading and writing, was minimal. Their knowledge about Jainism was also limited, but they brought along with them the Jain rituals, which are still performed in Kenya in the traditional manner. Their greatest possession was their strong values of hard work, simplicity and mutuality, which they brought with them along with their baggage.

For these pioneers, legal and administrative work was difficult to handle because of their limited education. As a consequence, the welfare and education of fellow Jains was of paramount importance. They worked and donated generously and unselfishly towards these goals. As a result, today the Jains of Kenya can boast of reputable nurseries, primary and secondary schools as well as colleges of higher education. Recognising the importance of competitive sports, a sports complex was also built in Nairobi.

Unfortunately, formal education and spiritual education did not grow at the same rate. More emphasis was put on the former. Therefore, people grew up to be professionals in various fields

and became well established financially; but something was still missing - the thirst for a 'Jain identity' started simmering and many well-educated Jains and youngsters started inquiring more and more about Jainism and its tenets.



Young Nairobi Jains at a Shri Chandna Vidyapeeth class

There was a turning point in 1971 when Gurudev Shri Chitrabhanu visited East Africa. His discourses on Jainism created a lot of interest and awareness. Thus, the quest to attain more knowledge about our religion sparked off. In 1984, the building of the magnificent Jain temple in Nairobi also contributed to this quest. A religious class (*pathsala*) was started for children in 1945 where *sutras* and prayers were taught in the traditional way. They still continue to exist in the present day.

Yet, there was a huge need to learn Jainism in a systematic manner and to answer the 'Why?' questions. In January 1996, under the guidance of Shashikantbhai Mehta of Rajkot the organisation Young Jains Nairobi (YJN) was inaugurated, based on the success of the original UK Young Jains organisation. He advised the younger generation to form a group, where they could get involved in helping the less fortunate and in other charitable activities. There was a dire need for

this because the younger generation was totally lost when it came to the cultural and religious aspects of life.

The first project that took off was 'Clothe a Family'. Here, people donated used and surplus clothes, shoes, toys, book etc., which were then sorted out by young and old volunteers. Approximately 80000 items were collected and distributed to the needy over a period of one year. This brought about a great sense of fellowship amongst the youth. The selflessness with which it was carried out amazed everybody. This was followed by a convention, where the founder of Young Jains, Dr. Atul K. Shah and his colleagues flew from London to conduct a retreat (*shibir*) and a Business Ethics Conference at the Inter-continental Hotel.

In 1997, Pujya Sadhvi Shilapiji was invited to Nairobi. With her and Acharya Shri Chandanaji's blessings, the Shri Chandana Vidyapeeth (SCVP) for children was started. A group of young ladies volunteered to be teachers: although they did not know the 'ABC' of Jainism, they were nonetheless willing to put their heart and soul into learning for themselves and then teaching the youngsters. Since then, SCVP has grown from strength to strength and to date we have 400 children studying with us on Saturday mornings. The teachers meet every Tuesday afternoon to discuss matters related to the classes and learn more. The effect of these classes was such that children would go home and ask their parents about Jain concepts. Of course, their parents not being well versed in Jainism themselves could not answer their questions so they demanded YJN to start classes for adults. Today we have 250 adult students the majority of whom are

women! They follow a structured three-year course, either in English or Gujarati, after which they join a class.

The enthusiasm with which the students, children and adults come to these classes is a sight to behold. These classes have been instrumental in creating greater awareness of Jainism. Some children have converted to vegetarianism after learning about compassion. Parents, on seeing their children with such willpower, also became vegetarians. Most of the adults who attend the classes are very positive about them and have experienced a conscious change in their way of thinking, becoming more aware of their behaviour, business ethics and conduct. Some children do not buy firecrackers to celebrate Diwali, as they have learnt that noise and air pollution are health hazards to all life. Here are some comments from students on these courses:

"Jain classes have given me a new identity. I AM PROUD TO BE A JAIN. It gives me great pleasure that I am passing this knowledge onto the future generation."

"I have learnt to think before I speak to avoid hurting intentionally and unintentionally."

"I have learnt the importance of respecting people and not harming any living being."

A demand to start children's classes also arose in other towns and YJN facilitated their opening in Thika, Eldoret and Kisumu. YJN has been fortunate to initiate and sustain such growth. This project could not have been as successful without the support of all the Jain communities.

In May 2000, YJN mounted an exhibition entitled 'Glimpses of Jainism'. Various Jain themes were colourfully depicted and, gratifyingly, 5000 people visited it over a period of ten days. All were highly impressed by the calibre of the displays and the information contained therein. A similar exhibition was organised by the SCVP teachers at the opening of the Oshwal Religious and Cultural Centre

in April 2002.

Another event, which was a huge success, was the play *Mayna Sundari* in May 2002. The story was based on the Jain epic *Shripal Raja*. It was directed and performed solely by the 2nd year adult students. Auspicious days are celebrated in various ways by SCVP children. In August 2001, during Paryushan, a kids camp was organised whereby they learnt the Jain principles in a fun way, e.g giving a birthday party to Mahavir Bhagwan on the Mahavir Jayanti Day, the essence of *Michchami Dukadam*, performing skits on respect amongst other things. During Diwali, SCVP teachers help children make Diwali cards and sell them, with the proceeds going to charity. Last year, to celebrate spiritual wisdom (*Gnana Pancham*), the children of SCVP were taken to the Jain temple, where the rituals of *Gnana Pancham* and the importance of respecting knowledg was explained to them.

Other events like Jain quizzes, workshops, discourses by various personalities and pilgrimages (*yatra*) are regularly organised to bring variety into the learning process. All these events have brought together the young and old, helped instill much-needed Jain values and created a long-absent sense of Jain identity.

YJN also publishes a quarterly newsletter focusing on different aspects of Jainism. A book club has been set up by YJN, which allows people to purchase Jain literature, and the demand for Jain books has also gone up at the Oshwal library since the inception of Jain classes. The *Jain Spirit* magazine was also launched in Kenya and two complimentary copies were sent to all Jain families in East Africa.

YJN is helping to support the improvement of a rural school, the Gatunyu Primary School in Thika. They have provided them with basic amenities like desks, windows, blackboards, books and safe drinking water. This ensures that the students have a comfortable environment to



Enthusiastic members of YJN take to the streets of Nairobi to spread the word of non-violence

study in. A project, entitled Destination Gatunyu, was organised in May 2001 when both SCVP children and adults spent two fun days with the students of Gatunyu. They helped them to paint the walls and blackboards and also conducted a medical camp to improve the general well-being of the students. This forged a bond of unity between our children and those of Gatunyu, making an everlasting impact on all.

The continuity of any community is ensured by the youth of that community. The youth must be proud enough of their cultural and religious heritage to want to carry it forward into the future. In Kenya, YJN has taken a major step forward to ensure that this happens by involving youth in its projects and passing on our precious heritage, which has come to us from Mahavir Bhagwan. This happens in a fun and systematic manner answering all their 'whys' and 'buts'. With our encouragement and support, the Kenyan Jain youth are developing an intense desire to keep the torch of Jain values burning for eons to come. 🙏

BINA SHAH, NAIROBI



A wire sculpture of Lord Mahavir, by Kenyan artist Edward Masakhalia, at wire plant owned by Mr Khetshe Dharamshi and family

WALKING THE TALK IN MONTREAL

The 5th Annual Young Jain Professionals (YJA) convention was held in Montreal, Canada from 11 to 14 October 2002, reports Shilpa Shah. Jains from the US, Canada and England spent the weekend in Montreal to engage in scholarly presentations and peer-led discussions based on the practice of Jain principles.

The weekend began on Friday evening with the opening words of YJA Chair Sanjay Mehta, followed by creative icebreakers, involving a look into our personality types as well as team-building tasks. In this way, we got to know each other and ourselves better.



On Saturday, Rae Sikora, co-founder of the Centre for Compassionate Living delivered the keynote address. Ms. Sikora talked about the day-to-day choices we can make as regards living our lives in accordance with Jain principles. One point stressed was that although our society encourages us to want more and more, our religion and even common sense tells us to simplify our lives; given the state of our world, it is imperative that we make every effort to do so. Ms. Sikora also conducted a related workshop, Walking Our Talk, bringing the concept of non-attachment and non-accumulation to a very practical level to make people think twice about what they really need and what is important to them. The session also emphasised how we can relate to people who make different choices from ours, even if we do not agree with their choices.

In another session, 'Our Jain Beliefs and Practice, YJP Shrivakas

and Shrivakas in North America' examined how young Jains in a western society practise Jainism and the ways in which our beliefs influence our practices. The facilitators, Jina Shah and Shilpa Shah, outlined and explained some of the basic Jain vows that lay people can take. This was followed by a group discussion that centred around what constitutes Jain practice and the extent to which a personal choice is acceptable, as well as the way people choose to practise at different stages of life.

In a highly topical session called 'Jain Responses to Terrorism and War', retired professor Dr. Vastupal Parikh



discussed how the principles of non-violence (*ahimsa*), non-possessiveness (*aparigraha*) and multiplicity of viewpoints (*anekantvada*) are relevant to politics and global policies, and emphasised the need to be involved with various organisations that have an impact on world decisions. This was followed by a talk, led by Amar Salgia and Gabriel Figuerca, about the Jain acceptance of one's duty to protect one's country, even if it may mean killing others. Historical examples were used to illustrate how Jains have been involved in the military in the history of India. It was emphasised that in this process, one must be prepared to suffer the karmic consequences of killing, even if the killing is viewed as necessary to protect one's people. After a series of religious seminars, came a workshop called 'My Ideal Soul-Mate'. This session began with participating men and women talking in separate rooms about the qualities they wish to find in

their future mates. Single participants had a chance to benefit from the wisdom of the married, regarding important qualities to look for in a partner.

The convention continued with the light-hearted 'Jain Jerry Springer Show: Belief and Practice in Interpersonal Relations'. In this session, members of the audience participated in humorous impromptu skits depicting interpersonal relations between family members, couples and co-workers. Issues raised included family conflicts over matrimonial decisions, vegetarianism in the workplace and communication in



general. Participants demonstrated ways of dealing with a variety of situations using Jain principles. This was followed by a talk 'Jainism and Ecology' by Professor Anne Vallely.

The convention concluded with a panel session on 'Jainism at Work: Belief and Practice Professionally and in Public Service', where panelists Rita Morbia, Paresh Desai, Tushar Mehta and Veena Jain, gave examples of ethical dilemmas they face in their professions. An important point was made about how people who participate in a form of violence in an indirect way (such as investing in a slaughterhouse), often do not feel that they share responsibility in the violence committed, even though they reap the benefits. They also talked about how we all can make a difference and spread the message of non-violence by the decisions we make in our professions.

INDIA WOOS ITS DIASPORA

The Indian government, in a drive to fortify links with the vast global Indian diaspora, designated 9-11 January 2003 as *Pravasi Bharatiya Divas* or India Day. The three-day meet in New Delhi was billed as the largest ever gathering of the global Indian family, and the 9th of January was chosen to begin this seminal event as it marks Gandhi's return to India from South Africa. The decision to host such an event was taken by the Indian government following the recommendations made by a High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora chaired by the prominent Jain Dr. L.M. Singhvi.

After welcoming non-resident Indians and people of Indian origin from all over the world, Prime Minister Vajpayee invited them to share the vision of taking India into the new millennium. Almost 2000 delegates from 60 countries had gathered for this event, and on the whole they were cheered by the Indian

government's commitment to pursue closer ties with the Indian diaspora. Mr. Vajpayee emphasised that India would value these ties not just for economic reasons, but also for the opportunities to share experiences: "We do not want only your investment. We also want your ideas. We do not want your riches, we want the richness of your experience. We can gain from the breadth of vision that your global exposure has given you." There was much celebration as the Prime Minister announced dual citizenship for people of Indian origin in certain countries. Although there were concerns raised that this measure was not inclusive enough, it was an initiative that was generally welcomed. On a positive note, there were other announcements that demonstrated the Indian government's good intentions. For example, delegates learned that the Indian Parliament was already considering a Bill to establish a welfare fund for overseas Indian workers; and there was a plan to reserve seats in Indian educational institutions for the children of the NRIs in the Gulf.

The essence of the Indian

government's message to the global Indian family lay in these words from the Prime Minister: "We would like to create an environment in India which will make you want to return, not just for sentimental or emotional reasons, but in the conviction that you can excel in this country as much as you could anywhere else in the world." There was much networking and discussion over the three days and a general sense of bonhomie amongst the delegates. Everyone left feeling hopeful about the better ties with India in the future if all that was said and promised by the Indian government was indeed implemented.



Dr. L.M. Singhvi, Chair of the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora, was the chief architect of the India Day event

A CELEBRATION OF NATURE AND HUMANITY WITH THE QUEEN

In August 2002 the British interfaith organisation, the Alliance for Religions and Conservation (ARC) held in London its biennial assembly of the leaders of member faiths in the presence of HM Queen Elizabeth II as part of her Golden Jubilee Celebrations. The purpose of the assembly was to highlight the vital role that faiths play in discovering our place in existence and contribution to conservation. The event was celebrated on 13 November at the splendid Whitehall Banqueting Hall, with Jainism being one of the ten faiths represented at the event.

The Jain community was represented by the Institute of Jainology, which promotes Jainism through art, culture and education. The Institute's address to ARC and HM The Queen was based on the Jain principles of compassion and non-violence. The first part of the address was a passage from the Jain Declaration on Nature: "The teaching of *ahimsa* refers not only to

Wars and visible physical acts of violence but to violence in the hearts and minds of human beings, their lack of concern and compassion for their fellow humans and for the natural world. Ancient Jain texts explain: violence is not defined by actual harm, for this may be unintentional. It is the intention to harm, the absence of compassion, that makes action violent. When violence enters our thoughts, we remember *Tirthankara* Mahavir's words: "You are that which you intend to hit, injure, insult, torment, persecute, torture, enslave or kill."

The Institute's message continued with the recitation of an English translation of the song *Maitri Bhavnu Pavitra Zarnu*, followed by a classical rendition of the same song in Gujarati. The song was written by prominent Jain writer and speaker Shri Chitrabhanuji, and is based on Verse 6 from Chapter 7 of the Jain scripture *Tattvarthasutra*. Three talented young Jain singers, Palvi,

Alpa and Paarul, supported by Punit, an accomplished young tabla player and Shilaben on tanpura, performed both the English recitation and the Gujarati rendition. Shilaben was presented to HM The Queen who graciously discussed Indian music with her. All five members perform regularly at the Young Jains 'Sweet Harmony' monthly evenings in London.

The Jain community's 'sacred gift' to humanity was the building of a new village, 120km south west of Ahmedabad. The village of Ninama was totally destroyed in the Gujarat earthquake two years ago when its 1500 inhabitants became destitute overnight. Eight London-based Jain organisations and Shishukunj UK pooled their resources and raised funds under the banner of Gujarat Earthquake Relief Fund (GERF) to help alleviate the sufferings of the earthquake victims.

DYNAMIC SPIRIT: SCIENCE, SOCIETY AND GLOBALISATION

On 6-8 December 2002, NHSF (UK) in London presented a unique and innovative conference entitled 'Dynamic Spirit' on the themes of science, society and globalisation. The conference aimed to act as a catalyst for today's youth to start and take an active and constructive role in shaping the future of our world. Dynamic Spirit offered a refreshing new approach to some of the challenges



Delegates registering for Dynamic Spirit weekend

that lie before humanity by considering them not only from a political but also a spiritual and holistic perspective.

The conference drew on the ancient wisdom of Hindu scriptures that are not only religious works but also rich mines of academic and philosophical discourses on things such as science, the environment, politics and sociology. It attracted a wide range of speakers - writers, academics and international experts from different parts of the world. Speakers included Brother Reuben Thuku from the Theosophical Society of East Africa; Dr Gautum Sen, lecturer in Politics of the World Economy at the London School of Economics and a senior consultant to the UN; Professor Raman Gokul, a consultant and medical expert at the University of Manchester who has lectured widely on science and alternative medicine; Dr Bhan, a key adviser to the British Government on inter-faith issues and religion; and Dr. Atul Shah, Executive Editor of *Jain Spirit*. The conference addressed topical issues such as the war on terror, genetic engineering and biotechnology through lectures, interactive workshops, discussions and debates.

NHSF (UK) inaugurated the



Rt. Honourable MP Barry Gardiner in conversation with conference delegates

Dynamic Spirit conference at the House of Commons and attracted a full house of 175 delegates. They also enjoyed an entertaining play based on the *Bhagavad Gita*, performed by the members of the Bharatiya Vidhya Bhavan at Imperial College London on Saturday evening. The concluding lecture on Sunday was delivered by the freelance scholar and columnist, Dr Koenraad Elst at Brent Town Hall in north west London, home to a large Indian diaspora population. Dr. Elst has written on a variety of topics such as multiculturalism, Hindu revivalism, ancient Chinese history and philosophy, comparative religion and the Aryan invasion theory.

For more details, visit www.dynamicspirit.com

MUMBAI MESSENGER OF PEACE FÊTED IN NEW YORK

On 16 September 2002, the Chair of the World Jain Confederation Board of Trustees, Mr. Pratap Bhogilal addressed an audience of prominent Jains in New York on the need for concerted efforts to promote a culture of peace and non-violence. Mr. Pratap Bhogilal and his wife Bhagwatiben from Mumbai were warmly received at a dinner meeting organised by Arvind and Ila Vora from New York. He spoke to the assembled members of the New York Jain community about the work of the recently established World

Jain Confederation (WJC). The WJC aims to promote non-violence globally, and Mr. Pratap Bhogilal emphasised that Jains and people of other faiths must join hands in achieving a global

culture of peace. He stated that the time had come to begin a worldwide Jain movement, such as is being facilitated by the WJC, in order to build a better world for future generations.

Mr. Pratap Bhogilal is a prominent Indian industrialist who has made valuable contributions to commerce, charity, education and religion. His contributions to society were officially acknowledged by the Honourable Anthony Santino, who presented him with a Certificate of Recognition on behalf of the Town of Hempstead, New York.



From left to right: Mr. Arvind Vora, Mrs. Ila Vora, Mrs. Bhagwati Bhogilal, Mr. Pratap Bhogilal and Anthony Santino.



Cocoa co-operative, Dominican Republic

In December 2002, the King Baudouin International Prize for Development was awarded to fair trade pioneers of FLO (Fairtrade Labelling Organisations) International. Inspired by the vision of a king who was keenly aware of social inequalities between the North and the South, the Brussels-based King Baudouin Foundation established the King Baudouin International Prize for Development in 1978. The prize, with a value of 150,000 Euro, is awarded every two years.

The Foundation wishes to recognise the actions of individuals or organisations that make a significant contribution to the advancement of developing countries. FLO International and its member organisations have been chosen as this year's winners for their pioneering role in



Banana grower, Dominican Republic

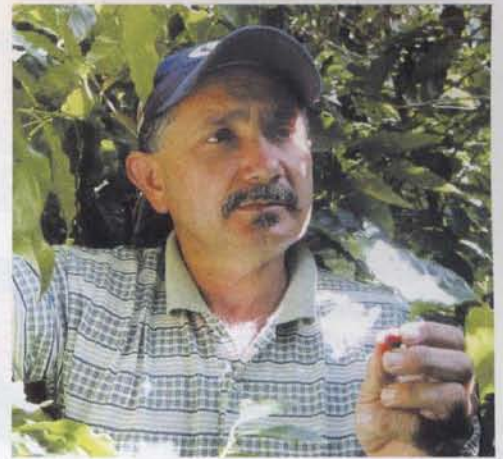
FAIR TRADE PIONEERS HONoured BY KING BAUDOUIN FOUNDATION

giving disadvantaged producers and workers of the developing world an opportunity to participate directly in international trade at Fairtrade conditions, through a unique system of certification, producer support, business facilitation and consumer education.



Guarantees
a **better deal**
for Third World
Producers

International trade may seem a remote issue, but when commodity prices fall dramatically it has a catastrophic impact on the lives of millions of small scale producers, forcing many of them into crippling debt and countless others to lose their land and their homes. FLO International and its member national organisations in 17 countries exist to ensure a better deal for marginalised and disadvantaged third world producers. FLO promotes Fairtrade, which challenges the conventional model of trade, and offers a progressive alternative for a sustainable future. It empowers consumers to take responsibility for the role they play when they buy products from the third world. Results from recent consumer surveys suggest that



Berry-producing co-operative, Costa Rica

the majority of people would prefer to buy FAIRTRADE Mark products. Through its Fairtrade Standard setting and Certification system, FLO International permits more than 800,000 producers and their dependants in more than 40 countries to benefit from labelled Fairtrade. FLO guarantees that products sold anywhere in the world with a Fairtrade label and marketed by a National Initiative conforms to Fairtrade Standards and contributes to the development of disadvantaged producers.

In autumn of 2002, it was announced that a new FAIRTRADE Mark was to be introduced gradually across the 17 countries that make up FLO International. Until now, there have been seven different FAIRTRADE Marks used across the 17 countries. Now, the global vision behind the FLO system will be represented by the international label. "The system has always been global; now the FAIRTRADE Mark is too," says Harriet Lamb, Executive Director of the UK's Fairtrade Foundation, a member of FLO International. This will make it easier for consumers to recognise and choose the more ethical option for their shopping baskets. For more information on the work of FLO International, visit www.fairtrade.net. 3-16 March 2003 is Fairtrade Fortnight in the UK. For more information, and to contribute your support to Fairtrade, visit www.fairtrade.org.uk

DALAI LAMA URGES END TO ELEPHANT BEATINGS IN THAILAND

Bangkok, December 2002

On behalf of PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) His Holiness the Dalai Lama has written to Thaksin Shinawatra, Prime Minister of Thailand, urging him to intervene in the systematic, widespread torture of baby elephants used as a draw by the country's tourism industry. Baby elephants are routinely torn from their mothers, immobilised and mercilessly beaten with nail-studded sticks for days in an attempt to 'break them in' for use at tourist-frequented elephant camps and 'sanctuaries' that are nothing more than cruel circuses. Many do not survive the beatings.

PETA has obtained new video footage that shows terrified baby elephants



screaming and futilely struggling, their bodies covered with bloody wounds. PETA has taken the unusual step of calling for a tourist boycott of Thailand



until the government enacts and enforces laws that would prohibit these cruel training techniques.

"Thailand's elephant camps are promoted to animal-loving tourists under false pretences," says PETA's Director of Captive Exotic Animal Department, Debbie Leahy. "No kind person will want to set foot in Thailand if they see the torture of these beautiful baby elephants."

In the past few years, His Holiness has also asked India to crack down on the leather industry for its cruel treatment of cows during transport and slaughter, and has written to officials in Taiwan, urging them to improve the atrocious conditions at pounds for homeless dogs.

For more information, please visit www.peta.org. The Dalai Lama's letter to Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra is available upon request.

SPIRITUALITY: OVER-LOOKED AND UNDER-UTILISED?

Dennis Oliver, a member of the UK-based Community Action Network brings us news of a new study on spirituality as a community asset. In early December 2002, "Asset-based Community Development: Spirituality as an Asset" was circulated through the ABCD internet discussion group. The author is Valerio Vaz, a priest from Goa, India. Dennis Oliver tells us: "The study concludes that spirituality - understood as 'personal beliefs or values' held within the core of a person's being, by which one directs his/her life - is an enabling strength within communities, a major motivation and support for many who struggle for justice, humanisation and community building. Therefore, spirituality should be recognised as a key asset and important factor for building on the existing strengths of communities and appropriately encouraged or at least accepted."

Elaborating on his reaction to the study, Dennis says: "My first reaction to Vaz's work is that even in our highly secularised nation, transcendent values and convictions drive and support many who persevere in the daily challenges of community development and social entrepreneurship. Vaz, from his experience of a more generally religious culture than ours, rightly observes our reticence to acknowledge this factor. Perhaps we identify spirituality with analytic weakness, or fear the confrontation or enthusiasm that it often triggers. But is this fair to the 'disadvantaged' communities for whom faith can be an immense resource?" Those who wish to read Valerio Vaz's study can request a copy from Dennis Oliver, spiritualityarticle@dennis-oliver.co.uk or from its Canadian source gcunnings@stfx.ca. Dennis Oliver is himself researching an article on how

spirituality relates to community development in Britain and would welcome comments on this subject (your contribution will be formally noted in the article). He is interested in learning how we can "assess and acknowledge the role that positive spirituality can and does play within the challenging communities in which we live and for which we work. Dare we begin naming the positive characteristics that would mark spiritualities (with and without a religious linkage) as assets for our communities?" Dennis is keen to learn more about Jain perspectives on this topic, so readers of *Jain Spirit* are encouraged to contribute any relevant comments to Dennis on the above email address.

SUBSCRIBE ON-LINE
www.jainspirit.com

OPENING UP NEW HORIZONS IN RURAL INDIA

In December 2002, Hermann Kuhn, founder and long-time President of the Jain Association International (Germany) initiated the New Horizon project in rural India. Project New Horizon will train students of a *gurukul* in a remote rural area in professional computer operation. The teaching focuses on actual computer skills needed in the current business environment. The project further involves training the teachers of this *gurukul* and other schools so they become able to continue this program on a self-sustaining basis and later they can also spread this program to other areas. In this way, Project New Horizon will enliven the economic prospects of a wider rural area. It will provide an expanding pool of skilled IT workers that constitute the backbone of any sustained growth.

The *gurukul* in question is situated in Maharashtra state, about 250 km east of Aurangabad, in the rural village of Nawagad, and was established by the Jain *muni* Sri Aryanandiji in 1992. The school provides 4 years of free education and board to young students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Hermann has been supporting this school for the last 10 years and has watched it grow from 30 students in 1992 to about 200 in 2002. The school has been officially recognised by the State School Board and - in addition to the boarding students - it also provides education to about 450 students from nearby villages. Those in charge of the school offer their services on an entirely voluntary basis and without salaries.

Hermann has just introduced professional computer operation to students of the 9th and 10th grade so that school-leavers may gain practical computing skills to make it easy for them to obtain jobs requiring higher qualification. The course will focus on the practical skills needed in the current business environment. The basic principles of modern business administration, as it links to computer operation, are also covered. After completing this four-month course, the students will be able to apply their skills in any common business environment without much further training. Selected students of the 9th grade will also be introduced to advanced programming, a course that will run for one year. Hermann is currently negotiating with heads of Indian companies to provide employment for the students after they complete their training. For further information on New Horizon, email Hermann Kuhn on: centura@bom4.vsnl



November 2002: Mrs. Kundan Madhusudan Shah and her family of artists hosted an exhibition of their entire art collection, built up over a number of years. Thousands of Jains from all over London attended this event at the new Jain temple complex in Southgate, North London.

JAIN SPIRIT GRANTED CHARITY STATUS

As we go to print, the *Jain Spirit* team is celebrating its newly granted charity status. It is now a registered charity, supervised and regulated by the U.K. Charities Commission. This means that we can now accept donations and can claim back tax on financial contributions made to the magazine by British taxpayers and corporate sponsors. We would like to encourage our readers and business supporters to send us regular donations.

FORTHCOMING EVENT - July 3-6 Cincinnati 'JAINISM: THE ART OF LIVING'

The Federation of Jain Associations in North America (JAINA) is holding its 12th biennial convention in Cincinnati, Ohio on 3-6 July 2003. This international convention, entitled 'Jainism: The Art of Living' is being organised in co-operation with the Jain Centre of Cincinnati and Dayton, and is expected to attract over 6000 people from all over the world.

The weekend convention will feature excellent speakers on Jainism, a Jain networking forum, worship rituals such as *pooja*, art exhibitions, and a daily programme of yoga and meditation. In addition, there will be a youth service project, workshops for senior citizens, a careers fair and personal development workshops. There

will also be plenty of opportunity to socialise, with theatre and dancing on offer in the evenings. For the first time, a JAINA quilt will be created during the course of the convention, allowing delegates to share the unique aspects of their particular Jain centre with others. The quilt will identify all the North American Jain centres and will be made and displayed during the weekend. To find out how your Jain centre can participate, please contact Ranjan Punater on: punater@hotmail.com

Registration for 'Jainism: The Art of Living' has now begun. Don't miss out! Visit www.jainaconvention.com to either register online or to download a registration form.

Achievements

Royal Honours in Canada

On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the accession of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II to the British throne, the Golden Jubilee Medal was presented to Mr. Keshav Chandaria from Ontario, Canada, by the Government of Canada. The Golden Jubilee medal is awarded to people who have made a significant contribution to Canada, to their community and to their fellow Canadians at home or internationally.

Mrs. Arti Chandaria was also presented with the Queen's Golden Jubilee medal. She was honoured in a ceremony led by the Lt. Governor of Ontario in recognition of her services to the Royal Ontario Museum, where she launched the South Asian Initiative. This initiative led to the establishment of the Christopher Ondaatje Gallery of South Asia, as well as an endowed curatorship of South Asian civilisations.



Mrs. Chandaria at the Golden Jubilee medal ceremony with her family and the Lt. Governor of Ontario

High Flyer Earns PhD

Sonali Laxmi Shah, aged 29, was awarded a PhD by Loughborough University in the UK for her study, *The Career Success of Disabled High Flyers*. The study focuses on the careers of men and women from different social and ethnic backgrounds, with congenital or acquired physical impairments. Sonali - who herself has a physical disability - intends this study to provide role models for ambitious young disabled people.

Prestigious Award for Jain Academic

The Guy Medal in Silver for 2003 was awarded to Professor Kanti Mardia for his many path-breaking contributions to statistical science, including two fundamental papers read to the Society on 'Statistics of directional data' (1975)

and 'A penalised likelihood approach to image warping' (with C.A. Glasbey, 2001), his highly acclaimed monographs and his lasting leadership role in interdisciplinary research. The Guy Medal is awarded by the Royal Statistical Society, founded in 1834.

Kenyan Impresses in Prestigious Photographic Competition



Anup Shah, a Kenyan Jain, was highly commended by the judges of the 2002 BG Wildlife Photographer of the Year Competition for his photograph *Mating Ostriches*, taken in Kenya's famous grasslands. There were 18,500 entries from 60 countries in what is the world's biggest and most prestigious wildlife photographic competition.

Amongst world-class competitors, Anup's image achieved a 'Highly Commended' status in the category of 'Animal Behaviour: Birds'. Explaining how he came to take this excellent photograph, Anup said: "I guessed that these ostriches in the Maasai Mara National Reserve, Kenya, were courting, and so I kept a lookout for signs to confirm my suspicions. After several days, the hen finally took the initiative. First, she stopped grazing and began to preen herself. Then she approached the cock, ruffled her wings and danced and bowed around him. Within minutes, his pale pink neck had turned crimson. As she began to run away, he chased after her. As soon as he caught up, she dropped to the

ground. Very gently, he crouched over her, making a parasol with his wings. As they mated, they seemed to fall into a trance, their eyes sometimes open, sometimes shut, necks swaying dreamily from side to side."

The overall winner of the 2002 competition was Angie Scott, whose spectacular winning image *African elephant family watching a grey heron* is shown here. The photograph shows a family of five African elephants reflected in the still waters of the Luangwa River in Zambia. Angie was presented with the trophy at a special awards ceremony at London's Natural History Museum on 17 October 2002.

The BG Wildlife Photographer of the Year Competition is organised by BBC Wildlife Magazine and The Natural History Museum, sponsored by BG Group. All 101 winning and commended images from the 2002 Competition are currently on display in the Natural History Museum's BG Wildlife Photographer of the Year exhibition, which runs till 5 May 2003.

NEW BOOKS

The Lessons of Ahimsa and Anekanta for Contemporary Life, edited by Tara Sethia, 2002. This collection of papers from a highly successful conference at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, is fascinating for those interested in Jain scholarship. Contributors include Kristi Wiley, Kim Skoog, Padmanabh Jaini, Kamla Jain, Anne Vallely and other prominent people. For order details, email tsethia@csupomona.edu

You Are, Therefore I Am, A Declaration of Dependence, by Satish Kumar. Published by Green Books, UK, ISBN 1-903998-18-2. This book traces the author's spiritual journey - child monk, peace pilgrim, ecological activist and educator. Also, the Jain influence on his life is extensively discussed. It is in four parts: Encounters with Meaning, Quest for Wholeness, Travels in India, A Relational Philosophy.

History of Oshwals, by Mangilal Bhutoria. The Oshwals are a very illustrious community of Jains originating from Rajasthan. Among them have been many chief ministers, army commanders and finance ministers, not to mention businessmen and scholars. This book is an abridged translation of the original Gujarati version, which is much more thorough and well-researched. It has six chapters on origins, history, development and present day. The modern Halari Oshwal community has its roots in Osia, and are also originally from Rajasthan. It has been published in 2002 by Priyadarshi Prakashan, Calcutta. Tel: 4117517; 248 0260.



ROBERT RADIN

TEERTH DARSHAN - A UNIQUE COLLECTORS ITEM

All over the world, we see examples of Jains who sacrifice a huge amount of their time, money and resources to do their best to preserve and propagate this beautiful heritage. In Chennai, the Jain Prarthana Mandir Trust led by its founding Secretary, Shri U. Pannalal Vaid has been working for the last forty years to publish and propagate a collection of all the sacred Jain sites throughout India. Their latest work, *Teerth Darshan*, which is an English translation in three volumes, is a large and detailed compilation illustrated throughout with photographs, printed and bound on very high quality paper. Without doubt, it is a collectors item, costing US \$ 100 for three 250-page volumes. A bargain for the price to someone who values Jain heritage and is curious about its history and impact. Mr. V. Ramnik Shah of Canada translated the Gujarati version into English through a lot of meticulous effort.

Throughout India, there are Jain temples and historical sites. This is because Jainism's impact on India has been widespread. However, if we were to visit India as a tourist, it is frustrating to find the lack of information and literature about these sites. I am quite sure that western tourists often come out of Jain temples not even knowing that they are Jain or that there is a distinct Jain tradition. Could the same happen to our grandchildren in fifty years' time? Hopefully, not. Each temple has details about its antiquity, deity, approach route and amenities for Jain pilgrims. For a Jain explorer, this is invaluable information. The beauty of this collection is its non-sectarian content and good quality research with photographs. There are detailed maps of each site, which are also a rarity in India. I often feel disappointed that very few of our youths travel to India for their holidays or gap year, and those that do, very rarely visit Jain places of worship or heritage. Goa, Kerala and exotic Mumbai seem more popular than Mt. Abu, Palitana or Shravana Belgola. We have a lot of work to do to educate young people and even their parents about the beauty of Jain heritage and the tremendous variety of its art and architecture.

All Jain libraries should obtain these copies as a minimum as they are a resource for research. The books are a compilation so they are not meant to be read cover to cover; it would be difficult to read them in that way anyway. It is best if readers try to discover information on places which are of particular interest to them and then explore around that. Scholars can use this to identify all sacred sites in a particular geographical area they are studying. Students at Jain *patshalas* can do projects based on the material here, and through the challenges they discover our heritage.

Alas, I hear you say, but there is so much to read and so little time. If so, then share a set amongst your extended family. Donate it to your local public library after you have finished. Give a set to central educational libraries like the British Library or the US Library of Congress. This would be invaluable for scholars anywhere in the world.

Reviewed by Atul Shah.

The book can be ordered by email from:
teerth_darshan@yahoo.com

Jain temple at Palitana, India

LONDON WARMS TO TALES OF GUJARATI ROOTS

Jain Spirit and an eager audience at the London School of Economics warmly welcomed Mira Kamdar, the acclaimed author of *Motiba's Tattoos*, as she launched her book in the UK on 21 October 2002. Mira had the audience enthralled as she read selected extracts from *Motiba's Tattoos*, a book which the British had already been given a taste of through its serialisation in *Jain Spirit*. The book takes the reader on a fascinating journey into the past as the author traces the history of the Gujarati side of her family, starting from the era in which her grandmother was a young girl. The curious audience, many of them members of the British Gujarati diaspora community, gladly took the opportunity to ask Mira about her bi-cultural background and the experience of going back to her Gujarati roots as she researched this book. *Jain Spirit* is pleased to report that the event was a resounding success, with rewarding interaction between Mira and the audience who also took this chance to have their own copies of *Motiba's Tattoos* signed by the author herself.

NEW ADDITIONS TO THE TEAM

Falguni Patel from Manchester has just been appointed as a Director. She brings a wealth of experience and knowledge about Indian culture and the U.K. voluntary sector. She has a Master's degree from the School of Oriental and African Studies. She has already been involved as News and Youth Editor of the magazine, and will be the Guest Editor for Issue 15, which comes out in June 2003.

James Maturin-Baird, a photographer and designer, has joined the team as freelance Photo Editor. He replaces **Alison Kent**, who did a wonderful job in improving the quality of pictures and the layout of the magazine. James is embarking on a photo tour of India in February 2003 with the Executive Editor. **Gordon Woods** continues as Graphic Designer.

SCOTLAND PROMOTES INTER-FAITH RESPECT

The campaign to promote 'Respect' among Britain's faith communities, originally launched by HRH Prince Charles in Birmingham, received a new boost in Scotland on 29 October 2002. The project was officially launched at the Signet Library in Edinburgh in the presence of Dr. Jonathan Sacks, the Chief Rabbi who spoke eloquently of the need for tolerance and respect to all peoples and cultures in today's turbulent times.

He expressed his delight at the involvement of the Jains in this campaign. His latest book, *The Dignity of Difference*, is having a significant influence on inter-faith dialogue and the importance of religion as a moral guide in today's society. Over 100 people representing a wide range of organisations attended the event, which was covered on radio and in newspapers. The Jains in the UK were represented by Dr. Atul K. Shah, Editor of *Jain Spirit*.



BUSINESS ETHICS ENCOURAGED



Nearly 300 entrepreneurs and professionals from all walks of life participated in the third annual Chopda Poojan at the Oshwal Centre in London. The event is always held on Diwali Day and there is a strong emphasis on educating participants on the meaning and significance behind this ancient ritual. Aimed at appeasing the gods to bring prosperity, it also encourages participants to elevate their life and use the prosperity for the betterment of society. Originally initiated by *Jain Spirit*, this annual event

has now become a regular feature of London's spiritual life where Young Jains and the Oshwal Association are co-partners. The Poojan was conducted and translated by Mr. Sobhag Shah. For the Chopda Poojan of 2003, book your diary for Diwali now and prepare to elevate your life! The event clearly demonstrated that when Jain culture is explained and events are professionally co-ordinated, lasting results can be achieved.

GETTING CONNECTED TO INDIAN CULTURE

Young Jains UK were one of the major participants in 'Get Connected', a high-profile extravaganza showcasing the Indian sub-continent's rich culture, lifestyle and spiritual essence, which took place on 26-27 October 2002 at London's Alexandra Palace. A group of singers from Young Jains UK performed a devotional song (*stavan*) about universal love. The song was then expanded to incorporate all faiths, in order to show the commonality between all religions. The Young Jains UK team also gave a presentation on compassion and service in the community and how these values can be put into action to make a positive difference in people's lives. If you are interested in finding out about the Young Jains UK service projects please contact Sohini Shah by e-mail on sohinshah5@yahoo.co.uk

'Get Connected' is an initiative that brings together faith-based and cultural youth groups of the Indian diaspora community in the UK, with the aim of encouraging a better understanding of Hindu and Jain spirituality as well as Indian culture amongst the people of Britain. In addition to the London event, 'Get Connected' also held a similar event to celebrate Diwali on 16

November in Birmingham, Britain's second city. The Diwali Mela in Birmingham showcased various aspects of young Indian lifestyle in Britain today. The visitors enjoyed a wide range of activities and presentations relating to meditation, yoga, Ayurveda, food, faith, culture and entertainment. The Mela was attended by Clare Short MP, the British Secretary of State for International Development.

'Get Connected' received much support from a number of faith-based organisations, and British Prime Minister Tony Blair wrote a personal letter to the organising team endorsing the initiative.



Young Jains Singers (from left to right): Anil, Adarsh, Jatin, Sohini, Punit, Kala, Jyoti, Ranjan and Sunanda

SINGING OUT FOR PEACE

www.peace-not-war.org is an international network of musicians raising funds for the global peace movement, putting music out there to inspire people towards non-violent action against the 'War on Terror'.

On 9 December 2002, the network released a double-album entitled *Peace Not War*, featuring pro-peace and anti-war songs, including contributions by top artists such as Nitin Sawhney, Public Enemy and Ms. Dynamite. Lyrics and streaming audio are being made freely available on www.peace-not-war.org. *Peace Not War* is a diverse collection of songs from different genres and cultures - mass protest is making a difference around the world and these musicians can inform and motivate people to stop the war. *Peace Not War* is available in record stores in the UK, Ireland, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, the USA and Canada. It can also be ordered from the web site. In all cases the proceeds from selling the compilation will go to the UK-based Stop the War Coalition and other peace groups internationally to fund their protests, educational and musical events.

OBITUARIES

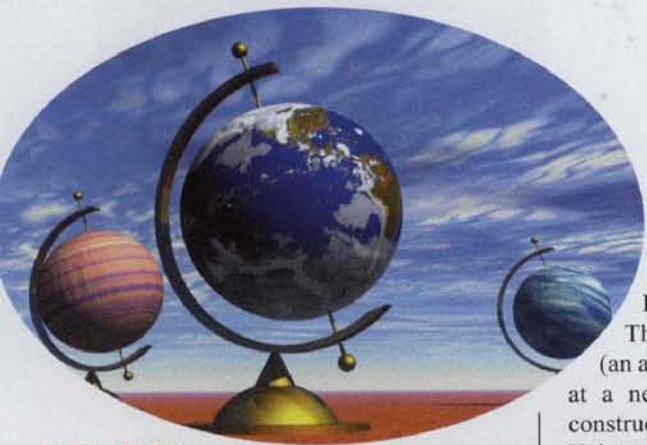
Mrs. Nayana Surendra Haria died on 30 October 2002, in London, aged 47. She was a keen student and teacher of art, especially in Rangoli, participating in demonstrations and workshops including the Victoria and Albert Museum and the British Museum in London. Nayana inspired many children through her art classes.

Mr. Chirag Chandra Shah, a highly successful young investment banker, passed away suddenly in December 2002. Thousands of people attended his memorial service. He was very well respected by young people throughout the community. His employers, Goldman Sachs expressed their appreciation for his significant contribution to the firm in a short span of time.

Mr. Babubhai Kapadia died in November 2002, in Manchester, aged 83. Babubhai was the highly respected President of Jain Samaj Manchester, and a pioneering leader who has left a great and lasting legacy to his community. He was a gentle, personable man, who led by example and will be held dearly in the memories of all who knew him.

Mr. Somchand Shah died in London in November 2002. He lived most of his life in Nairobi and was a dedicated leader and community patron, having inspired many organisations and individuals in Kenya and all over the world. He was a successful businessman, who was very religious and concerned about the spiritual upliftment of humanity.

NEWS IN



JAIN MAHA-SAMMELAN CALLS FOR UNITY AND CO-OPERATION

Rajasthan, India

A huge congregation of Jains from all the Shvetambara sects, known as a *Maha-sammelan*, was held on 27 October 2002 at Sadri in Rajasthan. The mass gathering was inspired by and held in the presence of Jain saint Acharya Shri Padma Sagar Surishwarji, who is the founder of Shri Mahavir Jain Aradhana Kendra at Kobe near Gandhinagar in Gujarat. The popular event was organised by Bharatiya Sanskriti Samanvay Sansthan, (B.S.S.S.) of Jodhpur with the objective of discussing various topical subjects such as: unity, cooperation and coordination amongst different sects, removal of social evils, stopping misleading propaganda against Jain saints, protection of Jain temples and property from attacks in various parts of the country, and development activities for people in under-developed areas. A large number of religious leaders from different parts of western Rajasthan, representatives of different Jain Trusts and temple authorities, Members of Parliament and the Legislative Assembly and Officers of Administrative Services participated in this event.

Shri Jas Raj Chopra, a retired High Court Judge, Chairman of State Consumer's Forum and also Chairman of B.S.S.S. stressed the need to establish and uphold the prestige and dignity of the Jain community. Towards this end he suggested striving for achieving greater representation of Jains in the administrative services. Shri D.R. Mehta, who was amongst the special guests invited to take part in the programme, indicated an urgent need to unite the disintegrating elements in Jain society. Shri Padam Sagarji Maharaj in his scholarly discourse said that there was no dearth of wealth within the Jain community, but there is need to spend it wisely for social causes, forgetting differences and working in unity for social development and progress.

WORLD'S LARGEST JAIN TIRTHANKARA STATUES INSTALLED AT AJMER

Rajasthan, India

The largest ever statues of ashta-dhatu (an alloy of eight metals) are being installed at a new temple complex, which is being constructed on a hill at Gyanodaya Teerth Kshetra, near Ajmer in Rajasthan. The complex covers the entire hill and a large number of pilgrims arrive there every day. It is becoming a major religious pilgrimage centre for the Jain community, especially those belonging to the Digambara Jain sect. According to the plans, the complex will consist of 24 temples, one for each Tirthankara. The images of three Tirthankaras, Shri Shanti Nath Ji, Kunthu Nath Ji and Arah Nath Ji have already been installed. They are made of ashta-dhatu and each of them is reported to weigh as much as 24 tonnes, a record figure for any metallic Jain statue in the world. The estimated cost of the entire project is said to be Rs. 25 crores.

VEGETARIANISM: THE WAY TO A HEALTHY LIFE

New Delhi, India

At a heavily attended gathering for celebrating World Vegetarianism and Animal Protection Day in New Delhi, Acharya Shri Vidyandaji of the Digambara Jain sect expressed his views on the importance of vegetarian diet and simple (sattvic) food. He said that these were necessary to maintain a healthy mind and strong body. He advocated that the 'kill and die' mindset should be replaced by 'live and let live'. Dr. D.C. Jain, Head of the Department of Neurology at Safdarjung Hospital in Delhi, said that 160 types of ailments prevalent in the world are due to the consumption of non-vegetarian food. Recent research has shown that such food is responsible for many serious diseases such as heart ailments, paralysis and cancer. Shri Ramesh Chandra, Working President of Bharatiya Gyanpeeth, stated that vegetarianism is not just a mode of eating. It is a scientific way to a healthy life and that is why more people are switching over to vegetarian food in western countries. It is painful to observe that in a country like India, which has a strong history of vegetarian culture, is now moving towards non-vegetarianism.

BAHUBALI DEVOTEES IN COLOURFUL ANNUAL CEREMONY

Shravana Belgola, India

The devotees of Bhagwan Bahubali performed the annual Mastakabhisheka ceremony with traditional fervour and splendour on 30 September 2002 in Shravana Belgola. The Mastakabhisheka at Gommatagiri is performed on an annual basis. The five-metre tall statue appears to change its colour as milk, vermilion, turmeric, tender coconut and sandalwood paste are cascaded down over it. The first round of Mastakabhisheka was followed by offerings of flowers and the statue was smeared with vermilion and turmeric. Sri Devendrakerthi Bhataraka Swamiji of Hombuja Jain Math supervised the Mastakabhisheka while the priests performed the rituals from a specially erected platform behind the statue. This holy event was witnessed by more than 6000 devotees gathered from all over Karnataka. The Swamiji called upon the gathered devotees to spread the message of Gommatesvara in particular and Jainism in general.

INTERFAITH CELEBRATION TO PROMOTE PEACE AND HUMANITY

Mumbai, India

On 2 October 2002, the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, the WJC (World Jain Confederation) held an interfaith seminar in Mumbai, India, to look at faith-inspired cures for the ills of society. The WJC's Forgiveness and Goodwill Day Celebration (Kshamapna-Sadhbhavana) was graced by eminent speakers of different faiths, including Acharya Dharmadharandhar Surishwarji, Acharya Chandana Shreeji, Bishop Thomas Dabre, Mr. Solomon Sopher, Dr. Rafiq Zakaria, Prof. Anil Sarwal and Shri Gautamji, with Shilapiji as compere. The speakers discussed spiritual wisdom from their respective faith traditions, with regard to combating violence, promoting universal tolerance and peace, and developing a global vision for social coherence.



BRIEF

Compiled by Falguni Patel

U.P. CHIEF MINISTER INAUGURATES JAIN ART GALLERY AT LUCKNOW

Lucknow, India

On the occasion of the 2600th Birth Anniversary celebrations of Bhagwan Mahavir, an exclusive Jain art gallery, Kala Veethika, was inaugurated on 25 October 2002 in the State Museum at Lucknow by the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Ms. Mayawati. Various rare collections of ancient temple architecture and other art objects are on display in the gallery. The gallery was built by the Sethi Trust, with the cooperation of Shri Bharat -Varshiya Digambara Jain (Teerth Sanrakshini) Maha Sabha and State Museum. It was inspired by Jain saint, Shri Saurabh Sagar Ji Maharaj.

JAIN PHILOSOPHY VERSUS THEORIES OF MODERN SCIENCE

The YJA (Young Jains of America) South Regional Conference that took place over Thanksgiving weekend, 29 November – 1 December 2002, was a great success. This three-day conference included several sessions exploring the themes of Jain philosophy and modern science. Samaniji Pratibha Pragya led morning yoga and meditation sessions on both Saturday and Sunday. The Houston Youth Group organized a presentation on the meaning of the Namokar Mantra. Following this session, the participants discussed why the Namokar Mantra is considered to be such a powerful prayer in Jainism. Samaniji Pratibha Pragya also led a lecture entitled "The Life of a *Shravak*." This was followed by a discussion on how every individual incorporates Jainism in their lives. The Dallas Youth Group performed a skit entitled "How the Chor Stole Diwali", based on the importance of Diwali in Jainism and why it is celebrated.

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

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.

STUDENTS COME TOGETHER TO EXPLORE JAINISM

Manchester, UK

British Jain students, keen to explore Jainism as it relates to their lives, have initiated a venture called Jain Student Network (JSN). JSN's vision is to have vibrant groups of students across the UK, building up a support base of like-minded individuals, learning to live in a non-violent way, and exploring issues relating to students. Currently, existing Jain student groups are at universities in Warwick, Leicester and Manchester, with several other locations on the horizon. For further information, contact Prakash Shah (07879 442631) or Suraj Shah (07968 910827).

BOSTON JAINS PUBLISH NEW PATSHALA RESOURCES

Boston, USA

The Jain Center of Greater Boston (JCGB) has announced the publication of two new booklets: *Jain Prarthana Book* and *Shri Samayika Sutra*. Since the inception of Jain religious classes (*patshalas*) in North America, it has been observed that the teachings of Jain prayers and *sutras* have been an extremely challenging task for young people born outside India. This has been due primarily to a lack of suitable material. After extensive efforts, JCGB has compiled these two booklets, which present this material in a simple and appealing way.

The *Jain Prarthana Book* presents many popular hymns in the original Devnagari script with transliteration and translation in English.

The *Shri Samayika Sutra* booklet provides instructions how to perform the Jain ritual of *samayika* in a simplified and step-by-step way. The *samayika* procedure and the *sutras* are easy to read and understand. In Jain traditions, *samayika* is the first and the most important duty.

The booklets are available in a package of 20 books (10 Prayer books and 10 *Shri Samayika* books). The cost is \$60.00 for a package (no cost for domestic shipment, extra cost added for overseas shipping). To order, please contact: Pankaj K. Shah (mitashah@attbi.com), 249 Hillside Ave, Needham, MA 02494, USA. Please make cheques payable to 'Kreate and Print'.

MAHAVIR FOUNDATION GRANTED PLANNING APPROVAL

London, UK

In December 2002, Vinod Kapashi, President of London's Mahavir Foundation, announced that the Foundation was granted planning permission to demolish the existing structure at its Brookshill site in north London and to build a new *shikharbandhi* (sanctified) temple and Jain Centre there instead. The Mahavir Foundation will announce the date for the inaugural ceremony shortly. It is most likely to be held on 11 May 2003.

PURE FREEDOM: THE JAIN WAY OF SELF-RELIANCE

USA

A new resource for sharing Jainism with the world has been designed, written and published in the United States for use by Jains to explain Jainism to non-Jains in America and the English-speaking world. The second edition of the pocket-size booklet *Pure Freedom: The Jain Way of Self-reliance* has just been completed and is now available for Jains worldwide to spread the philosophy and vision of Lord Mahavir to friends, neighbours and colleagues of all faiths and backgrounds. The booklet answers familiar questions, such as: Do you believe in God? Why don't you eat meat? What's the value of your philosophy, when it seems so few have heard of it? What do Jain people do, how do they live and why? Do your beliefs have anything to do with my life in the modern world? Are you like a Hindu?

This new introduction to Jainism focuses on what many curious people want to know and typically ask about. It also addresses some of the misconceptions about Jainism. For a copy of the booklet, please contact Mr. Amar Salgia at: asalgia@yahoo.com



A RARE GEM

**MRS. MANIBEN MEGHJI PETHRAJ SHAH –
18/4/1914-21/1/03**

With the death of Mrs. Maniben Meghji Pethraj Shah in London at the age of eighty-eight, Jains and Gujaratis from East Africa, UK and India, have lost a wealth of wisdom, humility and simplicity which touched the lives of thousands of people.

The wife of the eminent educator, businessman and philanthropist, Mr. Meghji Pethraj Shah, Maniben was a unique backbone to the success of the family earlier in East Africa and then later in the United Kingdom. Very few East African Jains would not have been touched by the impact of this family on their lives – whether through education, medical care, banking or community welfare. I was educated at the Maniben Meghjbhai Shah Primary School in Mombasa, which was to produce a large array of students who were to raise themselves and their community to unique professional and business heights over the coming years. This was not an exception but a rule of the family's impact in India, East Africa and UK, with their widespread philanthropy and generosity. Both Maniben and Meghjbhai devoted a considerable part of their time, energy and money on charitable projects in India, Africa and the UK. Education and medicine were dear to their hearts, and received the greatest benefits. Institutions endowed by them include colleges, hospitals, schools, libraries, hostels, old peoples homes and orphanages.

Born near Jamnagar in India, she was married to Meghjbhai at the tender age of seventeen. Meghjbhai was a school teacher from Dabasangh near Jamnagar, who emigrated to Kenya in 1919. Through sheer will and hard work and a deep wisdom, Meghjbhai established several businesses which were to flourish greatly. Today there are a large number of such successful businessmen in the community, but Meghjbhai was by far their early pioneer and role model. Behind every great man is a great woman, and Maniben was a rare gem who constantly encouraged Meghjbhai and raised the large family.

The story was not all rosy – the biggest blow of all, being the sudden death of Meghjbhai in London in July 1964. Maniben became a widow at the age of forty-nine, and became the main tower of strength for the family for the next thirty-eight years, raising her family of five daughters and two sons and many grand-children and great grand-children. Women have played a unique role in the Gujarati Asian community in East Africa and in Britain. Often playing the role of mother and house-wife, they were a source of deep inner strength and resilience for their husbands and children, giving them the ability to adapt to different environments and succeed economically. They



were reservoirs of patience, love and simplicity, rarely losing their confidence despite the hardships of raising families in foreign lands. They overcame their personal hardships through mutual support and encouragement and inner stamina and persistence.

When Maniben came to the UK in 1957, she was one of the first of the generation of East African migrants, and despite knowing little English, she raised her family, dying in the same house in Golders Green which they bought when they arrived here. Meghjbhai's sons Vipin and Anant started the Meghraj Bank, one of the first Asian banks in this country, which was to grow into a premier financial institution in London. They continued the legacy of their father by pursuing business ethically, providing quality service with the utmost respect and humility. The bank was an invaluable resource to the early Gujarati Asians in this country who had great energy and enterprise, but found barriers in raising finance for their growing businesses. Meghraj understood their needs and was able to take an interest in these enterprises at an early stage. It was this support which enabled many of them to flourish into the mature organisations that they are today.

With the death of Maniben, the East African community has lost a rare role model. Over the next ten years, most of the early pioneers of East Africa will undergo a similar fate through ageing, and the entire community will lose these unique cultural reservoirs. Maniben was very proud of her Jain roots, regularly practicing the Samayik, which gave her inner peace and strength, and enabled her to stay in touch with her Indian roots. The new generation of Jains in this country know very little about this meditation and its practice, and are losing touch with their Jain roots very fast. All this has happened in a very short span of time – no less than forty years. The Jain culture and values are very helpful keys to survival for the community in a changing world and the basic threads to their tradition and identity. The family continues to promote education and culture in this country to this day in every which way.

Atul K. Shah.

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QUOTES & QUIPS

Fight with your own self. There's no point in fighting the external foes. Difficulty lies in conquering one's own self.

Acharanga Sutra 1.5.3.45-46

Essentially there is no difference between souls, be it the soul of an elephant or of an ant.

Bhagwati Sutra 7.8

The soul is neither the body nor the mind, neither the speech nor their cause. It is also neither the doer, nor the cause of action, nor the approver of any action.

Pravachan Sutra 2.68

Just as when the water becomes clearer, one is able to view the reflection with greater clarity. So when the self becomes inspired to know the reality, one starts acquiring knowledge with greater consistency.

Avasyaka Nir yukti 1169

As the light from crores of burning lamps are of no avail to a blind person, so also the study of numerous scriptures are of no use to a person who has no character.

Avasyaka Nir yukti 98

The real can never be destroyed and the unreal is never born.

Panchastikaya 15

When the mind becomes stable like the water of a clear pond, then the reflection of the soul can be seen in it.

Tattva Sara 41

Past Karmas will definitely catch you in the future.

Sutrakrtanga Sutra 1.5.2.33

Once the seed is burnt, it does not sprout out again. So also the karmas once destroyed do not spring out back in the form of birth and death.

Dasasrutaskandha Sutra 5.7.15

None can escape the effect of their own past karmas.

Uttaradhyayana Sutra 4.3

The ascetics being noble in thought and spirit cut the tree of transmigration with the axe of meditation.

Bhava Pahuda

A wise person should reflect thus, "Mother, father, in-laws, siblings, spouses, children or relatives - none can rescue me from the afflictions caused by my own karmic deeds."

Uttaradhyayana Sutra 6.3

In this entire world there is not a single space-point where this soul has not experienced birth and death.

Bhagavati Sutra 12.7

None can carry another person's sorrows. Every being is born alone and dies alone.

Sutrakrtanga Sutra 2.1.13

I am one and alone. Nobody is mine nor do I belong to any body.

Acharanga Sutra 1.8.6

I feel no pleasure in this transitory body, which I must leave sooner or later and which is like a foam or a bubble.

Uttaradhyayana Sutra 19.14

The body is called the boat, the soul is the oarsman and the cycle of birth and death is the ocean which is crossed by the great sages.

Uttaradhyayana Sutra 23.73

He who looks at straw and gold alike is said to be truly initiated.

Bodha Pahuda 47

By adhering to the vows, even a householder can be pious.

Uttaradhyayana Sutra 5.24

Ignorant is one who thinks that he makes others sad or happy. The wise do not reflect thus.

Samaya Sara 253

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ARTICLES



A Social Revolution

Dhara Kothari reports on the origins and growth of the Jain Social Group, an International Federation founded by **C.N. Sanghavi**, which has thousands of members worldwide

ALL BIG THINGS START WITH AN IDEA...JUST A small idea, like the Eureka kind. It's as if the mind does a lot of analysis before it comes up with a solution. Sometimes it works unconsciously, sometimes after a lot of thinking. In any case, coming up with a revolutionary idea that can change the way people work or socialise is a great feeling. Something like this happened to C.N. Sanghavi, the founder president of the Jain Social Groups' International Federation. I met him at his home in Mumbai to discover the secret formula.

"The Jain Social Group (JSG) was established on 1 January 1965," said Mr. Sanghavi. "As I am a chartered accountant by profession, the founders approached me to audit their accounts from the first year. After a few years, in around 1975, the committee informed me about their indisputable decisions to make me the president of JSG. That was the only group at the time, with a hundred members. Under my presidency a few more groups were formed, as I felt expansion was necessary. These groups established in Bombay and other parts of India grew in number, upto seventeen in just a few years. I visualised more rapid expansion and as these groups were functioning independently, co-ordination was the need of the hour. We created a federation on 15 August 1980. It was the birth of the Jain Social Groups' International Federation. The rest, they say, is history. Twenty-two years later the federation has clocked in 235 groups in India and 15 abroad, covering America, Europe, Africa, Middle East and Asia with more than 70,000 members in all. Today it is the biggest single international organisation of the Jains the world over, a Jain equivalent of the Lions, Round Table or Rotary International.

The fundamental reason for establishing JSG Federation was to bring all the Jain sects on a single platform. "These groups are open to all Jains, irrespective of their sect, language or location. The unique thing about JSG is that they accept married couple members only. There are also junior groups for

youngsters, where single membership is accepted. This is to ensure that the new generation is attracted to our social groups rather than join cosmopolitan associations like Rotary, Lions and others. We also work in collaboration with organisations dealing on a similar wavelength like those promoting vegetarianism or animal welfare," explained Sanghavi.

Being a social group, one cannot expect total religiousness from the members. It's a social meeting whereby two things are achieved: firstly, a social get-together every month to enjoy an evening out and secondly, a place where social and business problems are solved. "However, we do not directly interfere in any personal or business problems. Only help them at a broad social level," stated Sanghavi. "The evening starts with a Jain dinner followed by an entertainment or light programme such as dramas, musicals, lectures, movies, picnics and so on. Special Jain programmes are organised during Jain festivals like Paryushan, Diwali and Mahavir Jayanti. The only exception under the Jain principles is that we permit dining after sunset (*Ratri Bhojan*), as it is nearly impossible to organise social activities without it. However, we do make provisions for strict followers as well," clarified Sanghavi. The events are different every month. Some groups are creative enough to take it up as a challenge to better their programme each month, to introduce something new and exciting. The choices vary from showing movies, dramas, concerts, musical shows, variety entertainment, fancy dress dances (specially during Navratri) and picnics. None of the entertaining shows are vulgar. Every group tries to arrange a trip to other parts of the country, be they pilgrimage or general tourist places. Some even organise trips abroad.

JSG is a non-profit organisation by nature. "We discourage any group from collecting reserve funds. If

there is a surplus it should be given away to the members in form of gifts at the end of the year. Therefore we advise them to donate regularly to various charitable institutes that deal with the welfare of animals, hospitals or educational institutes," explained Sanghavi. "The federation comes out with a newsletter, the *Mangalyatra*, where the activities of all groups are mentioned. In addition, news, articles, opinions and announcements of all chapters are given free to each and every member of the JSG.

Lately, there have been disputes and dissent among the older members as to the path the JSG is taking. In one instance they had to approach Acharya Chandrasekhar Vijayaji to stop a local JSG in Mumbai to go ahead with their plans for a 'Jain Prince' and 'Jain Princess' competition for youth. It was felt



C.N. Sanghavi handing over property deeds to H.H. Pramukhswami

that celebrating festivals that were inconsequential to the original aim of the social gathering would be contradictory. Also, holding programmes related to Valentine, Christmas, moonlight cruises, rain dance, etc. were looked down upon. Such activities were leading to the degradation of the Jain faith and the moral standards as well. The Acharya even demanded to get the word 'Jain' removed from JSG if they did not follow the basic code of conduct. Many have objected to the politicising of JSG as they felt that the committees were less interested in the social aspect but more in popularising themselves. Some of the rigid and illogical rules are really uncalled for. For example, on one hand they want to encourage the youngsters to join cosmopolitan associations, on the other hand they strictly refuse to permit guests, at times even the children, of the members to attend a function. In fact, the expansion has created more problems than being any real help. Another controversial fact that has come to light is allowing non-Jains to become members of the JSG. One such group is the Mumbai-South, where they have accepted Vaishnavs and Hindus in their fold. This and many other reasons have caused that JSG has lost its influential, honest Jain members who feel that the JSG has become more of an open 'mela' rather than a genuine group that should stick together under the umbrella of the federation.

"Nevertheless, it is still true to say that the Jain Social Group is one of the largest and most active non-sectarian Jain organisations in India, and it is also the largest global one of the Jains all over the world. This is a significant achievement. It is also important to remember that social events crucially bring

the community together and make them feel connected – no society can function without socialising."

C.N. Sanghavi is a man who builds associations. Born in 1926, he has the spirit of an enthusiastic teenager. Besides the JSG federation, he has been the founder president of the Indian Vegetarian Congress, Mumbai; the Shri Mahavir Jain Vidyalay Alumni Association and Federation, and the Jethpur Praja Mandal. He is also an ex-chairman of two other councils, ex-president of four more associations and vice-president of the All India Jain Shvetambara Conference. And that's not all! He is the trustee of at least twelve public charitable trusts and member of the governing bodies of another thirteen various boards. Whew! He ought to get a lifetime achievement



Waiting for the event to start

award for just having so much of patience dealing with various activities and people. He fondly quotes Samuel Johnson: "A day on which at least one new acquaintance is not made, is a day wasted."

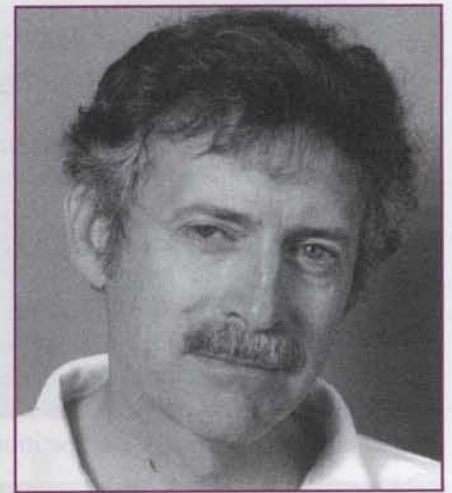
He has been conferred upon with many awards and felicitation. To name a few: Jain Ratna Award from the hands of A.B.Vajpayee in 2001; Presidential Award of JAINA, the Jain Samaj Ratna. He has also presided and co-ordinated many international conventions and conferences. Despite his paralytic attack rendering part of his body immobile, he has never stopped his enterprising activities. In 1999 he had a dream of a global federation of all Jain organisations. This idea paved the way for the formation of the World Jain Confederation. Due to his illness Dr. L.M. Singhvi was appointed as the president of the newly formed WJC. A versatile man, C.N. Sanghavi gets his satisfaction from the motto 'to love and to be loved'.

He loves to quote this verse: "Short is the life span, And far lies the gate, Hasten your steps, Before it is too late." 🙏



Dhara Kothari is a freelance writer based in Mumbai.

MODELS OF AUSTERITY AND WISDOM



Jain nuns and saints have to observe a strict ethical code where there is little room for compromise, explains **Lawrence Babb**

THE ASCETIC LIFE IS BASED ON FIVE GREAT VOWS (*mahavrats*), to which the initiates commit themselves as part of the initiation (*diksha*) process. The vows are the same for male and female ascetics. They are mostly negative – that is, they are vows not to do a given thing – and apply to three modes and at three levels of action. The actions in question must not be done with mind (*man*), speech (*vacan*) or body (*sarir*). Moreover, monks must vow not to do them (*karna*), not to cause them to be done (*karvana*) and not to admire their being done (*anumodan karna*).

The first and in many ways the most important vow is *ahimsa*, which is the vow not to harm any living thing. Jain laity are also required to avoid harming life forms but the ascetic's vow is more inclusive, extending even to one-sensed beings. Many of the most conspicuous features of ascetic life are shaped by this requirement. Ascetics drink only boiled water so as to avoid harming small forms of life that would otherwise be present. Their food must be carefully inspected to be sure that it is free of small creatures. They must avoid walking on ground where there might be growing things, and they do not bathe so as not to harm minute forms of water-borne life. An ascetic carries a small broom (*ogha*) with which to brush aside small forms of life before sitting or lying down. He or she also carries and in the case of *Shthanakvasis* and *Terapanthis* permanently wears a mouth-cloth (*muhpatti*) with which to protect small forms of life in the air from one's hot breath. They may not use fire. They may not fan themselves lest harm come to airborne life. Although they are permitted to sing (and do so during rituals), they are not permitted to clap or count rhythm on their knees because of the

potential lethality of the percussions. They may not use any artificial means of conveyance. This list of prohibitions could be greatly extended.

The vow of *ahimsa* is the basis of the four-month rainy season retreat (*chaturmas* or *chomasu*), which begins at the very end of the lunar month of *Sravan* (July-August). One of the most important requirements of the ascetic life is movement. Ideally, ascetics travelling in groups of at least two should never spend more than a few days at a given

place. During the four rainy season months however, ascetics must establish semi-permanent residence in one place – the basic idea being that travel would endanger the many growing things that flourish on the ground during the rains. The practice plays an important role in reinforcing the ties between laity and ascetics. Resident ascetics give daily sermons and exercise a more than ordinary influence on the community, so the rainy season retreat

is a season of enhanced piety among lay Jains. Local communities are eager to invite particularly distinguished or charismatic ascetics to spend their rainy season retreats among them, and arrangements are often made years in advance.

The period of the rainy season retreat is the most important of the Jain ceremonial year. During this period there are two ascetically-oriented annual observances. One is the eight-day period of *Paryushan*, the most solemn occasion of the Jain year. It is an occasion for extensive sermonising by ascetics, for fasting and the performance of the confessional rite of *pratikraman* by laypersons. The

“One of the most important requirements of ascetic life is movement.”

high point of Paryushan is the public recitation of the *Kalpasutra* (see Vinaya Sagar 1984) by ascetics and the climax of the recitation is a dramatisation of the fourteen dreams seen by Mahavir's mother at the time of his conception as described in the text. Also occurring during the retreat period is a special fast, the *navpad oli*. It centres on nine days of fasting coordinated with the worship of the nine positions of the *siddhachakra* figure.

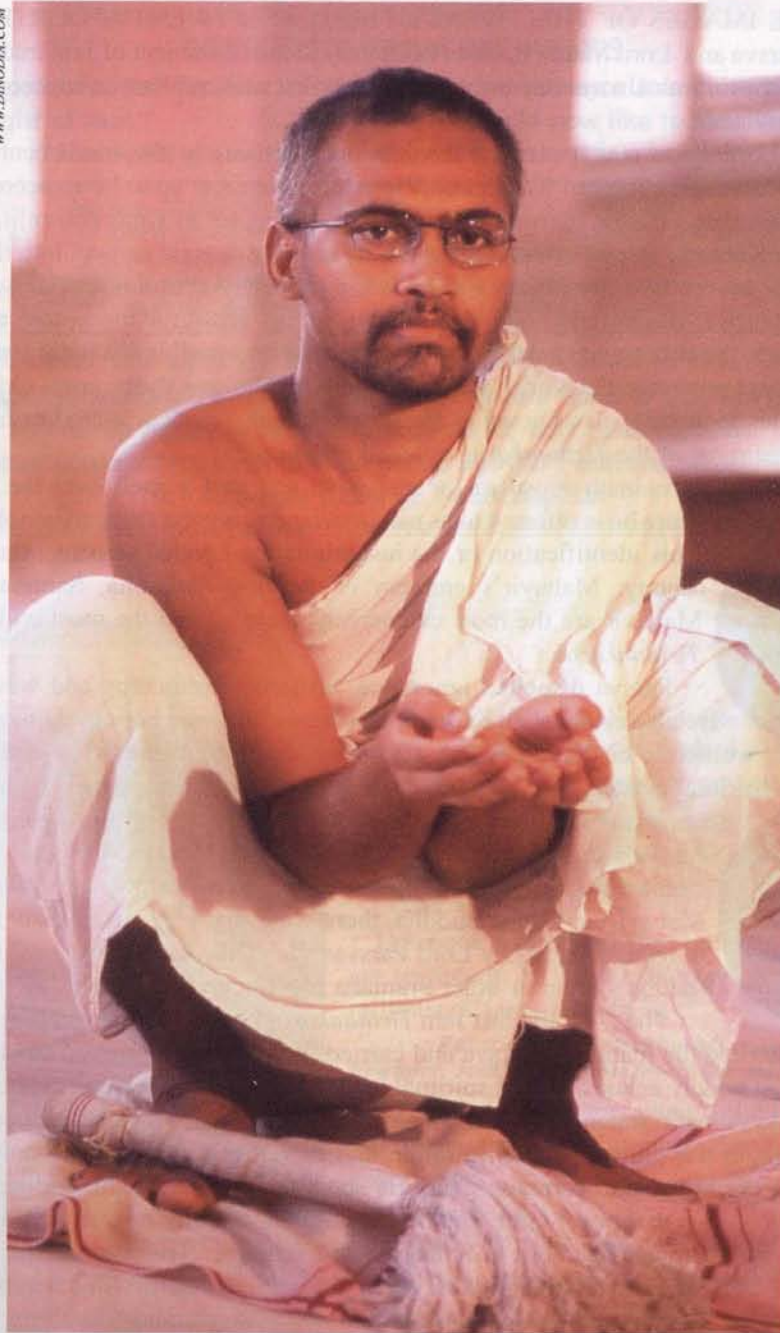
The second vow is *satya*: to tell the truth. The third is *asteya*: not to take what is not freely given. The fourth, *brahmacharya*, is a vow of complete celibacy. An important implication of the vow of celibacy is that there should be no physical contact between an ascetic and a member of the opposite sex. This requirement extends even to animals of the opposite sex. Indirect contact is also barred: an ascetic should not touch an object that is being touched by a member of the opposite sex. Thus, if a man wishes to give a book to a nun, he must first place it on a neutral surface, after which she will pick it up.

The fifth and final vow, *aparigraha*, is that of non-possession. The importance of this vow in regulating ascetic behaviour is exceeded only by the vow of *ahimsa*. This vow is the basis of the peripatetic ascetic life; constant movement ensures that there can be no attachment to a particular place. Ascetics may own nothing. They do, however, carry some items. Shvetambara ascetics wear clothing, and they also carry certain paraphernalia such as their staffs, brooms, mouth-cloths, the special ritual devices used while preaching *sthapanacarya*, the receptacles for collecting food and personally needed items like eyeglasses. They may not, under any circumstances, handle

money. Some ascetics, however, control quite large sums because of their influence on the wealthy laity. Ascetics can even be involved in property transactions while nonetheless adhering to the letter of non-possession. On one occasion in Jaipur I saw an ascetic 'purchase' some carved religious objects intended for display in a museum he was promoting. Money actually changed hands but it was not touched by

either of the ascetics who were present. Instead it was counted out and given to the seller by a 'servant' who accompanied these monks on their travels carrying money and other items.

The vow of non-possession has extremely important implications for the ritual culture of the Shvetambara Jains. Ascetics cannot perform worship that involves any physical offerings, although they can engage in mental forms of worship. This is because, having taken the vow of non-possession, they have nothing to offer. In major rites of worship such as Parshanath's five *kalyanak-pooja*, ascetics frequently sing the Sanskrit verse coming before the offering formula, but they cannot repeat the offering formula itself, which will be presented by a lay worshipper. Their singing of the verse is a concession to their supposed knowledge of Sanskrit, but the offering formula is off-limits because of their inability to make offerings. 🙏



Sadhu demonstrates the Guru Vandana (obeisance to Gurus)

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.

Masters Of Truth

L. M. Singhvi examines the lives and contributions of the last two *Tirthankaras*, Parsva and Mahavir

THE IMAGES OF THE TWENTY-THIRD AND TWENTY-FOURTH *TIRTHANKARAS*, LORD Parsva and Lord Mahavir, shine brilliantly in the firmament of Jain tradition. The historicity of Lord Mahavir was always beyond question but that of Lord Parsva was conclusively established by Dr. Herman Jacobi.

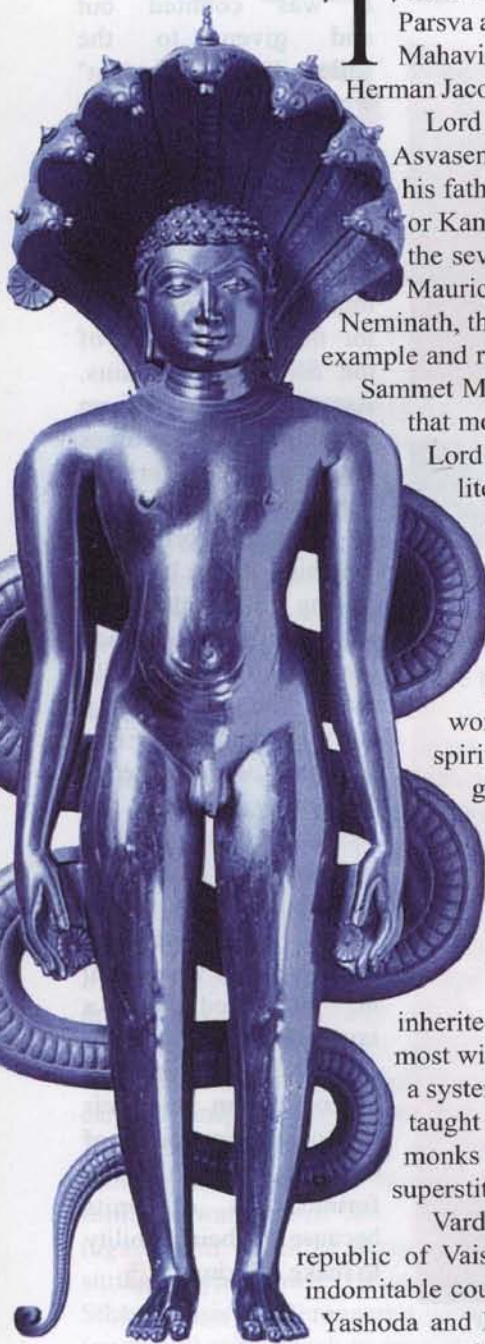
Lord Parsvanath was born in Kashi (Varanasi) in the ninth century BC. His parents were Asvasena, the ruler of Kashi, and Vamadevi. He grew up to be an accomplished prince and to fulfil his father's desire, married Prabhavati, the daughter of King Prasenjit. He made an ascetic, Katha or Kamath, see the error of his ways, as he threw a great serpent into the fire-pan while performing the severe five fire penance (*panchagni tapas*). According to *Parsvanathacharita*, translated by Maurice Bloomfield, one day in the spring season Parsva saw a picture of Aristanemi (or Neminath, the twenty-second *Tirthankara*) painted on a wall in his palace and was inspired to follow his example and renounce the world, which he did when he was thirty years old. He attained *nirvana* at the Sammet Mountain, also known as Parsavanath Hill, which is sacred to Jains. It is at Parsvanath Hill that most of the *Tirthankaras* attained *nirvana*.

Lord Parsvanath travelled far and wide and cast a spell over the people of India. In Prakrit literature he is referred to as *purushadaniya*, a great man, an ennobled exemplar. The hallmark of his identification or his insignia is the hooded serpent. Rshabha's insignia is the royal canopy; Mahavir's emblem is the lion. Rshabha, Santinatha, Neminath, Parsva and Mahavir are the most extensively sculpted and the most widely idolised and worshipped *Tirthankaras*.

Parsva dispelled ignorance, resisted priestocracy and was opposed to ritual violence. He also established a *sangha*, a system followed both by Jains and Buddhists. He permitted women to be given *diksha*. The Aryans as well as the tribal people acclaimed Parsva as their spiritual master. His teachings held sway in his time and he became the living legacy for future generations for many centuries. Lord Mahavir and Lord Buddha were both heirs to Lord Parsva's legacy. Emperor Chandragupta Maurya, the grandfather of Ashoka the Great, became a Jain monk. Emperor Kharvela of Kalinga was a Jain. During the time of Lord Mahavir and Lord Buddha, there were many Sramana monks who belonged to the order, *sangha*, founded by Lord Parsvanath. They eventually joined Lord Mahavir's order, Lord Buddha's order or other Sramana proponents.

The 24th and last Jain *Tirthankara*, Lord Mahavir was born in the sixth century BC. He inherited the mantle of Parsva and carried forward the revolution of ideas that had made Parsva the most widely acknowledged spiritual leader of his time. He consolidated the Sramana doctrines into a systematic statement of philosophy and ethics and the art and science of life. Parsva and Mahavir taught the philosophy of optimum and incremental *ahimsa* not only to those who had become monks but also to common men. He sought to emancipate the Indian society from the shackles of superstition and priest craft, and proclaimed the equality of men and women.

Vardhamana was born to Sidhartha and Trishala. Trishala was the sister of Chetak, head of the republic of Vaishali. Vardhamana was given the appellation of Mahavir because of his steadfast and indomitable courage and determination. According to Shvetambara tradition, Vardhamana was married to Yashoda and had a daughter named Priyadarshina. According to Digambara tradition, he remained a bachelor. He was 28 years old when his parents passed away. At that stage, he wanted to become a Sramana, but his elder brother, Nandi-Vardhana persuaded him to postpone his renunciation for two years. He left his home and became a Sramana at the age of 30. After deep meditation, severe penance and many trials and tribulations, Vardhamana Mahavir attained enlightenment (*kaivalya*) in the seventh month of the thirteenth year of his



*Parshvanatha, 12th century,
in collection of
Victoria and Albert Museum,
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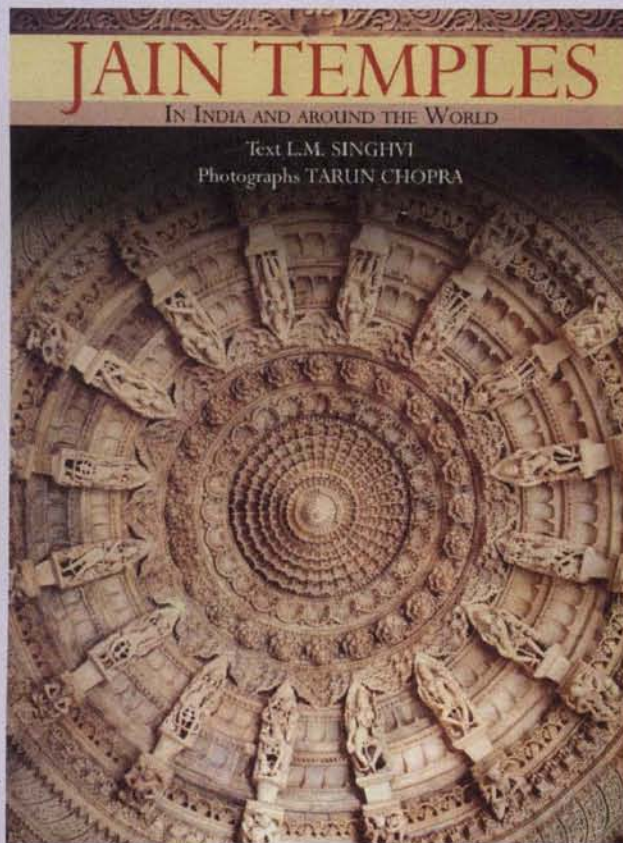
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Motiba Challenged Gandhiji

Mira Kamdar continues her award-winning story of a strong and resilient grandmother

IN ADDITION TO FINDING HERSELF MARRIED TO A man who spurned all physical pleasure, Motiba experienced a distinct and sharp decline in lifestyle. She had been raised in

the lap of luxury, with an army of servants and attendants to look after her every need. She was used to wearing fine clothes and costly jewels, and had never had to cook, clean, or otherwise help around the house. In the much more modest Kamdar home, the cooking and many of the other household tasks were done by the women of the family. This included physically demanding chores, such as fetching water from the river. Today, the river in Jetpur is so incredibly filthy and polluted, it is hard to imagine it as anything but the open sewer and toxic waste dump it has become. In 1924, however, decades before the town would experience a boom in the textile-dyeing business that would destroy its ecology, it must have been much cleaner, for my grandmother and her then nine-year-old sister-in-law, my Jasiphaiba, used to fetch water from it every day. Jasiphaiba told me that they would always take a certain path that was rather steep in parts, requiring them to hike

up their *saris* and tuck them in so as not to trip over them. When they reached the river, they would again adjust their *saris* so they wouldn't get wet as they waded out a bit where the current ran faster and where, they believed, the water was cleaner. They would take the clay water jars, dip them in the water, and slosh them back and forth to clear the surface of any debris, then fill them, lift them up upon their heads, and turn back to make the return trip. I can imagine my beautiful grandmother with her lithe young legs sparkling with damp as she stepped out of the river and

began her way up the dirt path towards the town, letting her *sari* down as soon as it was practical with one hand as the other steadied the heavy jar on her head. Most of the year, it would

have been so hot and dry that a trip to fetch water with the inevitability of getting somewhat wet would have been a welcome errand.

Jasiphaiba, who lived with my grandmother during those early years of marriage at her in-laws' house, confirms the legend of my grandmother's saintly demeanour under all the circumstances. Apparently, Motiba never once uttered the smallest complaint, never gave the slightest sign that she was unhappy about any of the changes in her life. Like an Indian version of Snow White, so noble was the character of the beautiful and rich young Motiba that she smilingly went about performing tasks of household drudgery that were clearly below her station to which she'd been born. After all, it was her 'duty' to do so. It was her fate to go to her husband's house, even if her husband wanted nothing to do with her. A vow of celibacy on



Gandhiji marching to Dandi

the part of one of the partners in a marriage on the day of the wedding would be grounds for annulment in most cultures. But not in India. Even today, when divorce has begun to make a hesitant and very recent inroad on tradition, marriages are generally considered unsunderable, no matter the circumstances.

Motiba's new husband was never an easy man to live with. He later became a patriarch whose grown children tremble in fear whenever he called them. Bapuji always



Mira Kamdar at The London School of Economics

kept aloof from the rest of the family, with the exception of any small children who happened to be about, on whom he doted. If there was a sticky matter to be put before him, my slight grandmother would be sent into the room where Bapuji spent his days listening importantly to the BBC and the *Voice of America*. She was the only one who was not afraid to confront him. I remember very starkly the night I awoke at the age of nine in darkness and in fear to feel the whole apartment in Bombay shaking violently, a thunderous roar drowning out all but the piercing screams coming from my own throat. I saw my grandfather standing in the frame of our bedroom door and instantly thought he had become so angry about something that, all-powerful as I believed him to be, he had seized hold of the house in rage. In fact, we were in the throws of a devastating earthquake in which thousands perished. My grandfather was bracing himself in the doorframe so as not to fall, and had come to warn us or help us. But this was only clear to me later, after the dust had settled, and that eerie post-earthquake silence had begun to be broken by the sounds of quiet weeping and of people finding each other safe in the shattered night.

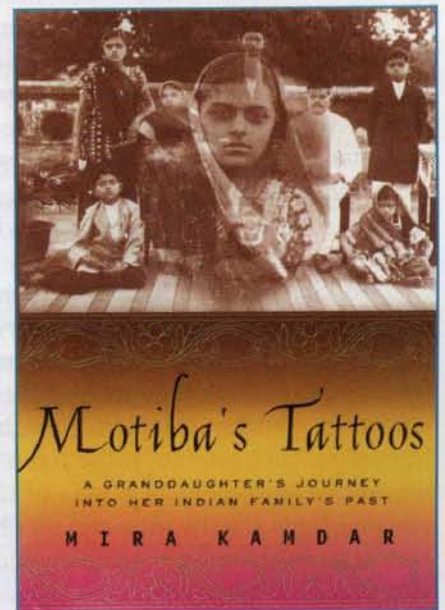
Just what Bapuji's mother and wife thought of Gandhi and his ascetic philosophy is unclear. It is evident, however, that the women were not prepared to share Gandhi's views on *brahmacharya*, sexual abstinence, and they resolved to challenge him on this point directly. Many, the story goes, invited Mahatma for an audience during his passage through the region in early 1930. This can only have taken place, as far as I can figure, during Gandhi's famous march to the shore of Dandi to gather salt in violation of the British prohibition against the manufacture of salt in India. Gandhi came to meet the Kamdar ladies. He found himself confronted by an angry mother-in-law and a young bride seated cross-legged before him, *saris* pulled over heads, Motiba's countenance demurely

downcast. "Why are you doing this?" asked my great-grandmother getting right to the point, referring to the celibacy vow he'd imposed on his disciples. "Madam, I am doing this for freedom, for our liberty," he replied. "I don't know what freedom is," answered the old woman, "but I do know that you are ruining this girl's life. She is nothing better than a widow!" This was a serious accusation. Anyone who knows anything about India knows that there is no fate worse than that of a widow. A widow is worse than dead, in fact the best thing she can do for herself and her family is to die. If she must live, then she must live as if she were dead: shave her head, break her ornaments, dress in rags, work as a domestic slave for the favour of continuing to be fed. No wonder some widows have preferred *sati*, self-immolation, to life. Upon hearing the women's complaint, Gandhi recognised that the celibacy vow must, indeed, be causing hardship for his married followers' wives. He rescinded it. My grandfather performed his marital duty and my father was conceived, the first of six children. Five survived.

Family legend has it that Motiba, the seemingly demure bride, is the one who put her mother-in-law up to admonishing the Mahatma. Modest appearances concealed a will of iron. It is one of the many paradoxes of Indian life that women can be formally rendered powerless by the official patriarchy, yet dominate behind the scenes. Mothers, particularly of grown sons, are, in fact, allowed a great deal of freedom and accorded genuine respect and authority. A mother can act openly where a young bride does better to hide her true motives. In any case, this fantastic story of my father's coming into the world is the story of a confrontation between the world of women and the world of men, between the world of the home and the world of politics; a story in which the masculine spheres of the secular and the civic are vanquished by the feminine realms of seduction and practical home management. 🙏

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Mira Kamdar is a Senior Fellow at the World Policy Institute and a regular broadcaster on Los Angeles radio. The book is available worldwide from Amazon.



Sculptors Reveal Inner Beauty



Sudha Seshadri analyses the subtlety and patronage of sculpture

THE ADI PURANA RECOUNTS THAT AS conditions on earth became increasingly difficult, Rshabha taught the people the skills of survival such as agriculture and commerce, and he also taught them handicrafts – the arts of sculpture, painting and architecture. Further, when Rshabha attained *kevala-jnana*, Indra, aided by the other gods, prepared the *samavasarana* for his first discourse.” writes Saryu Doshi in *Masterpieces of Jain Painting*.

In India, expressions of the soul have always been and are integral to existence. From pre-historic to present times our thoughts and emotions have found expression in sculpture, wall paintings, bronzes, clay images and manuscript illustrations.

Historically, the earliest examples of Jain images are from the Mauryan period dating upto the 3rd century BC. The headless torsos, found at Lohanipur near Patna, have the polished surface that the Mauryan period (c. 475-220 BC) is renowned for. In architecture, the earliest examples of rock-cut architecture are found in the granite hills of Barabar and Nagarjuni, where there are seven cave temples, built as retreats for Jain monks in the rainy season. One of the caves was a donation made by the Emperor Ashoka himself.

From the Mauryan period until the present times, one is able to study and enjoy the images of *Tirthankaras*, yakshas, yakshinis, vidyadevis, dikpalas and other gods and goddesses as well as celestial dancers and musicians. These images are not static - they convey to the viewer the very essence of what they represent. Hence, the image of a seated *Tirthankara* with hands folded and eyes half-closed, portrays a being who ‘has looked within himself, is at peace and has achieved both enlightenment and liberation. He will help his followers to cross the ford of life.’ In contrast, the image of Indra or a celestial dancer will be infused with life, it will have an earthliness trapped within itself.

Working in stone, marble or bronze, the artisans were able to infuse life into the images they carved. They worked to a set precept and followed the instructions laid out in the *shilpa* texts. In their work they were guided not only by the master-craftsmen who headed their guild but by a monk who was learned in iconography. If the figure was that of Ambika, she would be shown holding a twig of the mango tree with fruits hanging from it and with a child on her lap. If the image was that of Jivantaswami, a representation of Mahavir before he renounced the world, then the artist would show him as a prince

wearing a cylindrical crown and jewels. Images of Rshabha or Adinatha always have ‘hair-locks’ on the shoulders. One will also find that images of the *Tirthankaras* are always made with the *mahapurusha lakshanas*, the distinguishing features of great men who have long arms with palms reaching the knees, long ear lobes, and arched eyebrows. Since ancient times in India, detailed texts were written describing how an image was to be made and what were the characteristics to be conveyed while making an image of a prince or a religious preceptor. This knowledge was passed down through generations more often than not from father to son through the oral tradition.

Who patronised the making of the images? History records that rulers of the Maurya, Gupta and subsequent periods were great patrons of art. Even if they were not Jains, donations were made by them. Inscriptions on the images as well as on the walls of the shrines are the records of donations, and we find that donations were not only made by rulers and members of their court but also by merchants, nuns, householders, dancing girls, as well as potters, smiths and others. It was believed that donating images and painted manuscripts or giving monies towards building a temple would result in religious merit. For example, the world-renowned temple of Ranakpur was built by Dharna Sah, a wealthy merchant and the chief minister of Mewar. A pious man, he followed the teachings of the Jain monk, Shri Somasundara Suri. The temple he had built is a transformation into reality of a celestial vehicle that he saw in a dream. A long dedicatory inscription in the temple records has details of the donor and his donations.

An inscription on a bronze image of Sarasvati, from Akota, of the 7th century says: ‘Ganini Isiya made this pious gift in the Nivrutti Kula.’ Sarasvati, the goddess of learning is worshipped by the Hindus, Buddhists and Jains. In Jainism she presides over the preachings of the *Tirthankaras* and is a part of the group of sixteen *vidyadevis*. Similarly, at Shravana Belgola in Karnataka, Mangayi Basti was built in 1325 by a royal dancing girl, while the central image of Shantinatha housed within the shrine was donated by Bhimadevi, the wife of Devaraya, the Vijayanagara ruler.

The guilds did not only make images, they also carved decorations on pillars, ceilings and door jambs. At

Ranakpur and Abu the decorations in marble are like filigree lace. Creepers, animal motifs, narrative panels, ceilings with a hanging lotus surrounded by musicians and dancers all capture the attention of the viewers. The halls (*mandapas*) are profusely decorated and each of them lead to the inner sanctum where the seated *Tirthankara* invites you to tread the right path.

In most cases, the artists or architects cannot be identified as they have left no record of who they were or what work they did. Sometimes, like in Karnataka, there are inscriptions that include the names of the engraver of the inscription as also that of the sculptor. For example, on a *nishidhi* at Shravana Belgola

embellished with sculptures and decorations. They were placed in the sanctum-sanctorum of the shrines together with the image of the *Tirthankara*, the one who would show them the path to salvation. 🙏

Sudha Shesadri writes for the eminent journal of Indian art 'Marg'. She is a freelance writer based in India.

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Gupta Period Digambara Jina



Sculpture and pillar decoration, Ranakpur



Celestial dancer, Ranakpur



Filigree work, Dilwara, Mt. Abu

the inscription reads: 'The writer of the inscription was *pargade* Chavaraja, a lay disciple of Prabhachandrasiddhantadeva and the sculptor Hoysalachari's son, Vardhamanachari, an ornament on the forehead of titled sculptors.' Sometimes the inscriptions listed the varied abilities of the artist, like an inscription from 1116: 'Expert in craftsmanship in gold work, metal work, stone work, jewel work, wood work, painting, palm-leaf work and iconographic art.' At Ranakpur, the architect Depaka is not only mentioned in an inscription but portrayed on a pillar in the *meghanada mandapa*. Thus, importance was given not just to the donor but to the religious preceptor, the local rulers, as also the artist and architect.

In many monuments in India, one will observe images of donors with hands folded in the *anjali mudra*, placed in the hallways or entrances to the shrines. At Abu, Ranakpur and other shrines one sees donor figures – these are of course not portraits of the donors themselves but representations. The earliest mention occurs in a legend which mentions that: 'Bharata, the son of Rshabha built a temple at Mount Shatrunjaya enshrining an image of his father. In this shrine he is said to have placed a portrait figure of himself standing with hands folded, in front of the image of Rshabha.'

Just as in the Hindu and Buddhist traditions, the Jains also built shrines, caves as well as structural temples, that were

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OPEN YOUR EYES TO THE WORLD

In conversation with *Jain Spirit*, **Anup Shah** talks about the motivation behind his web site www.globalissues.org

By profession, Anup Shah is a software engineer and consultant, a full-time career in itself. Around five years ago, he also established his own web site, www.globalissues.org, which explores inter-related issues such as social justice, the environment, geopolitics and poverty amongst others. Although developing and maintaining this highly informative and thought-provoking web site is almost another full-time job, Anup does not ask for payment or funding for this valuable work. He does it all in his spare time, often

reading and learning more about poverty, social justice, development and politics. After graduating, he moved to the U.S.A for work, at which time he decided to improve his web development skills: he actually only started the Global Issues web site to practise these skills and to frame his growing interest in the issues first introduced to him by this university friend of his, unaware that it would grow the way it has.

In exploring these global issues, Anup felt he wanted to write about them: "That was the only way I knew how to shout out: 'Hey, look what's going on around the world.'" Evidently, Anup is doing an excellent job of reaching people: the Global Issues web site currently has 5000 to 6000 visitors a day, and is cited on university reading lists as well as major newspapers, social justice- and development-related web sites.

As he pursued his quest to understand global issues better, Anup realised that even in the most democratic countries such as the U.S.A, the perspectives on many important issues offered by mainstream media was narrow and very limited. He found this disturbing because, as he states on his web site, he believes that: "Constructive criticism and debate should be a necessary part in the development and continual improvement process in all of us so that we can always evaluate ourselves as individuals, collective peoples and societies. This helps avoid stagnation, complacency and blind conformity, while enhancing democracy and diversity."

Now, through his own web site, Anup tries to present different perspectives from different sources: from the third world and from lesser-known individuals and organisations, not just the BBCs and CNNs of this world. The Global Issues web site has over 5000 links because Anup is keen that visitors are not "...stuck on my web site. I want them to go elsewhere, to other web sites. I want people to see that it's not just me saying this, there are many people out there saying it with far more research and detail than I am, and I want them to make their own decisions."

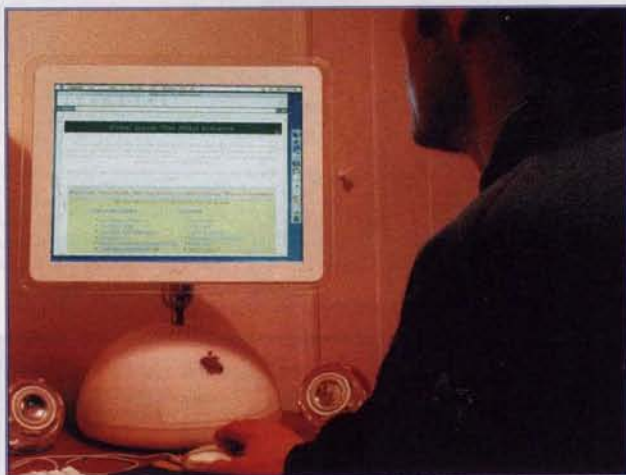
Anup feels that some of his concerns for social justice come from a background of Jainism, through his parents. He feels that Jainism offers a valuable framework for understanding social justice. In particular, he finds inspiration in the idea of non-violence.

"People are working hard, sacrificing their own lives in various ways to fight for what they believe in. We've heard stories of famous people like Mahatma Gandhi or Martin Luther King and others, but there are so many of those types of people in the world today that don't get a voice. To be honest, I feel they are the ones doing the hard work. All I'm doing is reading their stuff and trying to put it together in a different way, and at the same time it helps me see the world in another way. Maybe I can use my skills in this way to give back the things I've received through reading from other people's sweat and blood." 🙏

Anup Shah is a Senior Software Consultant, and lives in London.



JAMES MATURIN-BARD



Checking out www.globalissues.org

staying up into the early hours to work on the site, driven by eagerness to understand the world better.

Anup's interest in global issues was first sparked by a conversation about careers with a university friend. His friend was adamant that he could never work in the defence industry because 'whatever you do, you're building systems that kill people', an argument to which Anup had no answer. Anup recalls that the conversation then turned to the question of world poverty, and his friend told him about some of the shocking social injustices in poor countries. That conversation drove Anup to start

YOU NEVER STEP INTO THE SAME RIVER TWICE

Inspired by his baby niece, **Rupesh Shah** invites you to conduct an experiment in self-reflection, which is an important element in walking the Jain path of spiritual progression.

In the last 18 months my sister has blessed our family with a baby girl. One of the many things that my niece has demonstrated to me is how to live with doubt, uncertainty and novelty - and how to do this by being open to learning about oneself through experimentation.

Although she cannot yet talk, she always seems to be asking the world 'questions' about what is going on around her. From the occasionally painful experiments that she conducts with her body in order to learn about gravity, to the new ways she conjures up to play around with mum and dad, she seems to be always approaching her world with a question mark in her mouth. As she conducts these investigations, she is increasing her awareness of her 'self' and her relationships with the world around her.

In contrast, I've noticed that it is very hard for me to keep myself open to change. I tend to get stuck in my peculiar ways of acting and reacting. Heraclitus, the ancient Greek philosopher said "you can never step into the same river twice", the idea being that a river is in continuous flow and therefore from one millisecond to the next is a different, and hence 'new', river.

The metaphor reminds me that I tend to focus on the apparently neat shape and form that my life exhibits. In the same way that a map allows me to perceive a river as a static thing surrounded by other static objects, my everyday brain finds it easier to concentrate upon the seemingly unmoving aspects of my relationships with others and of my own actions.

However, the changing river metaphor hints that it is also possible to

regard our lives as being in continuous flow. I think this view opens up some wonderful opportunities for difference, discovery and change.



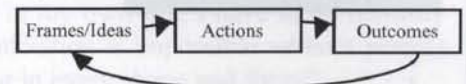
We should stay open to new ideas and beliefs

So I wonder if we can ask questions more often? Can we wonder about our relationships with one another, the non-human environment and the universe? Can we question whether our actions match our own expectations and values?

I find slowing down difficult enough and finding good space to develop this self-reflection is tricky in a world that moves so rapidly. However, there are techniques and tools that we can use to open ourselves up to change.

One of these simple techniques is to merely try to notice the ways that we understand the world. For instance, on occasion I try to increase my attention towards the ways in which I frame things. These 'frames of reference' can be huge things like 'gravity works on everything' or 'a woman's place is in the kitchen' or something small like 'I don't like green vegetables'. Whilst on the one hand frames are important for allowing us to make sense of our worlds, they can also restrict the way

we perceive things. The following diagram seeks to describe how.



The diagram suggests that whenever we do something, our actions are based upon the ways that we think about, understand or 'frame' the world. Our actions lead to certain outcomes, which we use to inform our ideas about how the world works. Importantly, we tend to interpret the outcomes in ways that confirm our initial ideas and frames.

So for example, if I have a frame of reference, which is 'my friends are neglecting me', then this frame will tend to affect the actions and language I use and lead to certain outcomes - perhaps a decision to not meet up. Unless I increase my attention to my frames, I'll tend to interpret this outcome in a way that confirms my original frame.

The model can also help us to slow down and investigate ourselves. Perhaps you could conduct a little experiment sometime this week (in honour of my niece and the flowing river). Try to notice one instance in which your original ideas or frames have affected the way you have acted towards someone or something. You don't need to do anything else - just try to notice the event - either whilst it is happening or afterwards - and see what happens. 🙏

Rupesh Shah conducts experiments in ecologically grounded and people-centred forms of development through research, education and activism. He can be contacted at rupesh99@fsmail.net

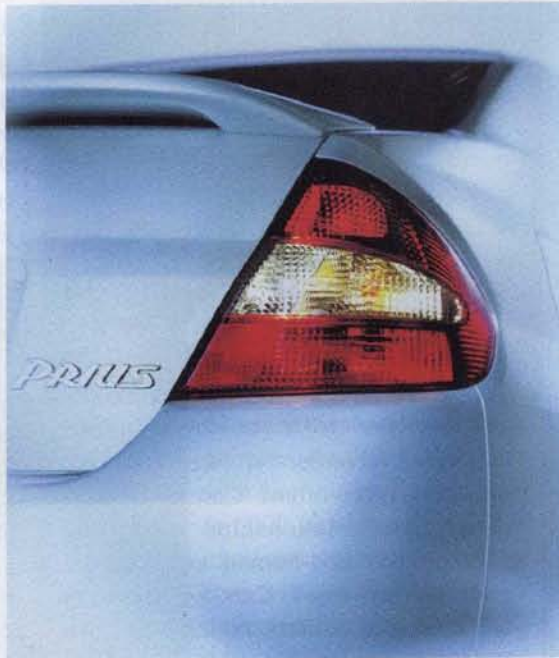


Vote With Your Pocket

Raju Shah emphasizes how our purchases can make a difference to the world

A basic Jain concept I learned a long time ago was that every action, no matter how small, is significant. Whenever I picked up a worm on the sidewalk after rainfall, it was no problem to me that it didn't make a 'significant' difference because I knew it did make a difference to that worm. Every time I avoid eating an animal product there is an animal somewhere that didn't have to suffer because of me. But the avoidance of violence is not just limited to those actions where we can see the direct outcome. We are increasingly oblivious of the significance of many of our other actions.

Most of us live in a society where an automobile is indispensable. Yet do we really consider all the options when we purchase a new car? Examining the car as a member of the environment, it is easy to see its destructive nature – it consumes vast quantities of gasoline (which goes through an earth-damaging process of refinement) and produces vast quantities of harmful gases. When I was in a position to purchase a vehicle I weighed up all the options and decided to buy a Prius, Toyota's Hybrid vehicle. Hybrid vehicles produce up to 90% less emission than a similar-sized normal vehicle. The California Air Resources Board's website lists the Prius as 90% cleaner than the average new 2002 model car. They also tend to have much higher mileage rates - I consistently get around 50 miles to the



Raju's choice of environment-friendly transport

gallon. It may not have been the cheapest option, but given that it performs well and is less damaging to the environment, I believe that it is extremely cost effective.

This was a large purchase and one does not make large purchases like this very often; but I also try to put smaller purchases in line with my thinking. For instance, I enjoy taking photos but camera films are made with gelatin, which is derived from animals. That is why I switched to a digital camera, thus virtually eliminating the continual use of gelatin. Although this is not a cheap option, it does provide good value for money: with a digital camera you can have digital photo albums,

thereby cutting the continual costs of buying and developing films and distributing photographs. Again, this is a one-off purchase. What about regular transactions? Well, I eat everyday and I frequently eat out. I have been to many different restaurants and I have found one universal truth: food from an all-vegetarian establishment tastes better. I think it has to do with the love that cooks have, and the vegetarian chefs seem to have more passion for their job. I always opt to go to a pure vegetarian restaurant if possible. I believe that I am supporting an establishment that does not participate in the sale of dead bodies as food, and I get an excellent meal – a win-win situation. Even my meat-eating friends enjoy the food more at the vegetarian restaurants.

These are just a few actions of many that allow me to vote with my dollar. I would be the first to state that I have not yet made every change to my life style that I would like to – but I do my best. I try to put the ethical beliefs that many of us share into practice, because I think I can make a real difference to the world in this manner. If we all try to practise our ethical beliefs, imagine what a great difference we could make! 🙏

Raju Shah is a young Jain, committed to living more ethically. For others interested in putting their ethics into practice, he recommends www.vegan.com for ideas and information.

arguments of compassion, and non-violence to mask his own fears. Is there any virtue in his state of mind? The greatest proponent of non-violence, Gandhiji himself said, "I don't like the non-violence of the coward. Non-violence of the brave alone is non-violence." We must not behave like cowards in the name of non-violence, for this is not non-violence at all." The Jain definition of *ahimsa* not only means non-violence to others, but more so it refers to refraining from action that will harm oneself, that will hinder our soul's ability to attain liberation. By our own definitions of *ahimsa*, being afraid like Arjuna was, and getting into a nervous state, is being violent to our own souls. There is a great universality in Arjuna's situation, as we all have our own struggles to face. Krsna's message is not violent - he is simply inspiring us to be brave, and face our own difficulties courageously, in a way that increases *dharma* in the world. Krsna reminds us of the difference between non-violence and unqualified pacifism, and that to be truly non-violent we must also be brave. Strength and compassion are two sides of the same coin; the twenty-fourth Jain *Tirthankara* Mahavira, whose name literally means 'very brave' perfectly exemplifies these two virtues.

The poet's war-like illustration can also be taken as a metaphor. The human body and mind is a constant battle field, between right and wrong. In many ways we are fighting a righteous war within ourselves. This idea is beautifully put forward in chapter six; "One becomes one's own friend when one has conquered oneself; if un-subdued by oneself, one operates as one's own enemy."

Bravery is not the only lesson that Krsna has to teach in the *Gita*. Whether or not Arjuna is scared, he is still confused as to what is the right thing to do. Krsna dispels this confusion by expounding his philosophy of action and life, calling it by the simple word 'Yoga.' Most Indian schools of thought believe that with every action, whether it is physical or mental, Karma is bound. It is also true that we can never escape from performing an action, not even for a second. It is utterly necessary to act to maintain our existence. How can one free oneself from binding Karma? To simply try and not act is not the answer. "By non performance of action, none reaches inaction; by merely giving up action no one attains perfection." (3.4) The *Gita* says "do thou always perform obligatory actions without attachment; by performing action without attachment, the human being attains to the highest." (3.19). The *Gita* teaches us to renounce the fruit of our actions, yet to still try and complete each action to the best of our ability. It teaches us that we have full control of our actions yet little control over the results of our actions. If we are governed by the fruits of our actions we lose sight of the means by which we attain them. When all that matters is getting the result, how we achieve our goals, whether foul or fair, becomes dangerously irrelevant. However if we undertake our actions in the spirit of service (*yajna*) there is no bondage of karma at all. The *Gita* teaches

us to lose the sense of "I" and "mine" and try to act for the benefit for all around. A little of this selfless attitude can do wonders for the world. It makes for better human relations from simple family life all the way up to international relations.

The Yoga of action is inherently non-violent. Gandhiji believed that it was impossible to act truly selflessly without observing *ahimsa*. He wrote, "Let it be granted, that according to the letter of the *Gita* it is possible to say that warfare is consistent with renunciation of fruit. But after forty years' unremitting endeavour fully to enforce the teaching of the *Gita* in my own life, I have in all humility felt that perfect renunciation is impossible without perfect observance of *ahimsa* in every shape and form."

I believe that the *Gita* was composed with its practical uses strongly in mind. It is a science of self-development, designed to nourish and strengthen human character in order to maintain a better, balanced, society for all. It asks us to look deep within ourselves, and try to unlock the latent divinity that is within each and every one of us. The deeper we look inside ourselves, the closer we get to self-realisation. It states that those who have realised the truth,

"by that knowledge will see the whole world in (themselves) in the infinite *atman*, as also in me." (Sri Krsna). Thus with spiritual development, the separateness between things is taken away, and the unity behind all appears. As Jains we also believe that all souls are equal, take away the exterior and essentially we are all the same. This idea is taken further, to include all living beings not just humans. If this truth was universally applied there

would be no chance of wars, hurting our "opponents" would be hurting ourselves. Krsna describes a true devotee to be "He or she who hates no creature, and is friendly and compassionate towards all, who is free from the feelings of 'I' and 'mine', even minded in pleasure and pain, and forbearing." (12.13). These virtues can truly be cultivated with the realisation that it is the soul that is the true self, and that all living beings share this divinity.

For many reasons people believe the *Gita* to be the Jewel of Indian literature. Next to the Bible, it is the most translated of all texts. Its beauty lies in the fact that it does not suggest any sectarian ideologies; it tries to break down the dogmatic view of religions, and emphasises that true religion is spiritual development, and not merely pious words and rituals. The *Gita* tries to encourage us to incorporate religion into our every day lives; it shows that no matter what our occupation may be, if we work in the spirit of service to others we are developing spiritually. 🙏

Vishal Shah is an undergraduate student at Cambridge University.

***"The human body
and the mind is a
constant battlefield
between right
and wrong."***

Nuns Could Attain Liberation

Katherine Anne Harper analyses the role of women and the existence of a female *Tirthankara*

JAINISM, THE OLDER OF THE TWO ENDURING *Sramanic* religions, historically has included both nuns and laywomen as vital representatives of the community. The Jain order of nuns predated that of the Buddhist's by centuries. The earliest historical references to female Jain renunciants were connected to the twenty-third *Tirthankara*, Parshvanath, who lived during the ninth century B.C. There are, however, mythological references to at least two Jain women attaining enlightenment or salvation long before Parshvanath. The first was Marudevi, the mother of Rshabha, the first *Tirthankara*. She, upon seeing her enlightened son, attained the highest spiritual state of *kevalajnana* - she herself entered into *samadhi* and passed away. Paul Dundas writes, "It is particularly noteworthy that according to the Shvetambaras it is a woman, Marudevi, the mother of Rshabha, who has the distinction of being the first person of this world age to achieve liberation." Yet another example of a woman attaining the highest spiritual level is found in the story of the Jina Malli who, according to the Shvetambara sect, chose the life of a renouncer as a prelude to *kevalajnana*. The myths concerning Malli will be addressed later; let us now return to Parshvanath and reconstruct what we can of the role of women in his order.

Jain texts suggest that at least as early as the ninth century B.C. women with a high degree of spiritual commitment and aptitude outnumbered men with similar inclinations and abilities. According to the *Kalpasutra*, Parshvanath divided his community into four parts: monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen. A woman named Pushpacula was placed at the head of the women's order. Furthermore, the *Kalpasutra* records that the four-part *sangha* consisted of 16,000 monks, 38,000 nuns, 164,000 laymen and 327,000 laywomen. While the authenticity of the actual numbers may be questionable, what is immediately striking is the ratio of women to men: more than two to one. The sheer number of women alone indicate a religion in which the religiosity of women was respected and female renunciation was

encouraged. Concerned with the welfare of all humankind, it was Parsvanath who first offered an alternative to Vedic exclusives. In doing so, he afforded women the same opportunities as men and affirmed that women were capable of attaining the highest religious goal. The great teacher stressed the importance of the four vows known as the Law of the Four Restraints (*chaturyama-dharma*), which most likely involved abstaining from four types of activities: injury, non-truthfulness, taking what is not given and having possessions. The effectiveness of Parshvanath's teaching is measured in the number of followers he led to enlightenment - some

2,000 ascetic women and 1,000 men.

The ratios represent a time in history when a greater interest, dedication and aptitude of women for spiritual matters was recognised. It seems that Mahavir allowed women into the order from the beginning of his teaching, with his first woman disciple, Arya Candana subsequently becoming the head of his order of nuns.

The large numbers of references to women are remnants of an ascetic movement which, on the whole, defended egalitarian attitudes. In the years immediately following the time of Mahavir, women were permitted the freedom to exercise options which included entering the order and the promise of reaching the state of bliss. For a

time they too were allowed to wander freely and teach in what was a relatively liberal society. Like their male counterparts, Jain women renunciants never established communities in fixed locations, but followed the ideal of Mahavir to never live more than one day in the same village. However, eventually nuns were made to become more dependent upon their male colleagues' authority. Regulations were devised that stipulated where the women were allowed to beg and what implements they could own or use. Stricter regulation of their movements



was justified by the wish to avoid all objects and conditions of life that could endanger the vow of chastity. In the early centuries of Mahavir's order, there was a liberal attitude regarding co-educational teaching. Situations in which women were the disciples of monks and monks were the disciples of senior nuns have been recorded.

Unfortunately, the liberalism toward females that characterised the early centuries of Jainism was influenced by the pan-Indian prejudices against women. The first literary references to the final exclusion of women from places of authority date to the middle of the second century A.D., but they are the product of a branch that had taken place around 300 B.C. The Digambara Acharya Kundakunda in his work *Sutrprabhrita* openly declared women unfit for emancipation. Among other assertions, he stated that women have no purity of mind because of their menstrual flow, which was an anxiety-provoking liability. He avowed that total nudity was a requirement for liberation and because women must wear clothing they are exempt from attaining liberation. Such proclamations mark the culmination of a long period of struggle for those with reactionary attitudes who sought to limit the role of Jain women and discredit their spiritual aspirations or achievements.

Little is known of the woman who, according to the Shvetambaras, is reported to have been the nineteenth *Tirthankara*. Born into a *ksatriya* family, her father was Kumbha, King of Mithila (modern Bihar). Legend has it that she was so exceedingly beautiful that many kings sought her hand in marriage but her father refused all suitors. They in turn felt insulted and waged war on Kumbha. Horrified by the bloodshed, the princess Malli convinced her father to invite all the kings to the palace. When the warring kings entered the royal chambers, they were confronted not only by Malli, but by a golden life-like statue of the princess. Malli proceeded to open a lid on the statue's head to expose rotting garbage. She explained that like the sculpture, beneath her own exterior there was nothing but fouled and filthy matter. She then made a solemn vow to renounce all worldly pleasures in order to take up the life of an ascetic. It was at that moment that she became enlightened (*kevalajnana*). Her royal admirers, duly shamed and remorseful, realised that true happiness lay in meditation and the performance of austerities. They too, like Malli, renounced the world for a life of asceticism. The Digambaras claim that the nineteenth *Tirthankara* was not a woman, but a man named Mallinatha who lived out an ordinary career as a male Jain.

The Jina Malli was a central figure in later polemical debates between the Digambara and Shvetambara traditions. According to Shvetambara legend, in a former life Malli was a king named Mahabali. He undertook a vow of renunciation along with seven other Jain mendicants with the understanding that they would perform their ascetic practices as a group progressing at the same rate. The customary list of austerities included fasting. Jaini wrote: "Mahabali was by nature deceitful and constantly found excuses (such as ill health) to

skip meals and thus broke the agreement by deviously accumulating a larger number of fasts than his friends. His conduct was otherwise faultless, and as a consequence of his great exertions in leading a holy life he generated such karmic forces as would yield him rebirth as a would-be-Jina."

What is fascinating about the story is the thinly disguised assertion that one small conceit harboured by Mahabali, despite powerful motives and ascetic exertions, resulted in his enduring one last life as a woman. On the subject of Mahabali's ambitions to observe longer fasts, Nalini Balbir writes, "This had a double effect: it explained the rebirth as a woman (because the ascetic resorted to perfidy and lie) but *also* the destiny as a future Jain since asceticism is recorded among the twenty causes leading to Jinahood." Hence, Malli was the exception to the karmic rules of rebirth – that a Jain must not be female and that a woman is not endowed with *samyaktva* (the proper view of reality) at birth. It must be noted that Jains, regardless of the sect, believe that human vices such as cheating and deceit cause rebirth as a woman.

It cannot be determined if Malli was a purely mythological character or if she was an actual historical person, but there is every possibility that Malli was a real person or, at least, was a representative of the various women who reached *kevalajnana*. The story of Malli then became unique and a religious tradition has been recorded that female spirituality results in the state of bliss. The tale of her previous life as a religious, but slightly dubious, ascetic king was probably an attempt to obfuscate or diffuse any notions that females had spiritual powers. While Digambaras refuted the story of Malli altogether, Shvetambaras equivocated by explaining that becoming a *Tirthankara* for a woman was unusual, and hence it was described as one of the ten unexpected things.

The ambiguous positions concerning the stories of Malli and the debates on clothing can be viewed as attempts to obscure or deny a woman's powers, rights and authority, not just in religious matters but in all aspects of life. She was denied the opportunity to make her own choices. At the heart of the story of Malli's enlightenment is the remembrance of a time, perhaps dating to the pre-Vedic period, when the religious authority of women was unquestionable. The previous life-story of Malli as a dubious male ascetic was appended later in order to diffuse the impact of her spiritual success. The subtexts of the stories of Malli and the debates on women are clear. They are disguised attempts to destroy an older belief system focusing on the Great Goddess, in which the female ability to create life within her body was sacred and was the source of profound mystical power. 🙏

Katherine Anne Harper is a Professor at Loyola Marymount University, USA. The above article is extracted from '*Jinamanjari*', Vol 13 No. 1, April 1996.

The Scientific Foundations of Jainism

Shamil Chandaria reviews a unique book by Professor Kanti Mardia

PROFESSOR MARDIA HAS TAKEN ON A FORMIDABLE TASK IN HIS BOOK, *The Scientific Foundations of Jainism*, explaining Jain science and metaphysics to a modern audience using the nomenclature and terminology of modern science. This is no small feat given that the ancient Jain texts were written in an obscure and technical language making them almost impenetrable to our modern eyes and ears. Furthermore, Mardia links these Jain metaphysical foundations to Jain ethics and the path of personal liberation and self-conquest. By doing so, he has written a synoptic account of the complete Jain philosophical system: metaphysics being the roots, science the trunk, and Jain ethics and principles of living a life of self-conquest and liberation being the branches and leaves.

Mardia has constructed four axioms which encapsulate the entire Jain belief system and form the basis of his book.

Axiom 1) *The soul exists in contamination with karmic matter and it longs to be purified.*

Axiom 2) *Living beings differ due to the varying density and types of karmic matter.*

Axiom 3) *Karmic bondage leads the soul through the states of existence (cycles).*

Axiom 4a) *Karmic fusion is due to perverted views, non-restraint, carelessness, passions and activities.*

Axiom 4b) *Violence to oneself and to others results in the formation of the heaviest new karmic matter, whereas helping others with moksha, with positive non-violence results in the lightest new karmic matter.*

Axiom 4c) *Austerity forms the karmic shield against new karmons as well as setting the decaying process in the old karmic matter.*

Mardia devotes a chapter to each of these axioms. In axioms 1-3 he gives us the Jain 'scientific' foundations of the theory of the soul and the human condition. Here he develops terms such as karmons (subatomic particles of karmic matter), karmic force fields, karmic fusion and the like, recreating a language that is reminiscent of particle physics, electromagnetism and other areas of physics. He uses scientific analogies to illustrate the principles of the Jain theory. The soul absorbs negative karmons from negative activity and is polluted so as to obscure and obstruct knowledge, perception, bliss and energy of the soul. The soul, however, has an innate tendency to be pure. The karmic matter determines one's position in life and the cycles of reincarnation.

The three parts of axiom 4 are the Jain applications of the science of the soul set out in axioms 1-3. The application is to foster the purity of the soul and ultimate well being. It engages with the ancient philosophical question of 'How should one live?' One should live to reduce the density of karmic matter in one's soul. Before seeing how to reduce the density of karmic matter, we should see what causes karmic matter density to increase: this is the focus of axioms 4a) and b). The culprits are called the karmic agents:

- **Perverted views** – a misunderstanding of the true nature of our soul,
- **Non-restraint** – lack of self control which leads us to do wrong when we know better,



- **Carelessness** – sloth in following a spiritual path,
- **Passions** – anger, pride, deceit, gluttony and covetousness,
- **Activities** – especially violence.

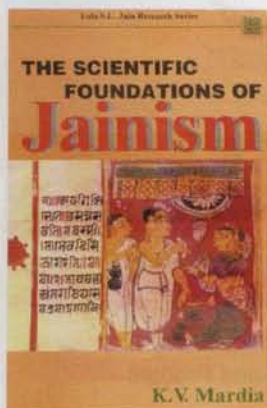
The path to purification, and thus self-conquest, is austerity. The practice of austerity not only prevents or slows down the inflow of new karmons into the soul but also causes the existing karmic matter to decay over time. The practice of austerity involves:

- **Restraint** – self control,
- **Watchfulness** – mindfulness in living well and not activating the karmic agents,
- **Righteousness** – rules of morality and disposition of character,
- **Reflections** – reflecting on philosophical truths,
- **Afflictions mastery** – mental mastery over hardships.

Near the end of the book, Mardia analyses Jain logic, especially the Jain holistic principle of knowledge (i.e. for true knowledge one has to take all the relative perspectives or points of view) and the principle of conditional predication (i.e. nothing is absolutely known unless the soul is 'perfect').

The final part of the book considers parallels between Jain ideas and modern physics, especially particle physics. He draws several suggestive analogies, but thankfully Mardia resists the temptation to make them more than analogies. This brings us to a critical point in the understanding of the entire book. How are we to interpret the axioms? To help answer this question more specifically, we could ask: how are we to interpret these enigmatic particles called karmons? Are they objectively a part of the fabric of the universe and composed of matter or energy? Or are they non-material? Or, perhaps, are they simply rhetorical devices that Jain teachers and texts of antiquity developed to explain why one should live a life of Right Conduct? These are very deep issues in the interpretation of Jain philosophy itself. However, Mardia has highlighted them by styling his book in a 'scientific' way. On the whole, Mardia does not explicitly specify his view. The thrust of the book does seem to imply his belief that the 'karmons' are literally material objects in the material world. At one point (page 10) he makes a perhaps flippant remark that 'presumably the gravitational force [of karmons] is small', which illustrates his materialist position. In taking this position, Mardia is undoubtedly in agreement with the orthodox Jain interpretation. To my mind, though, one should take care in the interpretation of the texts, and a less literal reading of them may be warranted. We could take a more humanistic view of Jainism being about Right Conduct to foster well being and flourish in human beings. The pollution of the soul by bliss obscuring karmic particles is a very useful allegory or even analogy, but to interpret it as literal truth is to confuse the spiritual with the material.

That being said, Professor Mardia's book has done a great service to the Jain tradition for two reasons. It is an extremely accessible book on Jainism for young and inquiring readers who have a scientific approach. Only few books on Jainism engage so directly with the subject matter. The second, and perhaps the greater reason is that in formulating the axiomatic approach to Jainism, he has encapsulated Jain philosophy into a self-contained, ordered logical set of principles which start at the foundations and proceed to the practice. This is very powerful, and is reminiscent of the four noble truths of Buddha, the axiomatic encapsulation of his philosophy. 🙏



K. V. Mardia, 'The Scientific Foundations of Jainism', Second Edition, Motilal Banarsidass, New Delhi, ISBN: 81-208-0659-1

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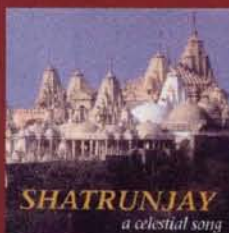
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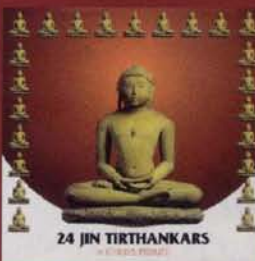


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1. To inform and inspire Jains world-wide and people interested in Jainism
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3. To help protect, preserve and promote the sacred texts, art, stories and rituals
4. To nurture a Jain renaissance
5. To foster a Jain solidarity, through a non-sectarian outlook
6. To place Jainism onto the world map as a distinct tradition with a deep history and philosophy
7. To relate Jain tradition to modern concerns and lifestyle

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The above is based on information available as of mid December 2002. New additions will appear in the next issue.
If you want to become a catalyst for peace and would like to help spread *Jain Spirit* then please e-mail editor@jainspirit.com
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A GIFT OF TIME

Dhiraj Shah shares the joy of *seva*



WE LIVE IN A WORLD WHICH IS STARVING for one of nature's infinite gifts – time. I believe that Jainism encourages us to give unconditionally what is most precious to us. Ever since we migrated to the UK from Kenya, our family has continued to give time regularly and consistently. It has been a most rewarding and enlightening experience for us. I would like to encourage more and more Jains to participate and give time to good causes. Giving time helps us to be selfless and contented. My work with young people has taught me that given the right environment, young people can really progress and develop their character through volunteering. Eighteen-year-olds can learn managerial skills which they would only get in a big organisation at the age of forty. They can develop their self-esteem so that they can cope with a variety of situations without losing their self-confidence. In a world which is changing so fast, identity provides real strength. I have seen with my own eyes the difference we have made to young people brought up in the West. They are already making a huge difference to society.

In the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh, we prepare young people from the age of seven to become the best of themselves and set their own high standards in whatever they do. We encourage them to be physically strong through regularly training *shakhas* and to live healthily and hygienically. We educate them about their culture through stories, sport, music and discussions. We organise annual retreats for young people, which give them concentrated training in character building and culture. These camps have been life-changing experiences for most of the young people who attended them. A retreat enables them to step out of routine life and reflect upon their goals and aspirations. It breeds deep community spirit through direct bonding with like-minded young people. It helps sustain a positive peer group which will last for a long time, something which schools rarely provide today.

In fact, I feel that giving time is one of the most natural instincts of human beings. Unfortunately, modernity is destroying these natural instincts and we are succumbing to it. We need not give in so easily. We should try gifting time locally in small ways, in areas where we have special

interests or abilities.

There is always a huge demand for good people. We should join organisations where we feel relaxed and welcome, and where we can grow and learn through our volunteering efforts. At community events, we should be ready to help out with anything from cleaning to stacking chairs without any concern for ego or self-image. This will set a good example for our children and it will teach us about true selflessness.

Don't be afraid of giving time. What is the worst that you can lose? Illnesses like depression, stress and anxiety are caused by selfishness and the breakdown of community.

"Giving time is one of the most natural instincts of human beings."

Giving time actually prevents these illnesses and builds our inner strengths. It gives us inner peace which today everyone longs for. It is very important that we do not have any expectations for return in terms of self-publicity or personal status. If we give time for the wrong motives, there will be stress. Patience is a very important virtue in volunteering. I have often been surprised by

the dramatic achievements of young people that have taken a long time to cultivate in our *shakhas*. Patience helps us to achieve lasting results and some of our efforts will definitely bear fruit for many generations. I encourage people to appreciate volunteers and support them rather than simply criticise them without doing anything.

The world today is driven by ego, fear and insecurity. Volunteering is a tremendous antidote for this. It is not a one-way sacrifice as many people perceive it. It fulfils us on a daily basis and encourages us to give more and strive for more. It unlocks our hidden potential as the motives are genuine and selfless. I would encourage everyone to try it for themselves and experience the difference it can make to their own lives. 🙏

Dhiraj Shah is Joint General Secretary of the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh in the UK, a national organisation promoting Hindu values. He lives with his family in Birmingham, UK.

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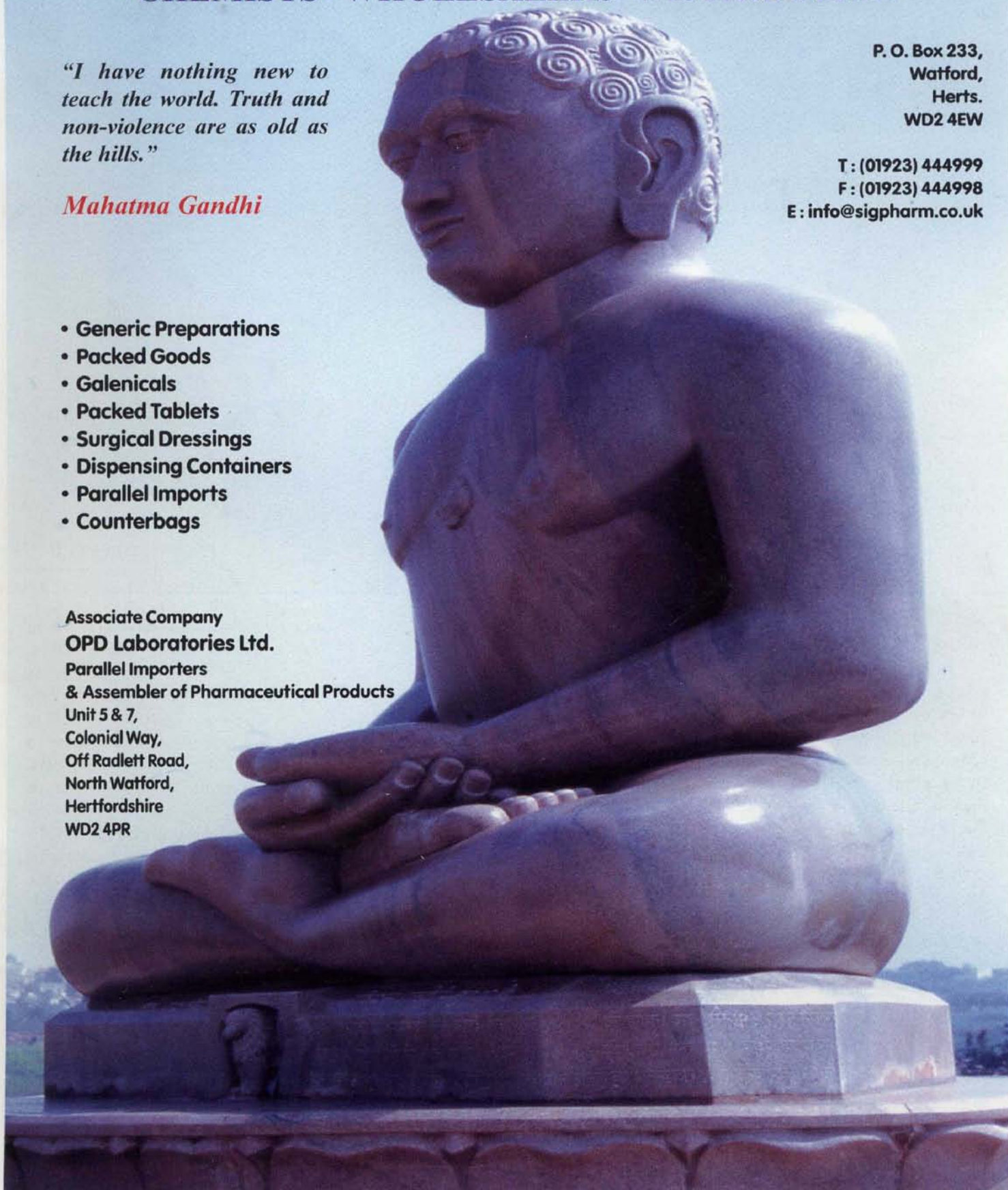
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Using the Internet as its key tool, NetAid is building an active network of people and organizations in developed countries committed to ending extreme poverty around the world. In September 2000, world leaders committed themselves to cutting poverty in half by 2015. NetAid brings people together in ways that will help achieve this goal. The website provides opportunities to donate and sponsor projects around the world, as well as learn more about the difference that NetAid's work is making to real people's lives in all corners of the world. Most importantly, this website allows you wherever you are, whatever your age to

become a citizen of the world. Through NetAid, you can offer your time, energy and skill to make someone else's life better.

For example, a volunteer in Germany translates documents for an organization serving youth in Africa. A man in Nigeria writes articles and a case study for an organization in the U.S. addressing poverty in West Africa. A woman in the United Kingdom concerned about children and poverty creates a web site for an organization in Sri Lanka. These volunteers help without having to leave their homes. They volunteer on weekends, in the evenings, on their lunch break, or whenever their schedules permit. And you can, too – visit www.netaid.org and find out how!

www.mkgandhi.org

Researchers, students, activists, and anyone interested in the 20th century's most famous advocate of non-violence - visit www.mkgandhi.org, which brings together a wealth of information for anyone who wishes to learn about Gandhi, his life, work & philosophy. This comprehensive site offers a wide range of information on Gandhi's thinking and activities: from the 'village economy to civil disobedience, from religion to politics, from education to the environment. There is a particularly thought-provoking section entitled 'Peace, Non-violence, Conflict Resolution', which has articles by Gandhi and other thinkers on these topics - it could be helpful to anyone who wants to relate the Jain concept of ahimsa to real life situations. In addition, you can view a pictorial biography of Gandhi, read inspirational quotations by him, try your hand at the Gandhi quiz, and even send Gandhi e-greeting cards! Students may find this site particularly useful not only for textual information, but also for photographs, available in the 'Students Section'. In this section, it is possible to submit your own completed projects as well as view others' assignments on Gandhian topics.

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www.peacechild.org

This is the website of Peace Child International, a UK-registered charity that empowers children to take responsibility for peace, human rights and the environment. It does this through innovative projects such as 'Be the Change', a youth empowerment programme that encourages young people to make changes in their own community and to work for sustainable development. Browse this website and learn how young people are addressing problems such as pollution, crime and poverty – read their stories, and be inspired to be the change in your community! Make contact with a virtual network of young people around the world, who are also concerned about making a positive change – the active bulletin board allows you to benefit from the experiences of those who are already involved in sustainable development projects. You can also sign up to Peace Child's newsletter, Action Times, and read news of Peace Child's activities in your corner of the world in the 'Regional Desks' section. Peace Child has also produced a number of publications for young people and educators alike, which you can buy from this website. The website tells you about a whole series of books on human rights, the environment, sustainable development and the United Nations, which are written, illustrated, edited and designed by young people themselves.



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