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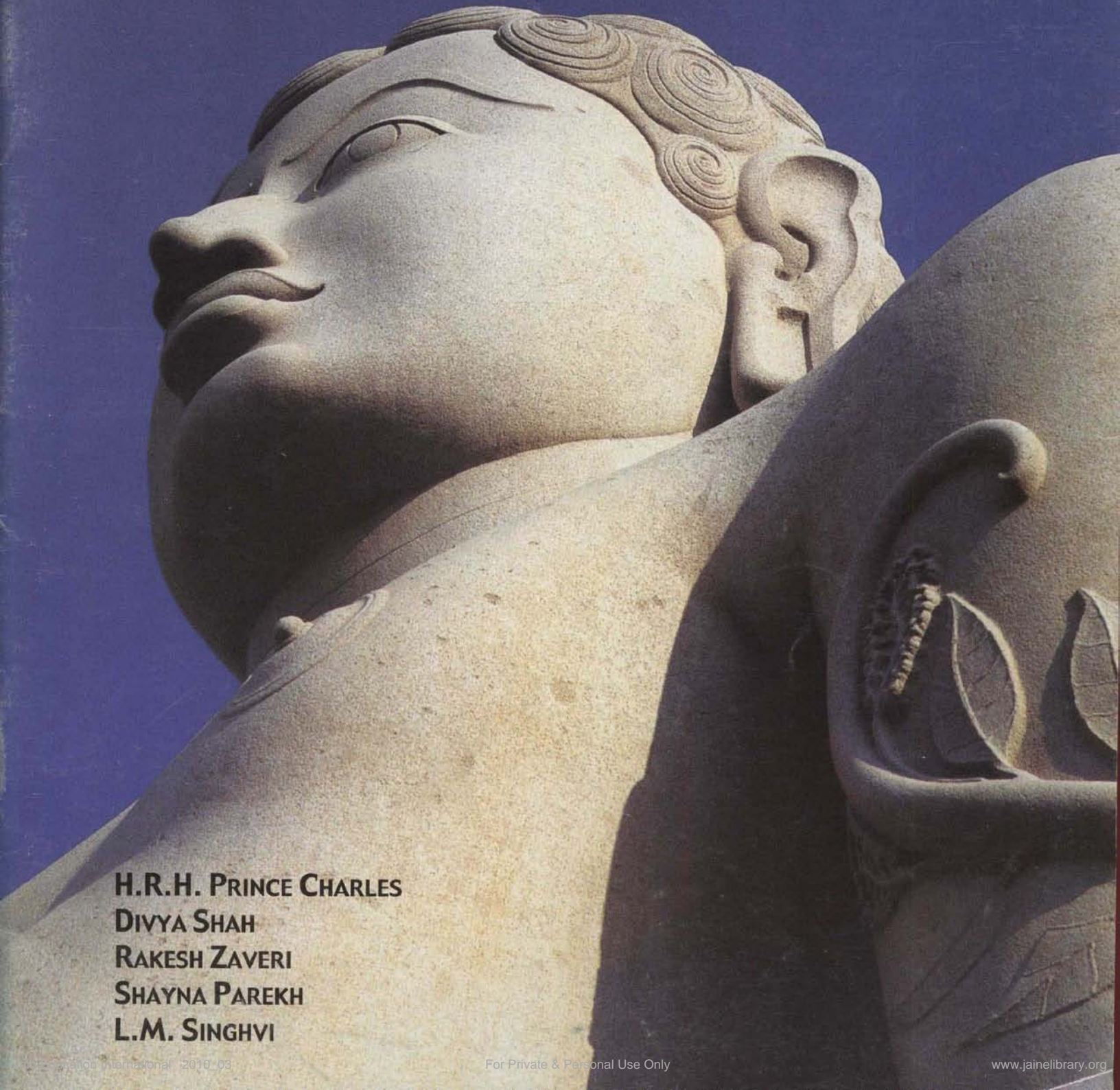
Issue 12

September - November 2002

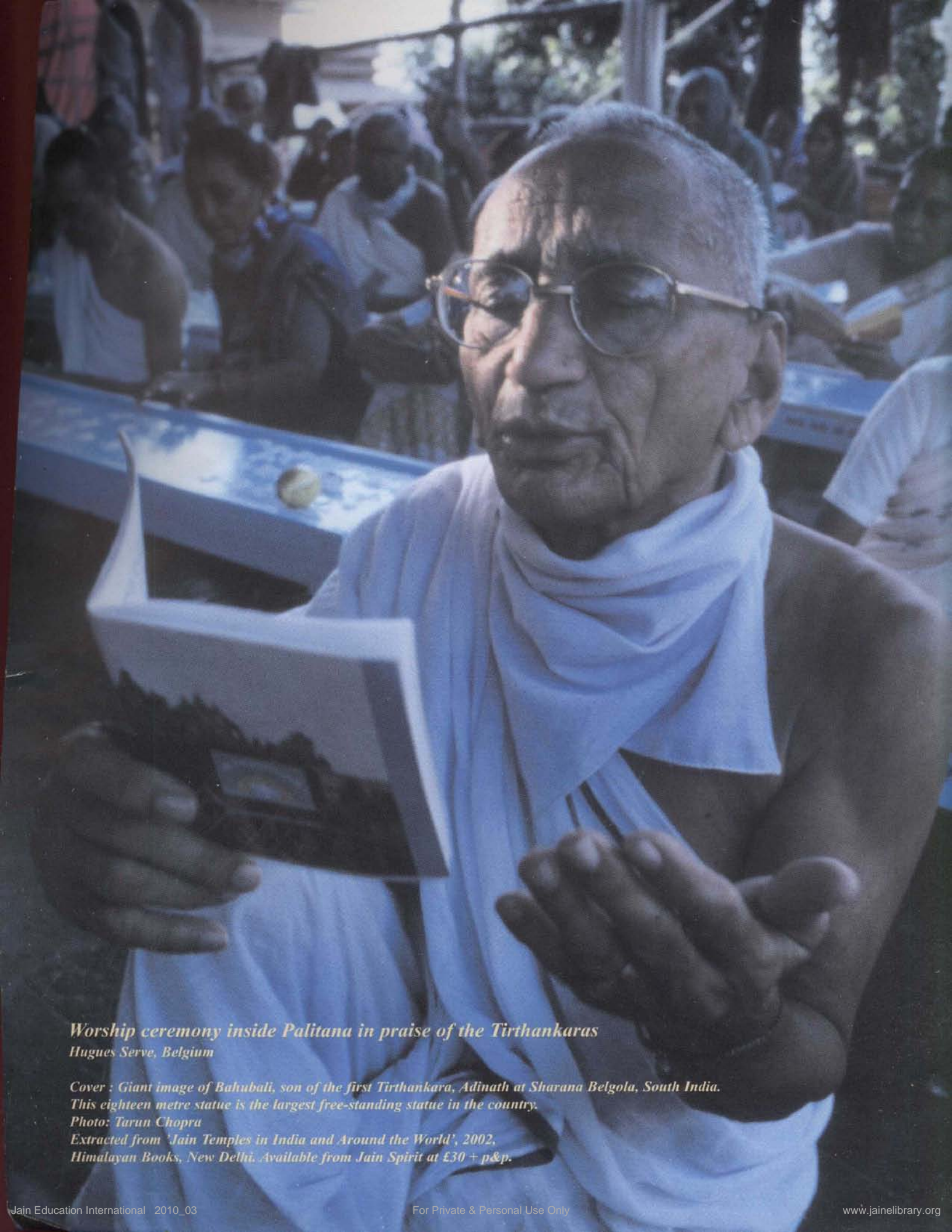
Non Profit International Quarterly Publication

JAIN SPIRIT

SHARING JAIN VALUES GLOBALLY



H.R.H. PRINCE CHARLES
DIVYA SHAH
RAKESH ZAVERI
SHAYNA PAREKH
L.M. SINGHVI



Worship ceremony inside Palitana in praise of the Tirthankaras

Hugues Serve, Belgium

Cover : Giant image of Bahubali, son of the first Tirthankara, Adinath at Sharana Belgola, South India. This eighteen metre statue is the largest free-standing statue in the country.

Photo: Tarun Chopra

Extracted from 'Jain Temples in India and Around the World', 2002, Himalayan Books, New Delhi. Available from Jain Spirit at £30 + p&p.

WELCOME

Dear Readers,

I would like to share with you what we do on the visual aspects of the magazine – images and design. A good picture speaks a thousand words. This is the power of the visual image. We know that the values of Jainism are relevant to our present day life of stress, conflict and greed. Wouldn't it be great to show this through images and art, such that anyone who sees it at once feels calm, peaceful and attracted to discover Jain wisdom? Our ancient temples at Shravana Belgola, Mount Abu, Palitana or Ranakpur have this mesmerising quality. How can we replicate this effect in a print magazine?

As editor, I work on commissioning interesting and varied articles from different writers. Then, our photo researcher and editor, Alison Kent reads the accepted articles, and we decide what message we want to visually portray through each article. She then starts doing her photo research, contacting photo libraries or artists for illustrations and going through our own collection.

How do we visually portray the benefits of non-violence in the modern world? Do we show a picture of someone meditating, or of someone stopping a fight? What about insects helping each other, or a lion caring for a deer? Good *pooja* photos can encourage someone who has never done one, to try it on their next visit to the temple. And what of simplicity? Greed is everywhere around us, but we need to show positive photos of how not having comforts need not mean unhappiness. Think of these images, and try to capture Jains living *aparigraha*. Community sharing and worship has a unique impact, reminding us of the benefits of sharing. Can we capture this in photographs?

We often struggle to get good Jain photos as there is no Jain photo library anywhere in the world. There are private collections, but it is difficult for us to find out who has them and how to contact them. Furthermore, we do not always know in advance which photos we will be using. Some photographers like Michael Freeman, Jayu Shah and Robert Radin have given us their photo collections which we keep in our library, and select and use from as and when we need them. This is really helpful, and we would like you to send us such collections if you can spare them, and lend them to us. In this way, people from all over the world can see your pictures.

Good photos are rare, and photographers spend time, skill and money to get them. They also need to travel to various sites, and purchase expensive equipment. Similarly, good artists and illustrators need to earn a living to practise their art. As a result, we do pay for the images we use, to encourage the artists and photographers to survive and continue their art. This is in spite of our budget constraints. We know that our readers appreciate and enjoy good images. Even with illustrators, we need to be patient and work with

them, giving them suggestions about the kinds of drawings we are looking for. Our regularly held meetings with Mike Turner, our cartoonist, are great fun, and we share some humorous ideas with him which he jots down on his sketch pad, and turns them into colourful cartoons which are funny too! They often carry quite a subtle but powerful message.

In order to encourage people to take good photos, and to help us build our own photo collection for Jain Spirit, we have embarked on a **Photo Competition** announced in this issue. See page 23 for details. We would like you to read the instructions and consider submitting selected photos, which will be judged by an eminent panel. Even if you do not win, there is a chance that your photo will be published in a future issue of the magazine. Please share this competition with others who may not be subscribing to Jain Spirit but are interested.

Once we have chosen the pictures, we then decide how to crop them and lay them out on the page for maximum impact.

We think of captions which emphasise particular points made in the article and ensure there are credits for photographers and artists. So far, we have concentrated the bulk of our efforts on

photos, and would also like to work with artists in future, to get a variety of images. Please contact us if you would like to illustrate for this magazine.

As this issue goes to press, there are two major international youth conferences this year, the Young Jains of America convention in New Jersey, and the Young Jains International Convention in the UK. The Board of Directors has very generously decided to offer a gift subscription to all the youths who register for these events.

Happy Reading!

Atul K. Shah

Executive Editor
editor@jainspirit.org



A Good Picture Speaks A Thousand Words

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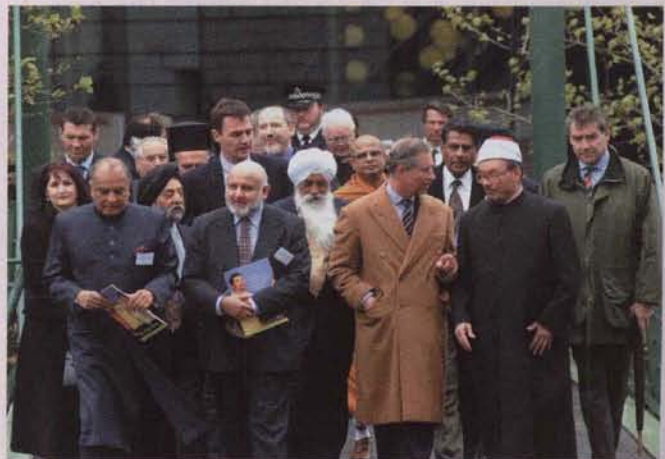
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All back issues can be ordered by completing the subscription form.



MASALA IN THE MEL

BRITAIN IS ALIVE WITH THE SOUNDS AND SIGHTS OF SOUTH Asia, which bodes well for a revival in Jain arts. One has only to cast a cursory glance at recent television, cinema and theatre productions to appreciate that the country is indeed experiencing a South Asian arts boom. Film director Gurinder Chadha's last offering, *'Bend it Like Beckham'*, won the hearts of diverse audiences across the nation. The new



A scene from *'Bali the Sacrifice'* a new play by Girish Karnad, produced and staged by the Leicester Haymarket Theatre through its own initiative.

Bollywood-inspired musical, *'Bombay Dreams'*, is the talk of London's West End. Re-runs of *'Goodness Gracious Me'*, the British Asian comedy sketch show, continue to attract television viewers, and its charismatic stars pour their talents into new projects that depict British Asian experiences.

While influences from the Indian sub-continent and other parts of the world have featured in the British cultural scene for many years, it is only now that one can justifiably talk of the arts reflecting the country's evolving multicultural society, in particular the experiences of the South Asian diaspora communities. Whereas South Asian arts have previously remained on the fringes of British culture, they have now permeated the mainstream – a major driving force behind this shift is the increasing appetite of British audiences for good quality productions that have cross-cultural appeal.

A case in hand is the recent box office success, *'Bend it Like Beckham'*. The film centres on the character of a British Asian girl who dreams of becoming a professional footballer. In the same way as *'East is East'* before it, the film was given a wide commercial release, rather than being marketed at a niche audience, and played to appreciative mainstream cinema audiences for over two months. The director's focus is certainly on a British Asian family living in a London suburb, but the film does not preach about race relations, nor is it *'Asian-specific'*. Rather, it has much more of an universal appeal in that it has a warm, humorous story about growing up, friendship and family – one that audiences from different backgrounds have savoured as a reflection of the melting pot that is Britain. In other words, the *'Asian-ness'* of *'Bend it Like Beckham'* is perceived as an integral part of the social fabric of everyday life, its Asian characters regarded as belonging to Britain as much as its non-Asian characters.

As Britain grows into its multicultural skin, it is becoming a hot bed of cross-cultural collaboration in the arts, as highlighted by the new musical, *'Bombay Dreams'*. It is a slick production that combines the talents of Andrew Lloyd-Webber, one of the gurus of the stage musical genre, with those of artists who are not so readily associated with West End and Broadway shows – Bollywood's A.R. Rahman and Farah Khan, and British Asian comedian/actress/writer Meera Syal. The result is a vibrant show that signals a potential revival of the flagging British musical industry. West End audiences have embraced the kitsch glamour and sheer energy of the Bollywood-style song-and-dance routines, indicating that they are indeed receptive to ideas and

MELTING POT

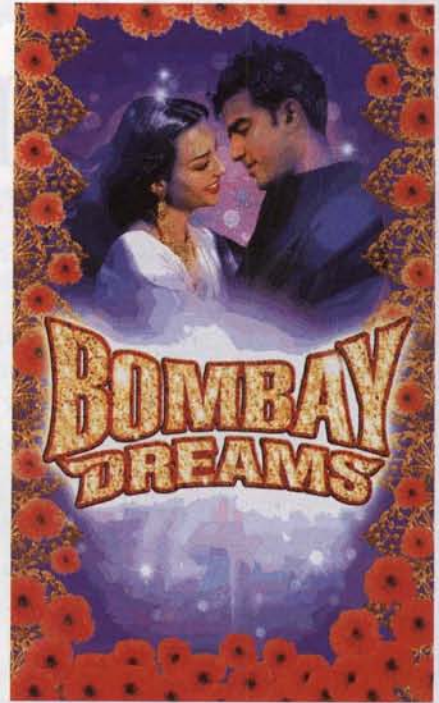
influences from other cultures.

Five years ago, it would have been difficult to even imagine such enthusiasm for Asian-influenced films and theatre. Now, such productions are managing to attract financiers, talented artists and eager audiences, thus making them widespread commercial and artistic successes. Evidently, this opens up a space for exploring through the arts the rich cultural heritage of South Asia, including those aspects related to Jainism. It is this space that was claimed by the creative forces behind *'Bali – the Sacrifice'*, a play based upon a Jain epic, which premiered in Leicester at the end of May.

'Bali- the Sacrifice' was commissioned by the Leicester Haymarket Theatre, which, along with touring theatre companies like Tara Arts and Tamasha, has pioneered the bridging of English and South Asian cultures through theatre. With the Leicester Haymarket Theatre already producing high quality South Asian-influenced plays, in 2001 the commissioning producer of Bali, Vayu Naidu, felt that "the time had come to move away from Bollywood as the impetus for creativity in theatre by Asians". With this in mind, she commissioned the renowned Indian playwright Girish Karnad to write a piece with a theme stemming from India's partition, but of global relevance.

Girish Karnad chose to interpret his brief through an exploration of violence and non-violence, inspired by a Jain epic – *Yashastilaka* – written by the Jain poet Somadeva Suri in 959 AD. Somadeva Suri's oeuvre was written with the intention of promoting the Jain faith, and thus reads more like a manual of lessons than a literary tale. Despite the didactic tendencies of his source material, Girish Karnad has written a play that is infused with artistic subtlety and emotional intensity. The plot centres on an instance of infidelity by a queen, which is found out by her husband. The king's impulse to respond violently to this disturbing discovery comes into critical conflict by his strong belief in non-violence and the Jain path to enlightenment. The play may have its roots in an ancient myth, but this production of Bali, weaving together intercultural forms of theatre, resounds with contemporary relevance.

Bali was well-received by theatre-goers of Asian and non-Asian backgrounds alike, and attracted many young people, demonstrating that professionalism and innovation in the arts can go a long way towards making the central tenets of Jainism accessible to people of all backgrounds through entertainment. This is important on several levels. Firstly, it



A poster for the new Andrew Lloyd Webber musical 'Bombay Dreams' staged at the Apollo Theatre in the West End of London.

helps promote a more widespread understanding of Jain culture in Britain, which is significant in a country that is attempting to build inter-faith and inter-cultural tolerance amongst its multicultural society. Good art allows this to be done in a manner that is not patronising, and holds a wide appeal rather than just catering to niche ethnic or religious audiences. It can also give younger generations of the Jain community a sense of pride and belonging in a culturally diverse country where they may not always feel comfortable learning about the Jain and Indian aspects of their cultural heritage. This, in turn, has the potential to inspire Jain communities in Britain to forge a more dynamic identity so that they can both celebrate their own heritage as well as interact more meaningfully with other groups in society. With *Jain Spirit* based in Britain too, a major revival of interest in Jain principles, culture and arts looks set to become an integral part of the melting pot that gave rise to the impressive and impassioned production of Bali.

The fact that Bali was commissioned by and premiered in a mainstream theatre in a major British city is a great source of hope and opportunity for the country's Jain diaspora community. It has created an opening for Jains to feel truly a part of multicultural Britain by expressing ideas stemming from their faith through the arts. It is an opening into new territory that needs to be further explored and claimed if Jains, and all those committed to building a more peaceful world, are serious about reviving the principle of *ahimsa* in this age of increasing violence.

FALGUNI PATEL

CELEBRATING MAHAVIR'S BIRTH

In April, Jain communities the world over celebrated the 2601st Birth Anniversary of the Jain religious preacher-revivalist, Vardhaman Mahavir Swami. This day also marked the conclusion of the yearlong festivities commemorating Mahavir's 2600th Birth Anniversary. Here are some of the highlights of these celebrations:

MUMBAI, INDIA

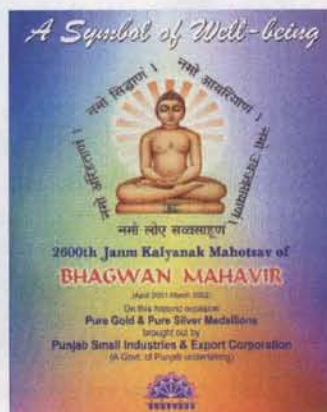
Fifty Jain institutions collaborated to organise a five-day exhibition, including sound and light shows, on the life and philosophy of Mahavir Swami, which attracted an estimated 700,000 visitors.

SAMAT SIKHARJI, BIHAR

The installation ceremony, *Pran-Pratishtha Samaroh* of the footprints of the 3rd Tirthankara Sambhavnathji was conducted at the Sammet Shikharji Mountain jointly by the two Shvetambara and Digambara sect communities. The site, where these footprints, *Pada chinha*, were located was heavily damaged due to heavy rains and lightning in the past. The two communities united in the rebuilding work as well as in the worship ceremony.

PATNA, BIHAR

A two-day national seminar, entitled *Bhagwan Mahavir in Art, Archaeology & Literature*, was held on 2-3 March 2002. The Seminar was a milestone in the advancement of knowledge on the subject and on the history of Bihar, the birthplace of 22 Tirthankaras.



NEW DELHI, INDIA

The International Ahimsa Academy was launched in tribute to Mahavir Swami's legacy. Prime Minister Vajpayee released a commemorative 5 Rupee coin, which bears the image of Mahavir Swami on one side. The Indian Government also announced that it has committed 30 crore Rupees to the preservation, development, protection and beautification of 54 specified Jain pilgrimage centres.

JODHPUR, RAJASTHAN

The celebrations commenced with flag hoisting and *Prabhat Pher* in the morning, worship in a temple in the afternoon and chanting of devotional songs in the evening. The following day began with a group *Samayika* in the morning followed by a massive *Shobha Yatra*, a procession carrying about 100 tableaux depicting different episodes from the life of Mahavir and other Tirthankaras, with a chariot carrying the image of Bhagwan Mahavir at the front. The celebration also included discourses given by Jain monks and nuns, a seminar on the life and philosophy of Bhagwan Mahavir, and devotional songs and music performed by the famous musician, Shri Rajendra Jain.

MOMBASA, KENYA

The Mombasa Jain community celebrated Mahavir's 2600th Birth Anniversary all year long, with highlights including two plays and the hosting of an art exhibition entitled *Mahavir Jivan Darshan*, all the way from India. The exhibition has already travelled to Nairobi, and it is hoped that it will go to London next year.

CHITTORE, RAJASTHAN

It was indeed a rare sight to see such a large number of Jain monks and nuns, *shravakas* and *shravikas* from all the sects - Digambara, Shvetambara, Sthanakvasi, Terapanthi and Murti-Pujak gathered in one place. They congregated at the historic Haldighati, Khamanour near Chittore. Some 15,000 devotees from nearby villages, as well as other parts of the country had come together along with about 250 monks and nuns to give serious thought to the need for socio-religious unity. All the Acharyas and Munis who were present there agreed that Mahavir Swami showed only one path and that all must strive to unify the various sects into a single, strong community. The congregation took unity and world peace as its theme, and all those who spoke stressed in unequivocal terms the need to maintain unity and peace at this crucial time.

NEW JERSEY, USA

A milestone event for the Jain community took place at the Royal Albert Palace in Fords, on 13-14 April 2002. The event was organised by Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan and ten other Jain organisations of New York and New Jersey States. Dr. L. M. Singhvi, Indian Parliament Member was the keynote speaker, and there were several presentations on relating to the life and teachings of Mahavir Swami. Other highlights included a photographic exhibition on Jain pilgrimage by Mahendra Visariya, a devotional music concert and a game show entitled *Who Wants to be Mahavir?*



INDIA: ACHARYA WALKS FOR PEACE IN GUJARAT

During the Rajasthan leg of his three-year *Ahimsa Yatra*, Acharya Mahapragya (the head of the Terapanth sect of Jainism) condemned recent incidents of communal violence in Gujarat as acts of great shame for all of us. While in the village of Balotra in Rajasthan, he made a speech urging everyone to come together and make sincere efforts to stop such inhuman acts of crime and cruelty and he stated that communal bigotry cannot be a solution to any problem.

Acharya Mahapragya is currently in Gujarat as part of his *Ahimsa Yatra*, where he is engaged in special efforts to spread the message of communal amity, love and goodwill for all. In light of the tragic events at Godhra and subsequent violent uprisings, the message for non-violence and tolerance has acquired renewed urgency and poignancy. Acharya Mahapragya has stated that broad-based training in non-violence should be provided for all sections of society, including children.

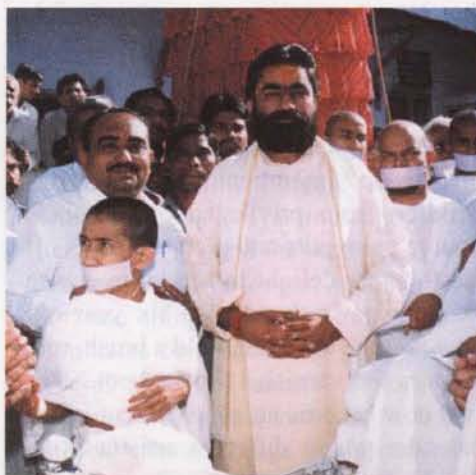
The *Ahimsa Yatra* began from Rajasthan and Sujangarh, District Churu on 5 December 2001. It is being led by Acharya Mahapragya, an original Jain thinker and philosopher, who is joined by hundreds of monks, nuns and lay people as he travels across India with the aim of creating mass awareness about the importance of non-violence. So far, Acharya Mahapragya's discourses in different towns and villages have attracted audiences which have included hundreds of Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus – a testimony to the widespread relevance of the *ahimsa* message

For further information on the *Ahimsa Yatra*, please send an email to: ahimsayatra@terapanthonline.com

ALL PHOTOS: L BHANDARI



Acharya Mahapragya's entourage in Balotra, Rajasthan



STREETWISE IN KENYA



Streetwise members at work

In recent months, we have participated in several art and craft fairs, making our presence strongly felt. From supplying gaily painted miniature pots to Basel Zoo in Switzerland, to painting a mural at the British High Commission in Nairobi, Streetwise is definitely going places and hopefully to the other side of the street.

As Jains born and brought up in Kenya, seeing the poverty levels rise on a daily basis, it is our duty to uplift the standard of living of our countrymen and women. To do nothing about this is *himsa* (violence). We all donate material things to various projects and charities, feeling we have done our duty. However, I feel that by giving my time and expertise I am able to get a group of people to be self-sufficient.

Jains have been fortunate to acquire a vast array of skills which have in turn made them very successful. If we all decide to share our skills and knowledge and give some time to the less fortunate, we can help change their lives for the better. Apart from the financial benefit, this will also allow people to maintain their dignity. This is in line with our Jain principle of *aparigraha*, so when I say I feel the same joy and sense of achievement as the painter, you know why. ”

For further information
Contact Rupal Shah
rts100@pacificafrika.com



Candlesticks painted by homeless people

“I can't draw nor paint, and neither can my fellow board members, but when I see this beautifully painted candle stick I feel a great sense of achievement. Why, you may wonder, am I so proud if I did not paint it?

Well, it all started a year ago. We were approached by Childlife Trust (a charitable organisation) to oversee a self-help project called Streetwise, which was on the verge of collapse due to previous mismanagement.

Streetwise was started in 1994 as a non-profit making self-help project aimed at both offering an alternative life to Nairobi's street children and at providing a preventative programme to stop them from getting there in the first place. Initially, it offered art classes to children from a local rescue centre. Its success enabled it to move into commercial production and to offer basic informal education along with painting, sewing and carpentry classes.

Regina Seeds, a local seed company, readily provided Streetwise with premises at the Nairobi show grounds. We immediately moved in and survived on donations for the next month, courtesy of fellow Jains. Meanwhile the board members set

about charting a way forward. Although this was often a difficult and frustrating process, our perseverance paid off. New products, ideas and marketing strategies were put into place with regular meetings running late into the night. With our truly wonderful Jain 'networking', it took just one phone call to get timber, paints and packaging material on credit, at a discount or as a donation. This networking, along with the support from friends and colleagues, saw the project on its feet again.

The way in which we manage Streetwise is quite unusual, and we strongly believe this is the reason why the management is very successful. There is no hierarchy of Chairperson or vice chair, and because every member is equal there is no conflict of ego.

We organised art classes where Streetwise members taught fifty children from privileged backgrounds how to paint pots and picture frames. It was a sheer delight to see a Streetwise member patiently teach a six year old how to draw a pattern, hold a brush, mix colours and varnish a finished pot. This will now become an annual event in our calendar where different artistic skills will be taught.

NEW JAIN BOOKS

L.M. Singhvi (Text) and
Tarun Chopra (Photographs)

Jain Temples in India and Around the World

Himalayan Books/Luxor
Foundation, 2002

ISBN: 81-700-2079-4 (£30+p&p)

A photographic pilgrimage around Jain temples the world over, enriched by Dr. Singhvi's insightful text. This beautiful book offers an uplifting combination of art and spirituality, and is an inspiring gateway into the Jain tradition. Available from Jain Spirit.

Christopher Key Chapple (Editor)

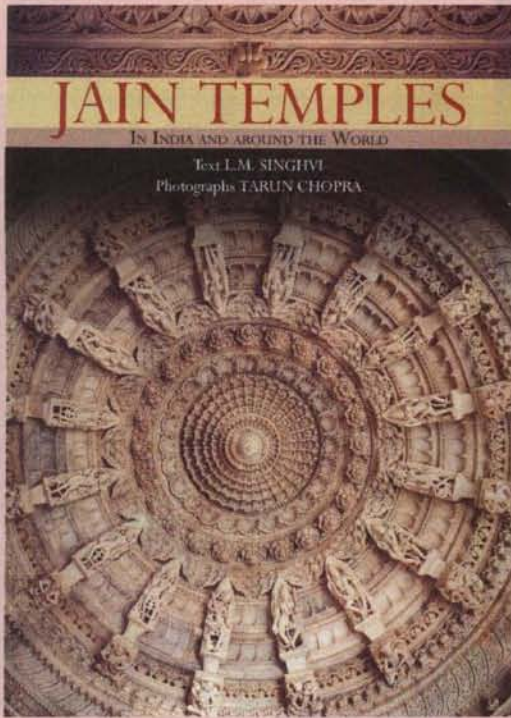
Jainism and Ecology

Non-violence in the Web of Life

Harvard University Press, 2002

ISBN: 0-945454-34-1

A new volume in the *Religions of the World and Ecology* series, this book brings together a thought-provoking collection of writing on Jainism and ecology. This volume includes contributions by John E. Cort, Padmanabh S. Jaini, Satish Kumar and Sadhvi Shilapji.



N.P.Jain

Ahimsa: The Ultimate Winner

KundKund Jnanapitha, 2002

ISBN: 81-86933-23-9

In a wide-ranging discussion of non-violence (*ahimsa*), Dr. N.P. Jain relates this key principle of Jainism to contemporary concerns.

John E. Cort

Jains in the World

Religious Values and Ideology in India

Oxford University Press, 2001

ISBN: 019565360-2

Based on the author's field research in Northern Gujarat, as well as on the study of Jain religious literature, this book paints a holistic picture of the modern day practice of Jainism.

Vastupal Parikh

Jainism and the New Spirituality

Peace Publications, 2002

An exciting new book, in which Professor Vastupal Parikh lucidly explains the principles and practices of Jainism, and links this ancient religion with modern concepts of spirituality. He proposes that Jainism represents a new spirituality, one that has at its core human and animal rights, social justice and environmentalism. Info: peacepub@hotmail.com

U.S. Stamps Highlight Pet Plight

A stray puppy and kitten will be featured on millions of American postage stamps bearing the message "neuter or spay". U. S. Postal Service (USPS) will issue on 20 September 2002, the first two postage stamps to call attention to the pressing issue of pet overpopulation. It is the culmination of a grassroots campaign by thousands of citizens, community leaders, animal health and welfare organisations, veterinarians and celebrities. An estimated 70,000 cats and dogs are born each day in the U.S. Animal shelters and

veterinarians throughout the country urge the pet owners to neuter or spay their pets in order to combat the problem of animal overpopulation. The message conveyed by the stamps is "too many animals, too few homes, save lives, neuter or spay". The message is that sterilisation is good for your pet. It helps cats and dogs live longer, healthier lives. For one thing, spaying and neutering eliminates or reduces the possibility of several types of animal cancers and diseases. Every year in the U. S., 8 to 10 million cats and dogs are given up to

animal shelters and others are abandoned. And every year, 4 to 5 million cats and dogs are euthanized in shelters due to lack of homes for them. In the white space alongside the sheets of the new stamps will be a toll-free phone number and web site address for Americans to obtain additional neuter and spay information and to find pets to adopt. The USPS continues to use its stamps to raise public awareness of important social problems.

ACHIEVEMENTS



Mr. S. V. Lathia, Industrialist and Social Worker

Prof. Kalyanmal Lodha was honoured with the prestigious Bihari Award by the K. Birla Foundation in Kolkata. He was presented the award for a highly appreciated book entitled *Vagdwar*, a thorough study of the works of eight prominent Hindi poets: Tulsi, Soordas, Kabir, Nirala, Maithili Sharan Gupta, Jai Shankar Prasad, Mahadevi Verma and Makhanlal Chaturvedi. Prof. Lodha is an eminent educator, Hindi writer, literary critic and social reformer; he has contributed greatly to the propagation of Jainism and continues to be actively involved in religious activities and social welfare.

Mr. Kishore Shah was awarded an MBE by Queen Elizabeth II for his contribution to safety in the fertiliser industry. Mr. Shah, environment health and safety manager with Terra Nitrogen U.K., has specialised in the safe manufacture and distribution of fertilisers and various hazardous chemicals throughout his 32-year career.

Mr. Venichand Ranmal Harania was awarded an MBE on the Queen's Birthday Honours for services to pharmacy. Mr. Harania of Middlesex, U.K. founded Nucare Plc., which provides marketing and support services to 1200 independent community pharmacists. Mr. Harania is currently the Executive Chairman of the company.

Mr. Dharamvir Jain won the *Ahimsa Trophy* and a certificate presented for Beauty Without Cruelty. Mr. Jain of Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. was awarded the trophy for his animal welfare activities.

Acharya Vidyanandji accredited the *Upadhyay* title to Sadhu Nirnayan Sagarji in Delhi, India on 17 February 2002. Nirnayanji has conducted research on *Katantra Vyakaran*, the grammar of the pre-Panini period of *Sharva Verma*. Nirnayanji was initiated to the ascetic order in 1989, after excelling in Prakrit and Sanskrit.

Mr. S V. Lathia, a renowned rubber technologist, has been awarded the Hancock Medal for 2002 by the Institute of Materials, London in recognition of 50 years of outstanding contribution to the rubber industry in India and abroad. Professor Colin Humphrey, President of the Institute of Materials, presented this award to Mr. Lathia at a special felicitation function held at Carlton House Terrace in London on Tuesday 11 June 2002.

Miss Veena Ajmera was honoured with a national award for her unique dance performance by the Sangeet Natak Academy at the Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi. The 14-year-old from Bhilwara, Rajasthan showed exemplary brilliance and skill in her *Mangal Kalash* dance, in which she carried 36 metal *Kalash* (pots) placed on her head, one resting over the other. Each pot represented important Jain themes, such as truth, non-violence, vegetarianism, environmentalism, non-addiction to drugs and universal brotherhood. She has performed this dance 60 times, both in India and abroad. Miss Ajmera's dancing aims to create a public consciousness on the various themes inscribed over the *Kalash*, and she has performed to raise funds for earthquake relief, eradication of blindness, education and medical relief for the needy.

Shrimati Snehalata Prakash Patalia completed her *varshi tapa* in May 2002. *Varshi tapa* is a type of penance prescribed by the Jain faith to help enhance one's spiritual journey. Mrs. Patalia fasted on alternate days for an entire year, and her feat was celebrated by a large gathering of family and friends with an evening of devotional songs and dance held in Surrey, U.K. towards the end of her penance.

NEW OSHWAL CENTRE OPENS IN NAIROBI

The new Oshwal Centre in Nairobi was officially inaugurated in March 2002, with the festivities spanning nine days, from 23 to 31 March. The objective of the nine-day event was to attract all age groups to the centre, which exists to

help unify the Oshwal community in the preservation of its social, cultural and spiritual heritage.

The festivities began with a party for children aged one to twelve. The children participated in traditional



A cycling race for all ages is flagged off from the Oshwal Centre

Indian games and in a practical lesson on *ahimsa*, to which their pet animals were invited. The games continued into the second day of the festivities with organised sporting activities for all age groups. Sport was an ongoing theme of the event, with a further two days dedicated to a tournament in which 800 participants competed in 13 different sports.

On the religious front, a four-fold art exhibition was set up: there was a section on Jain principles, a second section comprising large paintings recounting Mahavir's life story, a third consisting of an enormous rangoli depicting the *Tirthankaras*, and a fourth that displayed a pictorial presentation on Shrimad Rajchandra. In addition, a religious play entitled *Shalibadra* was performed one evening.

The nine-day event certainly attracted hundreds of visitors, many of whom were present at its finale, when a giant cake depicting the new building was ceremoniously cut, officially declaring the Oshwal Centre open.



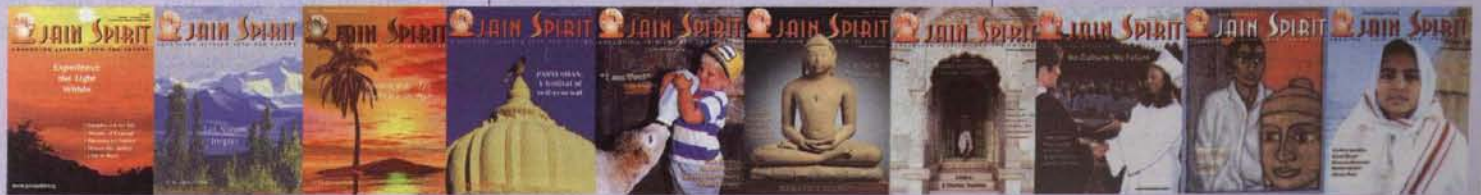
Cutting of the giant cake by Oshwal committee members and their chief guests

CELEBRATING THREE YEARS OF JAIN SPIRIT

Jain Spirit celebrated three years of existence on 22nd June, with an evening of spiritual music and singing by Kaushik, Anuradha and a host of very talented musicians. Over three hundred

people came to the Northwick Park Hotel in North-West London to share in this significant breakthrough. The musicians spent weeks practicing for a concert which captured the essence of Jain Spirit, combining the past with the present to give a varied and inspiring all round performance. At the event, we remembered and thanked all our self-

less volunteers from all over the world who have helped us come this far, including writers, artists, photographers, printers, readers, marketers, scholars, advisors, fund-raisers and donors. The publication of Jain Spirit is a communal effort and we are grateful for the continuous support and encouragement from everyone.



RIOTING VOICES

The sectarian violence that flared up in Gujarat earlier this year fundamentally shocked Indians and non-Indians alike. It struck a harsh blow to the principle of secularism, to the ideal of communal harmony. Yet many of us refused to bow to fundamentalist assertions that such discord and raging malaise is inevitable and without resolution. Amongst those who sought a constructive response to Gujarat's Hindu-Muslim conflict was the Indo-American Arts Council, which addressed the fall-out from the riots through the voice of theatre.

On 21 May 2002 in New York, the Indo-American Arts Council – in association with the World Policy Institute and Saja – presented a staged reading of Shashi Tharoor's novel 'Riot'. The novel is based on events surrounding the Ram Janmabhoomi - Babri Masjid riots, and was formally adapted for the theatre stage. Aroon Shivdasani, Executive Director of the Indo-American Arts Council explained: "Early this year, in the flaming aftermath of the awful Godra torching, I realised we had to make people here aware that we ARE a secular country,

that the various distinct 'voices' add to the mosaic of India and ensure its secularism even while presuming to be different. I asked Shashi whether I could adapt his novel to a staged reading. He was excited and agreed. I then requested Michael Johnson Chase from the Lark Theatre to take on this project. Michael, in conjunction with Shashi and myself, adapted Shashi's novel to a formal staged reading. I deliberately cut out the love story and concentrated solely on the issue of the actual 'riot'. I wanted the voices to be articulated - to clearly present the Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and the 'voice of reason' perspectives."

The staged reading was performed by Shabana Azmi, Madhur Jaffrey, Shashi Tharoor and Tunku Vardarajan, with the actors deliberately cast as characters of a different faith to their own. Thus, in an attempt to ensure that the audience did not take sides, Shabana Azmi played a Hindu, Madhur Jaffrey a Muslim, and Shashi Tharoor a Sikh. In *Riot*, Tharoor gives each perspective a passionate yet lucid voice, and this evidently captured the audience's attention during the performance.

Shivdasani observed that "the audience was spellbound and LISTENED to each articulated perspective – however extreme, however passionate."

Prior to the staged reading of *Riot*, a medley of a Hindu bhajan and a Muslim devotional song was played. The evening ended with the diverse cast saying: "We are beautiful." Notions of harmony and beauty set the tone for the evening and the multi-cultural audience sat side by side peacefully, focusing intently upon the clearly voiced opinions of the different faces of India. Those who came to listen ignored the rioters and protestors clamouring outside the auditorium. Instead they went home cradling the hope that India could indeed stay secular, and understanding that each passionate point of view they had heard should be given due respect and consideration.

The Indo-American Arts Council is a registered not-for-profit service and resource organisation, charged with the mission of promoting the awareness, creation, production, exhibition, publication and performance of Indian and cross cultural art forms in North America.

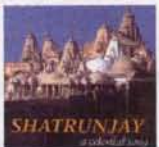
Indo-American Arts Council Inc., 27 Holly Dr., New Rochelle, NY 10801

Ahimsa year farce

The Jain community in India has expressed serious concern over the revelation that the export of meat from the country doubled during the year 2001 that was officially designated 'Ahimsa Year'. The number of slaughterhouses, including those that are illegally operated, increased. It is reported that presently, more than 4,000 slaughterhouses operate illegally all over the country. For a long time, various institutions opposed to cruelty to animals have been pressing the

Indian government to put a total ban on the export of meat from the country, but such efforts have thus far proved futile. Although it is argued that meat export is in India's economic interest, statistics show that real earning from the export of meat is a mere 0.71% of the total revenue, which could be made up from other sources if there was the political will to put *ahimsa* into practice. India's environment is devastated by meat production and export.

NEW CASSETTES ON PILGRIMAGE



An excellent series of four new audio cassettes on the pilgrimage to Shatrunjaya have been released in Mumbai by Triratna Foundation. The hymns are in a mixture of Gujarati, Hindi and Prakrit, with professional singers and compositions by Parthiv Gohil and Dipali Somaiya. In terms of quality, this set stands out as a beautiful contribution to Jain music. The packaging is also excellent and the music helps the listener to experience the spirit of pilgrimage. On 23rd June, the cassettes were launched at a special event in Mumbai by Muniraj Vimalsagarji.

For details, email Meera Shah madhumatishah@hotmail.com or see the advertisement in this issue.

EPIC INSPIRATION

MayanaSundari is one of the most inspiring characters in Jain literature. She is regarded as the epitome of self-confidence and devotion, and her story revolves around a staunch belief in karma theory. Her epic tale certainly moved the Gnan Class of Shri Chandna Vidya Peeth, Nairobi. They were so impressed that under the auspices of Young Jains Nairobi they produced and performed a Gujarati play based on MayanaSundari's story.

Following an intense two-month preparation, the Gnan Class performed the play to a full house in Nairobi on three consecutive days, attracting many plaudits and requests for repeat performances.

As well as the satisfaction of putting on a successful play, the Class also gained invaluable spiritual benefit through their dramatic endeavours. The students have embraced the timeless message of MayanaSundari's tale, which goes thus:



A tearful MayanaSundari on her wedding day

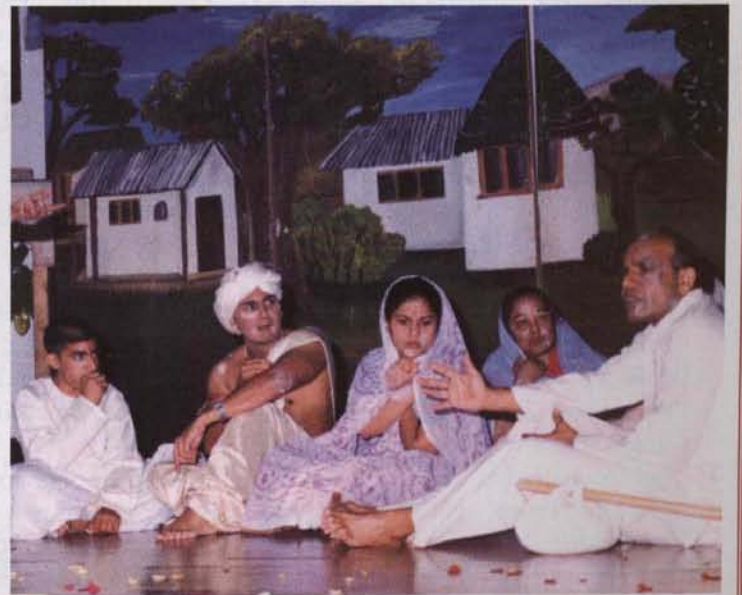
Mayana's father, King Parjapal of Malav, was enormously disturbed by the fact that his daughter's belief in karmic forces was stronger than her belief in the blessings of the King. His ego inflamed, the King agreed to marry off Mayana to a prince suffering from leprosy. Mayana accepted this decision and married Prince Umbar Rana, who was actually none other than Prince Shreepal.

The Prince had fled Champa city after his father the King's death, fearing harm to himself and his mother. In the course of his flight, the Prince came upon a forest community who renamed him Umbar Rana. It was here, in the forest, that he was affected by leprosy.

Mayana, unflinching in the face of leprosy, remained rooted in her belief in karma. She ritually worshipped the *Siddhachakra* and followed the Navpad, which provide spiritual guidance in the quest for nirvana. The epic tells of Shreepal and others being cured of leprosy as a result of MayanaSundari's unflinching devotion and spiritual progress.



The devoted MayanaSundari with her husband, Shreepal



The leprosy-affected forest community

Her tale demonstrates that happiness and peace can be achieved through a synthesis of faith and practice.

The story, an illustration of the infinite strength of the awakened soul, left both the Gnan Class and its audiences inspired and enlightened.

Kirtida Malde

SANSAAR REACHES ANOTHER MILESTONE....

The hugely successful Gujarati children's pantomime *Geet Gamat* was performed once again to packed audiences at the Wyllotts Theatre in Potters Bar, North London on Sunday 23rd June. Two shows were performed on the day to lively, foot tapping and excited audiences. The electric atmosphere made for a very special day for all.

Sansaar's objective of 'learning language through fun and music' was

amplified by the live performance on the stage. This method of learning and having fun is now achievable in the living rooms of every Gujarati family.

Following the hugely successful launch of the *Geet Gamat* CD, cassette and book last November, Sansaar has now launched *Geet Gamat* Live on video, available to order through Sansaar's web site: www.sansaar.org



India ponders vegetarian label policy

In May 2002, it was announced that Indian courts, together with a technical committee, are considering the practicalities of a vegetarian labelling policy for all cosmetics and personal hygiene products sold in the country. This is a highly significant move in a country that has such a large population of vegetarians, many for religious reasons. If the policy is

approved, officials would categorise and label all cosmetics and personal hygiene products as vegetarian or non-vegetarian, thus allowing consumers to make an informed choice.

The potential impact of the policy on India's economy will be a major factor in the final decision, which is expected in a few months' time.

LEICESTER PROCESSION



The Jain centre in Leicester celebrated the birth, renunciation (*diksha*) and liberation of Shantinathji, the main Tirthankar image in the temple. This two-day festival in June attracted hundreds of people and there was a special procession around the temple (*pradakshina*). The pictures show aspects of the celebration. The two young girls are acting as Sarasvati (Goddess of Knowledge/Wisdom) and Sadhvi (Jain nun). It was a very colourful, artistic and musical event.

For details visit www.jaincentre.com



Everybody needs good neighbours

The Prince of Wales has launched a new campaign, named Respect, aiming to promote greater tolerance and understanding between people of different faiths in the U.K. At the launch in April 2002, the Prince met with religious leaders, urging them to support Respect. The Prince's involvement with Respect is part of his contribution to the Queen's Golden Jubilee, which counts the promotion of inter-faith understanding in the country as one of its priorities. The hope is that Respect will mobilise hundreds of volunteers, particularly young people, will spend more time learning about and working together with people from different backgrounds to their own.

In light of several high-profile instances of intolerance in the U.K.

in recent years, the Prince observed that "good neighbourliness is perhaps one of the things most in need of repair" in the country's social fabric. Emphasising that it sometimes takes only simple actions to make a genuine difference, the Prince said Respect "is about the young Muslim mowing the lawn for the elderly Hindu lady down the street or the choir from the Catholic Church singing to entertain the Jewish old people's club. It is the small things above all that will make our communities a better place to live."

If you would like to know more about Respect, visit www.timebank.org.uk. A detailed article on this is in the Interfaith section of this issue.

DIKSHA CEREMONIES

- **MUNISHRI NUTANJI, MITESH PRABHASAGARJI SALECHA and SADHWI PRIYA SREYANJANASRIJI** took *diksha* from Upadhyayshri Maniprabhasagarji on 22 February 2002 and 11 March 2002 in Malpura, Rajasthan.
- **MISS REKHA and MR. SANTOSH BAFNA** of Samdari in Rajasthan took *diksha* from Mahasati Darshanprabhaji in the holy presence of Vinaymunishri 'Vagesh'.
- **Ms. SUSHRI NEELAM CHAMBAD** was initiated as a Jain *sadhvi* by Mahasatishri Daryakunwarji and Sadhwishri Jayprabhaji, disciples of Acharyashri Shubhchandji, on 17 February 2002 in Jodhpur, Rajasthan.
- **DEEPAK JAIN, ASHISH BHANSALI, ABHAY MUTHA, MISS USHA NIRMAL and MISS UJJWAL JAIN**, were initiated to the *Jain Shraman Sangh* order by Acharya Dr. Shivmuni and Upadhyayshri Vishalmuni at Meerut, Uttar Pradesh on 17 February 2002.
- **MR. ARVIND JAIN** was initiated to the Jain order by Subhadramuniji on 24 February 2002 at Rishabh Nagar in Delhi.
- **MS. VINEETA BACHHAWAT** took *diksha* in the presence of Upadhyay Maniprabhasagarji under Sadhwi Komalshriji on 17 April 2002.
- **KM. KAVITA** took *diksha* in the presence of Gachhadhipati Acharya Hemendra Surishwarji Maharaj and under Muni Jayprabhvijayji in Ahore on 15 May 2002.
- **KM. NIRMALA KOTHARI** took *diksha* in the presence of Muni Jayprabhvijayji and under Sadhvi Mukteshreeji in Ahore on 23 May 2002.
- **SHRI BABULAL SURANA** was initiated to the Jain order under Acharya Hirachandji on 23 April 2002 in Igatpuri.
- **GYAN GACHHADHIPATI CHAMPALALJI** in Balotra, accepted
KM. NEEMA, aged 24 years;
KM. REKHA aged 22;
KM. PINKI aged 21;
KM. RANJANA HUNDIA, aged 21;
KM. NEETU LOOKAR, aged 21 and
KM. SAMATA, aged 21 years
 as Jain *sadhvis* in April 2002.

ANIMAL RIGHTS LAWYER SHOT DEAD

The Jain community of Bhivandi in India was shocked to learn about the savage murder of 31 year old Lalit Jain, an eminent lawyer who took illegal slaughterhouses to task. Resentful of Mr. Jain taking them to court over their livelihood, people from the Bhivandi slaughterhouse shot him down in broad daylight in the midst of a busy market place. Driven by strong beliefs in non-violence, compassion and animal protection, Mr. Jain had fought about

200 cases on the illegal killing of cows and other animals during the last eight years and had won all of them. He had prevented more than 5,000 animals from being taken to illegally operated slaughterhouses. Mr. Jain had dedicated his entire life to religious and animal welfare activities. The lawyer had previously been threatened several times, but had gone ahead with his court cases regardless.

OBITUARIES

MR. SHANTILAL RAICHAND DAFTARY, aged 90, died in Rajkot, India on 22 December 2001. Mr. Daftary, a scholar, an orator and a social worker was closely associated with Jain organisations in Rajkot, Koba and Songadh.

DR. U. K. PUNGALIYA, M.A., LL.B., Ph.D., 80 years, passed away in Pune, India. Dr. Pungaliya was a Jain-Prakrit scholar, an advocate and a prominent social worker. He was a freedom fighter and was jailed during the Quit India movement in 1942. In 1995, at the age of 68, he was awarded a doctorate for his thesis, Philosophy and Spirituality of Shrimad Rajchandra.

MR. DINESHBHAI BHANSALI passed away on 2 February 2002. As the head of his family's charity, The Bhansali Trust, Dineshbhai had contributed financially as well as materially to the community. The Bhansali Trust spends crores of rupees on sustained relief aid to humans and animals, especially in times of disaster (drought, flood, earthquake).

MR. ARVINDBHAI PANNALAL SHETH, aged 84, grandson of Shri Hathisinh Kesrisinh and Shrimati Harkuvarba died on 28 January 2002 in Ahmedabad, India. The Hathisinh family built the famous Jain temple in Ahmedabad known as Hathisinh Derasar. Arvindbhai contributed to the restoration of more than 150 ancient Jain temples and pilgrimage places globally, including Ahmedabad's Sankheshwar Mandir. He also supported many shelters and animal welfare activities.

DR. NEMICHAND JAIN, the indefatigable crusader of vegetarianism, breathed his last on 8 August 2001 in Indore, India. He was deeply religious and lived for his chosen mission of spreading vegetarianism. He had crusaded for the cause through his monthly *Shaakahaar Kranti* (Revolutionary Vegetarianism) and other publications such as Slaughterhouses: 100 Facts.

NEWS IN BRIEF



REVIVING JAINISM

CHAMARAJANAGARA, KARNATAKA
Bhattarakha Bhuvanakeerthi Maharaj of Kanakagiri stressed the utility of electronic media in the propagation and resurrection of Jainism in the present era. Speaking during the launching of the new web site www.jainheritagecentres.com at Mysore on 26 May 2002, organised by Kannada Sahitya Parishath and Vardhamanaiah Trust, Mysore, he emphasised the need to employ new technology in rejuvenating Jainism. Dr. M.D. Vasantharaj, former professor of Jainology and Prakrit at Mysore University, inaugurated the website and traced the path of Jainism in India, citing the relics of the past. Mr. Nitin H. P. who designed and developed the web site explained in detail the concept and said that it is imperative and eminent to harness electronic media in creating awareness about Jainism both among the scholars and lay people alike.

KARUNA CLUBS: AN EDUCATIONAL MOVEMENT FOR CHILDREN

CHENNAI, TAMILNADU
Mr. Dulichand Jain, President of Karuna Clubs International, announced that Karuna Clubs initiated in Chennai schools have grown and expanded beyond expectation in different parts of India. Karuna Clubs inculcate respect, kindness and compassion towards all living beings and an appreciation of human values in children. The activities of these Clubs have created an astonishing response, especially in South India. The Clubs enjoy the full co-operation of schools and teachers. He elaborated that Karuna Clubs are actively run in 133 schools in Tamil Nadu, 127 schools in Andhra Pradesh, 22 schools in Rajasthan and 27 schools in Delhi. The activities of Karuna Clubs are being initiated at various other locations. At the Karuna Clubs International annual function, a rolling trophy and cash prizes are awarded to promising schools and children.

CALL TO RETAIN MAHAVIR JAYANTI AS HOLIDAY IN KARNATAKA

BANGALORE, KARNATAKA

The Jain community appealed to the Karnataka government to reconsider its decision to abolish the public holiday status of *Mahavir Jayanti*, the festival that marks the birth of Mahavir Swami. The state government made its controversial decision to cancel the holiday under the Negotiable Instruments Act. *Mahavir Jayanti* is the only Jain festival included in the list of national holidays.

UNIQUE NEW TEMPLE AT PALITANA

PALITANA, GUJARAT

May 2002 saw the addition of a unique Jain temple to the 2,700-temple pilgrimage hill of Shatrunjaya. It was built by Mr. T.A. Majide, a 60-year-old Muslim. Mr. Majide, a mining engineer from Ernakulam in Kerala, donated more than sixty lakhs of rupees towards the temple. The temple was constructed in the style of an Egyptian Pyramid, without using iron and steel or RCC structure, and stands 25' long by 25' broad and 22' high. There are 17 such Pyramid-style temples in India, but this is the first to be dedicated to the Jain religion. The foundation stone was laid by Mr. Majide, which was very much welcomed by the Jain community. The family of Mr. Majide, under the guidance of Abhayasen Vijayji Maharaj, performed the statue installation ceremony (*anjanshalaka pratistha*). A 63 inch black marble statue of Bhagwan Parshwanath seated on a snake and 1,261 mantras engraved upon it, was installed.

GLOSSARY OF JAIN TERMS IN GUJARATI PUBLISHED

AHMEDABAD, GUJARAT

Jain Siddhantik Shabdaparichay, a 456-page glossary explaining in simple Gujarati the meanings of words used in the Jain scriptures, has recently been published. The glossary has been painstakingly compiled by Sunandaben Vohora, who hopes that it will be particularly useful to those living outside India. The book is divided into two parts, 328 pages for Glossary and other 128 pages for Dictionary.

VANDALISM AND THEFTS AT JAIN TEMPLES IN RAJASTHAN

JALORE, RAJASTHAN

Three idols of *Tirthankara Bhagwan*, installed recently at a famous historic temple on the Swarn giri mountain, were mutilated by dacoits, who also stole valuables from the temple, including gold and silver. Incidents of theft of valuables and mutilation of idols are increasingly common in the Jain temples of Rajasthan. Despite complaints lodged with local and state authorities, no action seems to have been taken to ensure the safety and security of Jain temples. Last year twelve cases of theft were recorded, involving loss of lakhs of rupees and antique pieces. This has given rise to serious concern amongst the Jain community and representations have been made to the Chief Ministers of Rajasthan and Gujarat, Governors of States, the Indian President and Prime Minister, and the Human Rights Commission.

9TH CENTURY JAIN TEMPLE UNEARTHED

KOTA, RAJASTHAN

An ancient Jain temple of Bhagwan Rishabhdevji, dating back to the 9th century, was discovered at Awa, a remote village in Sangod district, 43 kilometres away from Kota. The temple complex, though in a completely dilapidated condition, is supposed to be of considerable historical and archaeological significance. The Archaeological Department of Rajasthan Government has taken charge of the site and efforts are being made to confer 'protected monuments' status upon it. As there is no Jain population in the vicinity of the temple, no worship is carried out and it currently lies disused.



Compiled by Prakash Mody

IMAGES OF TIRTHANKARAS FOUND FROM CAVES

CHANDKHEDI, MADHYA PRADESH

The Jain saint Sudhasagarji, disciple of Acharya Vidyasagarji came out of the caves at Chandkhedi, 55 kilometres from Ataru on 31 March 2002, carrying three images made of quartz colourless crystal rock, *sphatik mani*. The images were of a rare nature, of an almost supernatural quality. One of them was of Chandaprabhuji, 2.5 feet in height, the second of Arihant Bhagwan and the third of Parshvanath Bhagwan. It is probably the first time that statues of such clear crystal stone have been obtained. The saint had earlier proclaimed that he had been advised in a dream to take these images out from a certain place inside the caves on a particular day and time. According to the saint, Chandkhedi village is itself about 1,200 years old and so the images would be much older than that. The images are at present in the custody of the temple authorities and will be appropriately installed in due course.

RELIGIOUS LEADERS LAUNCH EFFORT TO END WORLD CONFLICTS

BANGKOK, THAILAND

Religious leaders representing the world's major faiths assembled in the Thai capital to shape a programme of community initiatives aimed at solving some of the world's more pressing problems. More than 100 religious leaders launched a world peace council on 13 June 2002, pledging to work toward reducing sectarian conflicts especially in Asia and the Middle East. The council was established at the start of a three-day meeting in Bangkok, attended by Christian, Buddhist, Jewish, Jain, Muslim and Hindu clerics with the support of the United Nations. The World Council of Religious Leaders, which aims to actively intervene in conflict areas, is the outcome of the recommendations of the August 2000 UN Millennium World Peace Summit. "There is a sense of urgency among the leaders to work for peace," said Bawa Jain, secretary general of the Millennium World Peace Summit. "The use of religion to promote divisiveness and violence must be countered by religious leaders from all traditions willing to become actively engaged in building peace," he said.

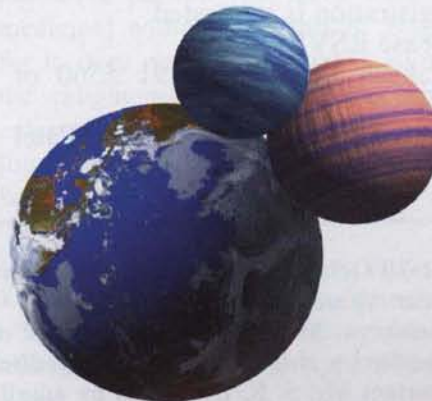
HARISH BHARTI TAKES BATTLE TO PIZZA HUT

NEW YORK, USA

Harish Bharti, a Seattle-based Indian American lawyer who fought and won a \$10 million settlement from McDonald's for deceiving vegetarian customers, is now taking on the world's largest pizza chain, Pizza Hut. McDonald's had said that the oil used to cook its popular French fries contained no beef extracts, a claim Bharti proved wrong. Now Bharti is confronting Pizza Hut, a subsidiary of Tricon Global Restaurants, with the claim that "the chain intentionally failed to publicly disclose its continued use of beef product in its pizza and other food items sold as vegetarian."

Pizza Hut spokesperson, Patty Sullivan denied the claim. "There are no beef products in the Veggie Lover's pizza... the pizza sauce is pure. It does not contain beef or chicken flavouring." Pizza Hut 'fully discloses' all ingredients on its web site in view of customers' dietary requirements and the firm 'exceeds' federal labelling and disclosure requirements, she claimed.

"The enzyme used in our pizza cheese, both in the shredded that goes on the majority of our pies and the sliced for P'Zone are vegetable/microbial based," Sullivan added. However, Bharti says this is not the case and has attached an affidavit from one of his clients, which declares Pizza Hut employees had told her that there was beef in the enzymes. "Pizza Hut say there is no beef in the vegetable pizza. Our claim is that they have 50 percent beef in their cheese," Bharti said. "I am not surprised that their initial knee-jerk reaction is to deny. Just as how McDonald's denied it. First we are going to have them to admit it. It took McDonald's three months to apologise and admit. It's too early perhaps for Pizza Hut."



EDUCATIONAL LOAN FOR JAIN STUDENTS

NEW YORK, U. S. A.

The International Alumni Association of Shri Mahavir Jain Vidyalaya, a non-profit organisation, enters the third year of its educational loan programme for Jain students graduating from US high schools. The loan of US\$ 4,000 (\$1,000 per year) is awarded for undergraduate college studies to students selected on the basis of academic merit, community services and financial need. During the first two years, the Association awarded a total of \$32,000 in loans.

For more information visit: www.iaamjv.org

NEW JAIN CENTRE

MANCHESTER, ENGLAND:

A new community centre is about to be opened in Manchester during September 2002. There are over 100 Jain families in this city and the new complex will serve their social and cultural needs.

SARNATH JAINS RESENT PREVENTION OF IMAGE INSTALLATION

VARANASI, INDIA:

The Jain community has strongly resented the ban placed by local authorities on the installation of the image of 11th Tirthankar, Shreyansnathji in the premises of the Digambar Jain Dharmshala at Sarnath, near Varanasi in India. When the installation ceremony of the 11 feet tall statue, weighing 1,000 kilograms, had been arranged, the Archaeological Department raised an objection and prevented its installation. Sarnath is the birthplace of Shreyansnathji. In Jain history, it is regarded as a holy place of worship. Refusal to allow installation has hurt the feelings of the local Jain community.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

PARYUSHAN – A FESTIVAL OF FORGIVENESS

This festival will be celebrated by Jain groups and communities all over the world; please contact your local group for details.

4 SEPTEMBER:

Swetambar sect's *Paryushan-parva* begins.

10 SEPTEMBER:

Samavatsari Day of Forgiveness, *Paryushan* ends and Digambar sect's *Daslakshana* starts.

11 SEPTEMBER:

Parna (Fast-breaking) ceremony

19 SEPTEMBER:

Ananta-chaturdasi

20 SEPTEMBER:

Kshamavani, Day of Forgiveness; *Daslakshana* ends.

A community luncheon is held at the end of *Paryushan* where all Jains living in a locality share a meal together.

4 NOVEMBER: *Diwali*



The Kalpasutra manuscript being venerated in London

AN EVENING WITH MIRA KAMDAR

15 September 2002, North York
(near Toronto), Canada

SHABDASETU, Canada's Gujarati Literary Group, presents 'An Evening with Mira Kamdar'. The Indian American writer will read from her award-winning book *Motiba's Tattoos: A Granddaughter's Journey into her Indian Family's Past*, and talk informally in English about her writing. *Motiba's Tattoos* (serialised in *Jain Spirit*) traces the history of a Gujarati family, beginning in a small village in

Kathiawar, via a passage through riches in Burma, a way-stop in the cosmopolitan Bombay of the 1960s and 1970s, and finally, life in a globalised world between India and America.

The event is to be held at Oriole Community Centre, 2975 Don Mills Road West, North York.

There is no charge, but advance registration is requested.

Please RSVP:

Prakash Mody 416 491 5560 or
mody@sympatico.ca

Alternatively, contact Kishor Patel
on 905 770 8298.

She is planning to visit London around 21st October to launch her book, and *Jain Spirit* will be organising her lectures.

Contact us for more details.



*Mira Kamdar,
author *Motiba's Tattoos**

PREKSHA DHYAN RETREAT

21-30 October 2002 at Preksha Vishva Bharti, Koba,
near Ahmedabad, India.

Acharya Mahapragyaji, head of the Terapanth sect of Jainism, will conduct a shibir (camp) and meditation classes. For further information, contact Mr. S. R. Bhandari by email on: sr_bhandari@indiatimes.com

Family Values

MIKE TURNER

COMMISSIONED BY JAIN SPIRIT



QUOTES & QUIPS

I have nothing new to teach the world. Truth and non-violence are as old as the hills.

Mahatma Gandhi

The practise of *Ahimsa* (non-violence) is both an individual and a collective virtue. The principle of *Ahimsa* has great potential significance, because it is basic in concept and universal in its moral principles.

Chitrabhanu

Listen to the True Path of the Jinas, with constant inner focus.

With no desire for praise nor love for the pain of rebirth.

Shrimad Rajchandra (1867-1957)

To err is human, to forgive divine.

Alexander Pope

From Samayasara, by Acharya Kundakunda:

If one performs austerities (*tapas*) or observes vows (*vratas*) without fixed contemplation of the Supreme Self, the all-knowing call it childish austerity and childish vow.

As an artisan performs his work, but does not become identical with it, so also the Self produces karma but does not become identical with it.

Thus devoid of a clear understanding of the nature of the objects of knowledge and incapable of abstaining from external influence and himself not attaining mental happiness, the ignorant person does not go along the path of peace.

Just as gold, however much it is heated, never loses its intrinsic nature, so also the right knowing Self, however much it is burnt by the associated karmas, does not lose his intrinsic nature of pure knowledge.

Of whatever psychic disposition, good or bad, the Self is produced he is certainly the substantive cause. That disposition becomes his karma or action and the Self enjoys the fruits thereof.

Just as a person who takes wine (as medicine) without any special longing for it, does not get intoxicated, so also the enlightened Self, while he enjoys external objects without any special longing towards them, does not get bound.

One who experiences the fruits of karmas thinks that he has brought it about, again sows the seeds of karmic bondage and misery of eight different kinds.

He who commits crimes such as theft, while moving among the people, is troubled by anxiety and fear – “I may be arrested at any moment as a thief.” But one who commits no such crime freely moves among the people without any such anxiety, because in his case no thought of arrest ever occurs.

When the material karmas pertaining to attachment, aversion and grosser emotions begin to operate, the empirical ego begins to have corresponding psychic states, which produce in their turn, fresh karmic bondage.

Thus devoid of a clear understanding of the nature of the objects of knowledge and incapable of abstaining from external influence and himself not attaining mental happiness, the ignorant person does not go along the path of peace.

Text Message – Post-Exam blues

Gt no mor xams 4 nothr yr!
Ys bt nw u hav 2 decid wot 2 do
No prob I ll chill out
Wot if u each cold?
Dnt b sily I'll bask in t sn
Care u mit get burnt
Doin nothin can get boring
Tru its btr 2 do sum constrectiv txtng

AVOID LIFE'S TRAFFIC JAMS

Pooja is serious fun, explains Atul K Shah



Children consider the temple as a creative playground and befriend God in the process

INDIA BEGINS ITS DAY WITH WORSHIP. People pray, bow, meditate and bathe the divine. This is a rare phenomenon in the modern world of religious scepticism. During my recent visit to India, I was fascinated to observe one community practising this act of reverence – the Jains. Every morning, many Jains all over India take a bath, put on fresh saintly clothes and walk barefoot to their local temple.

They embark on their daily pilgrimage with no possessions and high aspirations.

On a street in Mumbai, it is very easy to mark out the Jains by their dresses. Some of them even carry a cloth mask that they must wear when inside the temple. From the moment they walk into the temple, they remove the worldly concerns from their mind and enter into meditation. Their focus

is on the *Tirthankaras*, the teachers and ford makers who conquered their own vices to teach the world about compassion and salvation through their own living example. The recitation of the *Namokar Mahamantra* encourages them to salute the achievements of all divine souls who attained salvation.

The world today is full of sceptics of religion. Scientists and intellectuals are adamant that God has no place on

earth, and all religions are full of dogma and against reason. However, in reality, most Indian traditions should not be labelled as religions in the western sense because they are actually *dharma*, the sciences of sustainable living. They are far from dogmatic, and are open to rational debate and analysis. They are directly intertwined with culture and everyday life, and cannot be observed or studied in isolation from this. In many ways, Indian spiritual traditions have made invaluable contributions to modern science.

Still, I would like to invite a sceptic to come and observe the Jains. They do not need to believe what I write, simply to come and see for themselves. Come and enter a Jain temple in the early morning and experience the atmosphere. The design of the temple is simple yet beautiful. There is plenty of natural light and the temperature is cool. It is very clean inside and in their *pooja* the Jains give a morning bath to the *Tirthankaras* and pray that their virtues rub on themselves. These enlightened teachers taught us the science of sustainable living through non-violence, non-possessiveness and reverence for all living beings. The worshippers seek inspiration and remind themselves of the values of peaceful co-existence – love, non-materialism and simplicity. The cloth mask that they wear encourages them to recite only pure words and stops them from accidentally breathing in any insects and injuring them during the act of worship. Self-purification is the primary objective of their *pooja*.

The ingredients used in the *pooja* are also very simple and ecological – water, rice, flowers and saffron. Nothing is wasted. Inside the temple one sees people silently going about their worship, not arguing nor talking with one another. People of all ages come to worship, especially on a Sunday when schools are closed and children have more time. I found it fascinating to watch the children, and it appeared as if they were playing and decorating the Lord, who was their friend and hero at the same time. Everyone felt relaxed and

at home inside the temple. I did not see any act of greed or violence – it was as if there was a very peaceful community of souls who did not want to preach but simply live a good life without hurting anyone. Any scientist witnessing the *pooja* would be touched by the experience, provided they opened both their hearts and their minds. Here lies sustainable living in practice, conducted quietly and deliberately without any fanfare.

After the *pooja*, the Jain walks home barefoot, in the same way that he came. He re-enters the world of family, work, business or profession. Often, this becomes a messy world, very different



Above :
Amit Shah inviting
people by blowing
a conch



Left :
Reading and reciting

Below :
Singing and chanting
sacred hymns

from the temple, where one has to engage with people, get involved in transactions and make practical compromises. It is noisy and one is forced to negotiate the traffic jams of daily existence. This seems far removed from the peaceful sanctuary of the temple. The sceptic may argue once again that the worship was useless and did not change a thing. I know, because I was also a sceptic once. ►





Young worshipper wearing muhpatti and anointing the images with saffron paste

However, the *pooja* works at a deeper level. It works inside the body, making a mark on the soul. It aims to elevate the inner consciousness so that it is better able to understand the challenges of everyday living and deal with the situations as they arise. So when a Jain returns home from the temple, he has taken an inner bath that will invigorate his daily activities. There is a good chance that the qualities of the temple – creativity, simplicity and peace will now enter into his relationships and actions. The worshipper may now inspire others by his own conduct and character. The temple has entered his soul, and he is now taking it to the people.

Life presents us with many problems on a daily basis. There are many books and gurus who give answers to these problems. However, ultimately the responsibility of dealing with them lies within our own self. I believe that a sincere *pooja* can lift us and strengthen our resolve to face life sincerely and live peacefully and harmoniously. If we begin work with worship, there is a good chance that our work itself becomes an act of worship, where the values of love, tolerance and respect are paramount. If only the whole world would start their day with sincere and meaningful worship... 🙏

Atul K Shah wrote this article for the 'Times of India' Speaking Tree column dated 9 April 2002. He is Executive Editor of Jain Spirit.

Dr. John Cort's latest book 'Jains In The World', Oxford University Press 2001, describes and explains temple rituals very well.



Children praying and experiencing the peace inside the temple



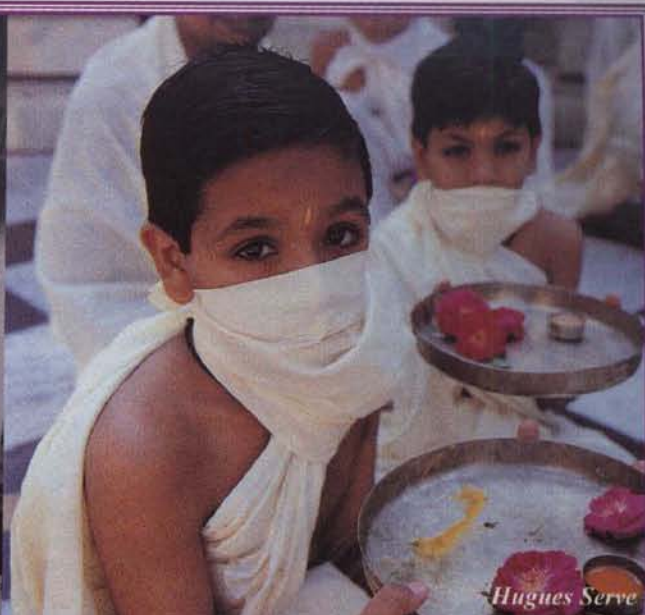
Conducting a dhoop-pooja



The flower-seller outside the temple



Atul Shah



Hugues Serve



Chandu Shah

CALL FOR ENTRIES

JAIN SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

Classes

Adult: sixteen years old and above.

Junior: below sixteen years old.

Prizes

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

Adult Categories

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

Junior Categories

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



P.E.T.A.

The Aim

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

How to enter

You will need a copy of the rules and an official entry form available from the web site: www.jainspirit.com

Closing date 28th February 2003.

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

EVERY CHILD IS UNIQUE

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Our children need to be nurtured but not moulded on parental fear or ego,
explains Divya Ajay Shah

PARENTING IS A HUGE RESPONSIBILITY. IT IS ALSO A tremendous opportunity. Parents can bring up their children such that they produce rays of hope wherever they go. However, the modern world seems tough, fast-moving and stressful, both for parents and for children. In this article, I would like to show how children can help us to heal ourselves and the planet. If we allow and support them in the right way.

To be born a human being is considered to be a rare privilege. It is stated in the Jain scriptures that it is only in the human birth that a soul can attain liberation. Even the angels are said to crave to be born as humans, so that they may progress on the path of evolution. I believe that each one of us is at a different stage of evolution and the final destination for all is to realise one's soul in its purest form and attain liberation. It may take several births but every birth that we take is to progress on our path towards perfection.

One of the most important things to realise is that the child is *not ours*. He or she does not belong to us. We do not create

his character, his capacities and his talents. These he created for himself by lives of experience in the past. He comes to us because of bondages from past lives and to work out some of his karmas – good and bad – and to progress on his path of evolution. Kahlil Gibran has said, “Your children are not your children. They are an expression of life’s longing for itself. They come through you but they belong not to you. And they dwell in the house of tomorrow. Therefore, don’t give them your thoughts or make them in your image..”

Various great thinkers and philosophers have broadly identified four aspects of a human being. These are; the physical body, the emotional body, the mental or intellectual body, the intuitional or spiritual body. To bring up a balanced child all these aspects need to be properly nurtured. Rudolph Steiner (founder of the Waldorf Schools) and J. Krishnamurti set up their education systems based on this.

The development of the physical body emphasises the need for a well balanced diet and ample exercise. Diet becomes an important issue in the modern culture of fast foods. It requires

a special effort and a conscious family decision to limit the number of meals taken outside. As far as possible meals should be prepared from fresh fruit and vegetables so that the intake of preservatives is minimised. And how often do we compromise on going out for a walk or taking our children to the park to play because of a television programme that we do not want to miss! Children need to be able to release their excess energy. If this is not done through exercise, it might come out in an unpleasant way.

In the nurturing of the emotional and mental bodies, the modern trend in parenting plays a detrimental role. The following are some of the warped beliefs held:

- My child must excel in whatever he is doing. I will therefore send him for extra classes and tuition.
- If Mr and Mrs X's child can do so well in any sport e.g. swimming, my child should do so too, whether he enjoys it or not.
- I will make sure that my child makes the most of the opportunities he now has and which I never did. He must not waste any time.
- My child needs to maintain the competitive spirit as that is the only way he will be a success in future.

On a macro level, if a parent has managed to achieve all of the above in a child, what would be his traits when he grows up? He would be self-centered, aggressive, ambitious, greedy and even competitive. Would it then be possible to create a society that is non-violent, peaceful, co-operative and harmonious? Would there be any place for the compassion that Mahavir and Buddha had? Is it a surprise that wars are never ending?

Let's look at the level of the individual and the family. Each soul is unique. The theosophical literature explains beautifully why different people are oriented in different directions. For example some people are artistic while others are more logical in their thinking. In their religious quest some follow the *gnan marg*, they progress spiritually by the study of the scriptures, while others make the same progress by the path of devotion, the *bhakti marg*. There are seven different temperaments identified. People with similar temperaments are believed to be born under one ray. There are thus seven rays. Our children could belong to any of these rays and could have inclinations and talents in different skills. Do we see the folly of comparing one child against another?

It is essential that we expose our children to as much as we can – to art, music, nature and beauty. We should help them to discover where they find fulfilment. It could be something that we concur with. It may also happen that what we think is a good sport or art might not be what he or she wants to do. Too often we try and impose our ideas and ambitions onto the defenceless child who wants so much to please and gain approval of the parents or teachers that he will try hard for a

while. Inevitably there would come a time when the situation comes to a head. One of two things could happen then. The child might just rebel and refuse to do what is asked of them. Most of us know that when this happens, it is not restricted to one or two issues only. It affects all the areas of our dealings with him and a vicious circle is created. We get upset with him, he feels we don't understand him and the result is constant conflict. The other consequence of not respecting or even squashing his feelings is that the child might withdraw completely. He might feel that he is a failure, that he cannot do anything right and may quit trying. His self-esteem would decline. All of us want to be happy and it has been proven time and time again that happiness is not derived from material things. True happiness is feeling good about oneself, and I believe that the greatest gift that we can give our children is a healthy self-respect. Can you imagine what a child could achieve if he truly believed in himself?

If asked whether we love our children, we would always say 'of course we do'. True love must be unconditional however. I believe that each one of us would like to be loved for exactly who we are. The mistake that our parents made

with us and that we make with our children is that we do not separate the individual from his actions. Consider a scenario where your child has thrown all the books from the shelf onto the floor. "You are a naughty boy,,," or "That was a naughty thing to do,,," are the two responses you could give. In the former statement the child's person has been attacked. He has been labelled in all finality.

In the second statement we are condemning the action. If any disciplinary measure is taken against him, it is important to make him understand that it is against the action, and not because you think he is naughty and perhaps unlovable. Similarly, when the child has done something commendable, it is the action that should be praised and not the child, the presumption being that each child is always good. Our love for him is not dependent upon how he behaves. I think it is very important to communicate this to our children on a regular basis. If they can look at all the people that they come across in this light, would not it be easier to forgive? Forgiveness (*kshamapana*) is another quality Lord Mahavir strongly encouraged.

When the child is given the freedom to be himself and to discover for himself where his happiness lies, the child will be living naturally and using his talents to the best of his abilities. Such a child will inevitably be of great service to the world. If we can manage to do this with our children, then we have fulfilled our responsibility as parents and as temporary guardians of a soul who is on a journey towards perfection. 🙏

Divya Ajay Shah is a mother of two sons and an active member of the Theosophical Society. She lives in Nairobi, Kenya.

“Children come through you but do not belong to you.”

TRANSFORM YOURSELF



Rakesh Zaveri

A dynamic Mumbai-based guru,
Rakesh Zaveri talks to *Jain Spirit* about his
 interpretation of Jainism

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT is essential to human progress and self-development. We cannot succeed in life unless we have inner depth and well-being. We focus our work on

spiritual education and have set up several groups for children and young people based on their age and peers. There are 24 brahmacharis who work with me full-time and are totally devoted to the spiritual and moral upliftment of people. All of them are double graduates. I personally left studies at the age of sixteen and went to learn classical music and philosophy. I also told my parents that I did not want to get married and wanted to pursue the spiritual path full-time.

I embarked on a crash course to get a degree, followed by a two-year MA at Bombay University where I studied Hinduism, Buddhism and all the ancient spiritual traditions of India. I have always been interested in these subjects, so I enjoyed it tremendously. Then, I pursued my PhD on Shrimad Rajchandra with Professor Ramanlal Shah. I think there should be a balanced diet in food as well as in self-study (*sadhana*). Continuous study is an important part of *sadhana*, and I encourage all the youths to undertake scientific study of religion first. Many of the youths in our wing have completed the MA at Bombay University. I recommend that people should spend three hours a day on meditation and study and then do their work or service. This really keeps everyone sharp and fresh, and we feel that every soul has this potential.

One day, a sceptical young Jain from New York came to me and had a large number of questions and concerns. I spent 17 hours with him and after detailed interrogation, he came to understand and accept our Jain philosophy and now his life has changed dramatically. To transcend our soul, we need to transcend our mind and therefore I place a very strong emphasis on intellectual study. I welcome and invite questions all the time. Without understanding, religion will ultimately become empty and routine. Jainism is so scientific, so perfect and coherent that it gives immediate satisfaction to any genuine seeker. First, you must desire to achieve salvation, then you plan out the strategy, execute it and finally you will achieve liberation.

Religion is not about activity but about attitude.

In our group, we use a variety of different techniques to educate and inform including art, theatre, computers and presentations. We draw on different religions and groups for ideas and suggestions. For example, from the Aurobindo ashram in Pondicherry, we learnt that there would be problems in day-to-day management of the spiritual institutions, but the trick is to elevate yourself. From a rooftop, a problem looks much smaller, so when we elevate ourselves we automatically begin to resolve any traffic jams. This is precisely what religion is about. It enables us to understand the nature of life's problems and challenges, and thereby helps us transcend it.

We encourage people to learn and understand, and then to transform their lives through practical actions. We actively invite dialogue and debate. Jainism is a very scientific tradition, very open to investigation and introspection. It is a rational tradition which will truly appeal to intelligent people. It has no dogma; it is really a way of life. It does not require faith to understand it. The value of Jain principles can be experienced and tested right here, in our own life today. Jainism encourages each one of us to study, reflect and believe deep down in our own self and the knowledge that resides in our own soul. We do not need to believe in Mahavir to find true salvation, but to understand and live the science that he revealed. *Pooja* is the first step, but it will not bring salvation by itself. It can be used to draw inspiration, but ultimately we have to embark on our own journey for self-realisation.

***"To transcend
 our soul, we need to
 transcend our
 mind."***

I am also strongly against the denial of social obligations and responsibilities (*sansaar*). We have to attain salvation through *sansaar* and not by avoiding or dismissing it. *Samayika* should have a direct impact on practical lifestyle and choices, and should not be in contradiction with our daily actions. Religion is about elevation, not escapism. Unfortunately, many people think that it is about escapism and therefore miss the whole point of true *dharma*. Personally I do not think that one must go to the temple to attain enlightenment. No. I would rather people understood and elevated their lives away from violence, jealousy and greed, the petty vices of modern living.

We are against all meaningless rituals, and feel that religion should not be identified purely with ritual. I would like to transform ritual into spi-ritual. The spirit and its condition at the time of prayer or worship are of critical importance. Religion is beyond materialism and ritual can trap us into a materialistic life, which will prevent us from achieving true freedom.

tree has lots of branches, all of which are connected in the base, the root. What is wrong in that? There is nothing wrong in forming a group, provided there is intellectual openness and non-dogmatism. Mahavir is my God, Shrimad Rajchandra is my guru, the one who has interpreted the religion for me in the best possible and scientific way, so I follow him. I am not saying that Shrimad

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Intellectual study of scriptures and sacred books is very important for spiritual development

To me the jewel is more important than the jewellery box. That is why I do not much care whether one is a Shvetambara Jain or a Digambara Jain, a Deravasi or a Sthanakvasi. What is crucial is that we aim for salvation through constant self-study and self-improvement. In my opinion, our guru Shrimad Rajchandra was a reformer and a revolutionary, but he did not start another sub-group or sect within Jainism. I am completely against divisions within the Jain community and would like Jains to unite in spirit and in fact. I feel divisions are created by followers, not by founders. It is the sign of our own weakness if we are unable to understand true *dharma* as non-sectarian and universal. I would not like to be classified as a Shrimad Rajchandra follower, but as a Jain.

Some people say that I have started a new cult in Jainism. Even Gandhiji was accused of starting a cult. Personally, I am trying to establish a pattern in life and encourage people to follow it. I am strongly influenced by Shrimad Rajchandra's writings and consider him as my guru. However, this does not mean that I do not read about or learn from other great gurus of life. There is no harm in pursuing religion as a group. Every

Rajchandra is my God, because then I would be starting a new religion. Our primary aim is to enable a transformation within, and not to create a new sect or division. We have tremendous love for Shrimad, whom we consider to be our father. Mahavir is our grandfather, whom we respect completely.

I invite everyone to test my words for themselves and only apply them if they find them relevant to their own life. I do not force people to follow my way of thinking. They are encouraged to believe in themselves. I consider myself as an instrument or as an interpreter. I am not closed in any way. I really hope that young people all over the world make some attempt to study Jainism before they decide to dismiss it or reject it. I am convinced that if they do careful investigation, they will discover a lot of truth and spiritual wisdom. 🙏

Rakeshbhai is based in Mumbai and has a new ashram in Dharampur, 200 km away.



WHY ME?

Blame is easy, but acceptance and self-renewal are the real keys to happiness, explains **Ravi Khanna**

WHEN I WAS YOUNG, MY HEAD ALWAYS SEEMED FILLED with questions: “Why do the people on the streets of Delhi have so little to eat?” or “How come some children get nice parents, whereas the parents of others don’t seem to care?”

As I moved through adolescence and into my early adult life, the nature of my questions began to change and became more focussed upon my day-to-day experience: “Why couldn’t I be as good at sports or as good-looking or as popular as the other people I know?” “Why did I have to be born an Asian in a western community, where I may be treated on the basis of my colour rather than my ability?” “Why are particular people at work aggressive towards me, even though I always show courtesy and consideration towards them?”

Such questions would come to me, particularly when I was alone, so for many years I would seek out older people in the hope of finding some answers. Invariably though, whilst I found a degree of temporary emotional comfort from explanations suggesting that ‘that’s just the way it goes,’ or ‘but life isn’t fair,’ or

even ‘forget about these things and just learn to accept yourself for who you are,’ I wasn’t ultimately satisfied.

The idea of destiny appealed to me for a while, but later I began to think that this wasn’t good enough either. I still wanted to know what my destiny was based upon or caused by. I also became concerned that perhaps such a belief may lead me to become apathetic or uninterested in trying to make a difference to my life.

So the questions continued, until I stumbled across the word karma. I was told that every thought I had and every act I performed would release a form of energy into the world, and that at some point in the future that energy would come back to me. Therefore whenever I felt sad or unloved in my life, the best thing I could do was to practise being loving or giving happiness, and I hoped that in time those forms of energy would return to me in the experience of my daily life.

“That’s cute,” I thought, “but does it help me answer my questions?” Not immediately, but the more I delved into my research of karma theory, the more I began to realise that perhaps

it actually did! Upon reflection, I began to see how previously I was looking for an external, objective justification for the inequalities that troubled me. But in reality no such universal factors existed. Rather, in order to understand why my boss would shout at me, I had to look a little closer to home. I came to understand that I was the source of all my personal experiences, and that the events of my day-to-day life were directly connected to interactions that I had instigated in the past. With the knowledge of the human soul and an awareness that I had lived on this planet many times before my present birth, I came to see how my current relationships were nothing other than the energy returning to me from other souls, that I had previously passed to them.

I studied accounts of a Shinto priest who upon entering into a state of meditation in the presence of someone else, began to witness the acts this person had carried out in their previous incarnation. On one occasion his mother came before him. For years the priest's father had physically abused his wife, even though she had done little to warrant such behaviour, always treating her husband with respect and gentle care. In meditation however, the priest witnessed how his mother had been married to her present husband in their previous life. But in that birth she had been the husband and he the wife. In that relationship she had been the abuser, and had treated her husband in a manner that was not dissimilar to the way he was now abusing her. The priest clearly saw how their current relationship was simply the settling of a karmic account she had perpetuated in their previous life together.

As a result, my view of my boss's behaviour changed. Before, I would question myself as to what right she had to act in this way and how unfair it all was since I had done nothing to warrant such treatment. But now I accepted that I was only receiving energy that I had previously given out to her, albeit not necessarily during our present relationship. I therefore had no right to blame her for acting in this way, and it would be better to focus upon the way in which I chose to respond to her. Instead of returning her actions with more negativity of my own making, I should seek to break that cycle and begin to create more positive karma by offering her even more love and respect than I had done before. For I knew that in time the negative account would settle. As the effect of my transformed attitude begins to kick in, a new and more productive chapter in our on-going karmic relationship would result, which we would both come to appreciate.

Once I accepted that I was the architect of my own life experience, I began to resolve many questions. But then I found myself wondering what the motivation behind karma might be – if indeed there was one!

At university I chose to study the classical Indian traditions

of thought upon which Jainism, Hinduism and Buddhism are ultimately based. In doing so my understanding of the soul was greatly enhanced and I came to believe that at this moment every human being basically consists of two separate identities – a pure spirit and acquired personality. Whilst essentially I am an individual comprised of the purest energy manifested in the form of love, purity, wisdom, joy and truth, over time I have lost touch with this self-awareness and with these divine qualities. Instead, I have come to identify the self in physical terms, such as gender, age and the beliefs and roles which I see myself carrying out. As a result, an acquired personality emerges based upon the way I come to perceive myself and how others see me.

Still, deep down my true self is bursting to emerge once again, and here is where karma fits in. I believe that my events and experiences are influenced by my latent spiritual self who needs them as opportunities to develop those virtues and qualities that have become lost within me. With this view, our world becomes like a karmic gymnasium, whereby situations come my way specifically to address spiritual deficiencies within my emerging nature. Just as in a gym one would find different apparatuses to exercise different muscles within the body, I believe the human soul designs specific situations in order to develop parts of itself which have been lacking before.

In the case of my boss, I feel that my spirit sought a job in the company where she was, not only to settle a karmic account between us, but also to help me learn to overcome my ego and

practise the qualities of tolerance and love more deeply. In choosing to see potential problems in this way, instead of reacting and creating even deeper karmic problems for myself, I have come to realise that I can use them to actually assist me in my journey to return to spiritual completion and perfection.

My questions have been replaced lately with an understanding that the things I previously thought were unfair are actually perfectly fair, as they have a directly attributable cause and reason for being. But more than that, each situation is my teacher, and a very useful and well-meaning one at that! For never being able to catch a bus to get to work on time, or persisting with a car which I love dearly even though it continually breaks down are actually situations which have been designed and sent to me to help me become the perfect being that deep down I really am. The only thing I have to do to return to that state is to be open to see the underlying reason for every occurrence which comes my way, and actively practise the spiritual quality and understanding it is asking of me. 🙏

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***“I am the architect of
my own life experience
and do not blame anyone
for my problems.”***



EMOTIONS DO MATTER

Mala Kapadia comments on the new American fad of Emotional Quotient (EQ) as an ingredient of success, explaining how emotions have always been important in Indian tradition

THE SUDDEN INTEREST IN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN the West makes it sound like a new component in the realm of Intelligence that has just been discovered by the scientists. In fact, emotions and intelligence have both been thought as opposing each other – the heart vs. the head. The awareness of their effect on each other has grown exponentially over the past few years as a response to the fast changing organisational realities. The world as a global village has posed different challenges, and the parameters for success are changing fast. Emotional Intelligence has thus become the latest *mantra* of success.

Technical expertise, IQ or academic excellence have traditionally been the barometer of success where the organisational situations were well defined and the rules of the games clear. The changing scenario is posing totally different challenges, where one needs to adapt not only to the changing rules but the change in games as well. Globalisation has created work cultures that require IQ or technical expertise only as threshold capability, which is then complemented holistically by emotional competencies. Research studies of star performers, leaders and successful professionals have all revealed one common thread: they are emotionally intelligent.

The conventional view of emotion is weakness – it is seen as interfering with good judgement, a sign of vulnerability, obstructing reasoning, undermining authority and complicating business management. The paradigm shift with the advent of the emotional intelligence concept portrays emotions as a sign of strength, essential to good judgement. It makes the person real and alive, enhances reasoning, generates influence, builds trust without authority and sparks creativity and innovation.

Emotions, *motus anima* (in Latin), mean the spirit that moves us. The latest neurological evidence indicates that emotion is the indispensable fuel for the brain's higher reasoning powers. The scientific exploration of emotions have emerged in two different dimensions – one, purely physio-

logical, which studies the evolution of the human brain, the emotion centres, the neural circuits, etc. The second research is to understand emotions as 'energy' that moves us. Our emotions, as much as or even more than our bodies and minds, contain our histories – every line and verse of every experience, deep understanding and the relationships in our lives. They comprise the feeling of who we are and enter our systems as energy. Energy, as we have been taught, is neither created nor destroyed. It flows. This energy is the primary source of influence and power.

In India, the scientific study of emotions and emotional intelligence is centuries old, almost dating back to the 2nd or 3rd century B.C. Bharat Muni, the founder of *Natyashastra*, has detailed the description of feelings and emotions as *bhava* and *rasa*. He has classified them in eight main families, namely *Shrungar*, *Vir*, *Karuna*, *Hasya*, *Rudra*, *Bibhatsa*, *Bhayanak* and *Adbhoot*. *Rasa* are emotions felt with an intensity that creates energy. *Bhava* are feelings which are fleeting, which may be momentary and may die before they reach the intense state of becoming an emotion. The families of emotions and feelings described by Daniel Goleman in the Appendix of '*EQ - why it matters more than IQ*' correspond to the families of *rasa* and *bhava* to a large degree. Again, the invoking of *bhava* or *rasa* is an internal process based on the genetic makeup and the level of consciousness of an individual. Any *bhava* or *rasa*, when experienced with intensity by an evolved person, loses the materialistic or worldly connotations and transcends to the highest sense of bliss. This transformation of *bhava* or *rasa* to a higher state can easily be related to emotional intelligence.

The purpose of any true religion is to evolve our consciousness to a higher level. My Reiki Master is a Jain and she regularly expands my horizon into Jain philosophy and values. It confirms my beliefs that all true religions ultimately align with the universal principles. Jainism contributes to Emotional Intelligence as it is based on forgiveness,

compassion and universal love. Forgiveness, called *kshama* in Sanskrit, is the fountain of energy that flows from our compassion and empathy (*karuna*) and connects all in one thread of universal love. We all are victims of the IQ based civilization that has become devoid of the above inner values. IQ led growth or progress has only resulted in unforgiveness, hatred and revenge.

According to my understanding of Jainism, emotional unintelligence is due to our *kashayas*. The word *kashaya* (passions) can be broken down into *kasha*, meaning worldly life and *aya*, meaning gain. The literal meaning of *kashaya* is to gain worldly life again, which means that as long as you have *kashayas*, the cycle of birth and death will continue. There are four types of *kashayas*: anger (*krodha*), ego (*mana*), deceit (*maya*) and greed (*lobha*).

When anger (*krodha*) flares we lose our sense of judgement. Virtues of love and forgiveness are destroyed. Anger arises if someone acts against our wish, if someone causes obstacles in the fulfilment of our desires. Anger invites revenge. Instead of an angry nature we should have a forgiving and peaceful nature. Not only is anger harmful in this life, but it can bring bitter consequences in our next lives too. Sometimes, virtuous people become angry but they immediately calm down and ask for forgiveness from the people they became angry with. We should do the same. By following their example, the sin caused by anger would be removed. We should cultivate virtues such as forgiveness, penance and repentance.

A greedy person (*lobha*) is not satisfied with what he has. To get more, the person may use all kinds of means without caring for others. We should be content with what we have and only accumulate to meet our needs. Our needs can range from basics to insatiable demands of the materialistic culture. If we develop the habit of helping others by offering what we have, greed will have no place. Greed destroys peace and happiness while caring brings them back.

One who is full of ego (*mana*) loses his sense of judgement and politeness. A proud person invites his own destruction. We can obtain knowledge only if we are humble. Humility brings good thoughts where there is no room for pride or ego. Humility is at the root of religion and it is rather difficult to develop religious feelings as long as ego exists.

Deceit (*maya*) is responsible for a dishonest life. Due to deceit one loses friends. Honesty helps to realise the truth. A deceitful person has little understanding of religion.

These *kashayas* can be grouped into two categories:

attachment (*rag*) and hatred (*dwesh*). *Rag* is formed from *maya* and *lobha*; *dwesh* is formed from *krodha* and *mana*. Fortunately, we are not helpless victims of our *kashayas*. We have our inner spiritual consciousness which, when awakened due to our right karmas, can guide us through the right path. One needs to strive to turn these passions into *karuna*, *kshama* and love. There is great virtue in simplicity. Contemplating on *kashayas* is useful for our daily reflections and self-purification. Developing *karuna*, *kshama* and love creates the emotional energy to enhance our intelligence.

Anger is an emotion, which has universal presence and yet very few people have mastered the art of harnessing the energy generated by anger. Emotions, though not acknowledged, often continue to simmer beneath the threshold of consciousness and affect our body and mind. On a conscious level, we protect ourselves by not showing emotions lest it is

seen as a sign of weakness. Unfortunately, these barriers filter the fuller experience of pleasure or happier emotions as well. Moving away from nature and progressing technologically has also contributed to this numbness as we spend more and more time in the concrete jungle with machines, including computers. Alienation from the natural world has shut down emotional systems.

Occasionally these walls collapse, flooding us with chaotic, sometimes destructively strong emotions. We're going through life's experiences emotionally anaesthetised, with most of our feelings locked up in our hearts, constantly disappointed in an unreceptive world. The professional life is generally devoid of opportunities for emotional gratification. Organisations driven by bottom-lines have eventually been blinded in their passion for result-orientation, thus negating people-orientation.

Peter Drucker emphasises: "To make a living is no longer enough. Work also has to make a life." This life includes our emotional life as well. In fact, think of a typical day in our life. Think about how much time and energy is wasted protecting ourselves from people we do not trust, avoiding problems we cannot talk about, faking acceptance of decisions we do not agree with, remaining silent despite the intuitive sense of missing opportunities, putting up with jobs that aren't right or holding back the insights on current problems and emerging challenges. When we connect with the inner strength of *karuna* and *kshama*, we are able to connect better with the people around us and make meaningful choices in life. 🙏

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Successful relationships require emotional intelligence



SLOW FOOD

Lavinia Plonka demonstrates the joy of home cooking and shared eating, basic values which are being crushed by modernity

TWO ALL BEEF PATTIES, SPECIAL SAUCE
Lettuce, cheese, pickles, onions
On a sesame bun!"

This is the *mantra* that followed me through childhood, the seductive lure of those gleaming golden arches, the forbidden palace of trendy, speedy, tasty burgers. "Mantra?" you ask. Yes, it was a *mantra* in the sense that it played in my head all the time, crowding out other thoughts – I was just a childhood victim of American advertising. My parents were so backward, or so I thought. They called McDonald's junk. "How dare you eat that junk after your mother slaved all day over a hot stove to prepare you a wholesome meal?" Who knew then that 'junk food' would become an international addiction?

Since the invention of the clock by some over achieving Benedictine monks back in the middle ages, Westerners have been obsessed with 'making the best use of their time'. Somewhere, the process of preparing food has lost its value, along with sitting down, having a leisurely conversation and clearing the table. All of these values have been supplanted by important things like making more money (to buy more stuff you have no time to enjoy), sitting at the computer and watching TV – though, of course, you can watch TV while eating. In fact, thanks to TV, frozen dinner was created. Originally called TV dinners, you just popped them in the oven and then ate in front of the TV. They even invented TV dinner tables and trays. Today the frozen meal industry is almost as big as the fast food industry, and the microwave is considered an essential kitchen item.

Everyone is eating on the run – almost literally. The largest number of car accidents in the US are called 'food accidents' because they are caused by people either eating or drinking beverages while driving. We eat at our desks, while walking down the street or talking on our cell phones. The concept of the entire family sitting down to dinner is as alien to today's children as eating a pre-packaged instant peanut butter and jelly sandwich would have been to their grandparents.

While I was travelling in India, I had the opportunity to stay with a family in Pune for a few days. Each morning, a plastic bag of milk from a local cow was delivered to the door. The mother immediately set to work – putting a certain portion towards yoghurt, another portion to cheese and the rest for cooking. Each night we sat down to an extraordinary feast that had taken hours to prepare. We lingered at the table, having a little of this, a little of that. Then we cleared the table together, talking, laughing. One night, as a treat, the family ordered 'fast food'. The dishes were quickly unwrapped and before we knew it, the meal was over. In the air was the sense that something was missing.

A few years ago, there was a Mexican film entitled *Like Water For Chocolate*. It was a passionate love story whose protagonist was an amazing cook. In one scene, she had prepared a feast that everyone enjoyed immensely. A woman, practically swooning with pleasure at the amazing flavours, exclaims to her, "This sauce, what did you put in this sauce?" The character smiles, lists several ingredients, pauses, smiles and says, "...and love." Is this silly? Perhaps not. Science is discovering that our emotions affect our health, although they don't have all the explanations. Neurotransmitters are constantly coursing through our bodies so that our actual chemical composition changes if we are angry, happy or sad. Carolyn Myss, a noted medical expert has stated, "Your history is your biology," implying that your life experience affects your materiality. If, as they postulate in quantum physics, we are merely fields of energy and vibration, could not these vibrations go into the preparation of our food? Everyone has a fond memory of a favourite dish prepared by Mom. You could go to a gourmet restaurant and order the same thing – it would not taste like Mom's! The missing ingredient is the love she poured into it.

Like the vibrations in our body, food also imparts



It takes a long time to grow and prepare spices

energy. In *Ayurveda, A Life Of Balance*, author Maya Tiwari says, "Foods are not inert. The depth and density of their energy invariably correspond to the level of our internal energy. Foods that are grown naturally, without the use of chemicals and without undue processing, are the optimum choice...Canned, frozen or chemically-processed and fast foods are noxious to our health. *They are dead foods, devoid of any innate energy.*"

What has this fast food culture done to our lives? In *Fast Food Nation*, author Eric Schlosser suggests that the fast food industry has transformed the world as we know it – from unsightly franchises dotting sprawling suburbs to a spectacular rise in obesity (fast food could also be called fat food). Why spend \$5 on fresh produce, two hours preparing it, 1/2 hour cleaning up, when you can get a McDonald's Happy Meal and a free Star Wars collectible for 99 cents only? Real income in the US has steadily decreased in the last 30 years, so mothers who used to spend the afternoon, like my Indian friend, preparing food for the family, now have to work late. After an exhausting day it is much easier to bring home a Pizza Hut pizza. Since most advertising relentlessly target children, the kids are much happier with some Taco Bell than they are with Mom's sautéed greens and mashed potatoes.

Practising Jains have been spared much of the fallout created by fast food. Vegetarian selections are few, although in an effort to capture the youth market, even McDonald's now offer a veggie burger. By making it a point to eat before sundown, many Jains' eating habits differ from the late night binging common in our workaholic culture. Even as more and more people dive into their deep fried Kentucky Fried Chicken and Wendy's heart attack on a plate (a _-pound hamburger with

bacon and cheese), the medical industry is stressing the value of vegetables, light meals and eating dinner early. Why would anyone choose to eat otherwise? Could it be as simple as Schlosser suggests? "Fast food is now so commonplace that it has acquired an air of inevitability, as though it were somehow unavoidable, a fact of modern life." Advertising, marketing and our hectic lifestyle have literally driven us into this unhealthy approach to eating.

Ancient knowledge often carries a wisdom that is uncovered only after modern foolishness has created a disaster. The knowledge of medicinal herbs was persecuted by the Catholics as the work of the devil and later virtually wiped out by the pharmaceutical industry. Plastic

substitutes for naturally decomposing materials are now clogging our landfills. On the other hand, ancient meditation practices are now returning as tools for everything from spiritual awakening to pain management.

This is a crucial time for Jains trying to maintain traditional eating practices. Others may perceive that a vegetarian meal prepared with love and eaten slowly at a reasonable hour, is foolish and a 'waste of time'. But perhaps it could prove to be the salvation of the species. The unbelievably cruel and wasteful practices of slaughtering animals in order to supply the fast food industry have devastated rain forests, destroyed third world economies and created vast amounts of waste. It is in direct opposition to *ahimsa*. The huge increase in the consumption of meat is responsible for many health problems. Perhaps it's time for a global advertising campaign for vegetables!

Do you remember being told to chew your food slowly? Never talk with your mouth full? Always allow a half-hour rest after eating? Believe it or not, these are now instructions given to people who are suffering from stress. Ulcers, anxiety disorders, headaches and more are being treated by all kinds of drugs that can have severe side effects. Often, people get caught in a Catch 22. They feel so awful from their stress related disorders that they either don't feel like cooking or they need to reward themselves – where else but at Burger King where you can 'have it your way'. Taking the time to prepare, enjoy and slowly digest your meal is the best medicine. 🍽️

Lavinia Plonka is a freelance writer based in North Carolina, USA

FROM A FEMININE VIEWPOINT

Alison Kent talks to Jain photographer **Bunshri Chandaria** about her exhibition at the Nehru Centre in London and finds out what makes a good photograph

BUNSHRI CHANDARIA



The skill in photography is in recognising the moment and capturing it

PHOTOGRAPHS ARE GREAT WAYS OF CAPTURING SPECIAL moments and memories. They are frequently displayed around the homes, provide us with inspiration and help us retain special experiences in our lives. Today, photography has become a major art form; there are photography competitions and exhibitions all the time. In this article, we examine the photographs of a Jain who has worked hard to practise her art.

Bunshri Chandaria is a trained photographer; she was invited to exhibit a collection of her work at the Nehru Centre in London. The exhibition covered three important aspects of her life: a visit to northwest India, images of Africa where she grew up and visions of Vietnam, which holds a special fascination for her.

Bunshri was born into a Jain family in Kenya. She came to the UK when she was twelve. She was first introduced to photography quite by accident when some twenty years ago her husband presented her with a manual camera. Being inquisitive, she wanted to master how it worked and to understand about the depth of field; how different films react to various light conditions and the implications of using colour or black and white films.

She discovered that she was hungry for knowledge and quickly her interest moved beyond technicalities. "Soon you realise that you see things in a different light," she said. She took up life drawing classes in order to further her knowledge of the human form. Equipped with some technical knowledge and increased visual awareness, she

became fascinated by the shapes and shadows on the buildings at different times of the day or the way people dress; in short, she was learning to be a much more acute observer.

Bunshri's formal training was at the St. Alban's School of Art and Design, where she completed a City & Guilds course. Here she was encouraged to study the background of other photographers. She became interested in what inspired them and considered how she would have photographed the same subjects herself. She gained a Licentiate'ship and went on to the University of Hertfordshire where she received an Associateship of the Royal Photographic Society in recognition of a panel of Indian photographs. Having gained technical proficiency and background knowledge, a photographer, like an artist, needs to develop a style which is distinctly their own.

On entering Bunshri's exhibition I was immediately aware that her viewpoint was deeply feminine. Far from choosing to capture moments of high drama and tension, Bunshri's images are intimate, even domestic. As a woman, it was easy for her to go into compounds in smaller villages in India, because she did not provide a threat. Speaking Hindi was also an advantage, making communication straightforward. As Bunshri's aim was to capture the ordinary moment, her subjects felt very much at ease and simply carried on with their work.

Bunshri has made an art out of the mundane, 'the beauty of the everyday moment' as she describes it. Her work is a testament to Marcel Proust's comment that "the real voyage of discovery does not consist of seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes." The photograph *Looking Back* is a tribute to this idea.

In the foreground a woman is sitting separating corn from chaff, an ancient occupation. She is surrounded only by the tools she needs, a mat, a bowl and the sack in which the corn was carried. She looks back over her shoulder into the compound, where another figure is squatting washing clothes. They appear to be looking at each other. Between them, peeping out of the doorway are more figures and a baby in a simple cradle. The beauty of this picture is that it raises questions. What is the relationship between the woman in the foreground and the people in the house? Why is she looking around?

A good photograph provokes thought; it invites us to look for a story and leaves space for the viewer's imagination. *Looking Back* gives us some information and provides an atmosphere, but it also invites us to exercise our minds. The colours are evocative; the woman in the foreground wears reds, oranges and yellows, colours of the autumn and harvest. She almost blends in with the colour of the corn and the earth from which it was grown.

The skill in photography is in recognising the moment. Consider *Looking Back* again. Would it be just as interesting if the central figure was grinning straight at the

BUNSHRI CHANDRA



A good photograph provokes thought; it invites us to look for a story and leaves space for the viewer's imagination

camera? Or if the figures in the house were in full view? Bunshri patiently waited for the decisive moment in order to capture the atmosphere of tranquillity. She said, "If you stay there long enough you feel that they do not even notice that you are there. It's a bit like watching the world go by."

It is this meditative quality of Bunshri's work which reflects her cultural roots in Jainism. People tend to live in a rat race, constantly striving to increase their material wealth, if not for themselves then for the next generation. By looking at these images the viewer is encouraged to stop and think. In the West we never seem to have enough hours in the day.

Bunshri feels it is her job as a photographer to inspire people to pause and look deeper. Her work is not only for Jains, but all kinds of people, young and old, rich and poor, people from all walks of life. Or simply for people who are prepared to spend time to look and think a bit. Each individual picture has a strength of its own. The skill of the photographer is to recognise the significant moment and then have the ingenuity to capture it.

On the day I visited the exhibition, Bunshri had just received the news that one of her prints entitled *Afternoon Nap* had been selected for the 145th Royal Photographic Society International Print Competition. This is wonderful news for such an ambitious photographer. On a more down to earth note, her photographs which capture the beauty of the everyday moment teach us a clear lesson: concentrate on the simplicity of life.

Next time you reach for your camera, think carefully about what you are doing. How could you make your photos more thought provoking? 🙏

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KULDEVI PROTECTS

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Worshipping the Kuldevi (clan goddess)

IT WAS NOT IN GOKHLANA THAT I GOT THE STRONGEST sense of the world of my grandmother's girlhood. This happened during a trip she and I made together, just the two of us, to visit the *kuldevi*, the clan goddess temple of the Kamdars, Motiba's in-laws. Thinking back on that trip, I realise that Motiba was initiating me, her granddaughter, into the world of the family's women, which is also the world of the ahistorical past, the past that exists as ritual, belief and symbol; the past that flows in the blood, that is expressed in ways we are barely conscious of, more feeling than knowing what it is; the past that keeps a distinct people together as a tribe through the predations of flight, war, famine or even prosperity. Motiba's own family, the Kharas, were rather strict in their adherence to the Jain teachings of Rajachandra and his acolytes. They had little patience with non-Jain beliefs, including the worship of ancient clan goddesses. Motiba's in-laws, the Kamdars, were different, and my grandfather in particular maintained a strong attachment to the family's clan goddess. Yet, it was clear that Motiba was quite happy to take me to visit the Kamdar *kuldevi* temple. My grandfather, Prabhudas Kamdar, had recently passed away. Perhaps Motiba thought the time was right to introduce me to the land of my forefathers.

The Kamdar *kuldevi* is Ashapura Devi, the goddess capable of realising all hopes. She is a powerful yet benevolent deity in the form of a beautiful mother seated

Mira Kamdar explains the importance of the *kuldevi* to their family, illustrating how modernity has impacted ancient heritage

sidesaddle upon a she-camel. True to the maternal ideal, she is tender and generous towards her children yet utterly ferocious when it comes to protecting them from harm. The priest at our *kuldevi* temple tells the story of the difficult migration our clan undertook, fleeing before the wrath of conversion-bent Muslims down from the steppes of Central Asia, over the deserts of Sindh and Kutch, before arriving finally in Kathiawar. "In the desert, there was no water. Mataji provided water to our tribe. We survived. The Muslims couldn't find any water, and they all died." Such are the legends the priest recites about the nurturing and protection Ashapura Devi offered to our tribe in an us-against-them world.

Until just twenty years ago, our *kuldevi* was worshipped in the form of some ovoid orange-painted stones that, according to legend, had been carried from place to place along the route of the tribe's migrations in an old wooden baby cradle. Today the baby cradle, full of sacred stones, sits at the feet of a gorgeous marble image of Ashapura Devi in an elaborate temple complex, but when my father was a child, it was housed in a small mud-and-thatch shrine. In those days, the village elders were personally known to my grandfather. Out of respect, he called the men *bapu*, father, a term of respect, and the women *ba*, mother. The villagers of Thorala are *garasias*, people of royal descent or who were rewarded by grants of land for loyal service to one of the Rajput kings of Kathi princes. As such they were to be treated with the highest respect. They had a reputation of being prone to violent disputes among themselves, a result of their war-loving nature.

As recently as the 1930s, family members used to travel from Jetpur to Thorala by bullock cart. They would leave at three in the morning and arrive three hours later, at dawn. The day before, my grandfather would send, also by bullock cart, huge barrels of *laddus*, sweets, and *ganthiya*, snacks of fried chickpea batter. They would offer these special foods to the goddess, pray to her, perform any rituals that needed to be performed, and then, once the food had received her blessing, distribute it to the villagers. In those days, my grandfather and the other most senior members of the

family served the villagers with their own hands as a token of the great esteem in which they held those who lived in proximity to the goddess.

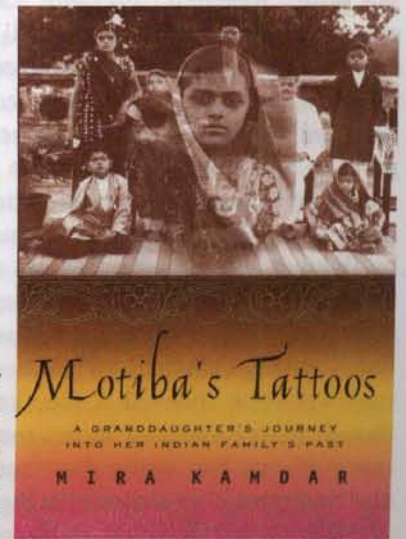
Once, when Dipukaka was a child, the family attempted one of these trips to Mataji's temple, but on the last stretch of road to the village the bullocks balked for no apparent reason at continuing. There was nothing that could be done to force or cajole them to go forward. Finally, though they were very near to Thorala, the family members decided to go home and try again the next day. Mataji, it was felt, did not want them to come just then. The next day they set off once again. When they came to the spot on the road where the bullocks had refused to advance the day before, the same beast paid no mind, placidly continuing their pace. When they arrived in the village, they discovered that there had been a dispute the day before between some of the villagers, which had come to such a bad end that several had been killed. Had the family members arrived in the middle of the fight when passions were running high, they too might have been in danger. Everyone in the party went straight to the temple to thank Mataji for looking out for them and for keeping them out of harm's way. In Kathiawar, everything is interpreted as a sign weighted with meaning. Nothing happens by chance.

Bapuji successfully bequeathed his devotion to the clan goddess to his children, who all, some more assiduously than others, make the effort to take the trip to Thorala. There are specific occasions when a trip to seek the goddess's blessing is required, such as when the firstborn son's hair gets its first cutting at the age of five, or when a newly married couple comes to perform a ritual before the goddess without which they cannot consummate their marriage. When my brother Pravin was born in 1961, Bapuji sent my mother a letter with strict instructions that his hair was not to be cut until he was five years old and could be brought to Thorala to have it shorn during the proper ceremony. My brother's thick hair was soon hanging down right in front of his face. Only after my mother wrote to report that she was receiving regular compliments of her new little 'girl' did Bapuji relent and give her permission to have the baby's hair cut in Seattle. He never insisted on the hair-cutting ceremony again and the tradition, impractical in this modern world, is now lost. One may, of course, come to pay *darshan* to the goddess any time, as I do whenever I happen to be in India. We always bring along *prasaad*, food that will be blessed by the goddess, including *laddus*, candy-coated peanuts and fresh coconuts that the priest breaks up as he intones his prayers.

The intimate ceremony of ritual feeding that once bound the Kamdar family to the villagers of Thorala has long ceased. Now, as our car pulls away from the village to carry us back to Rajkot so we can catch our flight to Bombay and then on to New York or London, we can see the temple priest distributing the *prasaad* to the village

children who, far from looking like the descendants of feudal lords, look the way scrawny poor children do all over India. The cow-dung-plastered walls and deep front porches of the traditional homes that graced Thorala's narrow lanes when Motiba and I were there have been replaced by concrete block structures devoid of personality and, it would appear, comfort. The villagers no longer wear traditional dresses. The men are all in trousers with their collared shirts untucked, machine-knit caps on their heads in place of the bright turbans they used to sport. The married women wear proper *saris* of nylon or machine-printed cotton in the 'national dress' style with the *paalav* draped over their left shoulder rather than in the Gujarati style, in which the *paalav* is draped over the woman's bodice. The young girls are all in cheap frocks or even nightgowns. It seems puzzling at first that the women in this remote village should wear their *saris* as women do in New Delhi and not as they do in any nearby city or town in Kathiawar. Then one notices the television satellite dishes sitting atop three of the new concrete bungalows: obviously, the women of remote Thorala, who rarely if ever make the three-hour trip to the nearest town, are aping fashions they can now see on television in their own home. Soon every trace of life as it had been lived in the village for hundreds of years will have vanished. Teenagers who have seen *Baywatch* and the latest music videos from Bombay find little appeal in traditional life and dress.

Out of devotion to Mataji, our *kuldevi*, our family has directly contributed to the erasure of all that is traditional in the village. There is now an official Kamdar *mahadevi*, (great goddess) temple management committee. The committee has built a new *dharmashala* across from the temple with Western-style toilets, raised bed frames, a mirror and even an electric clock in each guest room. But for the villagers' welcoming cries of *Jai Mataji*, "Long live the Mother-Goddess,,," the village of Thorala that Motiba took me to see on an enchanted afternoon twenty years ago, has ceased to exist. 🙏



©2000, Mira Kamdar.

Mira Kamdar will be coming to the UK in Autumn 2002 to launch *Motiba's Tattoos*. She is a Professor of Social Science in USA.

DID YOU KNOW?

Mahatma Gandhi was not always perfect but he used knowledge to change his lifestyle

MOHANDAS K. GANDHI IS REMEMBERED AS A GREAT MAN, who taught the world the power of non-violence (*ahimsa*). However, before he reached the stage of applying this power on a nationalistic level, he began on a more personal one by becoming a true vegetarian. He did it not just because of his cultural heritage, but due to his beliefs and morals too.

During his high school years in Rajkot, Gandhi made friends with one Sheik Mehtab, which he recounts in his autobiography as the 'tragedy' in his life. At this time a wave of 'reform' was sweeping over Rajkot, and Mehtab informed the young Gandhi that many people were secretly taking meat and wine. He said, "We are a weak people because we do not eat meat. The English are able to rule over us, because they are meat-eaters. You know how hardy I am and how great a runner too. It is because I am a meat-eater. Meat-eaters do not have boils or tumours and even if they sometimes happen to have any, these heal quickly. Our teachers and other distinguished people who eat meat are no fools. They know its virtues. You should do likewise. There is nothing like trying."

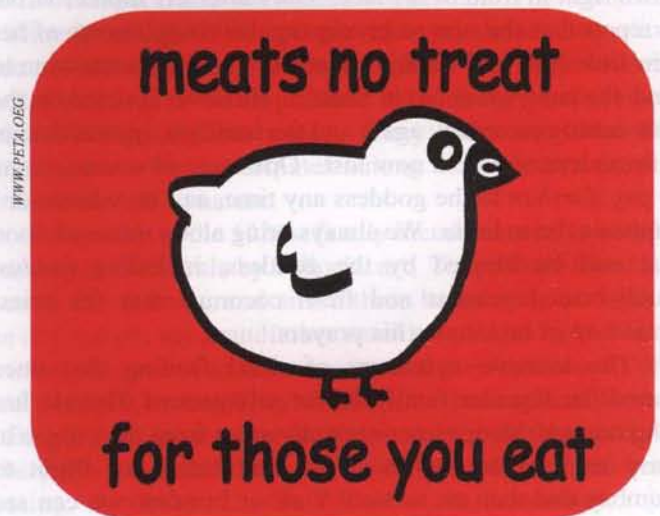
With repeated pressure and arguments, Mehtab eventually convinced Gandhi, well hidden from his parents, to eat meat. At first, Gandhi abhorred it. "The goat's meat was as tough as leather. I simply could not eat it." Mehtab persisted by preparing meat delicacies. Eventually, it began to grow on him that eating meat was good and would make him strong and daring, and if the whole country took to eating meat, the English could be overcome. He believed that only by fighting and through physical strength would his country be free. Gandhi became a relisher of meat dishes, if not the meat itself. This went on for a year but came at a price for the honest young Gandhi – he had been lying to his parents and they would be shocked if they knew about it. He felt that though it was essential to eat meat, deceiving and lying to one's parents was worse than not eating it. He decided to abstain from eating meat whilst they were alive. He based this decision on his devotion to his parents and not because he

became a 'true vegetarian'. Yet, since then he never went back to eating meat.

At eighteen, Gandhi decided to go to study law in England. His mother was reluctant to let him go as she had heard stories about people taking to meat-eating while in England. So, Gandhi took a vow, administered by a Jain monk, not to touch meat or wine, after which his mother gave him her permission to go and study. In England, Gandhi found vegetarian dishes tasteless and he starved most of the time. That is, until he hit upon a vegetarian restaurant where he had his first hearty meal ever since he arrived in England. The restaurant also had vegetarian books for sale and he bought one – Salts' *Plea for Vegetarianism*. The book discussed the moral reasons for being a vegetarian, the inherent violence present in the eating of meat and the non-violence that could be achieved from abstaining from it. After reading this book, no longer was Gandhi a vegetarian wishing he were a meat-eater, but he claimed to have become a vegetarian by choice. 🙏

"Gandhi took a vow, administered by a Jain monk, not to touch meat or wine."

Reprinted from the *Young Jains Nairobi Newsletter*, 2002.



GENIUS ALL ROUNDER

Ayala Ochert writes about Shayna Parekh, the current winner of the highest award at the University of California, Berkeley

WHEN SHAYNA PAREKH CAME TO visit Berkeley as a high school senior, her brother was too busy with his midterms to show her around. So Shayna showed herself around – she talked to student groups on Sproul, visited Boalt Hall, the Haas School of Business and watched the football team practise at the Memorial Stadium. “In that one week, I did everything,” she says.

‘Doing everything’ could be the motto for this effervescent 21-year-old. A political science and interdisciplinary studies major, Parekh is this year’s winner of the University Medal, Berkeley’s highest undergraduate honour. To qualify, a senior must have a GPA of at least 3.96 and demonstrate other accomplishments that have contributed to the University or wider community.

One might think that Parekh had to work hard to get her good grades, but she doesn’t put it that way. Not that she didn’t put in the hours; it’s just that it never felt like work. “I really haven’t ever been ‘forced’ to take a class – every one I’ve taken I really wanted to take,” she says. Research and reading were ‘pure enjoyment’ and she only wrote papers when she felt truly inspired to write. “She’s the sort of student that teachers dream of, always tuned-in and ready with a question,” says Beth Simmons, her political science professor. She recommended Parekh for the University Medal, and says that Parekh’s paper on the *International Convention to End Discrimination Against Women* is the best student paper she has ever read.

Parekh’s idea of a fun way to spend an evening has been to listen to one of the many fascinating speakers who come to Berkeley. She considered this a vital part of her education at Cal, and tried to take in a talk every evening. “It was amazing to hear the personal side of issues I had been studying in the classroom,” she says.

Another critical part of her education was UC’s Education Abroad programme. She attended a summer session in South Africa after her first year, *The Politics of Change in South*



Shayna Parekh at Berkeley

Africa. Taught by Professor Robert Price, it opened her eyes to the problems of the developing world, as she was able to visit the townships she was reading about in the course.

The following year she spent six months at the University of Delhi. “It was real immersion,” she says. “We were dropped right in. Everything about being there was different and challenging – the crowds, the pollution, the noise every hour of the day.” Language was another difficulty – Parekh is fluent in Gujarati but in Delhi people speak Hindi. Fortunately, Parekh has attended some excellent Hindi classes with Usha Jain, a professor in the department of South Asian studies who has just received a distinguished teacher award. While in Delhi, she also worked for the Mother Theresa Children’s Home.

This was her first visit to the country her grandparents left as youngsters. Both sets of grandparents emigrated to East Africa for a better life, and later moved to England. Parekh herself was born in Southern California.

Both the African and the Indian programmes opened up whole new worlds for Parekh.

When she arrived at Berkeley she had been interested in domestic politics, but these experiences abroad turned her interest towards the developing world. Her second trip to India last summer with the American India Foundation, set up by Bill Clinton to help rebuild the region after a devastating earthquake in January 2001, cemented her desire to go into international development work.

After graduating, Parekh plans to return to Gujarat for a year, followed by graduate work in social planning at the London School of Economics. She says that her grandparents are pleased that she is returning to the country of their birth, even though she has not chosen the comfortable life that they and her parents planned for her. “The reason that my grandfather left for East Africa was because of the business opportunities. But at the same time he just had this urge to travel and do new and different things,” she explains. “I realise that that’s what I must have got from him.” 🙏

MUSIC AWAKENS THE SOUL

Paras Shah writes about the joy of devotional songs

OUR PERCEPTION OF JAINISM IN PRESENT TIMES GREATLY depends on the simplicity entailed in this perpetual religion. As a Jain in the 21st century, this religion to me is all about consecrated rituals and sanctified principles that provide a ray of light in the dark tunnel of materialism and greed that encompass our lives. We all face the inexorable stresses of modern life and relentlessly turn to religion to experience a sensation of calmness and tranquillity.

What is it that makes Jainism such a sweetly alluring religion? Perhaps it's the purity that makes this religion fascinating. Or probably, it's the intricate architecture of Jain temples that serve as sanctuaries for all those who have become tired of being submissive to the gripping tentacles of evil, lust, desire and insatiability. To me, it's the indestructible bond between music and Jainism that really appeals.

Throughout history, Jains have patronised all kinds of social activities like art and culture, based on human needs. Hence, the conventional perception of Jainism being opposed to music because of its doctrine of desire-free *moksha*, ignores the social mechanism adopted by this faith to spread itself among the masses.

Music itself originates from a set of stipulated rules called the *ragas*. Combinations of these *ragas* make music the final ambassador for Jain values since it gains the ability to invoke devotional elements within us. Music is used as a catalyst to augment our devotion (*bhakti*) and faith (*shraddha*) towards the fundamentals of Jainism. Its ability to act as a catalyst lies in one of its most distinct, yet often ignored, properties. It is believed that nothing can touch the soul like the sound of music. Perhaps, it is due to this conviction that music in all its manifestations is so appealing to humanity. Music adjusts itself with our inner emotions and therefore increases our ability and willingness to worship. It touches, yet cannot be physically felt.

Worshipping the idols of the Jinas (*pooja*) entails an entire series of prayers that are recited in a consistent rhyme. For instance, the prayers for performing the eight *poojas* are commonly recited in a rhythmic melody. The *aarti*, one of my favourite tunes, is sung with so much energy and spirit that it simply illustrates the sheer joy of being able to sit in a temple and gaze at the splendid idols. The rhythmic yet consistent beating of the *tablas* and the sweet sound of the *sitar* remind me about the importance of harmony and wholesomeness in my life. Simply listen to a devotional song (*bhajan*) and you will immediately detect the consistency and completeness I am talking about. This corroborates the Jain principle of harmony and discipline.

There is a great deal of difference between reciting and singing a prayer. Although the words in the prayer remain the same, when singing, one finds that the soul is praying too. It seems as though the prayer is coming from within and, according to me, this is authentic praying. After all, prayer is simply a means of communication with the supreme. Authentic praying aids real spiritual meditation and advancement, and generally improves the quality of life. That's why it is often said: prayer heals.

Music possesses the power to unite people and bring them to a state in which they are mentally and physically conditioned to worship God. It is a universal language and is inborn in every human being. It is believed that even an infant, who has yet to develop an understanding for materialistic values, can comprehend the message of friendliness, equality and compassion portrayed by music at a tender age.

As a lover of music, I have learned to reflect on my personal resolutions and principles by respecting the musical aspect of Jainism. I have come to understand Jainism better and experience more veneration for it. It truly feels satisfying and fulfilling to be able to genuinely communicate with God; and best of all it is great to know how being a Jain actually feels like! 🙏

Paras J. Shah is 16 years old and lives in Mombasa, Kenya.



Live music at the launch of Jain Spirit, November 1999

CHANDU SHAIKH



"The key to working and living alongside others is drawing upon common interests and respecting differences" - Aarti Shah

IT HAS TAKEN ME SOME TIME TO REACH THIS CONCLUSION, but now that I am here I don't think I can ever think differently. The more I learn, observe and experience the closer I get drawn each time to this one word which I believe holds the answer to a multitude of problems: character.

It is all about character. Who you are as a person will determine your success in every respect. The way we think and the way we act have lasting effects on how the world functions. Sitting in an economics lecture, I was thinking about how the world reflects society, how society reflects the family and how the family reflects the individual. If I wanted to relieve the millions from poverty or end the world of violence, would I find the answer by reforming institutions or by reforming individual character? To me the latter seemed to make more sense.

I believe that individuals in this world should look deeply into their character. They should think about how they can change who they are, to benefit themselves and at the same time benefit others. But before I can change the world I must change myself. So follow me through my self-assessment. My ultimate goal is to be a good-natured person, not to harm others but to help others, so as to live happily. So let me look at my past and how I have tried to achieve this.

In a physical sense, I am not an aggressive person who hurts others. I can extend this and say: I try not to intentionally harm other living things. The way in which I best practise this is by being vegetarian. But the discipline associated with this has been fundamental to shaping my character. Two years ago I gave up eating eggs. As eggs creep into a wide range of manufactured food products, it has been challenging to say the least! But that very feeling of being able to withstand temptation, of not being crippled by greed and being able to conquer my mind is irreplaceable. I am not saying that if we all give up eggs the world will be

LIVE A GOOD LIFE

Aarti Shah emphasises the importance of walking your talk

a better place. But through taming our unlimited desires we have a greater chance of sustaining nature's beauty for everyone to benefit.

So now I have opened the door to the spiritual side of my being. Controlling my desires, has led me to think about controlling my emotions. I can think of countless times when I have let my temper dance with the flames of rage. Or when I have let envy trick me into her arms. Or when I have mastered judging books wrongly by their cover. How have I tried to control these emotions? Fortunately enough I have seemed to jump from one experience to another whereby I have met and worked alongside people from diverse backgrounds, cultures and opinions. Each encounter has not only tested my tolerance but also strengthened it. The key to

working and living alongside others has been drawing upon common interests and respecting differences. This respect has stemmed from being open-minded and willing to compromise.

Now I have realised that by opening this door I have entered into a complex battle of good nature trying to overcome bad. Many a time I have been overwhelmed and quick to shut it again. But this time I shall keep it open. However this path of self-assessment will have to be a lifelong challenge

whereby I must confront my weaknesses every step of the way and turn them into opportunities for improvement. I hope this may in some way inspire you to open your own door and take a look, for it is amazing what you may find inside. Who knows, each such individual action may unite to pave the way for a brighter future.

The key is to be true to yourself in identifying your qualities and realistic in setting your objectives. Once these have been determined you need to transform thoughts into action. This is where the challenge lies. Initially each thought and action must be contemplated, which with time will become instinctive. We all have a choice in determining the way we think and act. Let's exercise it. 🙏

Aarti Shah is a postgraduate student at the University of Warwick, UK.

"I can think of countless times when I have let my temper dance with the flames of rage."

TEMPLE NEEDS SOUL

Vibha Shah explains how one man transformed the local community in Mombasa

A JAIN TEMPLE IS TRADITIONALLY THE HUB OF ACTIVITY for the local community. However, as the world is changing so fast nowadays, children and young people rarely go to the temple, and even many parents do not see the relevance of the temple. They would rather spend their spare time on a golf course or worship in the sports club over a beer. For many, the temple just does not hold any attraction. The rituals are meaningless, god is stiff and silent and does not communicate, and generally only old people go there. However, the essence of Jainism is very positive, its cultural and artistic depth unique, and the central message extremely timely for the world we live in today. How do we then transform this attitude and make the temple as vibrant? This challenge is acute in the West where there is a trend towards temple building, but very weak effort towards soul building. There are no magic formulas for this, but we do have one successful example of how a young man from India transformed the local community in Mombasa by winning the hearts and minds of children and young adults. He is affectionately known as Hiteshbhai.

Upon landing in Mombasa from his hometown of Dubhoi in Gujarat in 1994, Hiteshbhai discovered a most beautiful temple right in the heart of the town. The Mombasa Jain Derasar was built in 1961 on two acres of land and is one of the first Jain temples to be built outside India. For decades it was the hub of the community. The founding editor of *Jain Spirit*, Atul Keshavji Shah, was himself 'raised in this temple' as his father was a life-long community servant there. Somehow, this spirit weakened in



Hiteshbhai breathing life into the Mombasa temple with his multiple skills



the eighties and nineties, and when Hiteshbhai landed there was very low attendance, mainly of elderly people. Something needed to be done urgently. There was a very big challenge ahead. Luckily for Mombasa, Hiteshbhai had the charm and the youthful zeal to take it on.

He discovered that there was a deep void in the knowledge of Jainism. Many people did rituals without understanding them and many more gave up on the temple altogether. With patience and diligence, he started classes and focused his attention on music as a way of drawing people back into the temple. Children very quickly got attracted and started singing and performing with Hiteshbhai's constant help and encouragement. They became attracted to him and slowly fell in love with the temple. It became their playground, a place where they could meet like-minded friends and at the same time learn something new every time. Jain rituals are very colourful and artistic, and if properly explained they can be very attractive to children. The *pooja* is the most glorious example, where children can bathe the Lord surrounded by great art and can place colourful saffron and flowers on the sweet Lord. Temple hymns keep their minds focussed and their voices in tune. They learn to meditate by experiencing the peace of the temple inside their hearts.

Children are innocent, loving and caring, and where the unity in a community breaks down, it can be rebuilt through the children. Children do not understand difference, are not interested in politics nor do they have egos. They simply want to be themselves and have fun. Very quickly, Hiteshbhai's arrival became the talk of the town, and children could not stop talking about him to their parents. They discovered a new friend who encouraged and helped them to relax and enjoy life.

Lessons can be drawn from this for some temples in the West, where there is politics and friction between the committee members, and ego clashes. As a result, turnouts fade and always the same people come. Instead of becoming a hub of activity, the temple becomes an empty tourist attraction. Children are a rare sight and if they are there, it is more because the parents have dragged them there to a lecture or a *pooja* which they do not understand and where they have no role to play. They are often an after-thought in a game dominated by elders. Temple priests are imported from India, but little effort is made to help them reach the masses positively, for which additional training may be necessary. For example, not having lived abroad, they would need to learn English, both spoken and written, and be supported in this. Often, they are bossed

around by temple committee members, and they lose interest and return home. The turnover among temple teachers/priests 'imported' from India is quite high. Sometimes, if they succeed in winning the hearts of the community, the committee members feel threatened and undermine them.

For children, Hiteshbhai was like a Pied Piper. They followed him everywhere, playing cricket, Uno, cards, badminton, singing and playing on the keyboard. They derived great fun and built their self-confidence. He has trained a whole team of young boys and girls like Dhruv, Mishal, Jinal, Anish, Amar, Krupti, Sheena, to mention just a few. He has trained them so meticulously in music that they have become very proficient and while Hiteshbhai was away for a year, the children managed to keep the Mombasa Jains entranced at the temple. Hiteshbhai is always open to

new ideas and techniques and has organised debates, plays, skits, quizzes, elocution competitions, singing and music performances on a regular basis – all having Jain themes.

A number of adults had drifted away from the Derasar. What really motivated them to come back was his voice and *bhakti*, which entranced them, striking them deep in their soul. His approach to education is unique; he does not make people learn under duress, but instead lets them

enjoy his lessons in a relaxed but disciplined atmosphere. He is not a rigid or staunch teacher, as he has many diverse interests and is able to relate religion to these.

Hiteshbhai has the knowledge, skills and charisma to translate an ancient tradition and endear a new generation to it. These skills are very precious and very rare in today's society. They do not come easily and often need to be nurtured, supported and cultivated. In London, the Jain community has yet to find people of Hiteshbhai's calibre and the same applies in many North American cities where there are Jain temples. This means that we should search for such people and, as a community, we must recognise the need to support them once they arrive. They have the potential to turn the temple into a spiritual sanctuary for the local community and uplift its spirit. Temples have a chance to become magnets if there are good human catalysts who inspire children and help them to fall in love with God. 🙏

Vibha Shah is an artist and teacher who lives in Mombasa. She has made a number of very large display rangolis in Kenya and the UK on Jain and inter-faith themes.

“Hiteshbhai has the knowledge, skills and charisma to translate an ancient tradition.”

CHANDU SHAH



REPENT AND RENEW

Vinod Kapashi explains the essence of *Pratikraman*

IF *PRATIKRAMAN* MEANS REFLECTING UPON ONE'S BAD thoughts and behaviour, or confessing one's own mistakes and making a resolve to tread the right path, then *pratikraman* can be done anywhere and at any time. You do not need to go to a temple and sit upon a piece of woolly-cloth or place a handkerchief on your mouth to conduct *pratikraman*. In fact, you could do *pratikraman* even when sitting on the metro or underground train!

Pratikraman means removing all of your bad thoughts, cleansing your mind and removing the malice you might have towards any living being on the earth, forgetting your ego, giving up your anger and having your mind firmly fixed on the sublime nature of your soul. It means forgiving everyone and forgetting all things unpleasant.

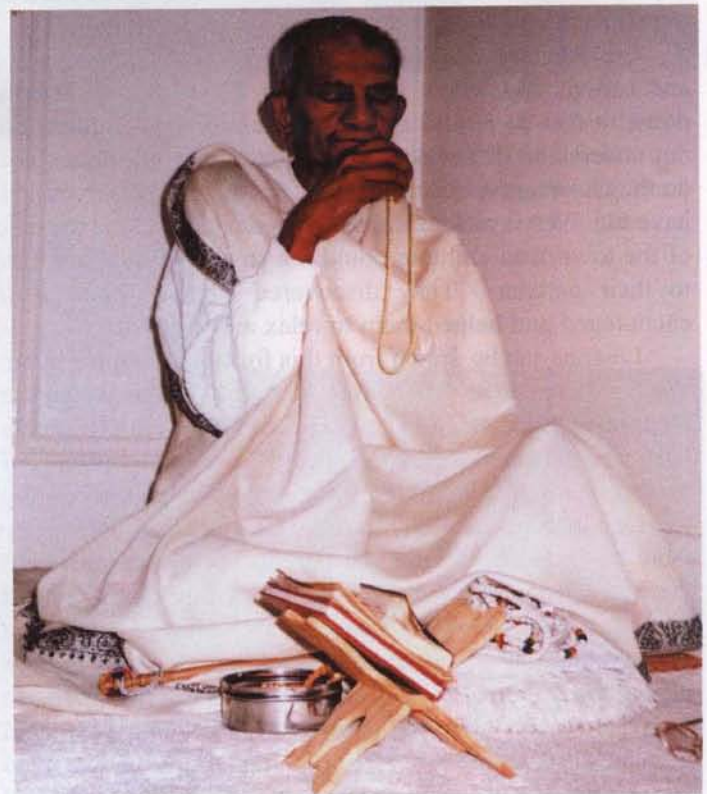
Pratikraman should be done after one has attained the *samayika* stage. This is the stage when one prepares oneself for the noble idea of forgiving and begging forgiveness from everybody. One should prepare oneself mentally and be in the correct frame of mind whereby all thoughts of hatred are replaced by peace and love. All worries should be replaced by faith and one should lift oneself above all the worldly attachments and aversions.

You can do *pratikraman* without conducting a lengthy ritual and without using all the paraphernalia. Once you attain a state of equanimity and return to a right and noble path, you have done *pratikraman*. Jainism says that this is called mental-*pratikraman* or *bhav-pratikraman*. The ritualistic *pratikraman* is called *dravya-pratikraman*.

Jain scholars and learned monks have always maintained that *bhav-pratikraman* is better than *dravya-pratikraman*. This is because if your mind is tense whilst doing *dravya-pratikraman* and you can't get rid of your hatred or bad thoughts then you won't be able to achieve the required result. You will just be performing a ritual without doing the proper inner cleansing. You may find that whilst conducting *dravya-pratikraman*, you are distracted and may lose your trail of thought.

Mahavir once said that one can achieve '*savadhya-yoga veerati*' upon doing *samayika*. This means that upon doing *pratikraman* one refrains from doing any mental or physical

karma. This is the advantage of *dravya-pratikraman* when you sit in a quiet place, wear light, clean clothing and keep the *muhpatti* (a piece of cloth required to cover the mouth). The *muhpatti* is also unfolded and folded in a systematic way during the ritual. This is the *muhpatti padilehan* when one unfolds the *muhpatti* carefully, examines it and then folds it once again whilst reciting a few sacred words. For example, he says, "I give up my ego, anger, my greed and illusion., He also accepts good things by gently touching *muhpatti* on arms and other parts of the body. This takes only a few seconds and one is supposed to say fifty small phrases whilst doing it. You may keep a rosary for counting beads while reciting.



A pratikraman in action

This will help your concentration and you won't get up before finishing the whole ritual. Moreover, the verses you recite will help you to achieve a perfect state of mind.

In one of the *sutras* we say the following words: *Thanenam, monenam, zanenam appanam vosirami*. This is very significant. It translates as follows: We attain a state of calm whilst sitting in one place (*thanenam*), whilst observing silence (*monenam*), and while doing meditation (*zanenam*). We also say, "My soul attains the state of separateness from my body." (*appanam vosirami*). This summarises the process in very simple terms. The tools are *thanenam, monenam* and *zanenam*. The goal is giving up all bodily activities including bad thoughts and freeing your soul (*appanam vosirami*).

A short verse, called *Iriya-Vahiya* is significant in terms of remembering all types of living beings and asking for forgiveness. This reminds us about how we treat our animals and how we deal with environmental problems:

"I wish to retract from sins.

Whatever types of living being I might have destroyed

While walking

While attacking

While crushing

On dews

In ant-holes

In water

In clay

In cob-webs

While cleaning or brushing

Whatever types of lives I might have destroyed

Those with one sense

Those with two senses

Those with three senses

Those with four senses

Those with five senses

I might have kicked them, rolled them, covered them, assembled them, touched them, separated them from their own kinds, or killed them.

In connection of all these things

May my sins or faults be forgiven."

There is another good phrase in the *Pratikraman sutra*: *Nindami, garihami, appanam vosirami*. The observer of the ritual says that he criticises all his bad thoughts and deeds (*nindami*). But that is not enough, he also says that he confesses in front of his guru or any elder (*garihami*) and

then he attains the stage of *pratikraman*.

These simple sentences speak volumes about the *pratikraman* and the lessons we can learn from this age-old ritual. There are different types of *pratikraman* rituals. But in any *pratikraman* the first thing one does is the process of taking a *samayika*. One has to perform this ritual by reciting ten *sutras* or verses of *samayika*. This way you are preparing yourself for the ritual. Once the *samayika* is taken you start *pratikraman* without getting up or moving, keeping one's guru as a witness. One can do this by keeping a religious book on a bookstand (*chapdo*) as a substitute for a real guru or teacher. Daily *pratikramans* are of two types: one is observed in the morning (*rayashi*) and the other in the evening (*devasi*). There is a slightly longer ritual observed every fortnight (*pakhkhi*) and one which is observed every four months (*chaumasi*). Lastly, the longest one

is the annual *pratikraman*, which takes more than three hours (*samvatsari pratikraman*). This is full of good prayers and *sutras* related to confessions for general faults in our lives. Most Jains only do this last *pratikraman*, at the end of the *Paryushan* festival.

On the last day of the festival Jains get together in a religious assembly. One or two elders recite *sutras* and guide the people how *pratikraman* can be done. After the ritual people meet and greet each other and say *Michchami Dukkadam* to each other. This means, "please forgive me for any mistakes or faults that I may have committed."

The very essence of the ritual lies in forgiving others and begging forgiveness for any wrong doings. It is not easy to ask forgiveness. Sometimes it requires courage. Criticising one's own bad thoughts and deeds means one must be humble. It is the way one can spread love and ultimately achieve peace within oneself and peace on this earth.

Khamemi savva jive, savve jiva khamantu me; Mitti me savva bhueshu, veram majjah na kenai. "I forgive all living beings. Let all beings forgive me. I have friendship with all and malice or quarrel with none." Wouldn't it be good if we could all recite these words on a daily basis? 🙏

Dr. Vinod Kapashi is a writer and promoter of Jainism based in London. He has written several books and taught a large number of students.

**"One should
prepare oneself
mentally and be in the
correct frame of mind
for pratikraman."**



CARRY YOUR VALUES WITH YOUR LAPTOP

John Elkington encourages consultants not to shy away from their values in the corporate workplace

MY WORK HAS TAKEN ME AROUND the world repeatedly – and these days into the boardrooms of major companies. It will probably come as little surprise that much of the discussion in such places revolve around science, technology and economics, not religion. Indeed, let me begin with a public health warning: I am neither a Jain nor in any recognisable way religious. But much of the work I am involved in has a strong value base, some of which seem to align well with such tenets of Jainism as truthfulness, non-stealing and non-attachment (at least from the most rampant forms of consumerism).

When I began work, there was no formal career path for an environmental consultant, let alone a sustainability consultant. These days things are different, but even now we often admit that we are ‘making it up as we go along’. In the process, we are often thrown back onto our core values. Unlike most consultancies, we absolutely refuse to work for certain sectors – having turned down several invitations to work, for example, for the tobacco and nuclear industries. When we do work with companies like Shell, Nike or Ford, we carefully test the opportunities against our published principles.

As for religious or spiritual angles, I have long seen church religions as a major barrier to the transformations

needed to ensure a more sustainable world. A childhood spent in trouble spots like Northern Ireland, Cyprus and Israel convinced me that religion often fuelled rather than defused conflict. True, that Jainism always struck me as somewhat different but I knew very little about it. When *Jain Spirit* asked me to write an article on the evolving art of sustainability

“There is much about Jainism that I aspire to but cannot hope to reach.”

consulting, I dug deeper into Jainism. In the process, I was astounded to find how closely some (but not all) of its core values aligned with my own and with those of the wider sustainable development movement.

A shared respect for the natural world is perhaps the most obvious area of overlap. Let me tell part of my own story, by way of illustration. The foundations of the work I have done over 30 years were originally environmental, although I also studied economics, sociology and planning at university in the late 1960s and early 1970s. As it turned out, many of the values that surfaced during the ‘Environmental Revolution’ have

striking similarities with the world of Jainism.

One of the most striking aspects of Jainism is the doctrine of non-injury to all living things. In retrospect, nature woke me up to this agenda rather than religion. As a six-year-old notional Church of England Protestant, I had no inkling of Jainism or anything like it, when one of the most pivotal experiences of my life happened in the mid-1950s. At the time, we were living on a farm in Northern Ireland. One evening, I was walking home through a moonless night from a friend’s cottage. My path took me near several old flax ponds, which were still flooded. Suddenly, I felt something strange around my ankles. Reaching down, I felt what I later worked out were eelers, baby eels, coming up from the ponds and slithering over the hill to the nearby river, heading for the distant Sargasso Sea. Intrigued by such natural mysteries, I made the mistake of asking an adult an obvious question for a child who still believed in some form of afterlife: do animals go to heaven? A mistake, as it turned out, because I was one of just three notional Protestants in a school run by Catholic nuns, a school that – in turn – was surrounded by a somewhat hostile Protestant community. Mother Superior, who ran the convent school, exploded using words I remembered but did not then understand: “You are either a pagan or a pantheist, and I

don't know which is worse!"

As later events proved, she was closer to the mark with pantheism. I am glad to see that Jainism recognises that all living beings have souls. When environmentalism hit in the late 1960s, I felt this was a movement made for me. Indeed, in 1961 I had persuaded all the boys at my school in England to give their two weeks' pocket money to the fledgling World Wildlife Fund (WWF), launched that same year. After a couple of years' doing anything to avoid the necessity to get a grown-up job, I returned to university to study urban and regional planning.

It was my great good fortune to walk straight from that postgraduate course at University College London into a small consultancy, based in London's Covent Garden (ironically, named after a long-gone convent). In 1975, the consultancy project I was doing in Egypt hit a brick wall and I faced a moral dilemma. Consultants are not meant to challenge their clients publicly, but the trajectory of the massive development projects I had been advising on was going horribly wrong: the Delta's largest lake, Manzala, was being chopped up by development experts in a way that was totally unsustainable. After trying hard but failing to get the Egyptians to wake up, I returned to London and phoned the magazine *New Scientist* and was commissioned to write a four-page article. As luck would have it, this helped persuade the authorities to reframe the various studies to address the entire Manzala ecosystem.

I learned both the importance of transparency and of listening to your conscience. After many years of working for major corporate and government clients, several of us formed a new company, SustainAbility. In 1988 we published a book, *The Green Consumer Guide*, which sold around a million copies and helped launch a new social movement. Companies came under intense market pressure in relation to such issues as CFC aerosol propellants, lead in

petrol, mercury in batteries, chlorine in paper production, and so on.

I learned another lesson. If you are prepared to pay for the consequences, you can take a principled stand on key issues and rather than losing clients you can attract a different set who have an appetite for real change. But you have to be careful not to let success go to your head. In 1996, we formed an independent Council to challenge our thinking and priorities. Given that some members come from the NGO world, some of our clients were deeply uneasy but they too now recognise the value of such diversity.

Periodically, we have done things that current or potential future clients



Nature has its own way of revealing the truth

are uncomfortable with. Examples have included our promotion of corporate environmental auditing from 1989, stakeholder engagement from 1990, corporate environmental reporting from 1991, the 'triple bottom line' of sustainable development (focusing on economic, social and environmental values added or destroyed) from 1995 and integrity in corporate lobbying from 2000. But we often find new market opportunities arising as a result.

As the agenda becomes more complex, however, our work moves towards board level. One key reason: if the challenges are simply technical or professional, professionals and technicians can handle them. But as issues like environment, human rights and corporate governance become

increasingly inter-linked, the political implications mean that the necessary choices are best made strategically, which often means at board level.

In the midst of all of this, there is much about Jainism I aspire to but cannot hope to reach. For example, cycling through London on my way to and from our office at Hyde Park Corner, it is hard to remain calm as motorists and truck drivers threaten life and limb. Twice I have been left unconscious, once with three cracked ribs. Non-violence in the face of continuous and sometimes simply careless threats has left me with a slightly less utopian view of the human nature!

Still, at heart I remain an optimist. Within limits, we can make a difference. Business and trade are potentially hugely important mechanisms for making such changes, if operated in the right way. SustainAbility is 15 years old this year, which means that we are looking back a decade and a half to test what we have achieved – and then looking forward to a similar time-span to get a sense of where we should be headed. Our road map for the future is laid out in a new book, *The Chrysalis Economy*.

The tension between values and value creation is eternal, but if we recognise the challenge and work to address it in the right way, real progress is possible. Done right, consultancy and education help catalyse right thinking and right action. Our thinking in this area can be found at www.sustainability.com. If you have comments on what we do or what we don't, we would love to hear from you. 🙏

John Elkington is Chair of The Environment Foundation, and of SustainAbility, based in London and New York. He is the author of 16 books, the latest of which is The Chrysalis Economy: How Citizen CEOs and Corporations Can Fuse Values and Value Creation (Capstone/John Wiley, 2001).

FORESTS ELEVATE THE SPIRIT

JAIN ART FROM INDIA, LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM, 1995



*Throne-back of an Ambika image,
Gujarat 15th century*

INDIAN TRADITION IS STEEPED IN THE VENERATION OF FORESTS. The 'five groves', or *Pancavati*, comprising the *banyan*, *peepal*, *asoka*, *bela* and *harada*, were at the heart of a spiritual hegemony that served to integrate medicine, diet and meditation thousands of years ago. The original Sanskrit word for forest, *aranya* (literally: no war) comported with an understanding by Indians of the sacrosanct nature of the forests. Clear-cutting was forbidden, described as a sin (*adharma*) against the very body of God. Against this pan-Indian backdrop of sustainability, Mahavir and the Jains embraced a powerful understanding of biological priorities. Mahavir

Michael Tobias
explains how
Jains are some
of the most sincere
students of nature

delineated 24 types of beings, 563 body types and nearly 875,000 species. Aristotle, the first pre-eminent Western biologist, only knew of fewer than 500 species. The early Jain scientists analysed soul clusters such as coral and fungi, moss and algae; they knew of matter (*pudgala*); studied atoms (*nigoda*) and conceptualised molecules (*skandha*). Even dewdrops were analysed and revered. Jains believed that every particle of matter contained a pent-up thinking soul just waiting to be emancipated. When the great Jain thinkers and sages died, many of them chose to be outside, in the wilderness like that of the summit of Mt. Sammedacala (Parasathantha Hill) in Bihar, where 20 *Tirthankaras*, including Parshva, achieved their nirvana.

Jainism is stringently attuned to maintaining respect for all life. This is critical to the integrity and historic continuity of the religion. In striving to maintain the forests and wilderness and to revere the soul in every being, the Jains have a body of literature known as the rules of behaviour (*shravakacaras*), which spell out the terms of spiritual and ecological reciprocity. Twenty-five hundred years later, today's scientists, grappling with the plight of most species on earth, may not know of the ancient Jain tradition but they certainly understand interdependency. In India, the relationships arguing for such veneration and understanding have all but broken down.

Indian habitat was in trouble even at the time of Mahavir. Thousands of villages tied together by walking paths through the forests invited exploitation. Today, though estimates vary depending upon whether sugar cane is included in the satellite data describing forest cover, little forest remains. Worldwide, the average is a mere 10%.

Across India, closed canopies (old growth) may constitute less than half that amount. In Nepal, Maoist insurgency and the beheading of hundreds of soldiers have coincided with the razing of the southern watersheds of the Himalayas, now virtually denuded. Bhutan, conversely, shows over 60% of its forests intact. The difference stems from a stubbornly Buddhist application of the non-violent doctrine and ecological sensibility, and a population barely exceeding one million but fostering the luxury as well as the understanding of conservation.

Jains, with their animal sanctuaries (*panjirapoors*), vegetarianism, psychoanalytic obsessions with both theoretical and practical *ahimsa*, were the long-time and perhaps the original champions of an Asian renaissance in compassion and biological preservation. Until the rise of mega-cities, many Jain families were rural, eking a livelihood from agriculture. Spiritually, those millions of Jain individuals inhabited a world described as the *madhyaloka*, a cosmological sphere reserved for plants and animals, which included humans. Violence of any kind within that world was unacceptable. How should Jains propose to cope with a violent world today? Not merely with the threat of nuclear war (say, with India's neighbour, Pakistan), but with the sheer escalation of atrocities towards plants and animals, and the vast human rights abuses across South Asia which include the enslavement of over 100 million children within India?

As with most developed nations, ecological issues within India have been ignored by politicians. With over one billion inhabitants, the majority of whom remain poor and are poised to reproduce thus doubling India's population by the end of the 21st century, what chance remains for Mahavir's wilderness and the Jain vision of revered nature? According to E.O. Wilson in his recent book *The Future of Life*, approximately \$28 billion is required just to maintain a sampling of the Earth's ecosystems against the onslaught of all those destructive human conditions. Together with the state of California, the Amazon Basin, New Guinea, the Congo block of Central Africa, the Philippines, Madagascar, Ecuador and all of New Zealand, India ranks as one of the 25 ecological hotspots on the planet. What is at stake is almost too heartbreaking to enumerate. Not just the Gir lion and Indian tiger (fewer than 1200 remain down from 50,000 at the turn of the century), but hangul stags, clouded leopards, pygmy hogs, wild buffalo, hoolocks and wild Asian elephants, Pallas's cats and musk deer, partridge and quail, bustards and blackbuck, and even the national bird of India, the peacock are all disappearing, and fast. These were just some of the contemporaries of Mahavir, the ones he conversed with.

The challenge for the Jains, just as for every human being,

is some kind of rapid, effective reconciliation with nature. Idealism and altruism come more easily to a community which can trace its roots to a spiritual tradition. In the case of the Jains, there is probably no more complete framework for arguing ecological altruism in the whole of human history. What would such altruism look like in these times? Can the Jains show their faith in a manner that transcends mere individual goodness like saying prayers at a temple, maintaining a vegetarian (preferably vegan) diet and conducting themselves in business, among friends, colleagues and at home with absolute decorum, kindness and generosity? The answer, surely, involves the aspects of tolerance, selfless service and *ahimsa*, but also other commitments as well. At a time when governments are spending no more than a combined total of \$6 billion per year to safeguard all of the Earth's ecosystems, it is clear that individuals must band together to provide additional amounts to acquire habitat and rescue countless ecosystems and species from certain extinction. Communities with such pre-existing idealism do exist but few are as gently oriented to Mother Nature as the Jains appear to be.

Many years ago, at a Jain convention in the United States, I

challenged the audience to establish a Jain ecological fund that would go toward the purchase of habitats. The economics favouring the purchase of land are especially compelling in developing countries. For example, the Nature Conservancy and Conservation International in Washington, have managed to purchase millions of acres of pristine wilderness at a price of (or less than) one dollar per acre. In the case of Guyana, pristine rainforest was acquired from the government at a rate of fifteen cents per acre per year, on a 200,000-acre acquisition. The government determined that this was more money than it could obtain from a competing lumber interest. Imagine, then, what the Jain community could do by inference within India and elsewhere?

The challenge is herewith restated. *Let Jain Spirit* help establish a non-profit charitable fund by which Jains might contribute to acreage to save plants, animals and micro-organisms. Saving nature is more urgent today than building new temples. Let the forest become a sanctuary and not a cemetery. Let the dialogue, in which Mahavir long ago engaged, be perpetuated. 🙏

Michael Tobias is author of many books including 'Life Force: The World of Jainism' (Jain Publishing, 2000) and 'World War Three'.

***“Let the forests
become a
sanctuary and
not a cemetery.”***

SEEK FIRST TO UNDERSTAND

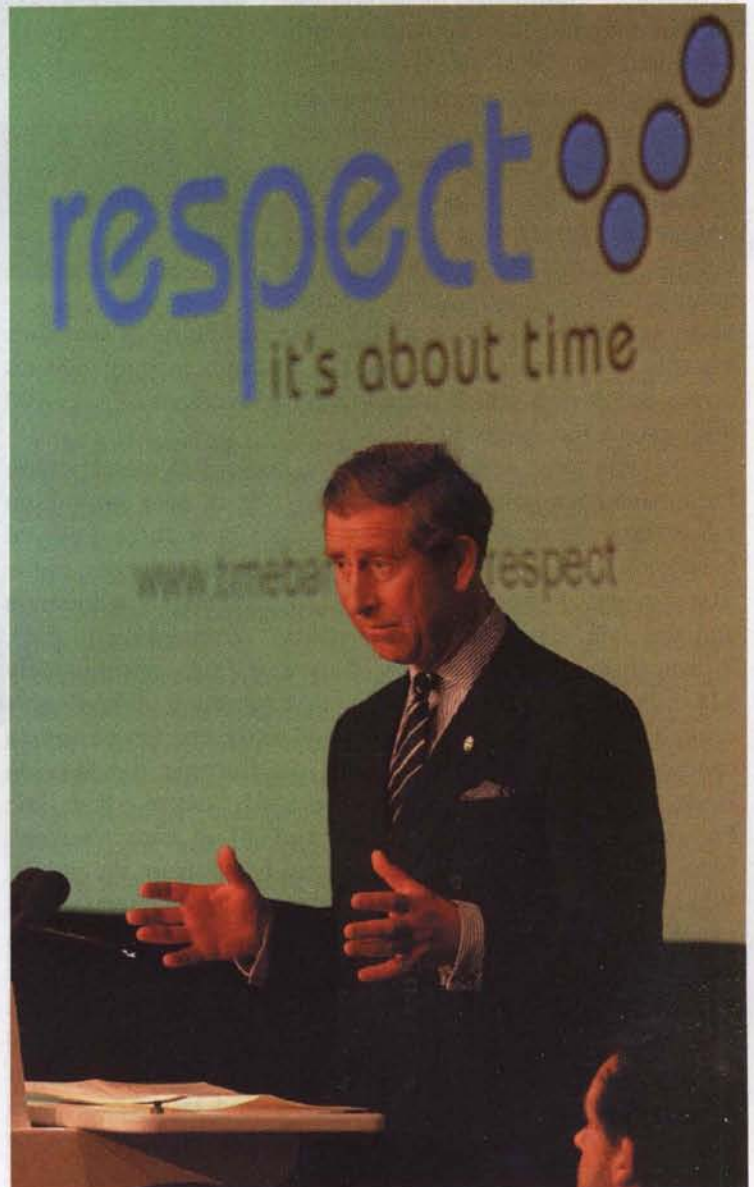
H.R.H. Prince Charles launches a new 'respect' campaign for inter-faith harmony where Jains are also playing a key role

“A SMALL GROUP OF US WANTED TO FIND A SIMPLE AND inexpensive way to celebrate the Millennium in a form which had a strong spiritual component; an idea which would have resonance and purpose with people of faith; an idea which could perhaps change attitudes. Something to encourage tolerance, respect and understanding.

Faith communities can contribute meaningfully, joyfully and, above all, in a practical way to the celebrations of the Queen's Golden Jubilee, with its timeless themes of service and community. It is our chance to thank The Queen for 50 years of unstinting service; to look forward and learn to do some things better than we do them now. Over the past seven months, everyone has laboured hard to find a way to make the idea work in practice. There have been many meetings between people of different faiths. The simple idea to make a gift of time to someone of another faith, to share and learn together, to enjoy the company of people of a different culture, faith and experience has been welcomed, even applauded. Every faith is now involved and most are represented here today. With the help of TimeBank, we have successfully found a way to put that simple idea into practice. The BBC has also committed itself to supporting our plan as key partners along with the Home Office, which is helping to provide a substantial part of our modest budget. I am most grateful to the Home Secretary for his support.

As so often happens, a name was needed...! Everyone seems to have settled on 'Respect' (was the eponymous Ali 'G' on the committee I ask myself?!...). But perhaps 'Respect' sums up succinctly and clearly what the relationship between different faiths should be all about.

Over the past year, we have seen internationally, nationally and locally all too many examples of intolerance to others. Tolerance is an easy word to pronounce, but it





H.R.H. Prince Charles with Britain's faith leaders at the launch in Birmingham

seems to be very difficult to enact in our lives. Yet it is such a tragedy that when the various faith communities have so much in common, its members are often divided by the different ways we have of interpreting the inner meaning of our existence. The founders of our ancient religions were those truly enlightened souls whose own lives were the most profound examples of how love and forgiveness, both on the outer and inner planes, are the only means of breaking the cycle of cause and effect of hatred, vengeance and conflict, and of reconciling the opposites in our relations with each other.

When we give a gift of time, let's remember that we are in fact united by a common bond of faith – faith in a sacred dimension beyond ourselves; faith in a divine 'essence' to the meaning of our existence; faith in the integrity of life itself. This bond is something infinitely precious at the time of human history when we have already crossed the threshold into a world where faith itself is denigrated, where humanity is to be re-designed in Man's and not in God's image, and Nature is to be re-engineered for the purpose of our own convenience. Faced with the ultimate consequences of such Promethean activities all people of faith have every reason to put their differences and intolerances to one side and to unite in defence of the Sacred.

We need to remember what has sometimes been lost from our communities and to repair it. Good neighbourliness is one of the things most in need of repair. In the next two years the Movement we are launching today will hopefully be able at least to help in the repair work. It is about the young Muslim mowing the lawn for the elderly Hindu lady down the street. Or the choir from the Catholic Church or Anglican Parish Church singing to entertain the Jewish old people's club. It is these small things that will make our communities better places to live in.

Many thanks and best wishes to everyone who will be involved in the next two years. The public response has been particularly encouraging, and I cannot help feeling that there are many people out there who have wanted to be part of such a scheme but have not yet had the opportunity. With 'Respect' those people now have a chance. ”

The above speech was given at the NEC in Birmingham on 29 April 2002. Details about the campaign can be found on www.timebank.co.uk/respect. Atul Shah is representing Jains on the advisory committee. In a letter to Jain Spirit, His Royal Highness has very kindly agreed to visit Jain centres in the UK to promote this campaign.

CONFERENCES INSPIRED REFORMS

John Cort analyses the Jain Shvetambara Conference in 1915, demonstrating how reforms were made in the community

JAIN ART FROM INDIA, LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM, 1995



Scene of instruction, Rajasthan, 1800. The most prestigious and honourable merchant-princes assumed a moral leadership of the meetings

WHEN WE LOOK AT JAINISM NOT AS AN ESSENTIALISED, timeless ideal but rather as it has been embodied and defined by Jain communities and individuals over time, we discover that the unitive, static definition of Jainism starts to dissolve. In this essay I will investigate one particular historical moment in the early twentieth century when the Shvetambara Murtipujak Jain community of western India was engaged in such a process of defining itself.

I will focus my discussion on the reform movement upon a lay conference held in 1915 in Sujangadh, near Bikaner. The principal vehicle for reform among the laity was the Jain Shvetambara Conference, founded in 1902 and based among the then recent and wealthy Jain immigrants to Bombay. There was a similar organisation for the Sthanakvasis: the All India Shvetambara Sthanakvasi Conference also based in Bombay, founded four years later in 1906. The Digambaras were slightly earlier off the block, with the Bharatvarsiya Digambara Jain Mahasabha founded in 1893 and headquartered in Khurai in central India, and the smaller regionally focused Dakshin Maharashtra Jain Sabha founded in 1899. The Delhi-based Bharat Jain Mahamandal, or All India Jain Association founded in 1899 attempted to provide a non-sectarian platform. The Jain Shvetambara Conference in 1905 established a monthly magazine in English language, the *Jain Swetamber Conference Herald*, and held large conferences every year or two from

1902 into the 1920s, then less frequently thereafter. These conferences were attended by thousands of lay Jains and went on for three or four days. Later these conferences also saw separate meetings for women and youth. In the 1920s enthusiasm for the conferences started to wane, and a consensus arose that there was no real need for such large and expensive conferences to be held annually.

These conferences reflected the traditional leadership style of the Jain community. In particular, we can see the traditional western Indian style of merchant leadership reflected, in which the most prestigious and honourable merchant-princes (*abrudar*; *pratisthit seths*) assumed a moral leadership of the meetings, based on their being leaders of the traditional collective institutions known as *mahajans*. The *mahajans* were responsible for the regulation of behaviour like establishing and maintaining

production standards in many trades, regulating relationships among trades, pressuring members to uphold business agreements, helping mitigate the effects of business failures, setting holidays, ostracising members who violated social norms (especially in terms of marriage and food-exchange), and collecting for sacred institutions such as temples and animal shelters (*panjrapols*). Advocating or resisting socio-religious change was obviously well within the purview of the *mahajans*.

The leadership of each conference, therefore, consisted of the leading *seths* of the host city. Donations from these *seths* were essential for holding the conferences, and the lists of the donors and amounts were published in the conference report, or in the *Conference Herald* if there was no published report. The local *seths* organised the committees that ran the conference. The committees at the fourth conference in Patan in 1905 were: Reception, Correspondence, Mandap (which organised the pavilions and other physical structures), Food (*Bhojan*), Recording Transcript (*Uttara*), Accounts (*Hisab*) and Fund. Each of these committees was headed by a leading Patan *seth*. The president of the Reception Committee was the wealthiest Patan Jain *seth* then resident in Bombay, and the chief secretary of the committee was the head of the Nagarseth family, the traditional Jain 'mayor' of Patan.



Echoes of these reform conferences can be found in the JAINA conventions in North America and the Oshwal Education and Relief Board conventions held regularly in Kenya for over 50 years

We do not have actual transcripts of the conferences, but the written reports indicate that there was little public debate or dispute at the meetings. Instead, they were held in a highly ritualised form of public rhetoric. The ritual nature of the meetings is further indicated by the fact that the dates were set by astrologers (*jyotis*). Speeches (*bhasan*) opened with *mangalacaran*, the recitation of Jain auspicious verses (*mangalik*). Sermons (*pravacan*) were delivered by leading Jain *sadhus*. Speeches were made both by the participating leading Jains, and also by other important Hindu leaders such as the Maharashtrian nationalist Bal Gangadhar Tilak who addressed the Third Conference in Baroda in 1904. Representatives of the princely government too delivered addresses when the conference was held in a princely state. Resolutions were introduced then approved, presumably after little substantive debate. The written reports of the conferences consist largely of transcripts of the important speeches and copies of the resolutions.

I will focus upon the resolutions approved at the ninth conference at Sujangadh from 27-29 January 1915, since that is the only conference for which I have a full set of resolutions available. The first four resolutions expressed the situation of the Jains as loyal and thankful participants of the British Empire. The first resolution was a pledge of loyalty to the Emperor George V, the second a note of sympathy to the Viceroy Hardinge on the recent death of his wife and son. The third was a resolution of thanks to the Maharaja of Bikaner, in whose state the conference was held. The fourth resolution thanked the Viceroy for his positive response to an active campaign that had been espoused in the resolutions of earlier conferences for the removal of a moral insult (*asatna*) at Mount Abu (many Europeans who came there during the summer season did not remove their shoes when they visited the Jain temples of Dilwara). The fifth resolution supported the ultimately unsuccessful campaign for at least two Jain holidays to be listed as public holidays.

The remaining ten resolutions all pertained to social and ritual matters within the Jain community itself. They called for

greater support for educational institutions, in particular: (6) religious, (7) general, (8) commercial and (9) women's education.

The tenth called for financial and other support to Jain libraries, a task called at other conferences the restoration of books (*pustakoddhar* or *pustak-uddhar*). The preservation of texts and supporting the work of preparing and publishing critical editions was central to the reform efforts. The reformers assumed that the contemporary debased practices ran counter to textual norms, and so the study and publication of those textual norms would contribute to the spread of reformed practices. The eleventh resolution was related to this, calling the propagation (*pracar*) of Jain literature through the support of publication schemes.

The twelfth resolution appointed a special committee to draw up a constitution for a conference within six months to ensure the orderly continuation of the reform efforts. The thirteenth resolution was in response to the official censuses of India, which seemed to indicate that the Jain population as a percentage of the total Indian population was shrinking. This resolution called for positive steps to reverse this trend, such as reconversion, education, increasing medical knowledge and financial aid for lower and middle class Jains. The fourteenth resolution called for the restoration and rebuilding of old temples (*jinroddhar*).

The fifteenth and final resolution dealt with a wide array of harmful customs practised by Jains. These were non-Jain customs violating either the Jain ethical principle of *ahimsa* or else the Jain merchant principles of social restraint and decorum. Among these customs were child marriage, marriage of young women to old men, second marriage when the first wife was still alive, singing of bawdy songs, the use of fireworks at weddings, dancing by prostitutes at weddings, special meals or excessive mourning and breast-beating at the time of death, and the worship of and belief in non-Jain deities. Other harmful customs enumerated at other conferences included the observance of non-Jain festivals such as *Holi*, *Sitala Poojan*, *Satyanarayan*, *Ssomvar vrat*, *Muharram*, and the performance of *Lakshmi Poojan* on Divali; paying a bride-price, using non-Jain wedding rites, conspicuous consumption and wearing bangles made of elephant ivory. As a result of the efforts of the Conference and other reform-minded organisations, many of these practices have largely disappeared from contemporary Shvetambara Murtipujak Jain life. In some cases, however, such as the use of non-Jain wedding rites and the observance of *Lakshmi Poojan* on Divali, the reformers met with little or no success. 🙏

John Cort is Professor of Religion at Denison University, Ohio, USA. The above essay is extracted from his Roop Lal Jain lecture in Toronto, 1994. He is a member of the advisory board of Jain Spirit and a prolific scholar of Jainism.

INDULGENCE IS VIOLENCE

Fasting is central to Jain philosophy and practice, explains **Professor Padmanabh Jaini**

ROBERT RADIN



All forms of animal flesh, including fowl and fish, are totally unacceptable for a pious Jain

ONE OF THE SEVERAL WAYS OF DISTINGUISHING THE VEDIC tradition from the heterodox religious systems is to characterise the former as oriented to sacrifice (*yajna*) and the latter as adhering to the path of asceticism (*tapas*). The heterodox tradition of *sramanas* ignores *soma* altogether, decries oblations to gods as fruitless, prohibits the eating of the so-called *prasada* and ridicules the offerings to the *manes* as futile. It rejects any notion of sacredness attached to food. The preferred mode of spiritual activity of the *sramanas* is *tapas*, which primarily consists of ‘heating’ oneself, i.e. drying or thinning by reducing the intake of food and water. *Tapas* is a form of self-sacrifice which is said to bring about magical powers (*rddhi*) as well as achieve the spiritual goal of *moksha*. The *Ajivikas*, the most ancient among the *sramanas*, have claimed that their teacher Gosala had accumulated such heat (*tejo-lesya*) within himself by fasting and that he was able to scorch to death two Jain mendicants by throwing that power in their direction. He is also said to have died fasting without water with only a mango stone placed in his mouth for the

purpose of salivating. Such a death was considered an extremely holy one and assured the highest heaven, if not *moksha*, for the departing soul. The *Acharangasutra* of the Jains narrates at length the severe asceticism of Mahavir, the last Jain *Tirthankara*. It is said that during the twelve years of his wandering life prior to his Enlightenment, Mahavir had lived only on three kinds of rough food – rice, pounded jujube and pulses. “Taking only these three, he sustained himself for eight months. Sometimes he ate only every sixth day or every eighth or every tenth or every twelfth. Free of desires, he remained engrossed in meditation.” According to later commentators, during these twelve years Mahavir took food on a total of 349 days only; at other times he fasted completely.

The Jains are distinguished from the Brahmanical tradition by their rejection of the sacredness of food, of sacrificial meat, but also of ghee and, by extension, the rejection of the cow as a sacred animal. They are distinguished from the Buddhists by their emphatic adherence to

the practice of fasting as a primary component of their spiritual path. Refraining from food for a period of time is not altogether unknown to the Brahmanical scriptures. The *Manusmṛti* prescribes fasting as a form of expiation for certain transgressions especially by members of the Brahman caste. The Puranic literature is also full of stories like that of Visvamitra whose years of fasting were rendered futile by the caprices of gods jealous of the sage's superior Yogic powers. For the most part, these are legends and are not narrated to persuade the Hindu laity to imitate the sage by similar fasting. In the case of the Jains, however, fasting by their teacher Mahavir seems to have left an indelible mark on their consciousness, making it the most important feature of Jain *tapas*. This is demonstrated by the fact that a great many Jain laymen and women of all ages undertake fasting on a regular basis and consider it the singular mark by which their community can be distinguished from that of the Brahmanical society. Remarkable still is the most holy Jain practice of *salekhana* which permits certain advanced Jain mendicants to adopt total fasting as a legitimate way – in fact the only permissible way – of choosing death in the face of a terminal illness.

The Jain emphasis on fasting invites an examination of their attitude to food and the reasons for their belief in the efficacy of fasting as a means of attaining *moksha*. Probably the Jain doctrine of the material (*paudgalika*) nature of karma capable of producing impure transformation (*vibhava-parinama*) of the soul (*jiva*) is at the root of this belief. It is well known that in Jainism karmic bondage is seen as an accumulation of an extremely subtle form of floating 'dust' which clings to the soul when the latter is overcome, moistened as it were, by desire and other passions.

These desires (present in all souls from beginningless times) in their most subtle form are called *samjnas*, a term which may be tentatively translated as 'instincts'. The Jain texts enumerate four such *samjnas* universally found in all forms of life including the vegetable kingdom. Craving for food (*ahara-samjna*) is the most primary of these instincts. No other being than the liberated soul is exempt from it. This desire for food sets up competition between one living being and another which gives rise to the second instinct, namely that of fear (*bhaya-samjna*). The consumption of food sets the third and probably the most virulent of the instincts in motion, the desire for sex (*maithuna-samjna*), the gratification of which produces further desire for food. This, in turn, produces a craving to accumulate things for future use, the instinct called *parigraha-samjna*, which invariably goads the soul towards volitional harmful acts (*himsa*) inspired by attachment (*raga*) and aversion (*dvesa*). The Jains therefore see the craving for



Jain nuns and monks are role models of simple eating

“A great many Jain laymen and women of all ages undertake fasting on a regular basis.”

food as the very root of all bondage, the uprooting of which is essential for the elimination of the other passions.

The Jain texts dealing with the training of mendicants constantly encourage the cultivation of distaste for food and stipulate a variety of ways of overcoming the desire for flavour (*rasa-parityaga*). They begin with the characteristic Jain declaration that the desire for food is the prime cause for all forms of *himsa* since food cannot be consumed

without destroying another life form. Because life cannot be maintained without consuming some amount of food, the Jain teachers have devised various means of minimising this *himsa* for their mendicants who have assumed the vow of total non-violence (*ahimsa-mahavrata*). In the Jain classification of beings, souls endowed with all five senses (*pancendriyajiva*) occupy the highest position, while the vegetable life, endowed with only one sense, namely that of touch is placed at the bottom of the list. Beings with two or

more senses must not be wilfully violated even by a layperson because their organisms (muscle, blood, bones, etc.) are similar to that of human beings. Thus all forms of animal flesh, including fowl and fish, are totally unacceptable for a pious Jain who must depend on a vegetarian diet, with only dairy products as an exception to the rule (since it is believed that removal of milk does not hurt the animal). The list of prohibited food (*abhaksya*) extends even to certain fruits and vegetables, especially the five kinds of figs (*udumbara*), fruits with many seeds (*bahubija*) and a variety of plants called *anantakayas*, which are thought to be inhabited not by individual souls but by an infinite number of living organisms. These *anantakayas* include as many as thirty-two varieties of food like turmeric, ginger, garlic, bamboo, radishes, beetroots and carrots. The Jains extend their scruples against destroying *ekendriyas* in unstrained water (*agalita-jala*) and a mendicant may drink only boiled water which has been rendered free of all forms of subtle life.

Further restrictions apply to the time when permitted food may be consumed. Advanced laypeople as well as mendicants as a rule observe the vow of not partaking of any food or water after sunset (*ratri-bhojana-tyaga-vrata*) and the Digambara mendicants are restricted to a single meal (including water) a day. On certain holy days, such as the eighth and the fifteenth of each lunar month, many laypeople undertake fasts called *anasana* 'not eating' or *upavasa*. At least once a year all Jains observe a communal fast and dedicate that day for begging forgiveness (*ksampana*) of all begins, including those *ekendriyas* whose lives they destroyed in the act of eating. As for mendicants, who must constantly engage in austerities, the Jain texts prescribe a variety of *tapas*: giving up stimulating dishes (*rasa-parityaga*), reducing the diet to a few morsels (*avamau-daraya*) and fasting for an entire day (*anasana*). Jain fasts, whether practised by mendicants or laypeople, must be distinguished from the fasts kept by the followers of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Fasting in these communities is, for the most part, restricted to daytime only; often food is freely consumed after sunset. Even the followers of various Brahmanical religious sects allow eating fruits or some form of uncooked food – preferably at night – on their fasting days. The Jain fast lasts from sunrise to sunrise and is total; only boiled water in limited quantities may be consumed and that too only during daytime. An extraordinary feature of the Jain fast – not much discussed in the books but tacitly observed – is that all sexual contact between couples is forbidden for the duration of the fast, even if only the wife or the husband has refrained from food. Although the vow of celibacy (*brahma-carya*) does not demand the vow for fasting, the Jains seem to perceive the latter incomplete

without the former. This demonstrates the unique Jain belief that the sex instinct (*maithuna-samjna*) is inseparable from the craving for food and cannot be overcome without controlling the desire for the latter.

Fasting for a day only is considered a child's play among the Jain laity. A great many Jain laypeople, especially women during the sacred week called the *parvasana-parva* in the rainy season (*caturmasa*) undertake longer periods of fastings for three to eight days. The formal conclusion of a fast is called *parana* and takes place long after sunrise, with a sip of boiled water, usually after an offering of food is made to a Jain monk or nun visiting the household for collecting alms. The *paranas*, especially after longer periods of fasting, are occasions for joyous celebrations by the relatives and friends of the person who has completed the vow faultlessly and cheerfully. Along with the fellow members of the community they gather to feed such a person with spoonfuls of boiled water or fruit juice. In the majority of cases these fasts are undertaken by women, often newly wedded brides taking the lead and proving their zeal to their new relatives. The participating community shows in this manner its delight in the spiritual progress made by one of its own and also earns merit by the act of giving food to so worthy a person. 🙏

“This desire for food sets up competition between one living thing and another.”

Professor Padmanabh Jaini is a prolific writer and scholar on Jainism, based in San Francisco, California. The above article was extracted from 'Collected Papers on Jaina Studies', by Pradmanabh S. Jaini, Motilal Barnasidass Publishers, 2000, www.mlbd.com

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You will find a fun module dedicated to Children, to which children are encouraged to add their suggestions! And for those that need up-to-date and further information on Jain Samaj there is a FAQ section, Discussion forum and monthly News Bulletin 'Ahimsa Times', which is circulated to thousands of Jains around the world.

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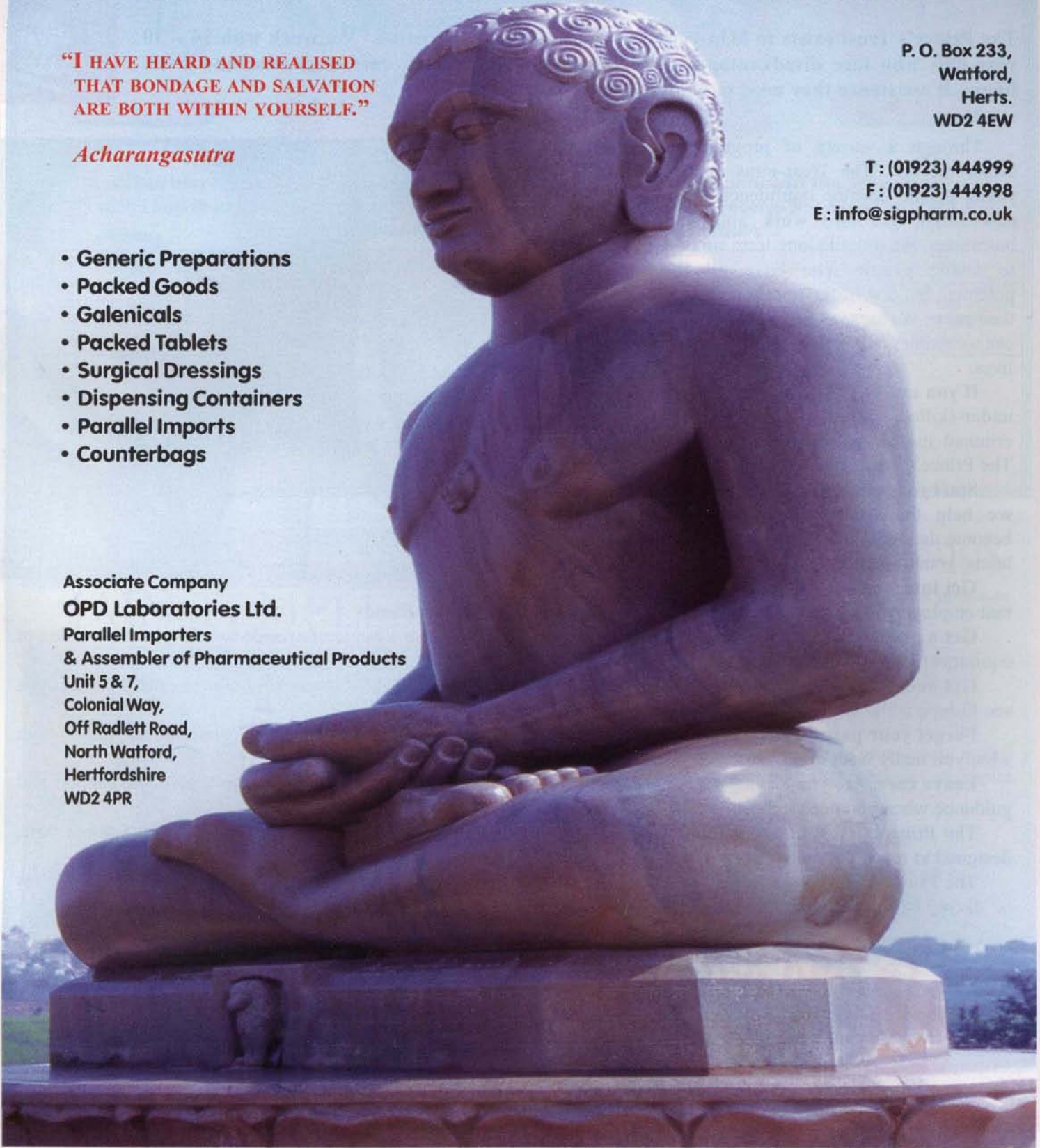
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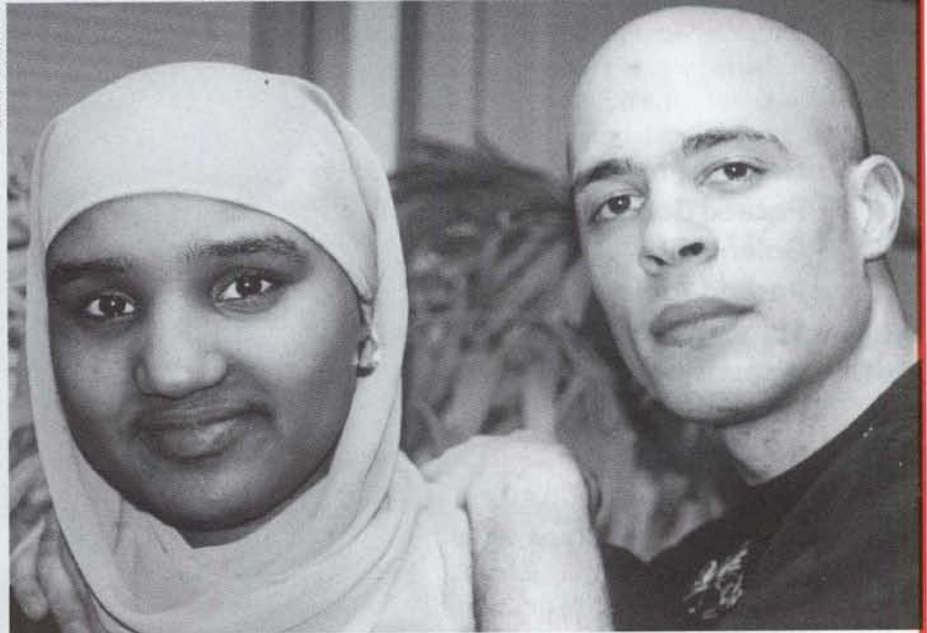
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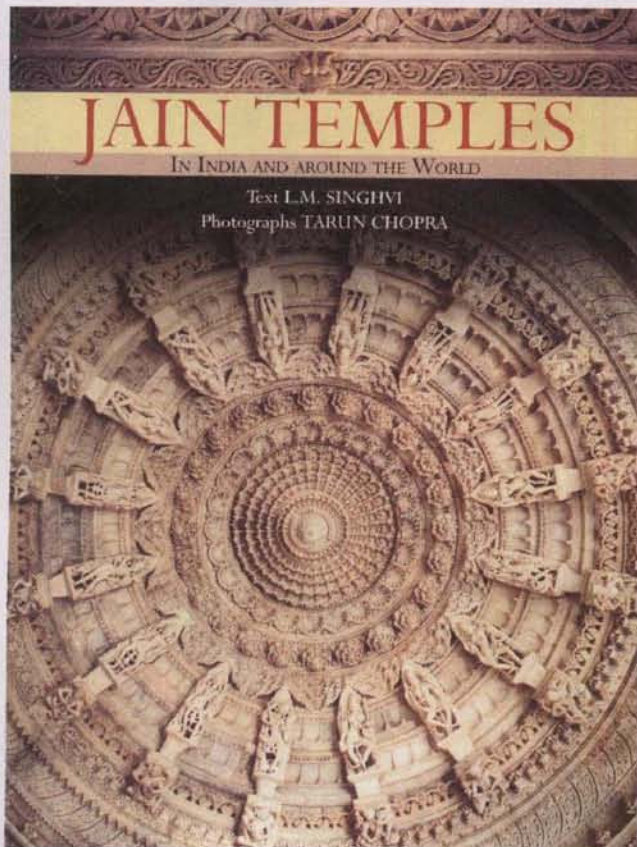
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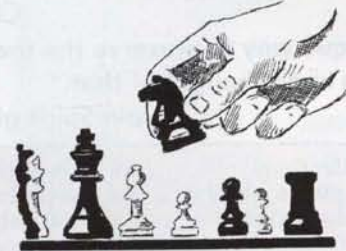
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HISTORY INFORMS



Dr. L. M. Singhvi

Dr. L. M. Singhvi, an eminent jurist and philosopher, explains why it is important to study and learn from history

IT IS STRANGE THAT FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS JAINS HAVE remained a minority in India without a psychosis of minority. They do not suffer from minority syndrome. Jains are not fighting against anyone, so they do not have a visibly separate identity. We are very well integrated wherever we live and we do not generally suffer from discrimination.

However, Jains today are not interested enough in their own tradition or their history, not even in scholarship. We have tried hard to open Professorships in many universities, but Jains never enrol as students. I am very concerned about this decline in scholarship, which Dr. Paul Dundas at the University of Edinburgh wrote about in Issues 8 and 9 of *Jain Spirit*. Ours is a deep tradition of study and scholarship. We are very good at building temples and maintaining them, and this is a positive strength. Jain temples are among the best maintained temples in India. However, we do not have a sense of history. Jains have had a strong influence on the *Upanishads* and we have made very little attempt to find out about the historicity of our *Tirthankaras*.

A German scholar, Herman Jacobi devoted many years of his life to the study of Parshva Nath and finally came to the conclusion that Parshva was a historical personage. I believe that at certain times, like during the Gupta dynasty and the reign of Chandragupta Maurya around the 4th century BC, up to two-thirds of India was Jain. The population of India was small at that time but percentage-wise there were many Jains. Even the rulers were Jains. There is a very famous south Indian saint called Tiruvalluvar, who in my view was definitely a Jain. He is studied in schools all over south India. I inaugurated his statue outside London University's School of Oriental and African Studies in central London. He actively promoted vegetarianism and non-violence, and his 'Weaver's Wisdom' is a central part of Shaivite literature. He has

given wonderful practical guidance about everyday life, which most Jains are not aware of.

There is a huge mystery about Rishabhath and his historicity. The seals of the Mohenjo Daro civilisation (one of the oldest of Indian civilisations) show a very strong resemblance to Rishabhath. Western scientists find it very difficult to accept that Indian civilisation is older than the Greek and Egyptian heritage. Civilisation evolves because there are catalysts, impacts and influences from different parts of the world. It may well be proven that the sociology of the Pharaohs is very similar to the sociology of India at that time. There are many references that indicate the prevalence of the Indian custom of brother marrying a sister, as was the norm for Pharaohs. There are striking resemblances between the pantheon of the Egyptians, the pantheon of the Greeks and the pantheon of the Indians. This is not just a matter of invention, but also a statement of fact.

I believe history is extremely important. The spirit of tolerance is also important in history – we can never say the last word. We are constantly discovering and rediscovering history. We are all the products of history. Knowing and understanding our past will give us tremendous inner strength and self-esteem. In our efforts to become economically successful and prosperous we are losing interest in our past, concentrating too much on the here and now. Studying history will make us humble, it helps us understand the flows of time and the different influences. It enables us to better see our own lives in a wider context. This will help us to cope with changes much better than if we were to simply live in the here and now. 🙏

Dr. L. M. Singhvi was the former Indian High Commissioner to the UK (1990-1997) and is a member of the advisory board of Jain Spirit.



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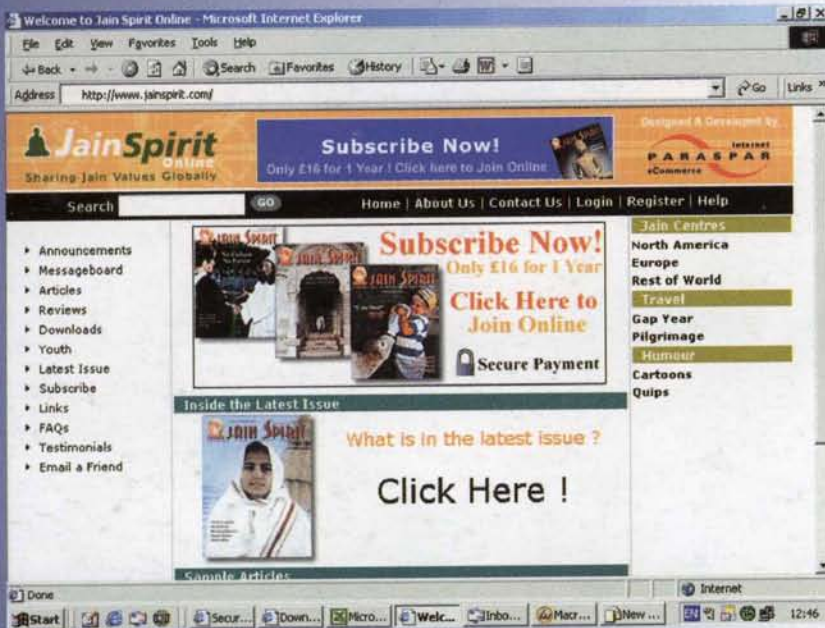
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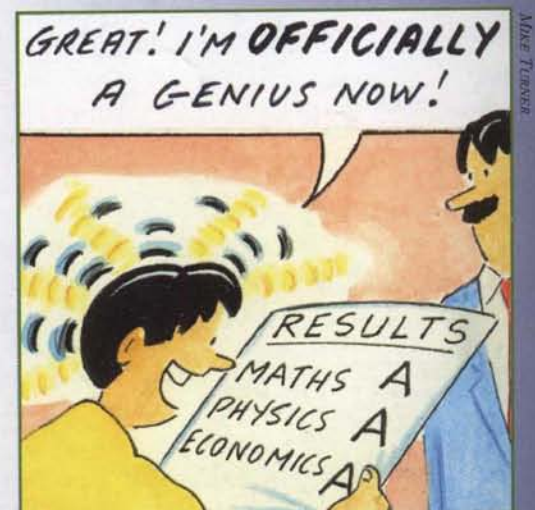
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The Trade Justice Movement (TJM) is campaigning for fundamental change to the unjust rules and institutions governing international trade, which currently have a profoundly harmful effect on the world's poor, on the environment and on democracy. The web site provides a comprehensive set of tools for the trade justice campaigner: up-to-date news, briefings, policy documents, ideas for action, links to information from member organisations, many of whom have expert knowledge in the field of international trade. The TJM is a fast growing group of organisations, including faith groups – why not involve your Jain community, and join? This is your chance to put your faith into action, and campaign for a cause that could improve the lives of millions around the world. Visit the TJM web site and discover how you and your organisation can make a difference!

New Jain Spirit Newsletter

Would you like to keep in touch and informed about new Jain Spirit developments and events? Would you like to be reminded of important festivals and dates? The Jain Spirit team has started a new colourful email newsletter which you can subscribe for free by emailing office@jainspirit.com with the subject line subscribe. A great way to stay in touch. Thousands are already reading this every month.



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