



Issue 2
October - December 1999
International Quarterly Publication

JAIN SPIRIT

ADVANCING JAINISM INTO THE FUTURE

**Experience
the Light
Within**

- **Temples are for Life**
- **Women of Courage**
- **Harmony on Canvas**
- **Whose Dis-ability?**
- **Less is More**

www.jainspirit.org

EDITORIAL

Dear Jain Spirit Readers,

Thank you very much for your support and subscription to this new venture to promote the understanding and awareness of one of the oldest religions in the world. Many of you were very generous with your comments on the first issue, explaining how informative, artistic and thought provoking it was. We are deeply grateful for your blessings, support and good wishes. The second issue is now finished and we have tried our level best to keep in step with the inaugural issue and improve on any mistakes.



This issue celebrates the great work of spreading Jain values globally by two of our most distinguished leaders, Acharya Chandanaji and Dr. Laxmi Mal Singhvi. They speak of the deep wisdom of Lord Mahavir and his vision. In particular, they are both keen to relate the past to the present and promote the practical usefulness and applicability of Jainism today. In these articles, you will find gems of wisdom which you may want to discuss with your friends and family to clarify your own understanding. Satish Kumar provides a striking portrayal of 'Less is More' where he reminds us of the tremendous importance of simplicity. And practice it we must, if we are to call ourselves true Jains. In 'A Parrots Training', Rabindranath Tagore examines the weaknesses of systematized education, showing that we should not give too much weight to the education in schools, colleges and universities and encourage individuals to express their own creative urges. Dr. Jains out there, please don't force your children to also become replica Dr. Jains!

This issue reports on the largest Jain convention in the Western World, the JAINA convention which is held biennially in North America. Last July, this event attracted seven thousand Jains and the distinctions between Shvetambara, Digambara, Sthanakvasi, Deravasi, were not visible and Jains all came together as one. The events and exhibition demonstrated a tremendous energy among Jains living outside India to keep their tradition and promote it. Any visitor to this event would go back thinking that Jains, wherever they may live, are taking pride in their culture and are making efforts to practice Jain values and unite.

Once again, we have paid a lot of attention to art and presentation in our magazine. Ravi Paranjape talks about how he uses art to promote harmony, and his work is truly melodious. Chandu Shah's photography helps us to reach some of the inner depths of Jainism through our eyes and his art. Lavinia Plonka talks about art as an innate quality of each soul – so start sketching, or singing, or dancing or acting. It is art which has played a vital role in keeping Jainism alive, and our breathtaking temples continue to draw thousands of people, as Cromwell Crawford explains in his article on their significance. The poetry of Benjamin Zephaniah and twelve year old Neha is also truly inspiring, showing how words and literature are also sacred to the soul.

As you can see, we have worked very very hard to give you the best of Jainism in an understandable and creative way. We would like you to respond by becoming true ambassadors of this tradition, and promote the magazine in every which way. Please give gift subscriptions to your friends and relatives, or encourage them to subscribe. We find that some people hate filling out subscription forms, so perhaps you can do it for them, and they will be most pleased with your simple gesture in time to come. Young people love this magazine but do not always have the money to subscribe to it – it is the duty of elders to sponsor their interest, and send it to them at their colleges or universities so that they keep connected. Who knows, even their friends may get inspired by the magazine. Let us together create a chain reaction such that by the year 2000, the whole world begins to acknowledge the special place that Jainism deserves in human history.

Jai Jinendra,

Atul K. Shah
Executive Editor
Email: editors@jainspirit.org

Details of Jain Spirit team and distribution network are on page 13.



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**Subscription - Introductory offer: 40% Off
See page 13 for details**

THE LARGEST JAIN CONVENTION IN THE WESTERN WORLD

Prakash Mody

A report on the tenth biennial JAINA convention which attracted 8,000 delegates from all over the world, half of whom were under the age of 35.

This July, the tenth biennial three-day JAINA convention was a resounding success, attracting a crowd of more than 8,000 people of all ages from all over the world, with the majority coming from North America. JAINA is a federation of more than 55 Jain organizations of America and Canada. Samarpan Jain Sangh of Philadelphia was the host and 'Jainism in the New Millennium' was the theme. The event was held during the July 4 holiday weekend at the massive Valley Forge Convention Center, in the suburbs of Philadelphia. Dr. Dhiraj Shah, President of JAINA and Devendra Peer, Convenor, were the leaders and, working in co-operation with volunteers, they ensured that the event was enjoyed by one and all. Dignitaries from religious and social fields of America, India, United Kingdom and other places graced the occasion by their presence. The Young Jains of the UK led a delegation of 20 young people who presented several seminars and networked with the young Jains from North America to build a Jain bridge across the Atlantic.



The chief guest, Mr. Frank Pallire, Congressman from New Jersey and Mr. Dhiraj Shah, Convenor of Jaina

What was most evident at the convention was the tremendous activity in the learning and practice of Jainism in the Western world. There was a large exhibition area where stalls ranging from Jain cartoons to CD-roms, books and the new temple project of the Jain Center of Northern California in San Francisco. In their own way, there are many Jains who are trying their level best to reinvigorate their culture despite being far away from India.

Dr. Mahendra Pandya who lives in New York was elected the new President of JAINA for a two-year term. In his address, he spoke of the tremendous potential for Jain unity and the commitment to uphold Jain values in the Western world. He explained: "The Federation of JAINA is a unique institution and does not have many parallels in the Jain-world today.

A section of the crowd at the convention



During the past 20 years of its existence it has strived for and succeeded in uniting all Jains as Jains in spite of the diversity in religious tradition, rituals, customs, language and regional origin." Despite the tremendous wisdom of Jainism, Dr. Pandya recognised that as Jains we do not always live up to its highest ideals. He requested everyone to "give time, talent and treasures". He gave a lot of importance to the youth, who are the torchbearers of this ancient culture, and must be encouraged to learn and promote Jain values.

This assembly had a variety of items like the grand opening ceremony; more than 90 lectures-meetings-seminars-workshops-presentations in different languages

and for different age groups and interests; magnificent real Chaumukhi

(4-faced) Jain Temple built by Nipul Malde where Siddha-Chakra Puja was performed; exhibitions,

slide-shows and displays of models, arts, paintings, books, etc.; booths of charitable and commercial interests; cultural items like raas-garba, dances, dramas, etc.; Gala banquet dinner; Sahitya Sammelan (Literary Session); awards presentation; matrimonial services; introduction visit to the Philadelphia Museum; seminars (Continuing Medical Education and others); fashion show; yoga & meditations; reunions of educational institutions and communities (like Kutchhi, Gurjars

and others) and many more. A booklet of programme details, informative souvenir and a few other publications were released.

The opening ceremony was attended by Jain Sadhus-Sadhvijiis (Chandanaji, Manakmuniji, Amrendramuniji, Shilapiji, Devendra Keertiji, Chitrabhanuji, Samannijis, and few others); Father. C. G. Valles of Ahmedabad; Jain Scholars-Academicians-Pundits (Satish Kumar, Dr. Parasmal Agrawal, Jyotindra Doshi, Tarlaben Doshi, Dr. Jagdishprashad Jain, Niraj Jain, Dr. Trilokchand Jain, Babubhai Kadiwala, Dhirajlal Mehta, Chandrakant Mehta, Dr. Kalyan Gagngwal, Hermann Kuhn, Kiranbhai Parekh, Diptiben Shah, Pravin K. Shah, Pravin L. Shah, Shantibhai Kothari, Dr. Rajnibhai Shah, Satish Tripathi, Sunandaben Vohra, Arunbhai Zaveri and a few others) and many Shravaks-Shravikas (Executive Committee Members, Trustees and Office bearers of many Jain Centers and Youth organizations). Later these personalities spoke at different lectures, Q&A sessions, Panel Discussions, Workshops, Youth Sessions, Presentations and many other items.

Some of the note-worthy items included:

- Regular seminars and events for young people throughout the convention, with separate meetings for under-15, over-15 and Young Jain Professionals. The UK Young Jains presented a play entitled 'Jains in Notting Hill' which was very popular.
- The Sahitya Sammelan where prominent Gujarati writers from India, (Rev. Fr. Valles, Makrandbhai Dave, Kundanika Kapadia, Taru Kajaria) and American-Gujaratis (Madhusudan Kapadia, Dr. Jayraman, Kanti Mepani, Madhu Rye, Panna Naik, Chandrakant Shah and a few others) spoke about Gujarati Sahitya (literature) and the contribution of Jain religion.
- Jain Spirit, a new International quarterly magazine for advancing Jainism into the future, edited by Dr. Atul Shah of London, England, and assisted by an international team, was launched. An ideal magazine with quality as well as quantity of information, coloured, glossy, Jain Spirit expresses a long felt need to inform and connect the international Jain community and propagate Jain values all over the world. The subscription is very reasonable at US\$31-£20/yearly; US\$141-£91 for 5 years and US\$421-£350 for lifetime.



A temple especially built for the convention by Nipul Malde

- Visit to the Philadelphia Museum of Art where there was a special exhibition entitled 'Making the Path to Perfection: Art for the Jains in India'.

- Marriage Information Services were also well organized facilitating traditional marriages by arrangement with booklet of details and meeting sessions. Around 250 registrants' details were listed in the book and another 50 must have registered on-site.

- Awards were given to: Pravin K. Shah, Cary, NC (Jaina Ratna Award), Dr. Surendra Sanghavi, Dayton, OH (Sushilmuni Ahimsa Award), Jain Society of Toronto (Second time Institutional award), C. N. Sanghavi, Mumbai, India (Presidential Award), nine Youths and 14 other individuals were given awards for their services.

- Patan-ni-Prabhuta, Panch-Kalyanak (Janak Khendry) dance-dramas were performed as part of the evening cultural shows and they were very good. Ravindra Jain provided an excellent musical evening.

- Cultural show of raas-garba and other dances, items by youths from various Jain centres were also entertaining.

- Publications: Gurjari Digest, the Gujarati literary quarterly published a beautiful informative special issue, maintaining its earlier high standard. India Tribune had an eight-page special supplement. Desi Talk, News India-Times, Gujarat Times (new Gujarati weekly from India Abroad Group) had special articles on JAINA and Jain topics.

- Delicious Jain vegetarian food was provided throughout the conference for breakfast, lunch and dinner, and this was much appreciated by the delegates. 🍽️

Prakash Mody works for Canadian Television.

THE NEXT JAINA CONVENTION WILL BE HELD IN NORTH AMERICA DURING THE JULY 4 INDEPENDENCE DAY WEEKEND IN 2001. IT WILL BE ANOTHER MEGA EVENT, DETAILS OF WHICH WILL COME OUT IN LATE 2000. IF YOU WANT TO ATTEND IT, THE BEST WAY TO FIND OUT IS TO SUBSCRIBE TO JAIN SPIRIT, AND WE WILL KEEP YOU IN TOUCH.

JAIN SPIRIT INTOXICATES THE WORLD



Digambar Acharya Vidyasagarji admires Jain Spirit

The first major international quarterly English language magazine promoting Jain values set off to a great start at the JAINA Convention in Philadelphia this July. The Chairman of Jain Spirit, Mr. Satish Kumar, a highly accomplished writer and speaker on spirituality, emphasised the urgent need for such a magazine to connect and inform Jains all over the world. Despite being one of the oldest religions of the world, with a philosophy so relevant to the modern age of over-consumption and pollution, too few people know about Jainism. Those who are interested experience great difficulty in accessing such information. Jain Spirit is for all Jains from all Jains and is non-sectarian in content and outlook. Its aim is to help bring together the entire global diaspora of Jainism, and help us to see what is common and build on these strengths.

Messages of congratulations are pouring in from all over the world, including places as far away as Australia, Uganda, and North America. The first issue, with 74 full colour pages, was so different from all the community newspapers that had hitherto been published that readers were struck by the professionalism. Very high standards were set for this issue, as Jainism is a tradition with the highest ideals. These standards will be raised in future issues, and regular, quality and informative news and information will be sent to subscribers all over the world. To maintain the quality, consistency and professionalism, Jain Spirit cannot be a free magazine. It has to be a subscription magazine, and the subscriptions will also discipline the publishers to continue to maintain the highest standards. So if you haven't subscribed already, why are you hesitating? The information will help you save money, and raise the quality of your life for a very reasonable fee. Please complete the attached subscription form today.

The magazine seems to have struck a particular chord with young people, who find it to be very open and non-dogmatic,

willing to challenge orthodox beliefs. At the same time, the language used and the articles are very varied and well-researched. Young people were particularly struck by the art and the modern outlook of the whole journal.

At last there was a magazine which accepted modern life as it is rather than trying to move back into orthodoxy. Although the magazine draws from the deep well of Jain tradition and culture, it translates these ideas to the present context, helping to keep the tradition vibrant and alive.

An editorial office has been set up in the small English coastal town of Colchester in Essex, about 60 miles from London. The Executive Editor, Dr. Atul Keshavji Shah has given up a permanent full-time University Lectureship to devote his energies to this project. The entire team of Directors are fully committed to making this project work, and devoting significant personal resources to its success. With a small full-time staff of two, we hope to take the Jain message all over the world, to schools, libraries, community centres, homes and youth groups. There is a website for information about subscriptions and advertising: www.jainspirit.org and there are plans to make this into an active site which Jains from all over the world would visit on a regular basis.

The magazine has already been launched in Australia (Sydney and Perth); East Africa (Kenya and Uganda: Nairobi and Mombasa; Kampala); North America (Philadelphia, Houston, Pittsburgh, Los Angeles and Boston); United Kingdom (Leeds; Manchester; London) and India (Indore, Ahmedabad). There are plans to do a major UK launch in early November where Dr. L. M. Singhvi, the former Indian High Commissioner to the UK will be the Chief Guest. What is needed to keep the whole momentum of this project going is the financial support of the entire global Jain community, through subscriptions, donations and patronage. Please contact our editor Atul K. Shah at jain.spirit@virgin.net or telephone 44-1206-794565 if you would like to contribute to this visionary and high-quality global project. 🙏



Jain Spirit team at the convention

IN BRIEF...

NEW DELHI

The fourth International Conference on Peace and Nonviolent Action with the theme Ahimsa (nonviolence), peacemaking and conflict prevention and management being held in New Delhi from November 10 to 14, 1999 under the auspices of His Holiness Acharya Mahapragya. This conference is being organised in association with twelve organisations – ten overseas organisations and two Indian organisations. Dr. S. L. Gandhi is its tireless organising secretary. For further details contact : anuvibha@datainfosys.net

INDORE

The eminent Digambara Acharya Vidyasagarji recently announced a major visit to this central Indian city for the rainy season. This announcement generated tremendous interest, and on the day of his arrival, there was a two-mile queue of people who walked with him to welcome him into the city. He was very impressed by the inaugural issue of Jain Spirit magazine.

MUMBAI

The eminent Jain acharya, Shri Devender Muniji Maharaj left this world on 26th April 1999. Thousands of devotees gathered to pay their respects in Ghatkopar Sthanak. He was cremated at Lomia College on 28th April.

MANCHESTER

This major British city is home to a thriving community of over 70 families. In addition, the universities attract over 100 Jain students each year. Recently the Samaj has purchased a major property which they are converting into a temple and community centre. The entire community is fully involved in a democratic manner. As a result, everyone's views and opinions are taken into consideration.

LEEDS

The Yorkshire Jain Foundation has for many years kept alive the light of Jainism. Professor Kanti Mardia recently hosted a special event to promote the launch of Jain Spirit at his home. Over 30 people came to listen to Atul Shah's lecture and everyone present subscribed to the magazine.

PERTH & SYDNEY

Over 150 Jain families live in the Olympic city of Sydney. They meet on the last Sunday of each month to recite Jain prayers and listen to lectures from visiting Jain scholars. In addition there are Jains living in Perth and Brisbane who also meet regularly. In August this year, the Jain communities of Perth and Sydney were shown the inaugural issue of Jain Spirit, with the help of our Australian correspondents, Ramesh and Rama Shah. Mr. Sunil Jain of the Jain Center of Sydney was very impressed by the first issue and is keen to promote the unity of all Jains worldwide. Mr. Amu Vaghji Shah in Perth also encouraged the community to subscribe and found it a unique vehicle for information and knowledge about the modern relevance of Jainism.

ANTWERP

This ancient Belgian city is home to over 50 Jain families actively involved in the international diamond business. A few Jains, like Mr. Kirtilal Manilal and Mr. Vijay Shah, have received special recognition from the Belgian royal family for their contribution to trade and commerce. The construction of a major Jain temple has already begun. All the members got together during Paryushana.

PARIS

Mr Gerard Clot had a major exhibition of Jain photographs in August 1999 entitled 'Les Jains de L'Inde'. This was the first time that such a major portrayal of modern Jainism was held in France. In addition, Mr. Lalit Bhandari hosted Jain Sramanis visiting from India and organised their lecture programme.

MOMBASA

The first Jain temple outside India was built in this beautiful Kenyan coastal town. Today there are 300 families who live here and some young people like Mr. Kirti Shah, Sachin Shah and Rajesh Shah are still actively involved in the management of community institutions like schools, mahajanwadis (community centres) and of-course the temple.

KAMPALA

On Sunday 18th April, the Jain Samaj of Uganda broadcast a special message celebrating the life and philosophy of Lord Mahavir. The Samaj also regularly organises a children's school to promote Jain values among the future generation. The 150 members also actively provide charitable support for the local community by way of medical camps and feeding programmes. Mr. Abhay Shah has launched a Jain newsletter providing information on local events and enabling greater communication.

GLOBAL NEWS

UNITED KINGDOM

JAINISM IN THE MILLENNIUM DOME

The British government has taken a significant interest in projecting the best of Britain to the whole world. Its landmark project is the Millennium Dome, a multi-million pound huge exhibition dome covering 20 acres and capable of housing 13 Albert Halls close to central London. It is the largest structure of its kind in the world. The Dome will attract over 12 million visitors from home and abroad throughout the year 2000. Around the central arena, there will be fourteen exhibition zones, one of which will be devoted entirely to spirituality, the Faith Zone.

Jains in the United Kingdom have taken the initiative to ensure that the positive contribution of the Jain community and its culture is highlighted in this Faith Zone. They are working closely with the Millennium Experience Company to provide them with a series of high quality Jain pictures and translations of everyday Jain spiritual life for the exhibition. These will be portrayed in several Life Point pillars, and Mr. Tim Gardom of the Company is very impressed with the co-operation and support provided by the Jains. There is a special section on awe and wonder where photographs of ancient Jain temples and their art will be shown. The aim is to use these as a way of reflecting the beauty of creation. A quote from the Uttaradhyayan Sutra will explain: "A lotus, even when rooted in mud, flourishes and stays clear above the surface remaining relatively dry. So should one blossom and remain pure even while surrounded by material desire." A section on marriage will show a photo of the hastameelaap ceremony which expresses the union of the bride and groom. "We are two souls together now. Let us act with one mind. Our welfare, our karmas, our joys and sorrows are common to both of us. Our goal is the ultimate nirvana."



INTERNATIONAL YOUTH EXCHANGE

In August 1999, 28 young Oshwal Jains from UK and Kenya joined their counterparts in Toronto, Canada for an international youth exchange. Co-ordinated by Paulomi Gudka, an active young Jain in Toronto, the event lasted ten days and visitors were hosted by Jain families living in the Toronto area. The activities included sightseeing, visit to a theme park, and some discussions about the future of the community. All the participants had a most enjoyable time, and the local hosts organised a special farewell dinner for them. New lasting friendships were made between young people sharing a similar cultural background, but living in different continents. (News and photo courtesy of Shailee Shah, Exchange Participant)

NEW JAIN ENCYCLOPAEDIA

In order to collate the vast amount of sacred texts in Jainism, and present them in modern understandable English, a new 10,000 page Encyclopaedia of Jainism is currently being written by a team of scholars based in India. Dr. Kamal Chand Sogani will be the chief editor, and eleven volumes are planned, with topics ranging from History of Jainism, to Philosophy, Art, Science and Society. The project is an initiative of the World Council of Jain Academies with headquarters in London. For details contact: Dr. Premchand Gada, Jain Academic Foundation of North America, Email: gadapb9jafna@pol.net or Dr. Natubhai Shah, Jain Academy, Email: natubhai@shah1.demon.co.uk

CALIFORNIA GETS A SPIRITUAL UPLIFT

NORTH AMERICA NEW JAIN COMPLEX IN SAN FRANCISCO



The Jain Center of Northern California (JCNC) has embarked on a project to build a temple and community centre (Jain Bhawan) in the city of Milpitas in the San Francisco Bay Area. It is a 24,000 sq.ft. two-storey building on a 1.75-acre piece of land, and includes an exquisite temple and Bhakti Room catering to the needs of all Jain sects including Shewtambar, Digambar, Sthanakwasi, Terapanthi and the followers of Srimad Rajchandra in a single integrated 5,500 sq.ft. area. The temple is on the second floor to

provide complete sanctity and isolation from the multipurpose community area on the first floor. It has been designed with a major emphasis on the needs of the young generation who are the torchbearers of our tradition. In addition, there will be an Internet Centre which will broadcast live programmes and host world conferences. People will be able to visit the temple from anywhere in the world through their computer screens. The entire project is expected to cost five million dollars. Potential donors should contact: Dr. Parveen Jain, Chairman of the Board of Directors on 408-559-6987.

TEMPLE EXPANSION IN LOS ANGELES

The Jain Center of Southern California (JCSC) was established in 1979. It was the first custom-designed facility in North America to meet the religious, cultural and social needs of the Jain community. The doors of the Jain Bhavan opened in 1988 and today JCSC has grown to serve a local Jain population of approximately 800 families. JCSC has established a long and impressive list of accomplishments and become a showcase of collective spirit for Jains in Southern California. Over the years, the size of the local Jain community as well as their level of involvement in JCSC have both steadily increased, creating the necessity to expand JCSC facilities to match these growing needs.

The existing Jain Bhavan will be fully integrated with two adjoining properties into a multi-use Jain Bhavan complex, serving the needs of the local Jain community for at least the next 15 years. The existing Derasar will be renovated and expanded to accommodate more people during Pujas and other religious ceremonies. Properly-equipped classrooms will be made available to support Pathshala and Swadhyay activities. This will be located in the existing Post Office building which will be renovated for this purpose. Plans call for building a dining hall, an expanded kitchen and more restroom accommodations. Facilities for housing the JAINA National Library will also be included. The expanded library will house a collection of over 8,000 books, audio and video tapes, and CDs, establishing a very valuable resource for scholars and students of Jainism.

A brand new cultural complex will be located in a new building to be erected next to the existing Jain Bhavan facility. It will house a museum, a large meeting hall (8,000-10,000 sq. ft.) and an underground parking facility which may also be used as a play area for children or as a dining area. Additional parking will be available on a neighbourhood lot now owned by JCSC. A very exciting part of the renovation plan calls for the cultural complex to provide a new home for a priceless wooden replica of the famous Palitana Jain temple, popularly known as 'The Gateway to Luck'. This magnificent temple (20ft _ 20ft _ 35ft high), is intricately and exquisitely hand-carved of teakwood and weighs close to 14 tons. Considered by art critics and experts on oriental architecture as one of the truly outstanding works of Indian art in the world, the temple will be a prominent feature of the entry foyer and will be fully integrated with the adjoining museum.



ACTUALITE DES RELIGIONS, an international magazine with a circulation of 30,000, recently did a feature article on Jainism with the help of Pierre Amiel and Atul Shah. Their September 1999 issue devoted eight full colour pages to various aspects of Jainism, using beautiful photographs to show Jain art and lifestyle. This is one of the first times that such an ancient tradition has been given significant publicity in a French magazine. To get your own copy, telephone Paris 1-48884600.

**INDIA
BAHUBALI STATUE
NEEDS URGENT
FACELIFT**

This giant 42-foot Jain shrine in south India near Mangalore (Karkala) is in urgent need of repair and restoration. However, the Archaeological Survey of India, the guardian of Indian heritage, has done little to help, and is proving to be a hindrance instead. For example, a local Jain group attempted to install facilities for drinking water, but these plans have met with resistance by the local authorities.



**TRIBUTES PAID TO
JAIN WRITERS**

Glowing tributes were paid to Jain writers for having enriched Kannada literature at a two-day Jain Literary Conference in Hubli, near Bangalore. Jain writers, like Adikavi Pampa, Ranna, Ponna, Ratnakar, Nemichandra and Bhaskara, have rendered great service to the literary world by producing timeless classics that were rich in content, form and style. They also made very valuable contributions to Kannada grammar, explained Bhuvankeerti Bhatarak Mahaswamy. The president of the conference, Prof. Brahmappa, stressed the need for a good compilation of these literary gems at affordable prices for the larger benefit of the reading public. He appealed both to the government and the Jain community for financial support.

FORTHCOMING MAJOR INTERNATIONAL JAIN EVENTS

World Parliament of Religions, South Africa, December 1999

Hundreds of people from all over the world will be attending this major global meeting of faiths, and the Jains are actively involved in representing this ancient tradition. The event will be held from 1st to 8th December 1999 in Cape Town. Details can be obtained from www.cpwr.org or email enquiries can be made through 99info@cpwr.org The UK-based Institute of Jainology will be leading an international Jain delegation which includes Dr. L. M. Singhvi. Details can be obtained from Mr. Nemu Chandaria, Email: diple@compuserve.com. Jain Spirit Chairman Mr. Satish Kumar is also an invited speaker.

Jaina Pilgrimage 2000 - Jaisalmer to Palitana

Last year's Samet Sikhar Pilgrimage was so successful that JAINA is now planing a pilgrimage to Rajasthan and Gujarat commencing January 20 of the year 2000.

For more details, contact Mr. Dilip V. Shah in Philadelphia, tel: (215) 561-0581 Email: dilipvshah@aol.com

November 1999, New Delhi, International Conference on Peace and Non-violent Action

This fourth international conference has regularly attracted delegates from all over the world active in the education and promotion of global peace. Hosted by Acharya Mahapragya and ably co-ordinated by Dr. S.L. Gandhi, this event promises to be a major success, and already, several international organisations have expressed interest and delegates have also registered. For details email: anuvibha@datainfosystems.net

July 2000, London, Fourth International Young Jains Convention

Young Jains of the UK is hosting its fourth major convention, which has in the past attracted delegates from all over the world. This event will build on the enormous successes of the past to provide young people with an international forum for networking and communication. Although the details have not yet been finalised, please put this event in your diaries, and latest information can be obtained from www.youngjains.org.uk In the past, host family accomodation in London has been organised for all qualifying international delegates.

Young Jains of America Midwest Regional Convention, November 1999

"East Meets West. Tradition vs. Compromise of Jain Values" is the theme of this youth convention to be held in Detroit, Michigan. The event will be held during the Thanksgiving Holiday on November 25-28, 1999. Registration forms can be downloaded from <http://www.yja.org> The event is for young people aged 14-30. Further information can also be obtained from Binisa Shah - Chairperson - shahbini@pilot.msu.edu - (248) 442-9474

!!STOP PRESS!! In July 2000, the big YJA Convention will be held in Los Angeles. Visit www.yja.org

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JAIN ART

The exhibitions of the works of Jayshree Khimasia and Kamal Shah reported in the inaugural issue of Jain Spirit, were well attended. It was gratifying to see a lot of young buyers who have started to take an interest in art, thereby encouraging artists to produce additional work. We have had over 25 exhibitions in the last three years and over 3,000 people have visited the Gallery. It would appear that considerable interest has been generated in Indian art and we have heard that one or two galleries may be commencing to promote Indian art. We hope that our youth will continue to show serious appreciation of our art and culture.

Raju Shah, Curator, Meghraj Gallery

THANK YOU

Jai Jinendra! Many thanks for sending me the first issue of Jain Spirit. It is an excellent publication which I have already read from cover to cover. I have for some time been looking for such a magazine. Such periodicals go a long way towards removing the sense of isolation for those of us who are not of an Indian background and have very little or no opportunity to meet with other Jains. It reminds us that we are in fact part of a major world community with a lot to offer. I particularly enjoyed the articles from Benjamin Zephaniah and Satish Kumar.

Ciaran Reilly, Ireland

YOUNG PEOPLE ARE SEARCHING FOR RATIONAL DIALOGUE

Many young people think that Jainism is a temple-based ritualistic religion where there is no place for reason and dialogue. As a result, they don't even admit to being Jain. This is a very sad predicament for such an ancient scientific and visionary culture. I read the inaugural issue with interest, and find that many young people are getting lost in the modern material world and seeking such ancient wisdom. However, to attract them, we need a different approach which integrates the past with the present, and allows young people to question. I also believe that young Jains are often very well educated and talented, and if they are attracted by the tradition, the community would be significantly strengthened. Jain Spirit is taking a valuable step in this direction, and I hope readers will turn its ideas into actions and take pride in their culture. This will provide valuable self-confidence which will help them sail through any storm. I appeal to all young Jains to subscribe to Jain Spirit without hesitation and become ambassadors of Jainism. Their world will be better for it.

Priti Shah, London

PROFOUND VISION

I would like to congratulate you on the first issue of Jain Spirit. I read the articles thoroughly and came to the conclusion that you have made the impossible thing possible. Jain Spirit is the journal we have been waiting for. Selecting the right material and editing it involves tremendous skill, energy and commitment and above all, selfless dedication and perseverance. Jain Spirit espouses a profound vision and Acharya Mahapragya was also very impressed with its quality.

Dr. S. L. Gandhi, Secretary, Anuvrat Global Organisation, Jaipur, India

A SPIRITUAL 21st CENTURY

Living in Brussels far from a vibrant community, I miss having intimate contact with Jains. I was therefore most surprised and delighted to receive the inaugural copy of Jain Spirit. Here is a bold attempt to integrate Jains all over the world and inform them about the practical and contemporary relevance of their culture. The variety of articles, their content and the underlying themes demonstrate to me a religion in renaissance. I believe the 21st century will be a spiritual century and more and more people will get tired of the current world of greed and materialism. Jain Spirit will continue to be a valuable sanctuary and I urge all my fellow Jains to rally behind this call and subscribe. It will help them to succeed and prosper.

Varsha Dodhia, Brussels

EXPERIENCE THE LIGHT WITHIN

Dr. L. M. Singhvi

The selfless striving for perfection is the hallmark of a Jain, and in this interview, Dr. Singhvi illuminates this path in all its dimensions.

The central message of Jainism is the same for people of all ages, castes and creed. It is a universal message stating that all life is interdependent. This translates into a way of life, which is based on ahimsa – non-violence, compassion. It is an ethical view of life, which is at once pragmatic and idealistic. It is important for us to remember that many ideas, which appear to us to be new, are ideas which were at the core of the Jain tradition for thousands of years. For example, we cannot merely say that we will respect the environment because there is more pollution nowadays than before. We have to take a holistic and integrated look at environment as a philosophy of life. Jainism is deeply rooted in a scientific and holistic view of life. It is deeply rooted in an approach to life which protects and preserves and is able to help us to have a reasonable balance between human needs, human consumption and human relationships. The central point is that we have to exercise a measure of restraint in our lives – *saiyam*. This principle is common to the entire mainstream traditions of India. That restraint is power: it enables you to rise to sublime heights, it enables one to experience the spiritual glow within oneself.

Jainism is a very scientific philosophy of life. For example, we use the word atomic and nuclear as if they were invented only in the twentieth century and are weapons of destruction. The very word atom and nuclear have been used in the Jain tradition for thousands of years. Anuvrat for instance is the atomic nuclear vow of the individual to follow a certain code of conduct. The nuclear power of the Jain tradition is based on the conciseness of each individual contributing to the best preservation of the world, to the best relationship amongst all living beings. This is not a view centred on the welfare of humankind but all living beings. We are talking today of biodiversity because until now we haven't thought of all other species and their life needs.



Dr. Singhvi addressing Jains in the UK

Jainism has thought about this all through its history. It is the scientific outlook of the Jains which distinguishes it from many of the traditions of philosophy.

Many young people feel that Jainism is a meaningless ritualistic tradition. However, rituals are nothing more than an affirmation of a principle. They are not the principle themselves. Modern man must get to the root of the religious tradition. Those roots are found in reverence for life, in a sensibility and consideration for all forms of life. Jainism also prescribes a practical code of conduct for everyone, which is in fact a code of conduct for good citizenship of the world.

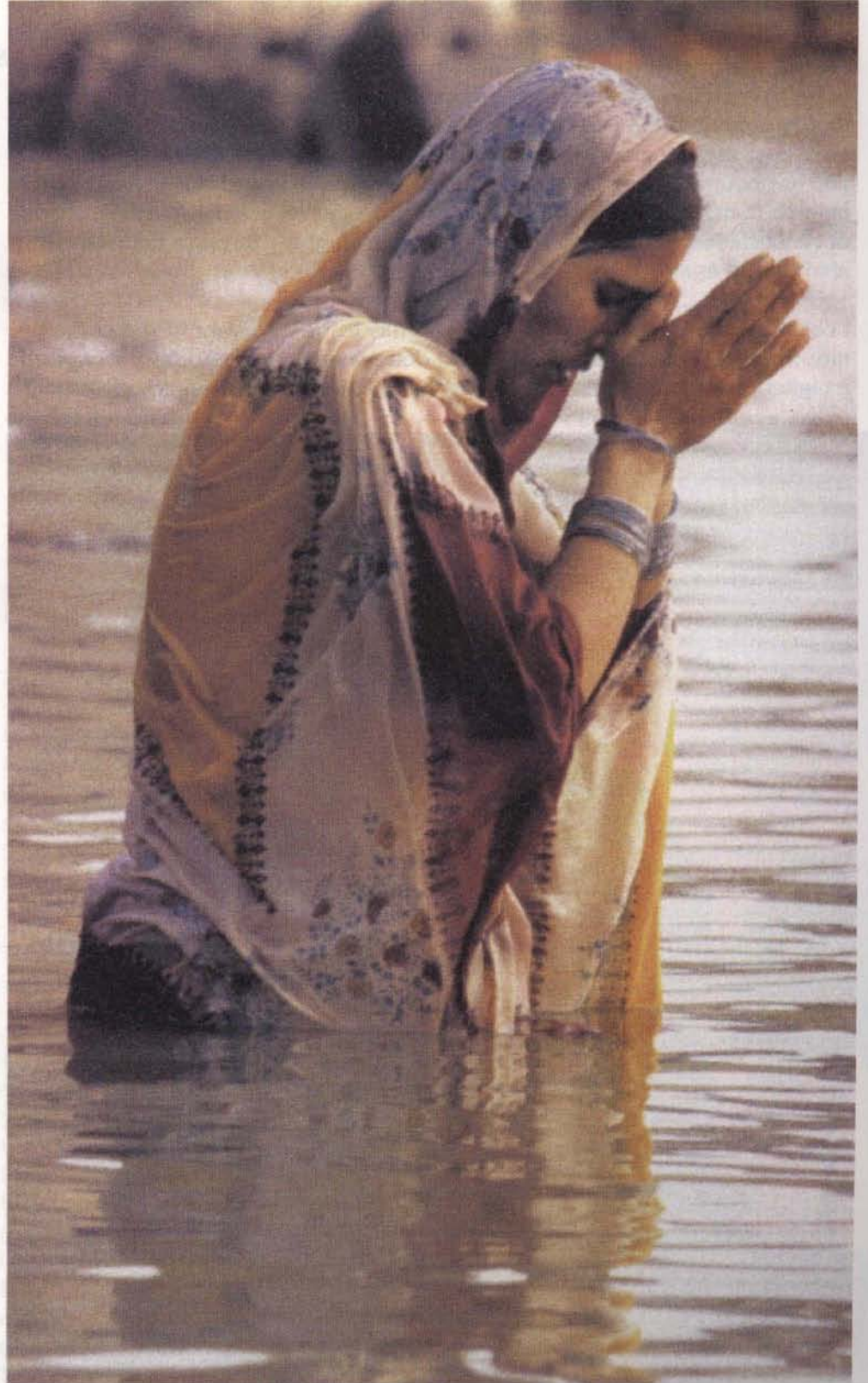
I think it is a central misconception of the Jain tradition and teachings to say that it is concerned only about the salvation of the individual in a selfish manner. Philosophically, one has to understand that each individual is a repository of a spiritual consciousness and we cannot have a regimentation of that individual consciousness. What we have is the principle of reciprocity. 'Paraparopagraho jivanam' is not selfishness but is an enlightened and a caring approach to the world. It is based on a strong consideration of others. Lord Mahavira's teaching was that

before you injure anyone, do not forget that the one you injure is yourself. Therefore, this otherness of the other is not a part of the Jain tradition. The alienation of that which is not mine is not a part of the Jain tradition. Therefore, the Jain tradition is founded actually on the premise that the individual must strive for the highest code of conduct, for the highest code of restraint, for the highest contribution that he or she can make for the preservation of others. That is what ennobles the Jain tradition. There is nothing selfish about it.

In fact, there is hardly any tradition which is more selfless. Selfishness comes if we subscribe to the indiscriminate accumulation of wealth. That is what is denied. Aparigraha is a consideration for the rest of the world. We cannot practise equity unless we practise moderation and constraint. Caring for the world as a whole and showing consideration for all forms of life cannot ever be selfish. On the other hand, there is no doubt that the light of spiritual growth has to be experienced by each individual. It is something which each individual has to strive for. This is the whole idea of the atomic conception of life. This conception does not isolate individuals from society but helps them truly to contribute to its betterment.

For example, I consider my success greatest when I am able to establish a personal relationship in the sense of giving and taking. I consider my success in building bridges, disseminating the best of the teachings of the great masters of the world. That is not to be measured by the outward images of success. What I have achieved is nothing particularly to brag about. I remember an obituary which

Bertrand Russell wrote for himself while he was still alive. He said beautifully that "I am conscious that I am only a speck in this vast Universe, only a fraction of the trillions of atoms which comprise this Universe." One should avoid the exaggerated sense of one's importance. I think one of the great follies of high office is this great egocentrism. I strive to make sure that I restrain myself from self-pride as much as possible in spite of the high office ▶



Picture: India Unveiled
by Robert Arnett

that I occupy. These positions are useful as opportunities to do something you want to do, as opportunities to serve others, as opportunities to give.

In my life, I have found that there is nothing more fulfilling than to give. Give in any sense that you can. However, you cannot give unless you try to cultivate your abilities – like planting a crop. Then instead of taking it home and keeping it to yourself, I think the crop must be harvested. I had opportunities which make me what I am. I am only too conscious of my own weaknesses, my own lapses and my own inadequacies. At the same time, one has to do the best one can. This is where I find a meeting point in the Jain tradition and in the Gita. Once you do your best and are not deterred by greed or selfishness, I think you are bound to succeed. We all have certain needs and desires and I don't believe that we can overcome that unless we achieve a highly spiritual state of renunciation of the kind which Jains have taught – through the practice of ahimsa and aparigraha.

I consider myself as best someone who has to be a servant of the community. The best servant is one who had done his duty well. To be a servant of a higher cause than one's daily life is always ennobling. I have translated the

Vedas, the Upanishads, the Buddhist and Jain scriptures, and I consider myself the servant of the great tradi-

My message to the Jain community is simple:

Understand, imbibe, assimilate and then disseminate.

tion of spiritual humanism. Western humanism is secular in that it is anti-religious. My humanism is steeped in the sanctity of the spiritual tradition. Ahimsa is a very old tradition, not restricted to Jainism. Agriculture became less violent over time – from hunting to pastoral to agricultural life. The destiny of civilisation is a pilgrimage from violence to non-violence, from fanaticism to tolerance, from lack of consideration of others to the maximum consideration for others. I consider myself a child of this cosmic striving in the togetherness of all the traditions. In Jainism, to regard one tradition as less sacred than another is itself a kind of sacrilege. I think the young Jains, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Jews, all have a contribution to make to this multi-cultural dialogue and take humanity out of the shells of isolation.

I draw great inspiration from the scriptures. I have been reading the Tattvartha Sutra over again, in order to write the foreword to the English translation being produced by the Sacred Literature Trust. All sacred texts inspire. Many of them also appeal to your reason. Tattvartha Sutra is a text of remarkable clarity. It is a brilliant encapsulation of principles which are an integral part of the Jain tradition. I find that a philosophy of life enables one to

No one religion has a monopoly of truth

*Picture: India Unveiled
by Robert Arnett*



put many things in perspective. This is right knowledge, right faith and right character. These three jewels of the Jain tradition are fundamental to developing a perspective of life and are beautifully explained in the Sutra.

I am an internationalist and do not feel that any one religion has a monopoly of truth. This enables me to look at the world as a whole. The principle of Anekant enables me to see the different facets and unless those facets are recognised, seen and understood, we cannot know the whole truth. Jainism does not deny the wholeness of a truth, but it denies the wholeness of a partial truth. If one understands the teachings of the Jain tradition, one can become a better human being. There are different routes to becoming better human beings e.g. by following the Christian Tradition or the Vaishnavite Tradition or the Islamic Faith. I think that from a modern point of view, Ahimsa and Anekant are the two most important contributions which Jainism has made, and which have influenced me in my life, my approach, and my ability to communicate – to receive as well as to give.

My message to the Jain community is simple: Understand, imbibe, assimilate and then disseminate.

We cannot have inter-faith harmony unless we accept Anekant.

Understand the Jain tradition and as you understand it imbibe it. As you imbibe it assimilate it, and then you should be ready to disseminate it. If you are able to understand, imbibe, assimilate and disseminate, then you are performing a role that is peculiarly that of the present generation of young Jains. Jainism is now at a much larger global threshold and I believe that if we can follow these four pillars, we can

achieve a lot. Each Jain has to do his homework thoroughly. That is why I place a great emphasis on understanding. Understanding intellectually is not enough and therefore I say imbibe. Imbibe means to internalise, and when you assimilate it you practise it in your work and thought processes. Then you have the capacity to disseminate it. This also has to be understood and discovered by each person himself. I am not a preacher. Someone may say that I have done enough if I have understood it and imbibed it. These decisions are ultimately personal decisions. In being oneself, one has to be the best of oneself. Jainism enables you to be the best of yourself.

This multi-cultural vision is part of the heritage of India. It is now the beginning of a new world order, which cannot be achieved unless one has that humility of spirit. We are a very small community. In fact, very often I ask myself the question: Is there any Indian who considers himself not to be a Jain? I believe not. Is there any Indian who will say that he is not a Vaishnava or a Shaiva or even a Muslim? I don't think so. We have been shaped in the matrix of a co-mingling of cultures and therefore willy-nilly, we have acquired ideas, we have acquired approaches and thought processes which cannot be demarcated by these labels which we put on our ideas. Anekant has provided a framework which has made it possible to have a dialogue. A hundred years ago at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago, everyone used to say that we are in the possession of the ultimate truth. This is where Anekant had not

entered into the multi-logue. We cannot have inter-faith harmony unless we accept Anekant. The ultimate triumph of Jainism is the triumph of the logic of Anekant in the world today. This is having an impact on inter-faith dialogue. Jainism has that sense of universality about it, but this should not give us a sense of pride and arrogance but a sense of humility.

In being oneself, one has to be the best of oneself. Jainism enables you to be the best of yourself.

We must remember however, that we cannot be perfect Jains. To be a perfect Jain is to be a Jina. We are only pilgrims of the path. There is a joy in the pilgrimage itself. What you achieve is quite enough at the end of the day. When we go and worship an idol, we will not become the idol, but will have a chance to make an offering to the idol. We should constantly strive to achieve perfection. The concept of Arhat is a concept based on merit earned by effort and endeavour. Arhat means capacity, ability, competence. The evolution and development of capacity is what Jainism is all about. Arhat means personal development not for selfish goals. I have a slightly different translation of aparigraha. It is not non-acquisition, but in giving what you have acquired that non-acquisition is fulfilled. In this world, acquisition through ethical endeavour is appropriate, but it is the giving of our wealth that is true aparigraha. Jainism is a tradition of sharing and caring in the true sense of the word. 🙏

Dr. Singhvi has written and spoken on Jainism all over the world. During 1990-1997, he was the Indian High Commissioner to the UK. He presently resides in New Delhi with his wife Mrs. Kamala Singhvi, who is a poet.

WOMAN OF COURAGE AND VISION

Acharya Chandanaji

The only Jain woman Acharya in this century, Acharya Chandanaji talks passionately about her mission to protect Jain culture and heritage. She holds unconventional views about some of the traditional restrictions which many young people find impractical and discriminatory in today's society. At Veerayatan, they have started a new movement which encourages Jains to actively engage in social and community service, in addition to their spiritual practices. She talks to Jain Spirit about her views and aspirations.

Can you please explain the mission of Veerayatan?

It was Amarmuniji's great hope that Jains should keep alive the place where Lord Mahavira preached the essence of Jainism. In the state of Bihar, the small town of Rajgir was one of the most sacred shrines. It is a sad fact that Bihar is one of the poorest and most lawless states of India today. Veer stands for Mahavir and Yatan stands for Holy Place. Lord Mahavir spent 14 Chaturmas in Rajgir so this is a very holy place. We started by providing basic education and support to the local community through food and medical camps. We now have a fully equipped hospital where nearly 10,000 patients are treated every month and 600 operations take place. Every day the demand for medical services is increasing due to the surrounding poverty and illiteracy. So our mission is to revive the local area

and create a major centre for Jain Pilgrimage. We also want to provide employment for the local women.

You are the first and only Jain woman Acharya in the 20th century. This appointment was both radical and controversial.

Amarmuniji was a very radical and innovative saint in the history of modern Jainism. He had a detailed knowledge and understanding of Jain scriptures and was fully committed to promoting Jainism in the modern world in any way possible. Although he encountered significant criticism he was always open to dialogue. He explained that what is written in the scriptures were not the exact words of Mahavir, as texts were written several hundred years after he died. Mahavir believed in non-discrimination and Amarmuni implemented this through my appointment. He was never afraid of opposition and stood up for what he believed to be right. I took Diksha (renunciation) in 1951 at the age of 14 and spent 12 years in silence studying the scriptures and languages.

You hold controversial views about Jain diet and the women's menstrual cycle. Please explain and defend these views.

Many Jains believe that the eating of root vegetables is very violent and should be avoided. I believe that there are many other areas in which a worse violence is committed. For example, Jains



Acharya Chandanaji

consume dairy products and wear silk, which in the modern day is very violent. I believe that there are many more serious and urgent issues facing the community than the issue of root vegetables. In fact, farming could also be regarded as very violent, as, in the very act of digging the land and harvesting the crop, millions of insects and micro-organisms are destroyed. However, Lord Mahavir did not prohibit farming – he recognised that some degree of violence was inevitable in life. I am not saying that those who do not eat underground vegetables should change their habits, but what I am saying is that a vegan diet (without milk products) is definitely less violent than a lacto-vegetarian diet without root vegetables.

Even the restrictions on sea or river crossing for saints are untrue. Lord Mahavir had to regularly cross the Ganges river to do his preaching, and he did it on a boat, reciting the navkar mantra at the same time. This is written in our scriptures very clearly. There were many wide rivers he had to cross to preach Jain values.



Taraben Shah of London serving the poor in remote parts of Gujarat

I would like to request Jains to move forward and not get constrained by trivial issues. We must look at the bigger picture, otherwise many young Jains will run away entirely from their tradition. For example, in this day and age there are thousands of Jains living in severe poverty who have no education or food for the next meal. Recently I visited a Jain family in Mumbai where the parents were both ill and the three children had nothing to eat, and I was in tears.

What are we doing for our people?

There are also thousands of Jains who are getting converted to other religions. Where are our priorities? Should we not focus our energies on removing the bigger violence and hopelessness?

Many young people like your radical views. They also feel that as Jains we have lost our priorities and are spending far too much money on temple building and similar projects and not enough on social service or basic education. They find Jainism to be a negative tradition of don'ts rather than a positive tradition of do's. Women also do not want to be discriminated against, and are having equal opportunities in the workplace, so why not the community?

All our efforts are for the new generation. Young people are interested in science, positive thinking and active service. I would like to focus on winning the young and people open to new thoughts and ideas and modernity. I am confident that this work will succeed. I also want to help liberate women and make them feel an equal part of society in every manner. They have done so much to uphold Jain values and we should encourage and respect them much more. I firmly believe that in many ways, the abilities and thinking of the young generation is far ahead and if this is harnessed by spiritual values, we can go very far as a community. Jainism has always been a radical religion – Mahavira was himself a very radical human being, so what we are doing is not different from the essence of his message.

Is Veerayatan purely a women's movement?

No. We also want to give diksha to men and include them in our mission. Dr. Singhvi has for long emphasised the

importance of unity in the Jain community. Can you give us examples where Veerayatan has worked in co-operation with other organisations for their benefit?

We are keen to work with other organisations with a similar mission. We have worked with JAINA and Jain Social Group and Navnat Association, Young Jains and Mahavir Foundation in the UK. Rather than talking about unity, it is better to practise it by doing, through active involvement in projects.

Amarmuniji spent 30 years trying to unite, but encountered huge difficulties. We are now working through action, and slowly the divisions will disappear and we will become one. I don't think this can be achieved through speeches.

In Jain philosophy, each soul is a source of wisdom and there is no higher 'guru' than that. Do you consider yourself a guru?

There is always an intimate relationship between guru (teacher) and shishya (student). The student will give full credit to the teacher, and the teacher will argue that it is the student's own

initiative which has brought him/her this far. This is the bhakti marg of Jainism. The guru awakens the light within the student, and the student worships the teacher. There is no bondage in this relationship, but there is worship and faithful love of the guru.

Western science progresses through self-criticism. Jainism is also a path of self-criticism and self-perfection. In what way are you self-critical of your own work and ideals?

We have sent Sadhvi Shilapi to earn a Phd where she has to expose her own ideas and thinking to debate and criticism. In our community, I find that those who are against our work or our interpretation of Jainism do not come and talk to us face to face. They do not seem to be interested in dialogue. We find that some people oppose for the sake of opposing and lack the direct scriptural knowledge that is required in defending their arguments. 🙏

Sewa, or service to the needy is a key feature of Jainism which is often neglected.



How much is enough? Is a question often asked by Jains when discussing the concept of 'aparigraha' or non-possession. Enoughness is subjective, and Jains should constantly aspire towards greater simplicity in their lives, argues Satish Kumar.

In Jain Scriptures great importance is given to the value of restraint. It is said that the triangle of a spiritual way of life, dharma, consists of non-violence, restraint and renunciation.

The principle of restraint is very relevant in our modern world; particularly the Western world. We live in a consumer society. We are encouraged to buy, to shop, to possess and to expand our material wealth incessantly. We think, live and work as if there are no limits.

LESS IS MORE

The Emptiness of Excess, the Fullness of Restraint

Satish Kumar

The dominant ideology of our time is to conquer and control nature and constantly add to and accumulate material possessions. This is called a high standard of living.

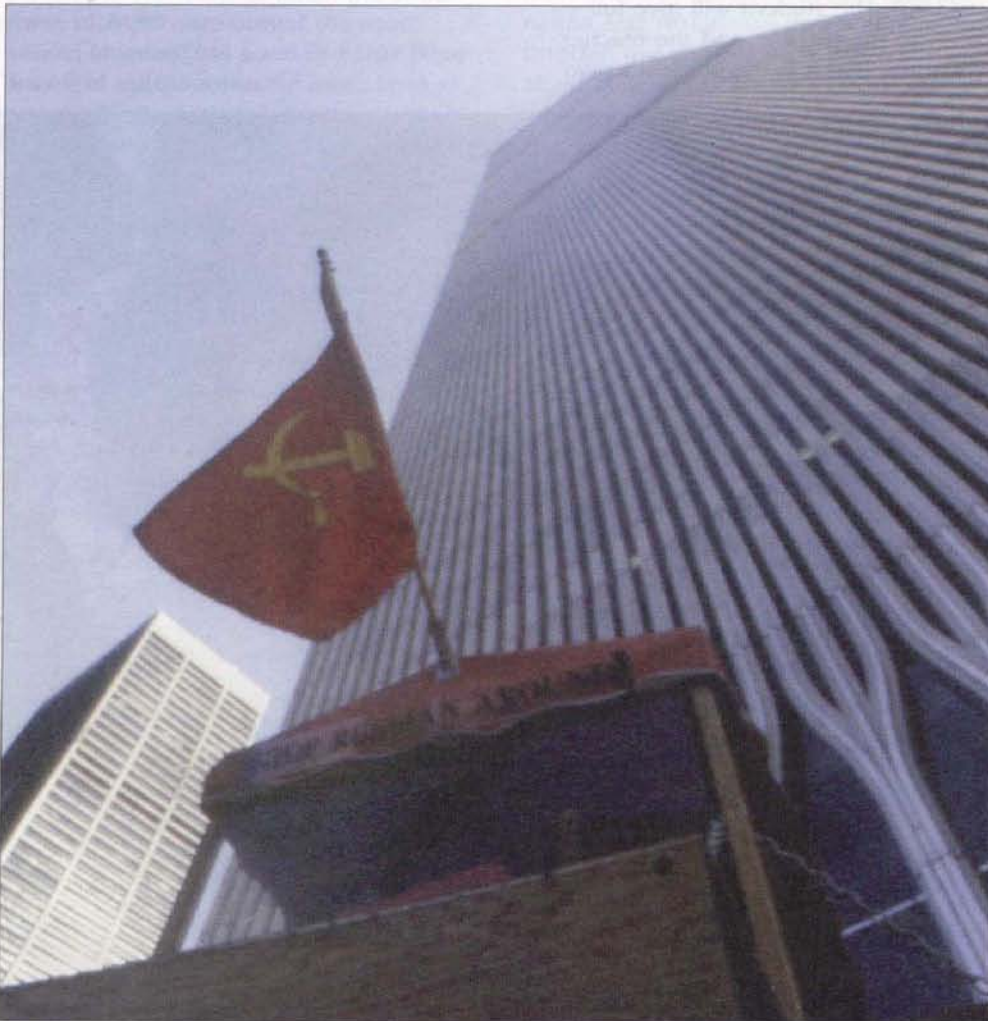
According to the Jain tradition, we should not only overcome our greed, but even reduce what we consider to be our need. Cars, washing machines, dish-washers, TV sets, videos, CD players, computers, and umpteen other gadgets have come to be considered as basic

needs. But a great deal of time is spent on doing monotonous, unpleasant and soul-destroying work to acquire these gadgets, and when they have been acquired even more time is spent in using, repairing, maintaining and replacing them. Often, many of these things sit in attics gathering dust. Garages and garden sheds are filled with unused items, and yet we go on acquiring more and more.

It is not that people are naturally greedy and acquisitive. It is the media and advertising industry which constantly work to cajole, persuade, entice and pressurise people into buying what they neither require nor desire. Governments also demand of their citizens that they consume at an increasing rate in order to keep the economy going and people employed. Consumerism has become a patriotic policy. Because people are so busy in the business of consumerism there is little time left to make, to create, to sing, to dance, to enjoy, to celebrate and to be. No time for the family, friends, or neighbours.

In this age of materialism we are persuaded to live under the reign of quantity. Jainism believes in the reign of quality. It wants its adherents to ask themselves three types of question before acquiring new possessions:

1) Do I need it? Can I live without it? If I have lived without it for so long, why can I not live without it in the future?



New York: Greed capital of the world?

Photo: Punit M. Shah, Atlanta

2) The things I am acquiring, are they durable? Are they made to last? And, are they made with environmentally friendly methods?

3) Are these things beautiful? Well made? Life enhancing? And aesthetically pleasing?

These may be uncomfortable in a world which is ruled by the ideology of economic growth. Government, media, industry, commerce, business, education, culture and even religious bodies measure their success and failure in terms of their economic performance.

International organisations have been established to foster unlimited and unchecked economic growth. The World Trade Organisation, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the European Union are some of the more familiar world bodies asserting their powerful influence. Multinational corporations exercise much greater power and influence than governments. In fact, some of those corporations are richer than many nations. The annual turnover of companies such as Mitsubishi, General Motors, Ford, Shell and Toyota are greater than that of countries like Indonesia, Thailand, Turkey, Malaysia and Iran.

Without knowing it, we are truly living under the dictatorship of the dollar. This dictatorship is more dangerous because it is subtle and masked behind the lofty aims of increasing human well-being and improving living standards. But in reality this kind of unrestrained pursuit of power and possessions is bringing a catastrophic situation in terms of environmental sustainability, social justice and economic equity. The world is facing an

Mahatma Gandhi's life was an expression true simplicity and he was greatly inspired by Jainism





Do we really need all this to be happy?

unprecedented danger of global warming and climate change. The depletion of the ozone layer is causing skin cancer and people are being advised not to sunbathe. The oil spills and other pollution are making our beaches unusable. In the wake of BSE (mad cow disease) and CJD (Creutzfeldt Jakob disease) people are losing confidence in the purity and quality of the food they consume.

So, ecologically speaking, unlimited economic growth is unsustainable. In terms of social justice and economic equity the situation is totally unfair. The combined wealth of the world's three richest families – Bill Gates (Microsoft), Walton (Walmart) and the Sultan of Brunei – is greater than the annual income of 600 million people in the poorer countries. One of the recent United Nations' reports called it a "grotesque" gap between the rich and poor. UN figures show that over the last four years the world's 200 richest people have doubled their wealth to more than one trillion dollars (\$1,000 billion), while 1.3 billion people are living

on less than a dollar a day. This is a snapshot picture of a society which is based on materialistic values.

The dissent against such a social system is growing. Environmental organisations such as Friends of the Earth are campaigning to bring about a new attitude of restraint. Many wealthy individuals are voting with their feet and giving up their lucrative careers in favour of a simpler lifestyle; 'Downshifting' has become a new buzzword in the USA where people are making a conscious decision to work less, earn less and live more. Voluntary Simplicity, a book by Duane Elgin, has become a best-seller in the USA. The book advocates a way of life that is "outwardly simple and inwardly rich".

In this context the Jain idea of Restraint, traditionally practised by millions of people for more than 2,000 years, is extremely relevant. Our founder Mahavir said "even the angels bow to those who practise restraint." He set a supreme exam-

ple himself. Being a son of a wealthy king he found that all his time was taken by the management of material possessions. The palaces, the furniture, hundreds of horses, elephants and domestic animals, thousands of acres of land, hundreds of servants and other paraphernalia such as robes, jewellery, shoes and thrones were absorbing all his attention and mind so that he had no space left to attend to the needs of the soul. And so he decided to leave his kingdom. He showed that to be happy you need very little.

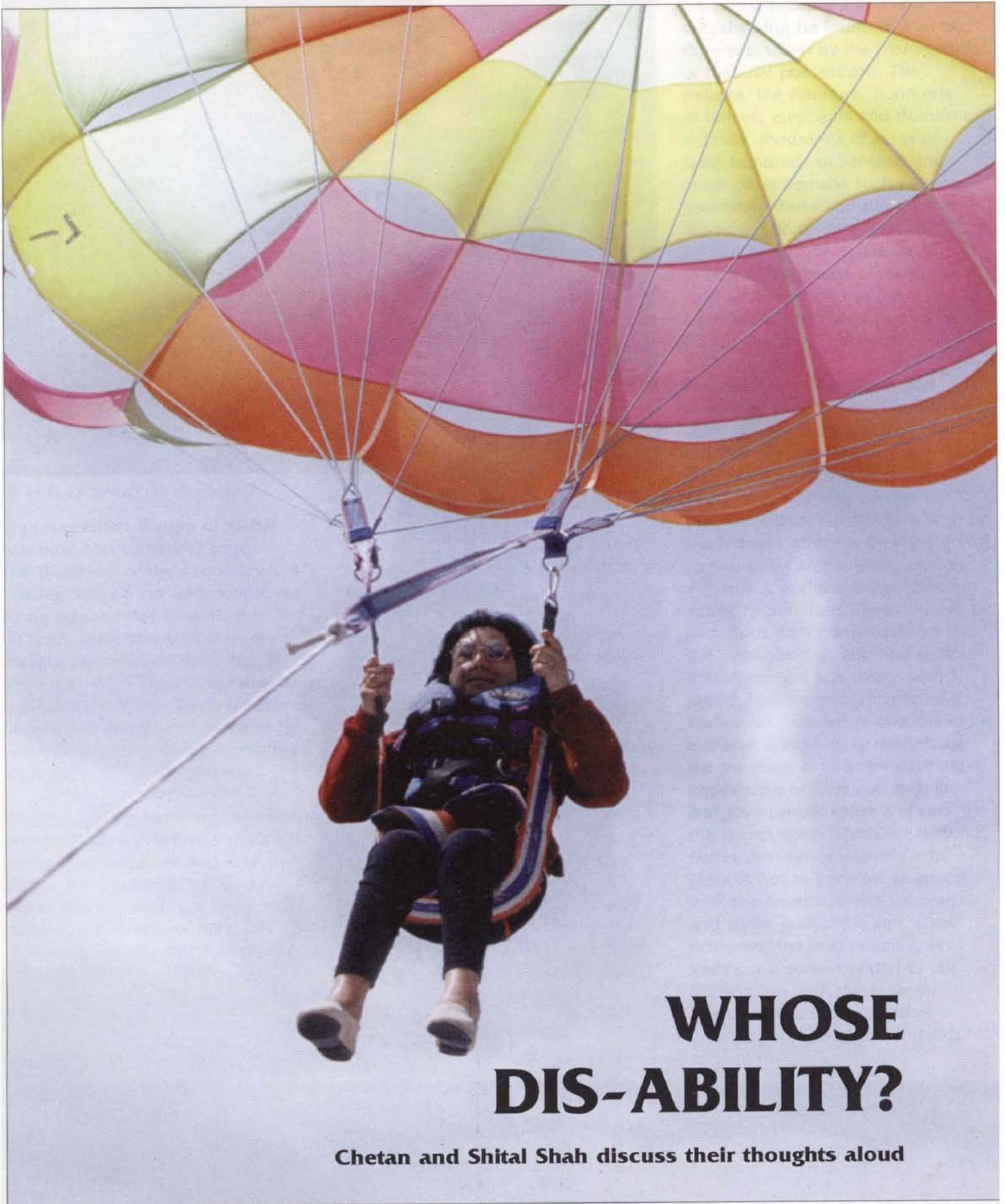
The teachings of Mahavir and other Jain sadhus have been to be alert, aware, and conscious of the amount of material possessions we accumulate and use. For example, every morning after meditation practising Jains would put a limit on the number of items they are going to eat, to wear, the distance they will travel, and the things they are going to purchase. Their aim will be to reduce their consumption from the previous day, and find satisfaction in using a few things well rather than too many carelessly. This is not to say that one has to be extreme and give up everything; the intention is to appreciate the importance of limit and frugality and give proper value and care to the things upon which we depend, rather than being wasteful. The point is not to become obsessed with the limits one has set oneself and suffer guilt if the aim is not achieved; the true meaning of Restraint is to be mindful of our relationship with the material world, and to create a better balance between material needs and spiritual practice. 🙏

Satish Kumar is a former Jain monk and Editor of the internationally renowned Resurgence magazine. He is Chairman and Consulting Editor of Jain Spirit.

Statue of Liberty:
'True Liberation'



Photo: Punith M. Shah, Atlanta



WHOSE DIS-ABILITY?

Chetan and Shital Shah discuss their thoughts aloud

The word disability implies weakness or failure. It focuses on the negative. None of us are perfect, and Jain philosophy focuses on the potential of each soul, rather than its present physical state. To call someone disabled is to deny them their potential.

What is disability? What's in a name? Would a rose by any other name not smell as sweet? Would a spastic not be as retarded, would a cripple be able to walk any better, would old four eyes be able to see any better, would it stop you talking about old deaf ears in front of him as though he didn't exist? Shocked? Horrified? Disgusted? Are you telling us that you have never been witness or party to a negative thought or deed regarding someone who was ABNORMAL! No? Well in that case you must be an exceptional Jain indeed, along with the company that you keep. You must all be well on your way along the path to liberation. We salute you! And those of you that answered honestly – read on.

According to William Hague (Former U.K. Minister For Disabled People), in his paper "Ending discrimination against disabled people", presented to parliament in 1995, the definition of disability applies to: 'A person with a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse affect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'

In the western world there are two main models of disability, the Medical and the Social. The Medical model being the oldest and most common way of thought, regards disability as an ailment that needs to be cured, in order to be accepted into and by society as a whole. It places the onus on the disabled individual to conform to the "NORM". It generally concentrates on the negative physical aspects, in other

words, the things that people can't do for themselves, things that require a carer to do including thinking and making decisions on their behalf.

The Social model on the other hand concentrates on the individual's strengths, the things they can do, predominantly the ability to think and make decisions. This model believes that all human life is valuable. Anyone, whatever their impairment, is capable of exerting choices. People who are disabled by society's reaction to physical, intellectual, and sensory impairment and to emotional distress have a right to assert control over their lives.

Disability is not categorically mentioned in Jain texts. A possible reason for it not being defined individually is that the Jain philosophy identifies each living being as a soul independent of the body, which is more like a costume. Hence its focus from the beginning is on the aesthetic qualities rather than the external physical appearance. It states that all souls are equal and deserve to be treated as such. Compassion, understanding, and co-existence are the essence of Jain philosophy. Jainism does not preach that there is any special power ruling over the destinies of men either from above or beyond. On the contrary it teaches that every individual determines their own destiny by their own mental and physical exertions which by themselves generate energies that bring them agreeable or disagreeable experiences. By reacting positively towards our fellow souls, we can indeed reduce our own negative karma.

Okay so there we have the theory in a nutshell, but what about the reality? Just how many of us practice our Jain beliefs in the course of our daily lives? Think back to the last time you came across a disabled stranger. What was the first thing that came to your mind? Did you

talk to that person? Did you talk to the person next to them? The natural question which comes to mind would be: I wonder what is wrong with them. Then perhaps you may feel pity or sympathy. Perhaps if it was someone with a speech impediment you may have questioned their intellect, perhaps you felt uncomfortable looking at them if they were disfigured in some way, or perhaps the experience was just too uncomfortable to deal with so you looked away and ignored them.

Now question what is the relevance of knowing what is wrong with someone. Will putting a label on them make you value them any more or less? Do they really deserve your pity or do they deserve your compassion? Do they want your sympathy or would they prefer your empathy? When we pity and feel sympathy for others what we are really doing is standing in judgement of them. Are any of our souls so perfectly pure that we dare to judge our fellow souls? The principle of Ahimsa is not just about non-violence but also about acceptance and understanding. To ignore someone is to deny his or her existence. The society in which we live is as rich as it is because of our differences not inspite of them. Surely this is reason enough to learn to accept and value these differences instead of devaluing them. How many of you out there have the same perfection? The same perfect eyes, ears, arms and legs? Who ewe and ewe and ewe? Goodness gracious me you must be clones. Well in that case we'll just say Baaaaa for now! 🙏

Chetan and Shital are brother and sister living in London. Chetan was a Treasurer of Young Jains for several years and Shital is very active in her local community. Mr. Jatin Shah in London is actively trying to form a Jain group for physically challenged people, so please call him on 020 8907 1219 if interested. Sponsors also welcome.

ASSERTIVE AHIMSA

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO STAYING COOL WITHOUT LOSING YOUR SELF-ESTEEM

Hema Pokharna

As Jains we must understand that the very word Jain is derived from the word 'Jina', meaning 'conqueror'. This refers to conquest over one's passions. Particularly important are anger, greed, deceit and lust, since these result in individual and collective violence in thought, word, and action. At the same time we as Jains must learn and understand that anger, pride, deceit and greed are very much a part of our lives today and that these will not disappear overnight. Life is filled with frustration, pain, loss, and the unpredictable actions of others. You can't change that; but you can change the way you let such events affect you. We as Jains must learn skills and tools to deal non-violently and compassionately with anger, conflict and stress.

The story of Chandakaushik has helped me clarify my understanding about non-violence. Chandakaushik was a big black poisonous snake, and he had bitten so many people that few dared go into the fields. Using his powers, Lord Mahavir, the Jain prophet and teacher, tamed and persuaded Chandakaushik to practise the discipline of non-violence. Within a short time the villagers discovered that the snake had become harmless. They took to throwing stones at it and dragging it about by its tail. After several days Lord Mahavir was very sad to find the snake wounded and battered, and he said to Chandakaushik, "What have you allowed to happen to yourself?" To which the snake replied, "But it was you who taught me to practise the discipline of nonviolence!" And Lord Mahavir said, "Chandakaushik I asked you to stop hurting, but I never told you to stop 'hissing'."

Violence to another is violence to oneself – there is no separation

Expressing your angry feelings in an assertive, rather than aggressive, manner is healthy. To do this, you have to learn how to make clear what your needs are, and how to get them met, without hurting others. Being assertive doesn't mean being pushy or demanding; it means being respectful of yourself and others.

At an intellectual level this is very easy to understand. At a practical level it is harder to implement. I felt my way through many explosive situations and have learned that to act non-violently in the face of violence requires a regular practice of meditation. Quiet moments help to experience compassion within ourselves and allow compassionate alternatives to arise from the heart.

Regular time in prayer and meditation has helped me to find steadiness in my continuing choice of non-violence over violence. This has helped me to act with long-lasting, life-affirming consequences as opposed to a quick fix when faced with any form of vio-

lence. Nonviolent living is taking the time and energy to stop, breathe, and connect with myself and my inner core which is the source of divine wisdom. Living non-violently takes great courage, commitment and vigilance in a culture whose values are antithetical to this compassionate ethic of non-injury. The environment and the media encourage us to deal with anger violently. Hit someone, break something, throw a fit, smash a fist into the wall, or sometimes into another person! Our inability to be aware that we are angry and then control and manage our anger leads to violence. Conflict in our relationships with people around us is inevitable, but how we deal with the conflict is important.

Anger is 'an emotional state that varies in intensity from mild irritation to intense fury and rage', according to Charles Spielberger, a psychologist who specializes in the study of anger. Like other emotions, it is accompanied by physiological and biological changes; when you get angry, your heart rate and blood pressure go up, as does the level of your energy hormones, adrenalin and noradrenalin. Anger is an adaptive response to threats; it inspires powerful, often aggressive, feelings and behaviors, which allow us to fight and to defend ourselves when we are attacked. A certain amount of anger, therefore, is necessary to our survival. All anger has a life-serving core, and so as Jains we can deal with anger non-violently, which does not mean that we suppress anger. The danger in this type of response is that if it isn't allowed outward expression, your anger can turn inward -- on yourself. Anger turned inward may cause hyperten-

sion, ulcers, depression, and many other medical problems. The aim is to use the anger energy and convert it into more constructive behavior.

Developing the ability to say "ouch" when one hurts, without blame or shame, is a skill I have learned from Marshall Rosenberg, a clinical psychologist who teaches a process called Non-violent Communication. Non-violent communication is a life-connected language. In speaking this language we connect with others by honestly expressing ourselves, but without any blame or criticism, and by empathically receiving communication from others, without hearing any blame or criticism from them, regardless of how they express themselves.

While communicating non-violently, our attention is focused on how people are, and what would enhance their lives. There are four distinct components of non-violent communication:

1. Observation without evaluation or judgement;
2. Feelings;
3. Needs;
4. Request.

According to Marshall Rosenberg, anger and conflict-management begin by being aware of the situations that trigger the feelings of anger, and being aware that the other person is just a stimulus and not the cause of your anger. At this point we relieve ourselves of thoughts such as, "He, she, or they made me angry when they did that." Such thinking leads us to express our anger superficially by blaming or punishing the other person.

So to deal with a conflict situation non-violently would be to be aware of our own feelings and needs rather than going to our head to make a mental analysis of the faults of others. In doing so we choose to connect our thinking to the life that is within us. We seek to understand that the cause of our anger lies in our thinking (in thoughts of blame and judgement).

In the face of anger the first step is simply to stop and breathe without giving in to the temptation to blame, punish or hurt the other person in any way. Simply remain quiet. Once we



Assertive or angry?

Photo: Chandu Shah

are centered and connected with ourselves, we become aware of our thoughts and identify the thoughts that are making us angry. For example, we overhear a statement that leads us to believe that we've been excluded from a situation because of race. We sense anger, stop, and recognize the thoughts stirring in our head: "It's unfair to act like that. He is being a racist." Such judgement of the other person is a tragic expression of our unmet needs; so the next step is to connect to the need behind our thoughts. If I judge someone to be racist, the need may be for inclusion, equality, respect, or connection.

So now when we open our mouth to say "ouch" and speak, anger is transformed into needs and need connected feelings. To articulate these feelings, however, may require a lot of courage. It is easy to get angry and tell people, "That was a racist thing to do!" To express our anger non-violently we may say to the person, "When you entered the room and

started talking to others and didn't say anything to me and then made a comment about race and colour, I felt really sick to my stomach, and got so scared; it triggered off all kinds of

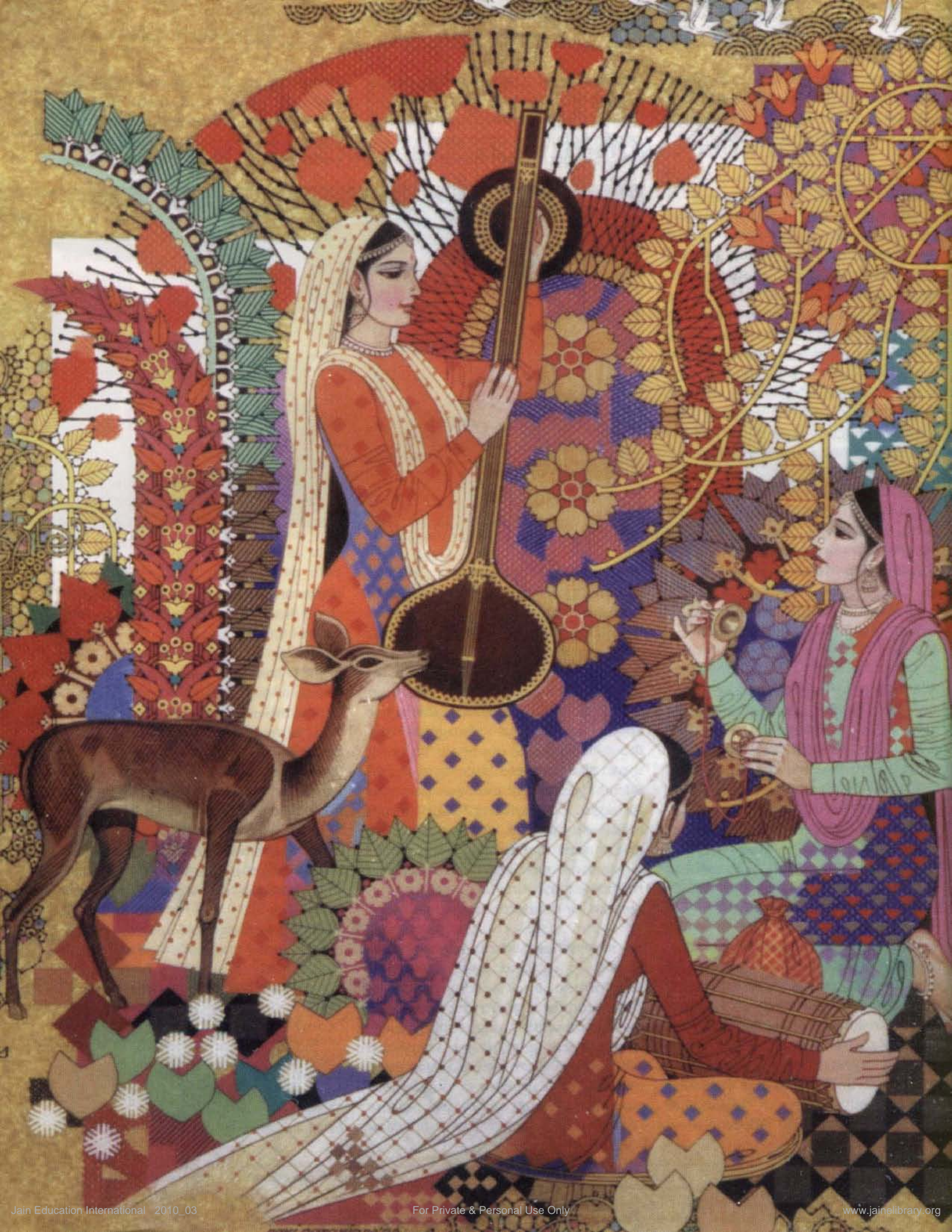
needs on my part to be treated equally. I'd like you to tell me how you feel when I tell you this."

In most cases, however, another step needs to take place before we can expect the other party to connect with what is going on in us. Because it will be difficult for others to receive our feelings and needs in such situations, we would first need to empathize and hear how they are feeling and what needs of theirs are being met. The more we empathize with them the more likely it is that they will be able to understand how we feel and need.

In this exchange of understanding of the other person's feelings and needs, we recognize our common humanity. 🙏

Hema Pokharna, PhD, is a researcher in psychology at the University of Chicago. She is very active in promoting conflict resolution all over the world, and has spoken at many international conferences.

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HARMONY ON CANVAS

The Art of Ravi Paranjape

In July 1999, the Meghraj Art Gallery in London hosted an exhibition of Mr. Paranjape's unique art. He talks to Jain Spirit about his techniques and inspiration.

I have been interested in art from a very young age. My father, although he was not a painter professionally, was pretty good at drawing and painting. He was a poet and a writer and was very close to a famous kannada scholar and writer. My mother was also a very good artist as far as embroidery was concerned. So you can trace that in my work, where at times I have tried to weave carpets with paints and brushes. In my adult life I was working in advertising and publications. Offset printing is done in terms of dots, so if yellow dots are printed and blue dots are printed on that you get green; so this particular technology had a great effect on my painting.

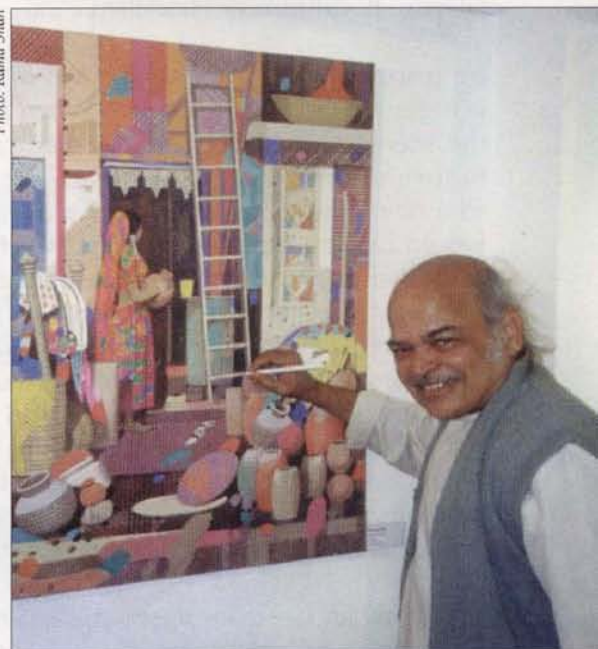
What is central to my art is the spirit of harmony. When we first see a painting, what meets our eye is the subject matter, but around the subject matter there are so many other relationships, for example, of one colour with the other or the colour next to that. There are different forms and positive and negative spaces also. For instance, if I draw a figure, that is a positive form that I have drawn and what remains now is the negative space. So we try to create a plane between a positive space and a negative space to ensure harmony. So basically harmony is the product of good composition. I feel that the spirit of harmony is something which is universal. So many quarrels take place, even at home, at work, at the national level, international level, so the first thing that I think the whole

world is trying to do is to achieve harmony. Why did Jainism take place at all in India? Because whatever the kind of religion existing before that was not fulfilling certain things. Mahavir preached and practised harmony at the social level. All these great painters from the Western world of the late 19th century and early 20th century focus on harmony. There are various colours, various lines, various forms and the whole painting was the harmony of all of these elements. The subject was often a pretext for the creation of harmony.

The actual choice of subjects comes from my close quarters: the town that I live in or the villages around my town. I have a habit of placing a possible painting in the subject that I observe. When I look at a thing I look at it in terms of a painting. When I see an interesting subject, I immediately make a note of that in my sketchbook: the form and colour and the source of inspiration for that. This becomes the nucleus of my painting and soon when I go home I make a small sketch in colour, and then I develop that further as a piece of harmony. I am greatly inspired by Indian classical music. I have not studied it as such but I do not leave out any programme of music that is coming up in the town and my aim always is to make my painting appear like a composer in a particular mood.

Looking at things in an artistic manner develops ones aesthetics – your ability to decide which is good and which is bad, which promotes harmony and which doesn't, so that ability gets sharpened. I do not have to go to a spot and paint. Some paintings are inspired by seeing something and others are the

Photo: Rama Shah



Paranjape painting "The Potter's Dream"

Opposite page: Floral Melody - Parajape 1999

expression of my aesthetics. Primarily in my work I use two media, acrylic and oil paints and watercolours and there are some drawings in colour pencils. Some artists work with an emphasis on toning relationships – that is, light tone and dark tone – bring this all together and create an image. My style is more line-oriented – that is, drawing-oriented – that means an emphasis on drawing and not so much on tone. Each medium has got its advantages and its problems. For instance, if one uses oil colours, there are a few things that you have to do as a first stage. One needs to use thin colour in the beginning and as you go on you need a great deal of discipline. However, acrylics dry really fast; so in ten minutes time they are totally dry. Therefore, to mix two shades you have to do it very quickly. But for my drawing-oriented style this comes very handy.

I have a little message for young people. I personally feel that one should distinguish between tradition and convention. I think that in the current century, young people don't follow tradition, and rebel against it. I personally feel that it is not the right thing, whether it is Jainism, Buddhism or Hinduism.

Be responsible to the tradition but at the same time, do not get rooted in convention. When Jainism came onto the scene what happened was that tradition was taken further and the conventions that were in the society led to a new creation. I would not call it a religion. I would call it a new social order, which made mankind more life-oriented and compassionate. Whenever the tradition goes forward new creations take place and whenever they get rooted in conventions everything becomes stale. So young people should be aware of the past – they should look back and decide what the right tradition has been and what are the conventions which do not necessarily need to be followed. Foremost, they should take the tradition further and not rebel simply for the sake of rebelling.

I think my art has really raised the quality of my own life. For instance my colour sense and my ideas about colour

Her dearest one - Parajape 1999



Pink side of youth - Paranjape 1999

definitely are spiritual. I forget my own sorrows or problems when I paint. The main aim of my paintings is to give joy and happiness to others. When I am engrossed in the subject of harmony I do not think of

anything else. I think that the money side comes much later. I do not sell my work through any agent because I would like to meet the buyer personally and not operate through a middleman. There is a wrong notion that the dealer is superior to the artist and that is wrong because the artist is the creator. When I was told to do an illustration I thought of how best I could and never of my salary and, if it meant putting in extra hours of work, then I would do it. And there are many instances where I was not rewarded for my work but I used to do it.

In the modern day, art has been taken over by technology such as computers and photography. Hence it is very difficult to make a career out of art. However, one thing that technology cannot do is to have a creative urge and capture the inner spirit. This is also where everything is fresh; so we must do everything to keep it fresh. 🌸

Ravi Paranjape lives in Pune, India. He can be contacted on: vivaswan@pn2.vsnl.net.in His paintings can also be viewed on <http://welcome.to/raviparanjape>

Vegan Delight

Ackees, chapatties
 Dumplins an nan,
 Channa an rotis
 Onion uttapam,
 Masala dosa
 Green callaloo



Soya meks yoghurt
 Soya ice - cream
 Or soya sorbet
 Soya reigns supreme,
 Soya sticks liquoriced
 Soya salads
 Try any soya dish
 Soya is bad.

Bhel an samosa
 Corn an aloo
 Yam an cassava
 Pepperpot stew,
 Rotla an guava



Rice an tofu,
 Puri, paratha
 Sesame
 Casserole,
 Brown eggless pasta
 An brown bread rolls



Plantain an tabonli
 Cornmeal pudding

Onion bhajee
 Wid plenty cumin,

Soya milked muesli
 Soya bean curd,
 Soya sweet sweeties
 Soya's de word,
 Soya bean margarine
 Soya bean sauce,
 What can mek medicine?
 Soya ot course.



Breadfruit an coconuts
 Molasses tea
 Dairy free omelettes
 Very chilli.

Ginger bread, nut roast
 Sorrell, paw paw,
 Cocoa an rye toast
 I tek dem on tour,
 Drinking cool maubi
 Meks me feel sweet,
 What was dat
 question now?
 What do we eat?



bina shah

poem by Benjamin Zephaniah

ART WITH DETACHMENT

Rangoli Painting in Kenya

Vinay Shah explores the great renaissance in Rangoli floor-painting engendered by Jains in Kenya, and talks to its pioneering experts, Mrs. Vibha Shah and Mrs. Pushpa Haria.



Display rangoli by Pushpa Haria & team: "Jain Darshan"

'Rangoli' is a Sanskrit word which means a creative expression of art through the use of colour. In ancient India, rangolis were used to decorate the entrances of homes, a floor-painting which provided a warm and colourful welcome to visitors. In Indian cultures, all guests and visitors occupy a very special place, and a rangoli is an expression of this warm hospitality. In particular, the Diwali festival is widely celebrated with rangolis, since at this time, people visit each other's homes to exchange greetings and sweets.

In a rangoli, powdered colours are sprinkled on cleaned and dusted floors to form decorations.

Rangolis can be vivid three-dimensional art complete with shadings or they can be the traditional plain, yet as beautiful, two-dimensional designs. The coloured powder is usually applied 'freehand' by letting it run from the gap formed by pinching the thumb and the forefinger. Techniques have evolved over time and now the use of the cone, sieve and funnel are popular. A few very talented artists actually throw the colour, and the end results are stunning works of art. The materials can be virtually anything that fancies the rangoli maker, but more traditionally it is 'chiroli' marble dust to which pigments have been added. Finely ground maize (corn) flour which has been subsequently 'dyed', grass and gravel have also been used. Petals of flowers, grains and pulses have been used to form attractive and unusual designs.

In ancient times, rangolis were actually

decorations made on the entrances and walls of houses to brighten up and add colour to occasions being celebrated, like weddings, births and significant religious days. They also signified a warm welcome for visitors. In fact in Maharashtra, India, housewives make them each morning. The designs would be simple and geometrical but could invoke symbolic forms. Oil lamps (diyas) would be placed in the rangoli to give it yet another dimension.

As the Jains and specifically the Oshwals migrated and settled in East Africa, community institutions were established. Celebration of Diwali and New Year (far away from India) became times for everyone to get together and participate in the activities to create the festive atmosphere. This is how rangolis as we know them today took root in Kenya. In fact, annual rangoli competitions have been held there for decades and Jains of all ages from children upwards, participate in these. These competitions have proved to be an excellent way of spreading the art and encouraging its growth and innovation.

A unique and pathbreaking innovation was the Display Rangoli, revived in Mombasa by the Oshwals. Mrs. Vibhaben Arun Shah, a leading and prominent rangoli artist and her team have more than 15 large display rangolis to their credit, the largest being 45 feet in diameter. The very act of doing these rangolis required a tremendous community spirit.

In an interview with Jain Spirit, Mrs. Vibha Shah talked passionately about rangoli, "I can drop anything to take a rangoli project." She has to her credit magnificent display rangolis created by the 'Rang Rekha' group she heads. "Jain themes have always been our first choice, the 14 'dreams' of Trishlamata, Lord Mahavir, Parshvanath; in fact all our rangolis have some Jain content". Vibha explained: "The logistics of display rangolis are quite complex, and require

Close-up of "Jain Darshan"





Mrs. Pushpa Haria demonstrating a rangoli

significant devotion and self-sacrifice. I start to play with the theme even six months ahead of the activities, the events, the people. I will then sit with my close colleagues from the Rang Rekha group and we will further develop the ideas and start putting them on paper. That is when the real work starts. We will spend about two months gathering the pigments in the approximate quantities and preparing the right tones – putting the team together, practising some of the intricate parts, especially the faces, eyes and other features that can make or spoil a rangoli. In addition, we have all the wonderful volunteers who help during the making of the rangoli, preparing tea and snacks, serving, picking up members, and do all the general running around."

"How do you feel when in less than the days it took to create the rangoli, it is swept away?"

Vibha: "Well people always tell me to look away and not be present when the rangoli is being removed. My joy, satisfaction, is in creating the rangoli. No-one can take that away from me. The fact that it has been a thought-provoking experience for the hundreds who saw the display is deeply satisfying. In fact, I am not at all remorseful about the rangoli being cleared. It has made room for another rangoli hasn't it?". A few years ago, she was the leader of a team from Kenya which made a large display rangoli on the inter-faith theme with paintings of all the major religions, at the Oshwal Centre in London. This attracted thousands of visitors.

Another well-known proponent of large display rangolis, Mrs Pushpa Gulab Haria, has even made a video on rangoli art. She has exhibited her art in various parts of East Africa, Britain, Portugal and Canada. In 1994, her work was a key attraction at the 'Rhythms of India' festival in Canada. She has won widespread praise for her work, and when we met her, she was full of energy and passion about her art. She has done 20 X 20 feet display rangolis on themes ranging from Hindu epics such as the Mahabharata and Ramayana, to Jain themes such as the birth of Lord Mahavir and Trishala matas 14 dreams. These works take up to ten days to complete, and Pushpaben and her team would work 18 hours a day to finish them. Mrs. Haria has also

invented floating rangolis, painted on water surfaces and equipment which make it easier to paint rangolis.

The pictures here show a 'Jain Darshan' rangoli which was done for the Nairobi Oshwal Mahila Mandal (Ladies Wing) in 1994. Thousands of people came to watch this massive 22 X 22 feet work of art, and a team of ten people worked five long days to make it happen. We asked her how she felt when she knew that it would all be swept away at the end. Pushpaben replied: "The greatest pleasure of rangoli is in the doing. It is a form of meditation which provides me with intense pleasure, joy and inner peace. It is a form of yoga, and a deep meditation in colour – a form of colour therapy. In fact, at the end, I always feel refreshed rather than tired, as if the act of doing it has given me deep strength and energy. A display rangoli is a very positive expression of teamwork and the community spirit."

"One must also remember that in its freshness underlies a special attraction. People who come to view it know full well that it is going to be swept away, so they make special time to do so. We also know what happens when we have fixed art, which requires regular maintenance and security, and space for display, all of which are very costly. With rangoli art, these costs are significantly reduced, and the art is always fresh and immediate. To me that is its special joy, and I would love to do a special rangoli for Jain Spirit." We visited Pushpaben during her recent visit to London, and her sisters-in-law were also actively involved in promoting her art. They have produced a beautiful instructive two-hour video cassette which explains and demonstrates this art. It is in Gujarati with English subtitles and can be ordered from jayaar@globalnet.co.uk at a very reasonable price. Colouring kits and tools are also available from this address. 📺

CREATE YOUR OWN RANGOLI

1. Choose a simple design and choose the appropriate colours.
2. You will need the following basic ingredients: A hard board of size 30 X 30 cm; Pencil/Chalk; Ruler; Spoons; Small funnel, with a very thin spout; sieve;
3. For even spreading, make a small cone or tube, and at the tip place a thin sieve/gauze. This will help considerably in even spreading of colours and minimise wastage. A stiff paper cone is ideal for margins, dots and borders.
4. Buy rangoli colours from Indian shops or from India. Alternatively, make them yourself.
5. Spread the colours by hand, tube or cone as necessary to make your rangoli.

TEACH YOURSELF RANGOLI VIDEO and KIT AVAILABLE FROM JAYAAR@GLOBALNET.CO.UK.

Mrs. Pushpa Haria can be contacted on simtec@net2000ke.com
Mrs. Vibha Arun Shah can be contacted at P.O. Box 81618,
Mombasa, Kenya. Tel: 254 11 220 248

CREATE YOUR OWN SPIRIT

Lavinia Plonka argues that artistic expression is a universal medium for accessing our inner spirit, and the Jains have been some of the greatest artists. Mahavira emphasised the creative potential of each and every soul.

The dawn slowly breaks over the city, the first pale fingers of light dance across the faces of the sleeping pilgrims. They have arrived during the night, quietly lining up, awaiting the morning. Their conversation is hushed, yet excited. They have come from all over, endured great difficulties, perhaps even the disapproval of their families in order to have this opportunity.

What could it be? The arrival of a great saint? A rare religious ceremony? No, it's Madison Square Garden in New York City on the day Grateful Dead tickets went on sale.

After all is said and done, we turn to art for an experience of transcendence. We all long for impressions and emotions that go beyond the 9-5, eat, work, sleep, world. Whether it's bonding with thousands at a rock concert, forgetting our humdrum life while laughing at a situation comedy, or silently contemplating the vision of Da Vinci, each of us has a need for something we call art.

But what constitutes spiritual art? Some would say that the Ramayana is spiritual art because it teaches various principles of Hinduism and that its language transports one to a wish for inner contemplation. Others would say it's just a great folk tale. I once overheard a woman at a restaurant. She was telling her friend about an exhibition she had just attended of Bonnard, an impressionist painter, famous for

colorful paintings of women and bathtubs. "It was a spiritual experience!" she gushed. Obviously spirit means many things to people.

Thousands of years ago, the distinctions were much clearer. Most societies revolved around their relationship to their gods, or their inner spiritual experience. The artists who carved the ancient Egyptian statues adhered to strict laws in their renderings of the gods. The actors of Hellenic Greece were not celebrities – instead, they were shamanic interpreters of the great mysteries. They projected their voices in the amphitheaters not just to be heard; it was believed their voices held up the sky. When the artisans crafted the magnificent temples at Mt. Abu, they did not get reviews in the local newspaper for their work. As a matter of fact, the act of creating the temples themselves, like the enacting of the Greek Mysteries, was a form of prayer. People did not go to "see a play," "take in some art," "catch some music." They went to communicate with what their culture deemed "the higher", be it capricious gods on Mt. Olympus, or the Buddha self.

Today it is difficult to find practitioners of the ancient sacred arts. There are monks in selected religious communities, or devotees, who dedicate themselves to re-creating the past. But relatively few contemporary Westerners are moved by these repetitions of traditional images. Instead, people are turning more and more towards marrying the ancient with "new" ideas; they watch reproductions of the Labyrinth from Chartres while listening to CDs of Qawali singers burning aromatherapy candles and dancing with long silk scarves. Or they paint

images from vision quests in the desert, looking deep within themselves to find the divine expression of their journey – be it a picture of an angel, a vortex, or a wolf on a moonlit night. Purists may frown upon such explorations, but perhaps it signals a new approach to spirituality.

We are entering an era when more and more people are moving away from worshiping a "god" outside of themselves. Instead, there is a search for enlightenment within, a wish for connectedness with everything that exists. A personal shrine can have images of both the Virgin Mary and Krishna set on the background of a Persian prayer rug. These pieces of sacred art serve as a reminder to look within, not beseech or invoke the god they represent. In some ways, these values reflect the ancient yet timeless values of Jainism itself.

Like the ancient temple builders, many artists today use the act of creation as a sacred path. Internationally acclaimed "visionary" artist/teacher Alex Grey reads sacred texts as well as original poems to his students as they paint. Many spiritual masters use contemporary arts to teach. For example, Chitrabhanu has written beautiful poems that inspire as well as teach. As Alex Grey says in his book *Sacred Mirrors*, "Sacred art objects are like repositories of transcendental energy that can 'charge' the receptive, contemplative viewer. The artist's primary medium is consciousness – the animating force that directs or infuses all other media." We are all artists, and the sacred is everywhere to inspire us. 🙏

Lavinia Plonka is a writer, artist and film-producer who has performed all over the world. She lives in New Jersey and can be contacted at lavinia@worldnet.att.net



Photos: Chandu Shah



We wish all our readers a very Happy Diwali & a Prosperous New Year

THE PARROT'S TRAINING

Rabindranath Tagore



Photo courtesy: Images of India by Sophie Baker

This classic satire on education by one of the greatest Indian poets expresses the fundamental difficulties of standard educational systems in acknowledging and dealing with the uniqueness of each soul. A must read for all those who have complete faith in the modern education system and those who have their doubts.

Once upon a time there was a bird. It was ignorant. It sang all right, but it never recited scriptures. It hopped, it flew, but it lacked manners. Said the Raja (King) to himself, "Ignorance is costly in the long run. For fools consume as much food as their betters, and yet give nothing in return." He called his nephews into his presence and told them that the bird must have a sound schooling.

The pundits (teachers) were summoned, and after deep deliberation went to the root of the matter. They decided that the ignorance of birds was due to their unsuitable habit of living in nests. Therefore, according to the pundits, the first thing necessary for the education of this bird was a proper cage.

The pundits had their rewards and went home happy. A golden cage was built with gorgeous decorations. Crowds came to see it from all parts of the world. "Culture, captured and caged!" exclaimed some, in a rapture of ecstasy, and burst into tears. Others remarked, "Even if culture be missed, the cage will remain, to the end, a substantial fact. How fortunate is this bird!"

The goldsmith filled his bag with money and lost no time in sailing homewards. Then a pundit sat down to educate the bird. With due deliberation he took a pinch of snuff, as he said, "Textbooks can never be too many for our purpose!"

The nephews brought together an enormous crowd of scribes. They copied from books, and copied from copies, till manuscripts were piled to an unreachable height. Men murmured in amazement, "Oh, the tower of learning, egregiously high! The end of it lost in the clouds!"

An outdoor class at Shanti Niketan, a unique learning centre by Tagore. It has produced great visionaries like Satyajit Ray and Nobel laureate in Economics Amartya Sen

The scribes, with light hearts, hurried home, their pockets heavily laden. The nephews were furiously busy keeping the cage in proper trim. As their constant scrubbing and polishing went on, the people said with satisfaction, "This is real progress!"

Men were employed in large numbers, and supervisors were still more numerous. These, with all their cousins of differing degrees of distance, built a place for themselves and lived there happily ever after.

But whatever may be its other deficiencies, the world is never short of fault-finders. They went about saying that every creature remotely connected with the cage was flourishing beyond words, except one – the bird. When this remark reached the Raja's ears, he summoned his nephews and enquired, "My dear nephews, what is this that we hear?"

The nephews said in answer, "Sire, let the testimony of the goldsmiths and the pundits, the scribes and the supervisors, be taken, if the truth is to be known. Food is scarce with the fault-finders, and that is why their tongues have gained in sharpness."

The explanation was so luminously satisfactory that the Raja decorated each one of the cousins with his own rare jewels.

At length the Raja, being desirous of seeing with his own eyes how his Education Department was busying itself with the bird, made his appearance at the Great Hall of Learning.

From the gate arose the sound of conch-shells and gongs, horns, bugles and trumpets, cymbals, drums and kettle-drums, tomtoms, tambourines, flutes, fifes, barrel-organs and bag-pipes. The pundits began chanting mantras at the top of their voices, while the goldsmiths, scribes, supervisors and all their numberless cousins of differing degrees of distance, loudly raised a round of cheers.

The nephews smiled and said, "Sire, what do you think of it all?"

The Raja said, "Tremendous, terrific!"

"Sire, education that is based on a sound principle is also most enriching."

Mightily pleased, the Raja was about to remount his elephant, when a fault-finder, from behind some bush, cried out, "Maharaja, have you seen the bird?"

"Indeed, I have not!" exclaimed the Raja. "I completely forgot about the bird."

Turning back, he questioned the pundits about the method they followed in instructing the bird. It was demonstrated. The Raja was immensely impressed. The method



Should Parrots be schooled?

Photo: Chandu Shah

was so stupendous that the bird looked absurdly unimportant in comparison. The Raja was satisfied that there was no flaw in the arrangements. As for any complaint from the bird itself, that was certainly not to be expected. For its throat was so choked with the leaves of books that it could neither whistle nor whisper. The entire learning process sent a thrill through anyone who saw it.

This time, while remounting his elephant, the Raja ordered the state ear-puller to give both ears of the fault-finder a thoroughly good pull.

Thus the bird tottered on, duly and appropriately, to the very verge of inanity. In fact, its progress was deemed extremely satisfactory. Notwithstanding, nature

occasionally triumphed over nurture, and when the dawn light peeped into the bird's cage it sometimes fluttered its wings in a reprehensible manner. And, though this is hard to believe, occasionally it pecked pitifully at its bars with its feeble beak.

"What impertinence!" growled the head guard.

The blacksmith, with his forge and hammer, took his place in the Raja's Department of Education. Oh, how his blows resounded! Soon an iron chain was complete, and the bird's wings were clipped.

The Raja's brothers-in-law looked grim, and shook their heads, saying, "These birds not only lack good sense, but also gratitude!"

With textbook in one hand and baton in the other, the pundits gave the poor bird what may fittingly be called lessons.

The head guard was honoured with a title for his vigilance, and the blacksmith for his skill in forging chains.

The bird died.

No one had the least notion exactly when this had occurred. The fault-finder was the first person to speak the rumour.

The Raja called his nephews and asked them, "My dear nephews, what is this that we hear?"

The nephews said "Sire, the education of the bird is complete."

"Does it hop?" the Raja enquired.

"Never!" said the nephews.

"Does it fly?"

"No."

"Bring me the bird," said the Raja.

The bird was brought, escorted by the head guard, sepoy on foot and sowars on horseback. The Raja poked the bird's body with his finger. Its inner stuffing of book leaves rustled.

Outside the window, a spring breeze murmured among newly budded ashoka leaves, and made the April morning wistful. 📖

Rabindranath Tagore won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1913. This essay was extracted from 'Rabindranath Tagore - An Anthology', Edited by Krishna Dutta and Andrew Robinson, £20, Picador, London, 1997.

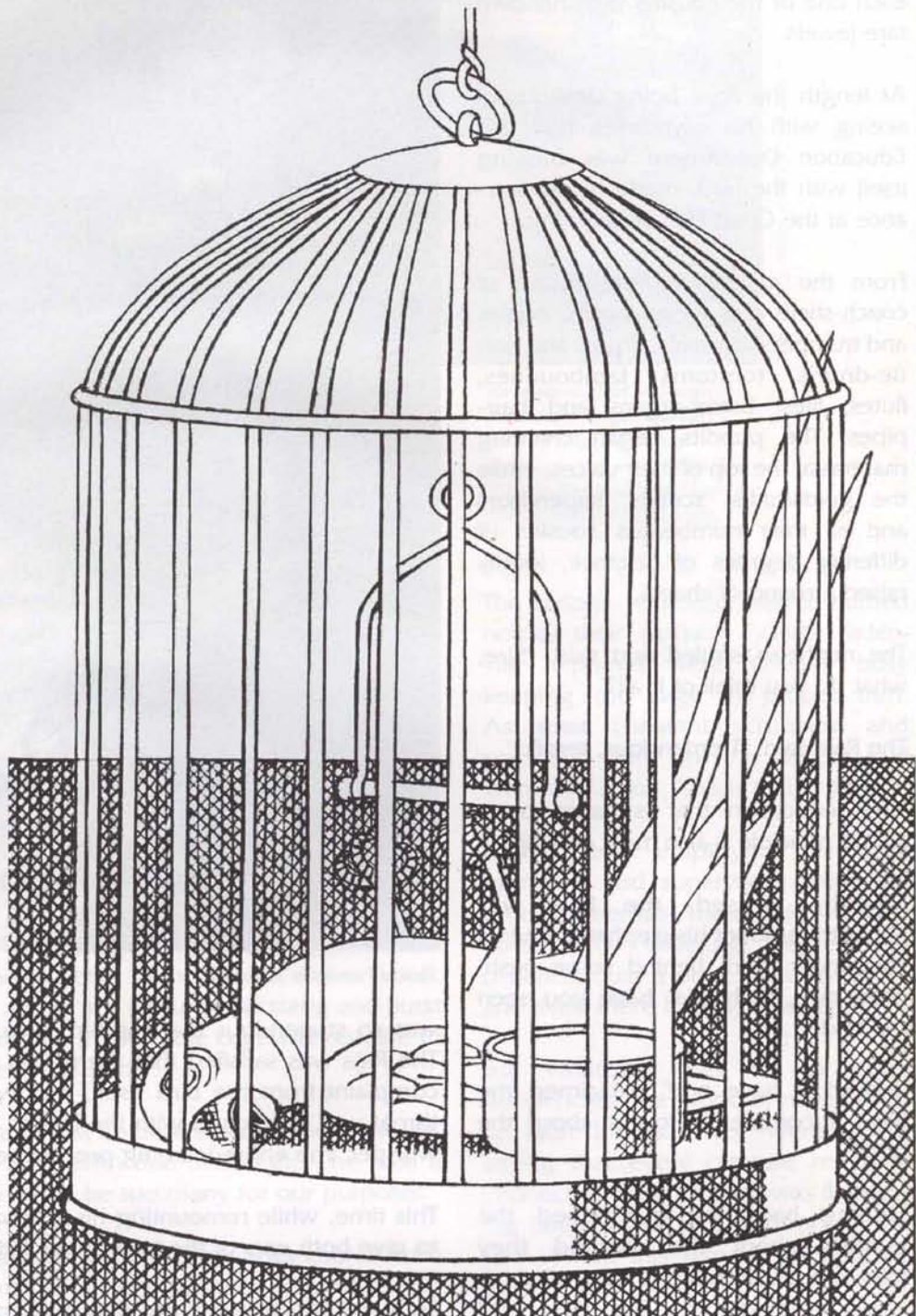


Illustration by: Ravi Paranjape

"Sire, the education of the bird is complete"

WHERE ARE ALL THE YOUNG PEOPLE?

Ishani Chowdhury

Despite inheriting one of the richest cultures in the world for free, young Indians today have little respect or pride in their tradition. In this article, Ishani speaks with concern for the future of this culture.

India's unparalleled beauty, its snow-capped Himalayan peaks and the unspoiled sandy beaches attract thousands of smiling strangers each year. Here Sri Krishna uttered the immortal message of Bhagavad Gita to Arjun, and countless yogis spread it across lands as distant as Java and Saudi Arabia. Mahavira inspired some of the greatest leaders of the twentieth century including Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King. Our forefathers built wondrous works of sacred architecture and developed the ancient cities of Harappa and Mohenjodaro. From India arose the decimal system, polo, chess, astrology, ayurveda and surgery. However, as the centuries passed, our treasures were looted. Our ancient and thriving cities were pillaged and burned to the ground and our people left crippled with horror.

Yet India has survived it all and now stands as a free country on the threshold of the twenty-first century, facing the challenges of being the world's largest democracy. However, while India thrusts forward as one of the globe's most rapidly developing countries, we seem to flee from our past. For some, being Indian is more a vice than a virtue. The mere thought of being called "Indian" seems to shroud us with shame and fear of association with "backward" kinsfolk. We run to escape, raising our children in this

atmosphere of contempt for our motherland. And as a result of this, my generation, Generation X, is described as clouded in a haze of drugs and violence, addicted to the computer keyboard and the Internet. But I see it as one wherein our history, loyalty and pride are in danger of being lost forever. We are the least in touch with our motherland, but not at all ashamed of this. We pride ourselves on being



called ABCDs (American-Born Confused Desis). We enter prestigious Ivy League colleges, chasing after the dream of six-figure salaries and networking with the corporate elite, while ignoring our community and the plight of our people and our motherland. At college, I see other students of similar ethnicity, Chinese, Black Africans, bonding closely, while my countrypeople are scattered in fragments. We are proud of our non-Indian friends, not catching even a glimpse of those who are of our own descent. Though our culture is richly adorned with festivals and traditions, Indian students' clubs know nothing but hosting parties. When it comes to joining Hindu or Jain organisations, we simply walk the other way, sometimes laughing as we pass by. A sparse group of parents go to temple, while

my peers are at home. Why so? "Oh, they have to study. The temple is always there. Maybe they will come next week." Unfortunately, that week never comes. These are the same peers that scoff at Indian culture and festivals and have a shallow conception of Indian history. Asked why, they reply, "My parents never explained it to me. If they don't think it is important, why should I?" "Join the Hindu Students Council? Isn't that a religious organisation? Why do we need that? Sorry but I have better things to do and I don't want to be called a fanatic." These temples could eventually become nothing but exhibitions, with vacant halls hosting Deities and one senior priest left to carry out the last strand of culture that links us to our motherland.

Our parents raise us with 1600 SAT scores, not the values of Vedas or ancient


scriptures. They delight in grasping anything American and letting go of everything Indian. They have forsaken the responsibility of handing over our rich and ancient heritage to grasp one that is merely a few hundred years old. Our festivals have become only social gatherings, not a time of remembrance or prayer. My generation may be the last one that can pass on the legacy of our forefathers, for not only the next, but also ultimately the world. The vision of a vibrant and united community may be lost forever. 🙏

ISHANI CHOWDHURY, 21, is founder of New York's Baruch College Hindu Students Council and is HSC's Atlantic regional secretary. This article was originally published in Hinduism Today, May 1999. Visit www.hindu.org/ht/

Photo: Chandu Shah

A True Man

By Neha Daya Shah - Age 12 years



Many summers I have passed
Upon the fields of earth
Now I sit in my bed
In preparation for rebirth
I look down on you
So young my child
So naive in the eyes of the world
Yet I have faith that you will succeed
In whatever you choose to do
The world will throw you many things
A lot of them unpleasant
Yet a strong character will shine through
And those around him shall bask
Inside the goodness that he brings
Now I sit pondering
In this bed of mine
What advice do I give
To one so young and blind?
Do I unlock the secrets of life
And warn you of this world?
Or do I let you battle it out
With the dangers of this place?
I have been through a lot, my boy
And a lot has been through me
And all the advice I have to give is
Shed the coverings of ignorance
Let yourself fly to freedom
For the greatest sorrow in life
Is not to realise your true self!

Dot...to...Dot

Kid's

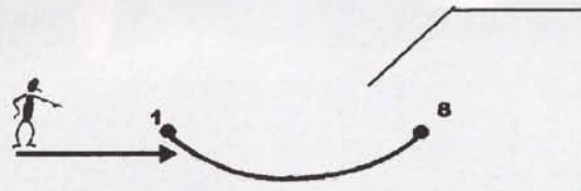
by Narendra Shah

Korner



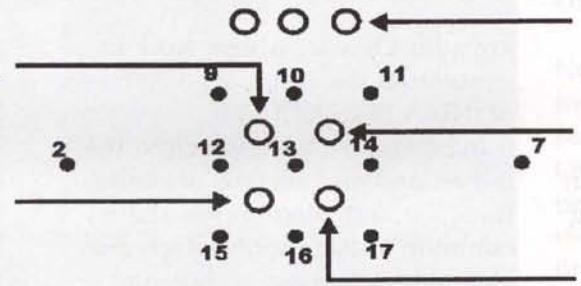
Hidden below is the symbol most International Jain organisations have adopted to represent the Jain tradition. The symbol is built from Jain principles and belief. The overall outline shape represents the Jain view of the cosmos from the spiritual point (it does not represent the physical universe). Its outline is in the shape of a person standing with legs spread wide and hands on the waist. The bottom part, up-ended triangle, represents the seven 'hells', the waist the middle world where our world is situated and the top hexagon represents the 'heavens'. At the top of the heavens, in the shape of a crescent, is the Sidh Shilla where liberated souls who have shed all their karma reside. Within the hexagon are three circles representing the Jain path to purity through the 'three jewels' i.e. through Samyag Darshan(right perception), Samyag Gnaan(right knowledge) and Samyag Charitra(right conduct). Below that is the Swastika, the four arms of which represent the four realms- types of life- (gati) in which the worldly soul, which still has karma attached to it, takes birth in a body. These four types of life are Hellish beings, Animal beings, Heavenly beings and Human beings. In the upended triangular section is the palm of a hand, with 'Ahinsa' written in the middle, representing friendliness. The palm signifies that 'I fear no one and I do not create fear in others'.

This must be the top, called -----, where the Sidh bhagwans live



These three circles must represent the three jewels, 1) Samyag -----
2) ----- Gnaan &
3) -----

I wonder which gati this is? It must be -----



I think this is the ----- gati

I know this one. It is the ----- gati

On the left is an incomplete diagram of the Jain symbol. To complete it, join the black dots in the following order:-
a) 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,1
b) 9,12,13,14,17
c) 11,10,13,16,15.
Then fill in the blank spaces. All the information can be found from above.

This must be the ----- gati



Happy Diwali

TEMPLES ARE FOR LIFE

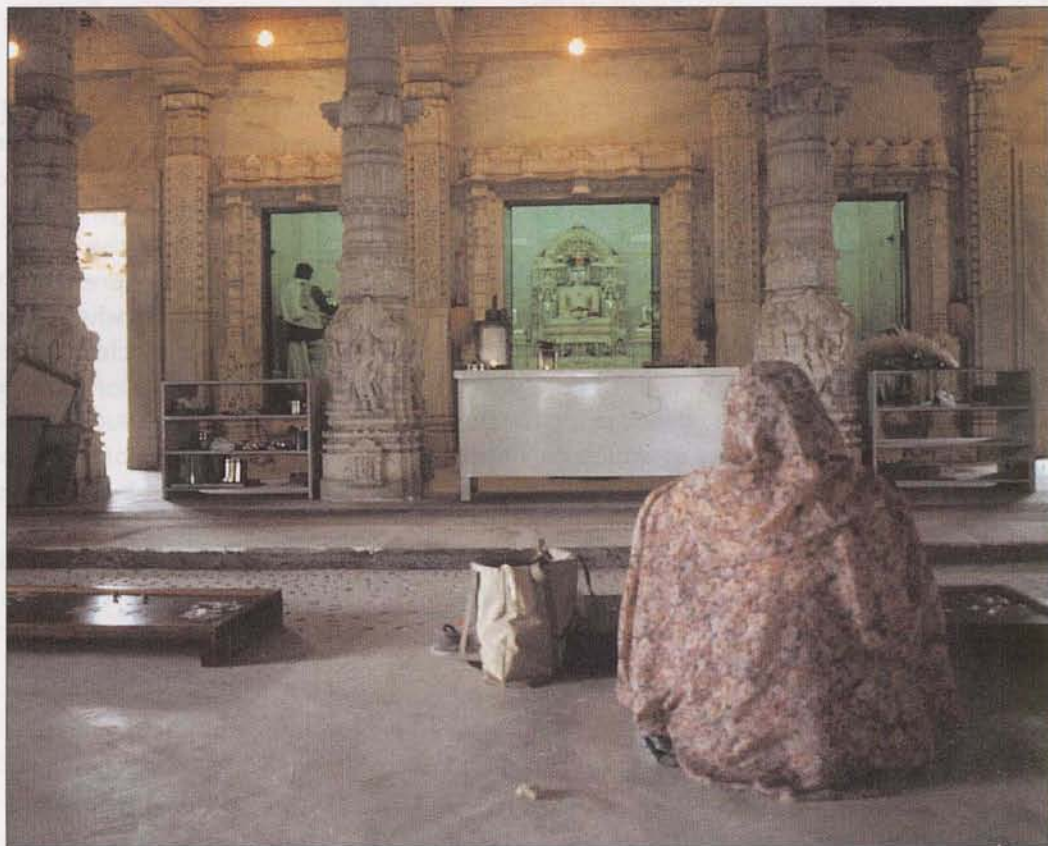
Cromwell Crawford investigates the role and significance of temples in Jain spiritual life. He addresses the central question asked by young people today: do we need more temples, especially in places like India, where there are so many already?

A boom in Jaina temple construction is under way. A source close to JAIN SPIRIT says: "temple-building is rife in India, and is now spreading in the U.S.A. and UK where there are several different temple projects in different cities." In India, many young Jains have strong views about temple construction, and feel that there is no need for more temples. Instead, money should be used for social welfare or other charitable causes. Furthermore, there are many Jain temples in remote parts which are deteriorating as the community has moved on, so there is no-one left to care for them and worship. It is therefore fitting to

If people do not come to the temple, the temple must go out to the people.

ask about the place of temples in the Jain tradition, and their role and meaning in contemporary life. Should we instead concentrate our energies on building living temples of people?

For answers, we take a 'temple tour' through the sketches and texts of two artists, Dilip Bhattacharya and



Joginder Chawla, whose work is featured in the February 1999 issue of INDIA PERSPECTIVES.

It must first be acknowledged that the art and architecture of Hindu, Buddhist and Jain temples share common Indian motifs which are elegantly portrayed in human, animal and floral forms.

Beyond these generic features, Jain temples stand uniquely by themselves, because of the distinctive myths, doctrines, and concepts that have inspired their artistic forms, giving Jainism a

leading edge in the creation of sculptures, wall-paintings and frescoes. This claim is amply supported by such monuments as the Tirthankara image of Lohanipur (Patna), dating back to the Mauryan period.

Bhattacharya observes that "from very early times, art based on Jainism depicts copulating artistic figures in places of worship. On sculptured stupas (pillars) and

railing posts of Mathura period even nude sura-sundaris are to be found. Such erotic figures appear mostly in medieval Jaina temples such as those in Khajuraho and Arang in Chhattisgarh district of Madhya Pradesh" (30). It is apparent that Tantric notions have influenced these sensuous depictions.

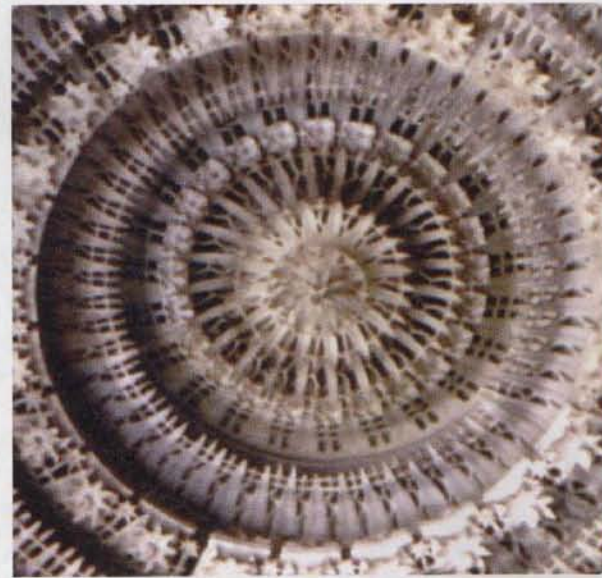
More characteristic of the sacred orientation of Jain art and architecture are the images of Jinas or Tirthankaras. Our temple tour stops before the 10th century sculpture of Gomteshwara at Sravanbelagola in Karnataka. At 57 feet, this colossal sculpture, hewn from a rock on the summit of the 143-metre-high Indragiri hill, stands out as the world's highest and most impressive statue. Its exquisite workmanship and looks of compassion bear eternal witness to the profound faith of the artist who built it.

Our next stop is before the Ajanta and Ellora cave temples, built by Jain monks between the 5th and 12th centuries. Bhattacharya points

out: "unlike other religious sects of those times, the Jains invariably selected secluded picturesque sites for their temples, and cave-temples for meditation and other related rituals. As per Jain religious inscriptions a devotee is just like a perfect pilgrim, who is journeying through life as a stranger in this world. He is required to perform the journey on the path of truth, knowledge and perfect conduct" (31). In our judgement, Jain monks were not alone in selecting "secluded picturesque sites for temples", but there is no doubt about the recognition that nature in all her beauty provides an optimum meeting place for body and spirit.

It was under the vaulted canopy of the banyan tree – Nature's own cathedral – that Lord Buddha received his enlightenment. The Buddha was acting on the belief shared by Jain monks that Nature speaks with many tongues to the deep levels of the human soul, and hence the practice of locating temples, schools and monasteries in arboreal settings.

Unlike Buddhists, Jain temples give a central place to idol-worship, signifying the elevated place accorded to Jain Tirthankaras, and intending their emulation by devotees. In time, similar honour was given to



Detail - Mt. Abu

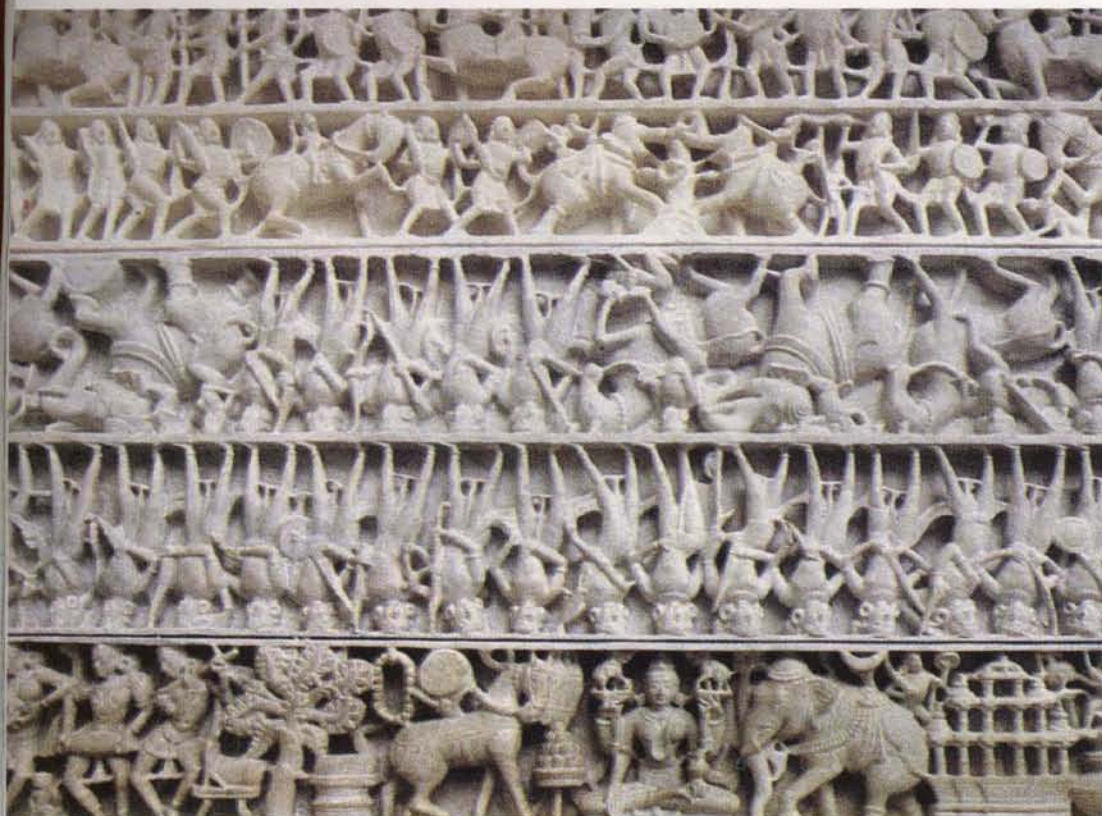
Delwara temple dome at Mt. Abu



icons of Acharyas (teachers), Siddhas (enlightened Ones), Sruta Devi (Goddess of Learning), and Yakshi (female folk deity). Icons took on symbolic form, such as the circle for Mahavira.

Next, Bhattacharya introduces us to the Jain Temple of Khajuraho, which served as capital city of the Chandelas in the middle ages. We peer into the Parsvanatha Shrine – the largest and best preserved. Bhattacharya notes that the image of Parsvanatha "is of recent origin," installed in 1860 AD, and observes that "the outer walls of the temple are decorated with fine sculptures like that of a woman writing a love letter, a lady fondling her child, a Nayika (heroine) painting her feet, a lady at her toilet and a female figure extracting a thorn from her foot" (32) – mundane images celebrating the common life.

Moving along, Joginder Chawla exclaims: "You are simply mesmerised when you enter the magnificent Jain temple at Ranakpur" (35). Set in solitary grandeur within the forested valley of the Aravali hills in Rajasthan, and built over a period of 50 years at a cost of rupees 9.9 million, "this three-storeyed wonder in marble, also ▶



Detail - Mt. Abu

called Chaturmukha (lit. four-faced) Jain Temple of Rishabdeva, was given this shape by four devotees" (37). Though its space is wide, with forty-feet-high pillars, "there is perfect architectural balance and harmony in shape. Artistic engravings and sculptures give it a feeling of ecstasy and divine bliss" (37). Jain mythology declares humans must undergo 8,400,000 births before attaining salvation; "the figure of 84 shrines in the temple is a symbolic reminder of these 84 lakh births and deaths" (37).

This bird's-eye view of some famous Jain temples through the lenses of Bhattacharya and Chawla provide useful information and insights in respect of the significance of temples in the Jain tradition, and their meaning for today.

First, though part of the Indian mainstream, Jain builders were not afraid to be inventive and strike out on their own.

Second, temples are not simply structures of stone and mortar, but are living shrines of Jain values, with their dominant quality of compassion.

Third, Jain temples unite nature with spirit, the sacred with the secular, and mutually hallow the affairs of heaven and earth.

The challenge to us today is to break new ground in respect of an

Detail - Mt. Abu



understanding of the role of the temple for each community. Honolulu is not the same as Houston. Innovate!
Temples must not be built as ego trips for the rich and famous, nor as comfortable country clubs for birds that get high on pluming and preening their own coloured feathers. We must transcend the tradition's historic error of being at ease in the temple and (like Buddhism) must reach out to the larger community. If people do not come to the temple, the temple must go out to the people. Each family then becomes an outpost of the temple, even within the forest of skyscrapers! I recall, it was Dr. Sulekh Jain who, at our first encounter, virtually conscripted me to deliver a speech at Morristown (near Detroit), where I called for the Jain community to build temples not just of bricks but of brains, which then sparked Sulekhji and others to found JAFNA (Jain Academic Foundation of North America). That man's initial compassion for me accounts for all of my involvement in the Jain community, though I am not a Jain.

The bottom line is that building temples is significant to the extent that the builders have their eyes on the Lord and not on a cheering public. Nothing must come in the way of that beatific vision. The magnificent Ranakpur temple enshrines this truth, for though it is erected of 1,444 pillars, not a single pillar obstructs the view of the Lord from any nook or corner! 🙏

The Crawford family has long roots in India, going back to 1761, with Henry Crawford serving as governor under Lord Hastings. He currently teaches at the University of Hawaii and publishes in the area of Indian medical ethics.

Opposite: Visitors at Delwara temple

Photos: Nemu Chandaria, M.D. Sharma & Chandu Shah



STAND UP FOR YOUR BELIEFS

Ingrid Newkirk



The founder of one of the largest animal rights organisations in North America, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), talks to Jain Spirit about upholding traditional values of caring and sharing for all life.

I was drawn to animals from my earliest memories. I remember going to the Taj Mahal for the first time. My parents took everyone inside but I couldn't go in. I was mesmerised by the chipmunks and couldn't leave them. I have always been completely consumed by animals, what they are thinking and what we are doing to them. And all of my life I have

...all of my life I have wanted to be a Jain...

wanted to be a Jain. I was exposed to Jainism at a very early age and it was the first thing that resonated with my inner heart. No matter what politicians say about world peace, Jainism has that reverence and if you practice it as much as you can it makes all the difference in the world. I don't believe

that we are going to have a very harmonious planet because there are so many awful things happening all the time to people, to animals, to the Earth. But, one can strive and I think that if you were to pick any one thing it would be the principles of Jainism.

The number one principle is the belief in non-violence, ahimsa, and of course through that vegetarianism. I find

that it isn't just a small part of the beliefs. There is no non-violent way to kill an animal. A knife, or a pole, or a decapitator is a tool of violence so the whole tenet of non-violence, of vegetarianism is very strong. Also Jains are very charitable. I have been to Jain hospitals in India and Jain bird sanctuaries, cow sanctuaries, wildlife stations, homes for the aged or poor, and this idea of putting effort and money back into the community and looking after those less fortunate and being aware of suffering is wonderful. I think the caring community of Jainism is invaluable. There is a tremendous spirit of community and co-operation. This is desperately

needed in modern society, where everyone

is locked in their cars and their high rises and the sense of community has eroded so badly.

I have always been a fighting sort of person when it comes to injustice. It angers me; I have to do something about it. It is not always comfortable

to speak up. Somebody could be laughing at what you say or making fun of your concepts when in fact what you have said is true. It does take strength to speak up. In fact the real bullies in this world are the people that feel insecure and the people that have to take out their inadequacies by tormenting, and overcoming, and dominating those that are not strong. All these are bully tactics and there is nothing courageous about them. But we must have courage.

The person who speaks first is the one that the others will follow. So if we, the kind people, are the first people to speak up, to say please stop doing that, or please understand why such an action is right or wrong, other people will listen. When you speak up you find that other people agree with you; maybe not all of them, but you will find that people will say, "Thank you, I wanted to say that too but I did not have the courage." And really what does it matter if some people laugh at you, if you know what you are saying could contribute to a better





Motherhood Feelings - Painting by: Ravi Paranjape

situation, or if by speaking up you have a chance of stopping something painful or miserable or horrible? It doesn't. All through history people have laughed at those trying to effect change and yet they have carried on.

So I would like to request the Jains not to be shy; they have a wonderful religion with such marvellous principles that everyone in the world would do well to follow. I hope young Jains will not assimilate into modern society in order to just fit in, by acquiring its really horrid habits. On the contrary, it has an awful lot to learn from the Jains and not the other way around. For example, in our office we have Michael Tobias's video, Ahimsa,

and we show it to our interns, to newcomers. Most of them have never heard of Jainism and they are mesmerised. The tradition is so clearly selfless and just beautiful.

Aparigraha or non-possessiveness is another profound principle. When you die and things surround you, when you look back at things, what have you got? The sports car or fancy jewellery? There is nothing to look back and be proud of. These are not things of worth in the real sense. What is worth anything in my book is if you can just chip away at the evil, at the pain and the suffering.

...there is no non-violent way to kill an animal...

There is a quote from Hippocrates that says "Even though the exterior, the form is different for all the creatures, the soul inside is still the same" and it is true. It does not really matter what package an individual comes in, what is important are their needs and how they can be helped.

Young people lose so many years when they rebel and just discard a value or an idea because it was their parents'. Later you reassess, you look at things sensibly and might come back to it. I would just ask young Jains to be really proud. You have something so exciting and important in Jain culture, wear a T-shirt, wear a button or badge that says it. Do not dissect animals. That is not Ahimsa. Stick up for it, do not change. No one can legally make a child dissect. Any child can stick up for it. A child has the right to insist on computer software or some other lesson that is actually more educational than cutting up a frog or cat. There are so many ways to live one's beliefs and to be proud and strong in them and to know that you are doing the right thing. Don't just follow blindly.

I also believe women are very powerful because they raise children and can teach them kindness. It is said that if you teach a child to be kind to a mouse, you are doing as much for the child as for the mouse. Mothers are the primary food providers and control what happens in the kitchen and what people eat. They are the leaders of the table.

People usually eat three times a day, so it means that they can either subsidise the slaughter house, or the dairy, or they can reject that type of cruelty. Women in their groups can do so much, not only through charitable acts, but through education in their libraries, in their ▶



Photo: Chandra Shah

Animals living in harmony with nature

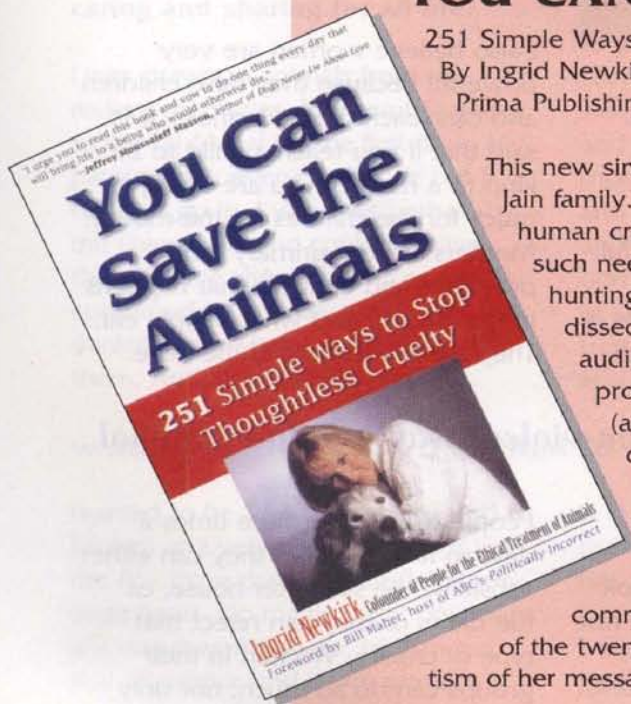
community of friends and in their women's groups. So even in the most traditional roles they are the educators, the providers, the nurturers and they have enormous influence.

I believe it is vital to start by being honest with children. Sometimes we lie to children to protect them, even though in their young hearts they are asking all the right questions. Why are we eating these animals that could be our friends or that we could at least respect and leave alone? I think that, if parents are honest with their children, they can't defend fishing, hunting, killing animals for food. Especially in a culture where you have every conceivable taste on offer in the supermarket or the health food store. Tofu ice-cream, soya margarine, rice or almond or soya milk. You can explain to them why we don't eat animals, and why we do not harm other creatures at all. They must appreciate that there are always alternatives which are caring and compassionate. The children will grow up with such respect that in the end they will always remember that they learnt the most important things in life from the family. 🙏

YOU CAN SAVE THE ANIMALS

251 Simple Ways to Stop Thoughtless Cruelty
By Ingrid Newkirk

Prima Publishing, 1999, www.primalife.com, US\$14.95. ISBN 0-7615-1673-5



This new simple and informative 260-page book is a must for the library of every Jain family. It provides detailed information about all aspects of animal life and human cruelty, with practical suggestions about what we can do to reduce such needless cruelty. There are chapters on the beautiful qualities of animals; hunting; pets; laboratory animals; animal ingredients in consumable products; dissection; and detailed appendices packed with information on videos and audiotapes, websites and recommended products. Ingrid Newkirk has provided a beautiful translation of ahimsa (non-violence) and jiv daya (animal compassion) in the modern day, and how it can be practised in our relationship with animals. Practical examples and information tell us how to change public opinion; switch to clothing and cosmetics without cruelty; buy from companies that don't test on animals or use animal ingredients; eat healthfully and compassionately; adopt animals from a local shelter or pound instead of supporting pet stores. Michael Tobias comments: "Ingrid Newkirk is one of the most important voices for compassion of the twentieth century. This new book reflects the wisdom, urgency and pragmatism of her message. Read it and share it with your friends. Learn to live by its message."

MEDITATION IN A TROUBLED WORLD

Michael Tobias

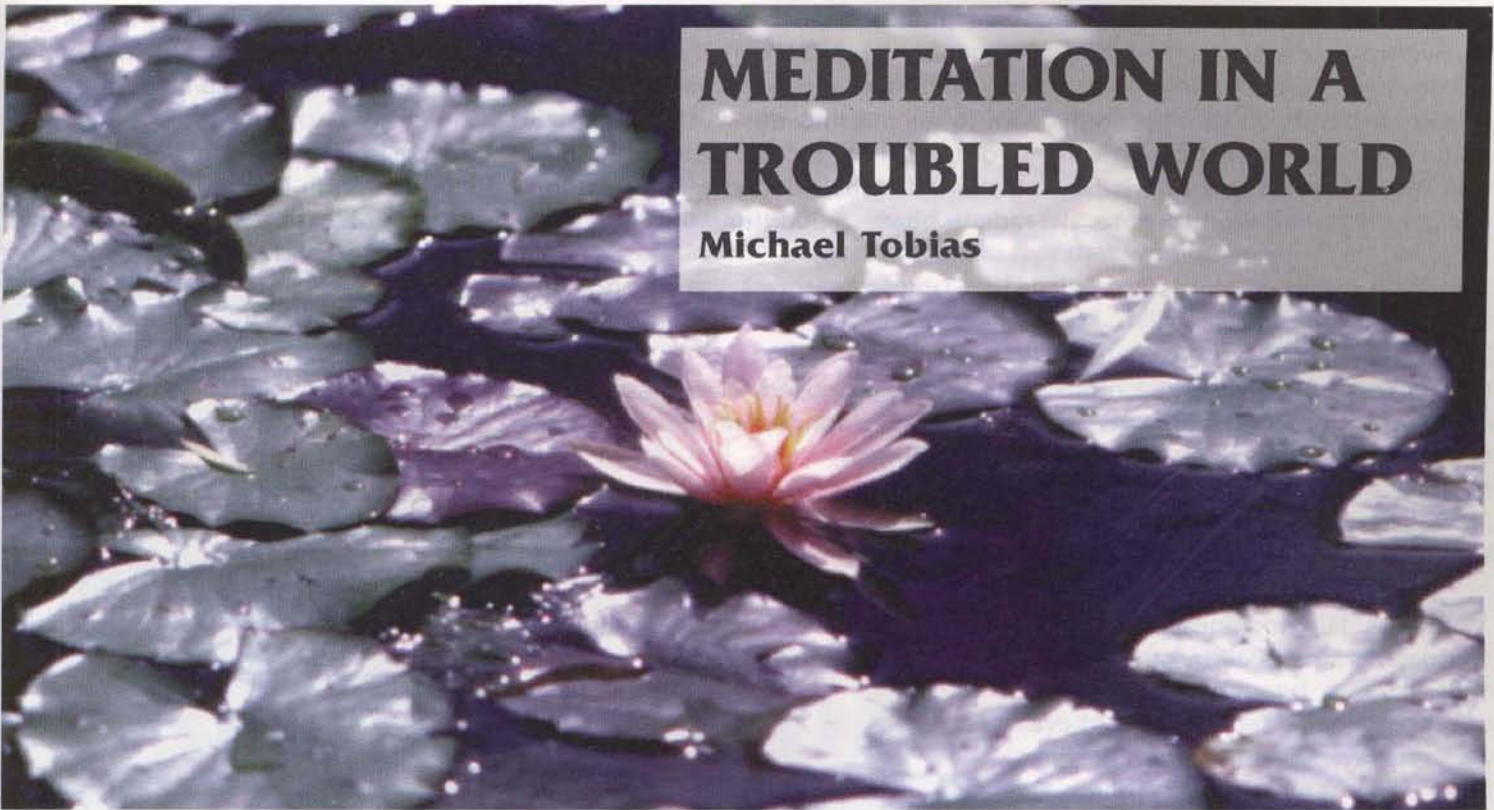


Photo: Chandu Shah

Many people understand meditation as something that we do in a quiet room through silence and inaction. In this article, Tobias makes a much wider interpretation of meditation, drawing on the Jain scriptures and lifestyle to demonstrate that meditation is really a connection with the inner spirit which can be manifested in many different ways. In particular, he argues that sincere ethical action is itself a meditation.

Recently in Pasadena, California, an *Amorphophallus titanum* bloomed for two days, only the 11th time the 'titan', or 'putrid flower', as it is lovingly known, has ever blossomed in the United States. Over 10,000 people swarmed the Huntington Library and famed gardens to catch a glimpse of the gorgeous, six-foot tall plant. It is an astonishingly proud flower, honed at least since the time of the Upper Cretaceous System 115 million years ago. Flowering plants, these days, are known to be on the

brink. In October 1998, a distinguished panel of scientists in Britain – following a 20-year survey of changing biological patterns on Earth – declared that as much as 60% of all life may well become extinct sometime in the next century. And in August 1999, at a meeting of scientists in St. Louis, the President of the International Botanical Congress, Peter Raven, declared, "We are predicting the extinction of about two-thirds of all bird, mammal, butterfly and plant species by the end of the next century, based on current trends." This was not sudden news, but confirmation – long in coming – of a planetary crisis that must strike human contemplation with shock and despair, begging the question: What is the worth of contemplation, after all, when the world around us, upon which we exclusively depend for our lives, is breaking point?

Contemplation, or meditation if you prefer, has long served numerous purposes that might best be described as purposeful, or pragmatic. The perceptive capacity, easily identified in *Homo sapiens* – that ability to think about thinking, *ahampratyaya* and *alocana*, in Jain tradition – gives us a certain grace under fire, as it does for blue whales, elephants, penguins or mountain gorillas. It is simple restraint that makes for the personality of non-violence in these species. In a world of noise and chaos, meditation endorses silence – it gives us the strength to forge ahead. It is a unique language that we develop to communicate with our own soul.

However, you can not meditate alone. No man is an island. Hence meditating near an abattoir would be a totally different experience from meditating atop a mountain. The quality of our external environment directly influences our internal meditation. In fact, there is no division between the internal and the external. Jainism recognises this fundamental interdependence of all life. ▶

It has produced twelve textual Angas, or limbs, which all pose questions and answers about the effective possibilities for mutual support. The monk or lay disciple is expected to express him- or herself among others; to display the cherished fruits of inner reflection; to go out into the world and spread virtuosity. Contemplation, in other words, is not, by nature, a secret, but the means to an end that is beyond the individual. Contemplation is not a selfish act. When we meditate, we radiate peace around us.

Consider the great words of wisdom that Jainism nurtured and that flowered through its scriptures.

- **Acara**, the behavior of a monk, is implicitly disposed to that community and how the individual – just back from the far fringes of inner thought – goes about interacting with other human beings.

- **Sutrakṛta**, the clarification of ethics, behavior, thought, so as to introduce balance.

- **Sthana**, Jain doctrines which attest to every aspect of karma, non-violence, moderation, respect; in other words, other forms, causes and consequences of behavior.

- **Samavaya**, a continuation of Sthana.

- **The Bhagavati Sutra**, which contains those scientific and philosophical queries reshaped into a question and answer session between Mahavira and his chief disciple, Indrabhuti Gautama. The very dialogue of the two men – at the heart of Jain tradition and anecdote – incites a universal paradigm. It shows that even an omniscient monk must tell his story, relate to another human being, come back from whatever lofty thoughts he or she has formulated, and return home to the soil where all things grow up naturally and express themselves, like the flower.

- **Jnatadharmakatha**, relating to issues of morality.

- **The Upasakada**, pertaining to observances among lay-votaries.

- **The Antakṛddasa**, which speaks to the practice of asceticism, or tapas, and examines the journey of a liberated soul.

- **Anuttaraupapatikadasa**, which leads the inquiring mind into the heart of reincarnation, a remarkable text.

- **Prasnavyakarana**, continuing from the 9th Anga, and guiding us along the very route of karma.

- **The Vipakasruta**, which addresses the whole notion of cause and effect.

- And finally, **the Drstivada**, a manuscript which has been lost.

The Angas, along with 34 Angabahyas, 12 Upangas, 4 Mulasutras, 6 Chedasutras, 2 Culikasutras, 10 Prakirnakas, and literally hundreds of thousands of pages of other texts, are the product of a collective meditation. They are equally concerned with the whereabouts of contemplation itself,

and the importance of grounding it in those aspects of human life that matter and which can heal the world.

The Jain heritage has always seen meditation in this much wider sense – a combination of right faith, right knowledge and right conduct.

Mahavira was emphatic that not only should we be non-violent, but that we should also not allow another person to be violent.

Consider just a few of the principles that have been embraced by Jainism:

- ahimsa (non-violence, non-injury, non-harming),
- jiva-daya (compassion and charity),
- anukampa (compassion),
- yatra (pilgrimage),
- astikya (affirmation),
- dana (charity),
- gunavratas (behavioral restraints),
- kshama (forgiveness),
- atithi-samvibhaga (sharing with a guest),
- maitri (universal friendliness),
- anagara-dhara (mendicant discipline),
- pravrajya (renunciation),
- anekantavada (tolerance; literally, the doctrine of manifold aspects),
- brahmacari (celibacy),
- asteya (not stealing; could be interpreted ecologically – not taking from future generations),
- tapas (austerity),
- irya-samiti (care in walking),
- aparigraha (non-possession),
- puja (the daily consecration).

The living practice of these profound ideals can itself be considered to be an act of meditation.

Artists, philosophers and spiritual thinkers – be it a Goya depicting the brutality of war, a Zola the inequities of class struggle, or a Dalai Lama the tyrannies over his people – have always concluded that morality without purpose is like an empty glass; that great ideas with no application in the real world are "useless passions", to use Jean Paul Sartre's expression. Contemplation is the

universal language of the Self, the one inexhaustible source of kinetic energy and transformation; indeed, the only reliable mirror of history and of the human heart. Hence we need to understand it as a tool for change. That implies a serious role for contemplation in the international courts of justice; for geopolitics and ecological economics; for saving endangered species and habitat; for ameliorating widespread conditions of abuse and suffering amongst human beings. Mahavira's own life is a fitting example of how the internal dialogue might

lead to purposeful actions in the community. After all, he spent most of his life wandering the back roads of India discussing the fundamentals of peace and of ecology with anyone who cared to listen. He actively prevented harm, liberated animals, found practical solutions to the problems he encountered in village after village.

Today, the tragedy of a world in a state of war is more with us than ever before, largely on account of the fact that we number 6 billion ungainly consumers, mostly carnivorous, and indifferent. In Mahavira's time the human population was not more than 225 million. At 6 billion, we are witnessing total collapse. Consider that just in the state of California, approximately 600,000 dogs and cats are euthanized (killed) each year, with scarcely a murmur of concern by the public. A similar number of Rwandans were massacred, and, again, the world stood by. And, to reiterate, we are now staring face-on at an extinction spasm that could take out 60% of all life on Earth, while humans, flaunting their seeming immunity to natural laws, attain the staggering population size of 12 billion in coming decades.

We'd better go back to the roots of our contemplative life and find effective ways to bridge what is, apparently, an impasse, and hopefully a temporary one. Call it paralysis by analysis, call it moral indecisiveness, the inability to discriminate priorities from so many imperatives. Call it the ego, or the general problem of existence. Maybe it is simply the unique trauma of our times. Evolution provided us with the contemplative faculty; the need to sustain internal discussion; to bring forth that most private and persuasive and impassioned of voices, from the depths of each soul.

Now it is time to practice what, in the depths of ourselves, we would preach. 🙏

Author of nearly 30 books, writer, director, producer of over 100 films, Michael Tobias is President and Director of the Dancing Star Foundation, one of the largest animal sanctuaries in North America. His books include: 'Life Force: The world of Jainism' (Jain Publishing Co, California) and 'Environmental Meditation' (The Crossing Press, 1993, available from www.amazon.com). Tobias has also made an award-winning PBS documentary: 'Ahimsa – Non-violence' which is a beautiful account of the relevance of Jainism to the modern day.

A simple shrine inside a Jain home

Photo: Punit M. Shah, Atlanta



TRUTH EMBRACES ALL

An interview with Father Valles

Father Valles was a keynote speaker at the JAINA Convention in Philadelphia in July 1999. A Professor of Mathematics, he was sent to Ahmedabad from Spain in the 1970s where he mastered the Gujarati language and thereafter became a prolific writer in Gujarati. Author of dozens of books about human nature and society, Father Valles is a very popular and respected honorary Indian. His lectures at JAINA attracted huge audiences, as he spoke with great wisdom and good humour too! Here he talks to Jain Spirit editors about the similarities between Jainism and Christianity.

Father Valles, you call yourself both a Christian and a Jain. Could you please tell us why you say that and what you think are the similarities between Christianity and Jainism?

It would be more exact to say that I do not call myself anything. To me labels mean little. To me it is the heart that really feels. Now we have a word for that; nowadays we call this ecumenism. It is a beautiful word, from a Greek root, 'oecumenen', which means the inhabited world – that is, the whole world in practice. So an ecumenical mind means one that embraces the human race as it is, and it is this type of ecumenism that I treasure and I like to represent. I was born and baptised a Christian and somehow this very close relationship, this intimacy with the Jain community was developed when I arrived in India. In Ahmedabad, I was made an 'honorary' Jain, and that is really the best compliment that I could have received, and I do treasure that.

But still do you find things that are similar between the Jains and the Christians?

We have great similarities, which is what made for a closer approach. I think the insistence on truth, is one of the profound gifts of Jainism and in the Bible we find the same of Jesus Christ, who said "I am the truth." I like it even more in Jainism in India, because the root of *satya* is *sata*, which is being, which is reality. I sometimes call myself a worshipper of reality, of being, and



Father Valles with dignitaries at JAINA convention

in the sense that *satya* applies to Jesus as well. Jesus said: "I am coming to give you the truth, I am coming to show you the way, I am the fundamental *satya*." That is to me a similarity that goes down to the roots and, if we live it, we can be truly brothers in spirit. Together with that there is also the insistence on good behaviour. That is: truth is not just being, it is also making life become true – that is,

Photo: Chandu Shah

behaving in such a way that our principles become our way of conduct. That again is a principle that we do not always live up to, but which we try to practise as much as possible. We have to practise before we preach. In one of the speeches this morning I heard a beautiful sentence from a Jain speaker: "What you do to a sick person you do it to me also. If you heal a sick person, you heal me," – a quote from Lord Mahavir's own words. Jesus also says in the gospel, "Whatever you do to the smallest of these little ones you do it unto me," which is the basis of service and of love. So here I found today a similarity which was unknown to me and which, when we go to the root, we learn.

How do you feel about the crisis in the world today: the breakdown of families; the breakdown of society; the environmental crises; all these sort of problems that the world is facing? How can Jain and Christian values be relevant here?



Stained glass window inside a church

Yes, you are quite right in mentioning these crises in family, society and the environment. In the political life of nations and continents, there are heavy clouds over the next millennium and I am not a fool to ignore them. You ask rightly what we can do. The answer is: the more true we are to our principles, the more effective we can be against these crises. Just this last quotation if we could apply in practice, then all these wars and all these oppositions would naturally disappear. Both Christianity and Jainism emphasise simplicity of life, so if we learn to reduce our needs as Jains and as Christianity teaches, we shall be doing the best to somehow avoid these crises. So, again, to go back to fundamentals is how to avoid these crises. I will add one more point, as you mentioned family – that together with our principles we have to add a certain openness and flexibility, because too much rigidity will bring about a greater crisis. The idea is to combine our convictions which may remain firm with our openness to new solutions to our problems.

When you say simplicity, even we Jains don't practise enough simplicity, and Christians even less. The Bill Gateses of the world are richer than 30 countries in the world, so the idea of more and more accumulation is dominant in the world. Do you have any thoughts on how this idea of simplicity moves up to the top of the agenda of society?

The only way that I know is through example. You said very well that in practice neither Christians nor Jains in general put into practice this principle. We have too many things; we are taken over by this consumerism. What strikes me is that people who are in the public eye often lead simple lives. For example, when I first met the famous philosopher Krishnamurti in a plane, all his luggage was just a little hand purse. He had booked no suitcase; he had no hand luggage, nothing to carry in his hands – a man who could have had everything. These examples can do more than any preaching. If we have people that are in the public eye and are respected and show that they need very little, that will be a way for all of us to greater simplicity in life.

You spent quite a bit of time in the family homes of Jains in India. Could you please tell us a little bit about the sort of family

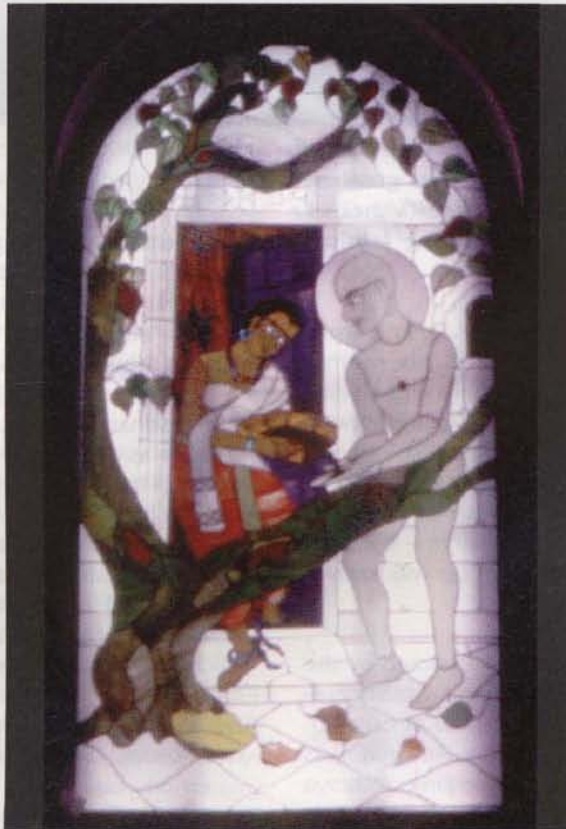
life, the social life of Jains and what you find is good and positive about it?

I spent ten years of my life living from house to house as a begging guest in houses of Ahmedabad, and many of my hosts were Jains. I never chose, I went from one house to the other – they could be Hindus; they could even be Muslims. Among the Jains, I found the family ties to be extremely strong, in the best sense of the word. That means that everybody in the family was standing for every-one else. There may be difficulties, a boy who fails in the exam, or a marriage that runs into difficulties – I have wit-

Among the Jains, I found the family ties to be extremely strong

nessed some of the most difficult things. At such times, the whole family would rally together and then that boy, or that girl, or that man or woman knew that they had a place there that would always be their home, absolutely and totally. Another thing I liked was the cleanliness, both physical and the way a Jain house is kept, the way the water is filtered, avoiding eating at night. Jains keep very carefully to the rules of outer cleanliness as an image of the inner cleanliness, of living a clean life inside. Another thing I

Photo: Chandu Shah



Stained glass window of Leicester Jain temple

noticed in the Jains, which I know is very true, is that there would be a knock on the door and there would be a Jain Sadhvi (nun), knocking for their daily food. It was a very beautiful image to see a person who lives directly on alms, never cooks for herself and depends directly on these families. From the part of the Sadhvi, that tremendous penance, renunciation, and from the part of the family, a readiness to serve any day. That is the thing that I will never forget. When the monks and nuns come for their daily beggings, that is really a blessed sight that I hope will be continued and preserved in the world to come.

What would you like to say to young Jains?

First of all, to learn your own tradition, the treasures that you have yourself. Learn your mother tongue and, in addition, put your tradition into practice. 🙏

AN ELEVENTH CENTURY GENIUS: HEMCHANDRACHARYA

Photo: Chandu Shah



The Palitana temple complex was inspired by Hemchandracharya

Vinod Kapashi examines the life of one of the greatest Jain figures in this millennium, a literary grandfather of Gujarat. He played a significant role in promoting Jainism in Gujarat.

Hemchandra was born in a Vanik family in 1088 A.D. in a small town called Dhandhuka. His father Chaching and his mother Chahini were devoted Jains. Hemchandra was only eight years old when he left his parents and his home to go with a famous Jain monk Devchandra, who initiated the young child into the monkhood. Hemchandra practised the austerities prescribed in Jain literature and he crossed, within a short space of time, the whole ocean of learning. His guru made him Acharya – the spiritual head of a group of monks – and since then he was known as Hemchandracharya.

The king Siddharaj, the then king of Gujarat, was attracted by the qualities of Hemchandracharya. He first met Acharya whilst ceremoniously parading the streets of Patan (then capital of Gujarat). The king was seated on an elephant and the Acharya was coming from the opposite direction. On seeing the king, Acharya praised the king in a beautifully composed Sanskrit lyric. This spontaneous response from the Acharya and the eloquence of

his poetry won the king's heart. The king invited Acharya to the Palace the very next day and from that day onwards the bond between them was unbroken. Acharya's political wisdom, religious strength and immense knowledge gave him a special place in the king's court.

King Siddharaj had fought and won many battles. His greatest victory was the victory of Malva (a town in central India). Malva was won but everyone knew that Malva was superior to Gujarat because Malva had its own strong, unmatched literary tradition. Malva had the best Sanskrit grammar, whilst Gujarat had none. The king wanted Gujarat to be at the vanguard of literature, and it was Hemchandra who came to his rescue. Scholarly knowledge of grammar was essential for any writer or poet, which was a point of prestige in the kingdom.

The king requested that Hemchandra compose a grammar, which would lift Gujarat's prestige. He agreed to undertake this mammoth task. After gathering all the necessary information from various sources and three years of continuous research, Hemchandra composed the grammar of the Sanskrit and Prakrit

languages. To explain and illustrate the complexity of grammar it was necessary to provide examples. Hemchandra solved this problem in his own unique style. He wrote a book on the history of Solanki kings. The book is written in such a manner that each of the verses explains the rules of grammar. This book of 250,000 verses is called Dwayashrya and it is written in two parts. The first part is in Sanskrit and it explains the rules of Sanskrit grammar, while the second part, which is in Prakrit, explains the rules of Prakrit grammar. Part two narrates the life of king Kumarpal who became king after the death of Siddharaj.

When the work was completed the king celebrated the historical event. The book was placed on the king's elephant and a colourful procession was held. More than 300 copies of this book were made and sent to different places in India and abroad. Regular examinations were being conducted based on the book, and prizes were awarded to the successful candidates. After nearly 900 years this grammar is still an important source in the study of Sanskrit and Prakrit languages.

Hemchandra had once predicted that Kumarpal – who was the nephew of Siddharaj – would become the king of Gujarat after Siddharaj's death. Siddharaj had no son but he did not like Kumarpal and was determined that Kumarpal should not become the king after his death. Siddharaj, one day, ordered his men to arrest or kill Kumarpal. Siddharaj's men searched for Kumarpal who, terrified, went into hiding. He sought refuge at Acharya's monastery (upashray). Hemchandra hid him in a stack of palm leaves. Siddharaj's soldiers, unable to find Kumarpal went away. Since that day Kumarpal was under the influence and obligation of this great monk.

The prophecy came true. Kumarpal became king after the death of Siddharaj. Hemchandra already had an honourable place in the kingdom but, once Kumarpal became king, his influence increased tremendously. Kumarpal had always respected Jain traditions but was now a true devotee of the Acharya. Kumarpal's period was a golden era in Solanki-history. The king made many social and political reforms. He was under the influence of Hemchandra and had given orders not to kill any animals in the kingdom. Though he believed in the principle of non-violence, through necessity, he fought many battles and expanded the boundaries of his kingdom. Hemchandra had a special place in the king's court. The King regularly paid his respects to him and received his blessing.

Hemchandra carried out extensive research on many subjects. It is believed that he spent much of his time writing and dictating his literary works. He was a great poet too. His composition of devotional poems in praise of Jain Tirthankaras has put him in the front-line with other great poets. Hemchandra stayed with people and stayed with time. He did not live like a hermit: he came out of his monastery and took part in the social life of people. Indeed, Hemchandra influenced kings as well as common people. He changed the affairs of the kingdom whenever it was practicable. His philosophy of non-killing and non-injury made revolutionary changes in the lives of everyday people.

Hemchandra wrote another mammoth work called the Trishasti Shalaka Purush Charitra. (Biographies of 63 great personalities).

This book is written in prose and contains 36,000 verses. It narrates the lives of 24 Tirthankaras and other eminent personalities. The book provides absorbing reading, describing many aspects of human life. The Lives of the Jain Elders is a new book by R. C. C. Fynes of De Montfort University, Leicester. It is a translation of Sthaviravali, one of the appendices to the above work. It was published in 1998 by Oxford University Press in their Oxford World Classics series. The book is an admirable effort by Dr. Fynes to bring an important work of Hemchandra to Western readers.

Hemchandra kindled the light of Gurjar-civilisation, putting Gujarat at the forefront of non-violence, love and high moral values. The reigns of two great kings Siddharaj and Kumarpal bear witness to this larger-than-life personality. To think Hemchandra was just a Jain monk would be a great mistake. He is not merely one of the greatest Jain monks of Gujarat, he is one of the greatest monks and literary personalities of the whole of India. Hemchandra's book on yoga is also famous. Yoga-Shastra describes all aspects of Patanjali and Jain Yoga systems. It explains Jain codes of conduct as well. He also produced different lexicons. One book lists plants and herbs. His book on logic Praman Mimmasa and Anya yog v yavchhed Dwatrinshika are also famous. Desi Nam Mala lists archaic words and is a valuable source for all linguists. Examples given in this book also depict the life of common people during this period.

Hemchandra was a true monk, renouncing everything from childhood. As a true devotee of the Tirthankaras he composed beautiful poems in Sanskrit language. These compositions show that he was a poet of very high calibre and at the same time he was a monk who possessed the highest virtues. Many scholars were outwitted by his immense knowledge.

He had performed a few yogic miracles too. Hemchandracharya knew about his death six months before the actual end. He had finished all his works. He died at the age of 84 in AD 1173. ❧



An intricate sculpture inspired by one of Hemchandracharya's epic books

REVERENCE FOR ALL LIFE

Animals in the Jain tradition

Christopher Key Chapple

Animals have always been revered in Jainism and the scriptures demonstrate a deep compassion for them. Jain concern for animals goes far beyond vegetarianism. For centuries, Jains have protected and cared for animals.

Animal symbols and stories pervade the Jain tradition. When searching for words to describe Mahavir as he prepared for his state of liberation, early Jain authors turned to animal metaphors:

His senses were well protected like those of a tortoise; he was single and alone like the horn of a rhinoceros; he was free like a bird; he was always waking like the fabulous bird Bharunda; valorous like an elephant, strong like a bull, difficult to attack like a lion (Kalpa Sutra, Jacobi, p. 261).

In fact, most of the great Jain teachers or Tirthankaras can be recognized on the basis of their animal associate. For instance, the first great teacher, Rsabha, is generally represented with a bull; the second, Ajita, with an elephant; the third, Sambhava, with a horse, and so forth.

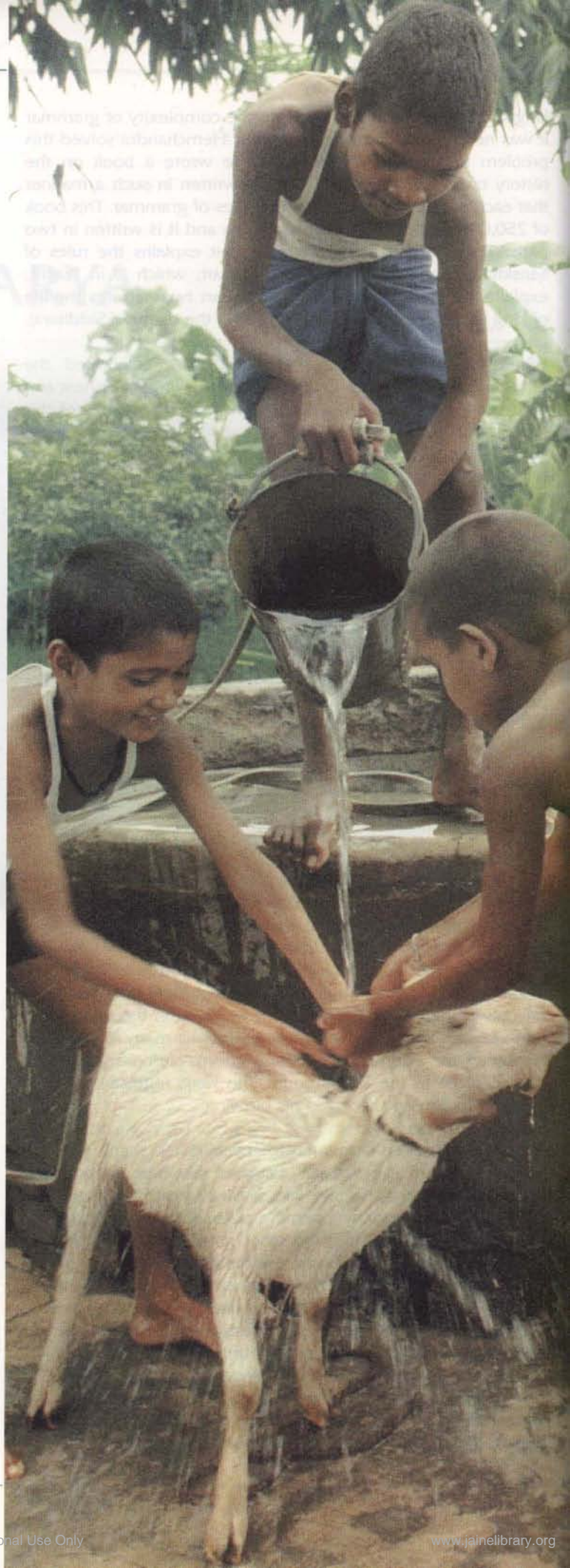
The prominence of animal imagery in the story tradition corresponds to a special care not to harm animals inspired by the Jain ethic of nonviolence or ahimsa. From the earliest texts of Jainism, we find animal treatment discussed in great detail:

Some slay animals for sacrificial purposes,
 some slay animals for the sake of their skin,
 Some kill them for the sake of their flesh,
 some kill them for the sake of their blood;
 others for the sake of their heart, their bile,
 the feathers of their tail, their tail, their big or
 small horns, their teeth, their tusks, their
 nails, their sinews, their bones; with a
 purpose and without a purpose.
 Some kill animals because they have been
 wounded by them, or are wounded, or will
 be wounded.

He who injures these animals does not comprehend and renounce the sinful acts; he who does not injure these, comprehends and renounces the sinful acts.

Knowing them, a wise man should not act sinfully towards animals, nor cause others to act so, nor allow others to act so (Acaranga Sutra I:1.6). Because of this concern from not injuring animals, Jains developed a unique science of life that differentiates distinct levels of sophistication among animal forms.

According to Jainism, 8,400,000 different species of life forms exist. These beings are part of a beginningless round of birth, life, death and rebirth. Each living being houses a life force or



jiva that occupies and enlivens the host environment. When the body dies, the jiva seeks out a new site depending upon the proclivities of karma generated and accrued during the previous lifetime. In instances of virtuous action, an animal may improve its prospects for a higher life form. If the animal has been vicious, then it will probably descend in the cosmic order, either to a lower animal form or to the level of a micro-organism (nigodha) or an elemental body dwelling in the earth or in liquid form or in fire or in air.

The taxonomy of Jainism places life forms in a graduated order starting with those beings that possess only touch, the foundational sense capacity that defines the presence of life. These include earth, water, fire, air bodies; micro-organisms; and plants. The next highest order introduces the sense of taste; worms, leeches, oysters and snails occupy this phylum. Third-order life forms add the sense of smell, including most insects and spiders. Fourth-level beings, in addition to being able to touch, taste and smell, can also see; these include butterflies, flies, and bees. The fifth level introduces hearing. Birds, reptiles, mammals and humans dwell in this life realm.

Jain cosmology consists of a storied universe in the shape of a female figure. The earthly realm or middle world (manusya-loka) consists of three continents and two oceans. The animals listed above, including humans, can be found here. Additionally, depending upon their actions, animals may be reborn in one of eight heavens or seven hells. If animals perform auspicious deeds they might be reborn in heaven.

In order to enhance one's spiritual advancement and avoid negative karmic consequences, the Jain religion advocates benevolent treatment of animals. The monks and nuns are not allowed even to lift their arms or point their fingers while wandering from village to village; according to the Jina, "This is the reason: the deer, cattle, birds, snakes, animals living in water, on land, in the air might be disturbed or frightened" (Acaranga Sutra, Jacobi, 145). In passage after passage, the Jaina teachers exhort their students, particularly monks and nuns, to avoid all harm to living creatures. The speech, walking, eating, and eliminatory habits of the Jain monks and nuns all revolve around a pervasive concern not to harm life in any form. Ultimately, the

ideal death for a Jain, lay or monastic, is to fast to death, consciously making the transition to the next birth while not creating any harm to living beings.

Manifestations of this concern for nonviolence can be found in the institutions of the pinjrapole or animal hospital, founded and maintained by the Jain community most prominently in western India. Geographer Deryck Lodrick described perhaps the most famous pinjrapole as follows: "In the heart of Old Delhi... opposite the Red Fort and close to the bustle of Chandni Chowk, is a pinjrapole dedicated entirely to the welfare of birds. Founded in 1929 as an expression of the Jain community's concern for ahimsa, the Jain Charity Hospital for Birds' sole function is to treat sick and injured birds brought there from all over the city ... The hospital, located inside the premises

of a Digambara Jain temple and supported entirely by public donations administered through the temple committee, receives some 30 to 35 birds daily. Most of these are pigeons with wounds or fractures incurred in the city's heavy traffic, although diseases ranging from blindness to cancer are treated by the hospital's resident veterinarian. All birds, both wild and domestic, are accepted for treatment by the hospital with the exception of predators, which are refused on the grounds that they harm other creatures and thus violate the ahimsa principle. Incoming birds are treated in the dispensary on the second floor of the hospital (the first contains the staff quarters and grain store) and are placed in one of the numerous cages with which this level is lined. As birds improve they are taken to the third floor, where they convalesce in a large enclosure having access to the open sky ... When birds die in the hospital, they are taken in procession to the nearby Jumna and are ceremoniously placed in the waters of that sacred river." (Lodrick, 1981, 17).

This Pinjrapole, in the centre of one of Delhi's busiest areas, boasts outstanding architecture and stands in many ways as a national monument to the Jain commitment to non-violence.

The origins of the Jain pinjrapole are somewhat difficult to trace. It could have developed in the early phases of Jainism (Asoka's inscriptions in the third century B.C.E. show similar concerns for animal welfare) or during the apex of Jainism, which lasted from the fifth to the thirteen centuries. In the state of Gujarat a succession of kings gave state patronage to ▶



Samavasarana painting

Courtesy: *The Peaceful Liberators, Jain Art from India*

Jainism, such as Mandalika of Saurashtra in the eleventh century, and Siddharaja Jayasimha, King of Gujarat, and his son and successor, Kumarapala in the twelfth century. Kumarapala (1125-1159) declared Jainism the state religion of Gujarat and passed extensive animal welfare legislation.

In one sense however, this seems like a work of great benevolence. In the movie *Frontiers of Peace* produced by Paul Kueperferle, one can witness directly the pain and suffering endured by some of the animals housed in Jain shelters. Some are grotesquely misshapen by old injuries and others seem to writhe in anguish. By the standards of Western veterinary medicine, these animals should be "put down", that is, killed to spare them their misery. However, for two reasons this would be unacceptable from the perspective of the Jain theory of karma. First, the person who would perform or approve of the killing would incur an influx of black, negative karma. This would bind to his or her life force (jiva) and further impede progress toward spiritual liberation (kevala), the state in which all karma is expelled. Second, it would do a disservice to the animal. Each life force earns its status due to past actions. As cruel as it might sound, the present predicament according to the karmic view holds that the animal deserves its suffering. It is acceptable and meritorious for someone to alleviate the suffering, which helps counteract negative karma on the part of the helper.

But if one has done all that can be done to make an animal comfortable, then one has no further obligation, and particularly must not prematurely kill the animal. If so, then the perpetrator of the killing will thicken and darken his or her karma, as stated above, and the killed animal would necessarily have to endure an eventually torturous further life to finish the atonement process.

Conclusion

We have surveyed various aspects of the relationship between humans and animals in the Jain religious tradition. Jainism proclaims a biological and psychological continuity between not only the animal and human realm, but sees insects, micro-organisms, and life dwelling in the elements as part of the same continuum. The Jain tradition developed a code of ethics that requires its adherents to avoid violence to all these life forms to the degree possible depending upon one's circumstances. All Jains are expected to abstain from animal flesh. Jain laypeople are expected to avoid professions that harm animals directly or indirectly.

Jain monks and nuns strive to minimize violence to even one-sensed beings and take vows to not brush against greenery or drink unfiltered water or light or extinguish fires. Perhaps more than any other religion in human history, the Jain faith seeks to uphold and respect animals as fundamentally and really not different from ourselves.

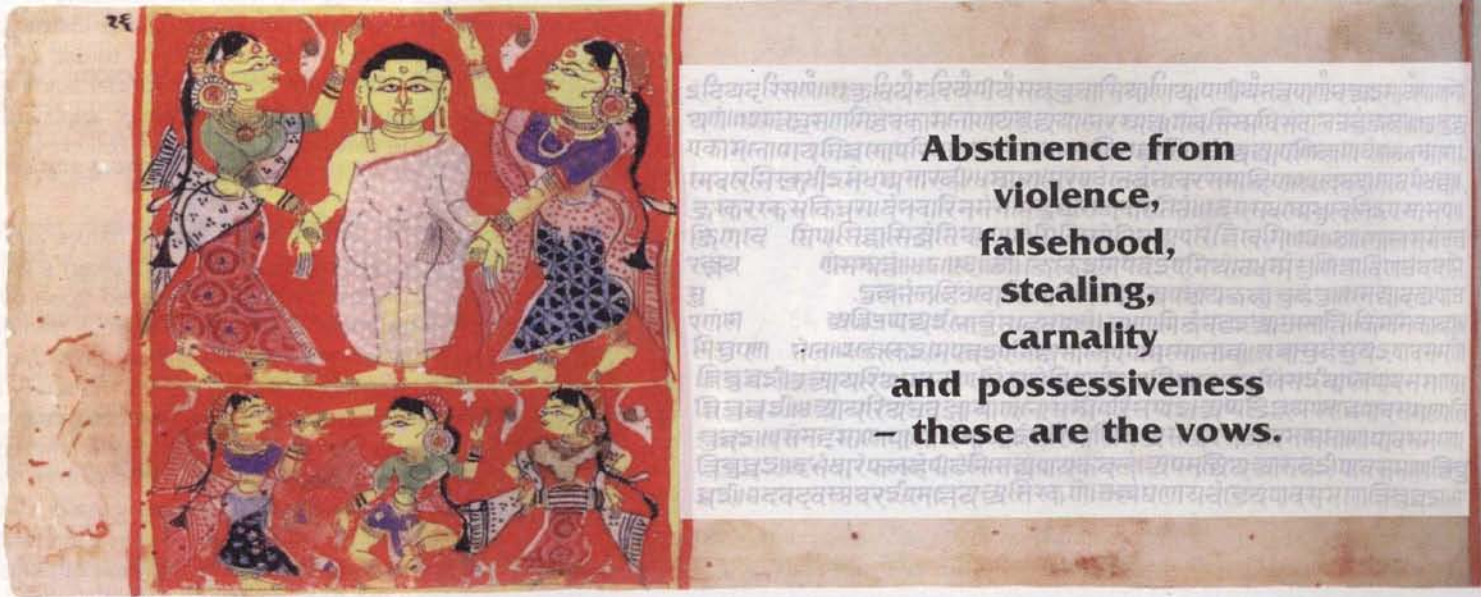
But at the same time, Jainism, with few exceptions, avoids sentimentalizing animals. Ultimately, the reason one respects animals is not for the sake of the animal, but for the purpose of lightening the karmic burden that obscures the splendor of one's own soul. Seen positively, every act of kindness toward an animal releases a bit of karma. But the approach is more on the lines of a *via negativa*: by avoiding a potentially damaging entanglement with an animal, one can ward off a potential blot on one's core being.

In conclusion, Jainism sees animals as former or potential human beings, paying for past sins yet capable of self-redemption. Human birth is considered to be the highest birth, as it is the only realm through which might enter final liberation or kevala. However, the best possible human life, that is, a life directed toward the highest spiritual ideal, takes the protection of animal life very seriously. The *Acaranga Sutra* (1.5.5) states that as soon as we intend to hurt or kill something, we ultimately do harm to ourselves by deepening and thickening the bonds of karma. According to Jainism, the best life pays attention to animals, not in a sentimental way, but in a way that gives them the freedom to pursue their own path, to fulfil their self-made destinies, and perhaps enter themselves into the path of virtue. 🙏

Christopher Key Chapple, PhD, is Professor of Theological Studies at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, where he teaches courses on Asian religions and comparative ethics. He has published numerous articles and several books, including Nonviolence to Animals, Earth, and Self in Asian Traditions, which includes a rather extensive discussion of Jainism (Christopher Key Chapple: Nonviolence to Animals, Earth, and Self in Asian Traditions. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993). In 1998 he convened a conference on Jainism and Ecology at Harvard University's Center for the Study of World Religions.



Lord Mahavir's mother Trishala had many dreams based on animals when he was in the womb



**Abstinence from
violence,
falsehood,
stealing,
carnality
and possessiveness
– these are the vows.**

VOWS AND THEIR OBSERVANCE

Violence, falsehood and the like, influence behaviour so deeply that they are seen as entrenched habits which require vows to root them out. Non-violence is mentioned first, because it is the principal vow, the basis of all other vows. In the same way that a fence is meant to protect a field, the last four vows are meant to protect the primary vow of non-violence.

A vow is a self-imposed obligation as to what one ought to do, and not do. It must be practised in thought, word and deed with full commitment to its careful observance at all times. Vows may generate the positive activities which generate the inflow of beneficial karma.

Partial abstinence is a small vow and complete abstinence is a great vow. When the five vows given in the first sutra are accepted and partially practised according to one's capacity, they are called small vows. When they are accepted and practised completely and absolutely without relaxation, they are great vows.

There are four supporting practices for stabilizing each of the great vows:

- Controlling speech, controlling the mind, moving about carefully, handling implements carefully, inspecting food and drink properly to ensure they are acceptable;
- Giving up anger, greed, fear and jokes, and resorting to thoughtful speech;
- Staying in a secluded place such as a mountain cave, staying in a deserted house, not obstructing access to other ascetics, seeking food exactly as prescribed in the scripture, avoiding disputes with fellow ascetics about articles of common use.
- To avoid: listening to lewd stories about women, looking at sexually arousing parts of a woman's body, recalling past sexual experience, stimulating or delicious food and drink, decorating one's own body;

The above is extracted from Chapter 7 of 'That Which Is - Tattvartha Sutra' translated by Nathmal Tatia, Harper Collins, 1994, ISBN 0-06-068985-4

SCRIPTURES ON THE JAIN COMMUNITY: COLLECTED ESSAYS ON THE JAINS

By Kendall W. Folkert; edited by John E. Cort
Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993; Pp. xvii +451. \$89.95.
Reviewed by Paul Dundas

When Kendall Folkert was killed at the age of 43 along with the promising young graduate-student anthropologist Thomas Zwicker in a crash on the outskirts of Ahmedabad in October, 1985, he was the only scholar in the English-speaking world carrying out research into both the Jain community in India and its scriptural and intellectual tradition.

Over the course of the century or so since Western scholars identified it as an independent religious path, Jainism was largely the subject of library-based investigation and, with one or two exceptions, its main interpreters were continental European philologists. For virtually all of these Western scholars, the realities of Jain life and culture as experienced by contemporary followers of the religion in India were of only marginal concern, and inaccurate text-derived generalisations, in which Jainism was portrayed as a kind of Hinduism or Buddhism "turned strange", flourished largely without qualification. Folkert's research at the time of his death into the various layers within the Pratikramana Sutra, the Jain confessional formula, and its contemporary ritual significance for the community which used it, was thus highly innovative.

On the basis of this surviving material, Folkert's friend and colleague John E. Cort has constructed a volume whose title *Scripture and Community (SAC)* reflects its author's most abiding academic interests. A reading of the book shows that Cort's editorial decisions (which include some discreet bibliographical updating) are triumphantly vindicated in that he has succeeded in presenting Folkert's work as an intellectually consistent totality and, as such, a major contribution to the study of one of the world's oldest religious traditions.

But why should anyone beyond those professionally interested in Jainism bother to read this book? It must be emphasised immediately that Folkert did not consider himself to be a Jainologist in narrowly specialist terms. Rather, Jainism formed the empirical basis for his wider reflections upon religion, while the insights derived from the discipline of religious studies served to inform his general understanding of Jainism,

most markedly in freeing him from the necessity of taking an exclusively text-oriented approach. Cort's insistence in his introduction on the "profoundly radical thrust" of Folkert's scholarship may at first sight smack of special pleading, but there can be no doubt that in several areas, and particularly his approach to the category of scripture, Folkert was clearly ahead of the times.

Chapters 3-6 of SAC, which deal with the nature and function of sacred literature, are representative of Folkert's general preoccupations and deserve to be pondered upon by all engaged in the study and teaching of religious traditions. Writing at a time when the Protestant Bible provided a virtually unchallenged academic model for the study of sacred texts (one which has by no means disappeared today), Folkert draws attention to the dangers inherent in privileging scripture as being solely what is written in a book. He calls on students of religion to display greater sympathy to the actual status of scriptural texts within each particular religious tradition and, in the specific context of Jainism, demonstrates how the notion of fixed canonicity was largely created by Western scholars in the last century at the expense of many alternative Jain enumerations of scriptural texts.

Folkert's direct field experience enabled him to see that the real significance of scripture for Jains hardly ever lies in the reading of so-called "canonical" writings but rather in the



Youth exchange - North America

community's ritual use of or contact with an extremely small number of texts, particularly the Pratikramana Sutra, which provides a kind of manual for periodical religious behaviour throughout the year, an insight he felt to be of no small relevance when considering other sacred-book-oriented traditions. Folkert formulates his general views on scripture in terms of what he styles, perhaps slightly clumsily, "Canon 1" and "Canon 2", the former being sacred text vectored to its audience, generally through ritual activity, while the latter is

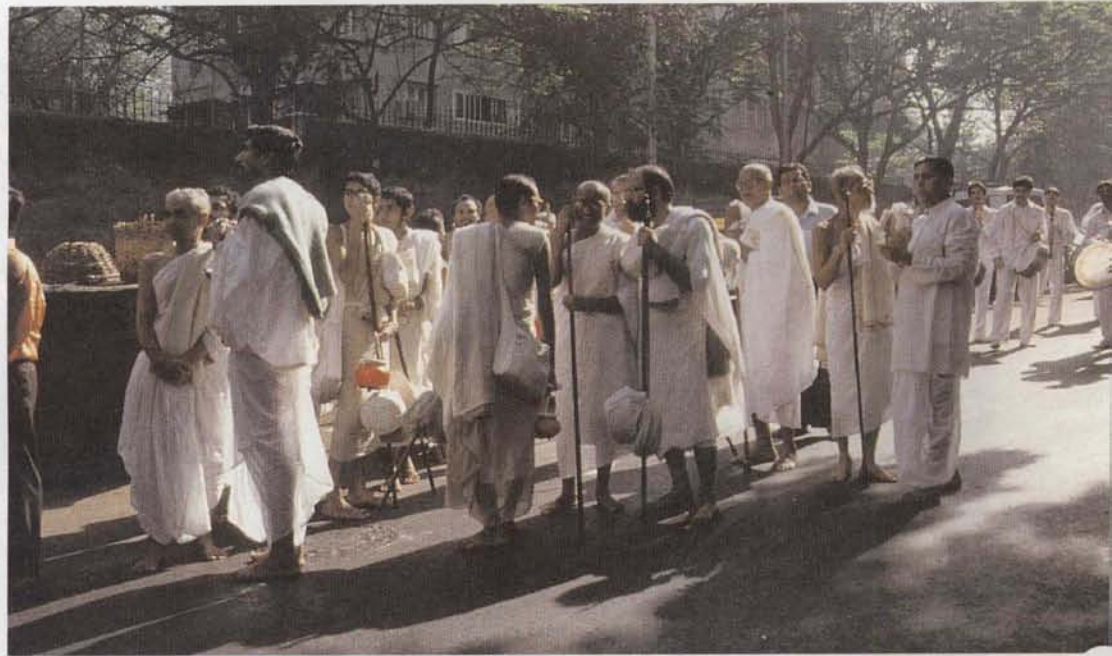
a sacred text that itself constitutes a vector of ritual authority and symbol (69-70). The potency of this model is displayed in particularly compelling fashion by reference to the various ways in which the bible is mediated to different Christian congregations (73-76).

The remainder of the first section of SAC is comprised of Folkert's reflections upon the history of the Jain tradition and the various institutional elements that have served to structure and maintain it. Chapter seven, published posthumously in 1989, is a study of the Victorian interpretation of the ancient religious site of Mathura in north-west India. Here Folkert starts by considering how nineteenth-century Western scholarship quickly formed the conclusion that the depiction within ancient Jain writings of a world of ascetic renunciation exclusively defined the parameters of the religion. The question of the function of the stupa within early Jainism is still somewhat uncertain, and unfortunately Folkert never really addresses it.

Chapter eight of SAC is a helpful discussion of the term darsana and a demonstration of how in Jainism it can mean both "system" and "faith". Of particular value for an understanding of the development of Jain intellectual history, often portrayed as relatively static, is Folkert's pinpointing here of a dynamic involving "a radical shift away from an analytical approach dominated by karma to one that sought to begin with a set of categories and means of valid knowledge (pramana)" (134).

Chapters 10-12 focus upon the role of the subject (gaccha) and the monk in the formation of Svetambara Jain history and

Inside a Jain temple



Jain monks at a community event

society and the often complex manner in which the lay and ascetic communities and the ideals bound up with them interact, especially during the period of the monastic rain-retreat. Here it might be said that Folkert's remarks now seem slightly sketchy in the light of research published in recent years (see John Cort's companion piece to this essay). Part one of SAC concludes with a splendidly evocative set of field notes and photographic illustrations relating to Folkert's observations of the celebration of the festival of Paryusan in two northern Gujarati villages. This chapter, most helpfully annotated by Cort, is surely worth its weight in gold to any introductory course on Jainism.

The second part of SAC, amounting to almost 200 pages, is culled from Folkert's dissertation on Jain modes of representing non-Jain intellectual positions. 📖

Paul Dundas is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Sanskrit, University of Edinburgh. He is author of 'The Jains', a highly acclaimed text on all aspects of Jainism, published by Routledge in 1992. The First Edition is currently out of print, and he is working on a second edition. This is an edited extract of a review which was originally published in the Religious Studies Review, Volume 23 No.2 April 1997, pp113-110 under the title 'Recent Research on Jainism'.

Photos: Chandu Shah

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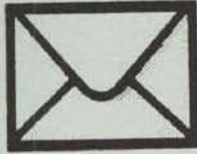
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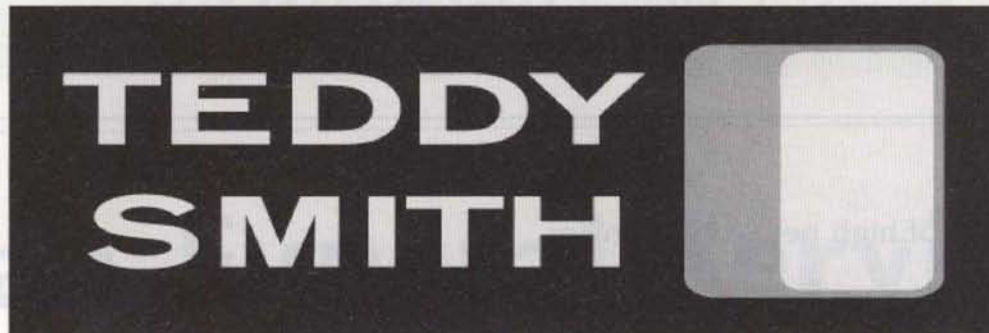
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The likelihood, though, is that the rebirth will
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been ahead of itself.”*

*Cromwell Crawford, University of Hawaii
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Mohandas Karmachand Gandhi said "Non-violence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by the ingenuity of man." The ability to distinguish between violence and non-violence is just one feature of human kind that sets it apart from the rest of the animal kingdom. This, and the ability to verbally communicate, not by grunts and groans, but by intelligent and deep conversation. The combined power of these two abilities is an unstoppable, no an unsilenceable force at the disposal of humankind.

One of the growing problems today is miscommunication, which often leads to numerous violent aggressions, which can all be avoided if we sit down and talk to one another. But talking won't solve everything. In order for

"Non-violence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by the ingenuity of man."

that to happen, you have to understand me and I have to understand you. Without this understanding our society will collapse under the shear weight of our ignorance. But, we will not let this happen. We, as graduates of Meade, have one of the most culturally diverse schools' in the county, if not in the nation. We represent a wide range of nations and ethnic groups, from



Asian Indian to Native American Indian, from Christianity to Buddhism, just to name a few.

We are about to graduate from our school into our society, and as new participants in our society I challenge you, a fellow graduate of Meade Senior High School's Class of nineteen hundred and ninety-five, to take on your responsibility as a citizen of this great nation and help it grow. I challenge you to do this by finding out more about the diverse cultures of this world that come together to make up America, try to spread your own view to others on all parts of life, be open to new things. Many of us have grown up together for over a decade, but don't let your

mind stop growing to new ideas just because we are about to graduate. Accept the glory of man's diversity, and gain from it a greater understanding of your own mind and your own soul. Through this self enlightenment, apply yourself to making our world a safer and a friendlier place to raise kids, our kids, the next generation. Do everything you can to insure that our

kids will be able to exist peacefully together, with the notion that just because one's skin has a different amount of pigment than another, does not mean that either one is superior, or just because one's tongue does not speak the same language as another, does not mean that either one is more intelligent, or just because one's soul doesn't have the same god than another, doesn't mean that either one is morally better. Do not let the prejudice of our ancestors be passed on. Do not forget that our kids need a planet that can tolerate the existence of all of us together. This planet needs to be safer, not only with less violence, but safer ecologically. Take care of our planet every way you can. By emerging from a use it, trash it society, and by recycling every little scrap, we can all make sure that the environment that our kids grow up in will be able to hold life, precious life. As Mahatma Gandhi also said, "I want to realize brotherhood or identity not merely with the beings called human, but I want to realize identity with all life, even with such beings as crawl on [the] earth." On this planet we are all family, just as we have been part of the Meade family for four years. And as a family we must treat each other as such. And to my family: Nana, Nani, Mom, Dad, and Meena, thanks for being my family, supporting me for 18 years. If we want to live as a family we must learn to stop the violence, and increase the peace.

In my religion, Jainism, there is a word: Jai, it means long live, and another word: Ahimsa, it means non-violence.

Jai Ahimsa, and peace out. 🙏

Raju Shah is past Chairman of the Young Jains of America. He is a graduate of Yale University and presently lives in Maryland.



Photo: Chandu Shah

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Address Correction Requested