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JAIN SPIRIT

S H A R I N G J A I N V A L U E S G L O B A L L Y

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Jain Spirit Photo Competition 2003, Winner - Derek Mephram

WELCOME

Unleash Your Cosmic Power

Peace - to borrow a phrase from Martin Luther King - is not the absence of tension or war, it is the presence of justice. An enduring peace, based on justice, is precisely what millions of concerned anti-war demonstrators around the world have been rallying for in recent months. In the build-up to the war on Iraq, the world witnessed its broadest and biggest ever wave of peaceful anti-war demonstrations. They presented a powerful reminder, if one was needed, that people from all walks of life, the world over, are against aggression and violence; a reminder that what most of us dream of is a peaceful life in a compassionate world.

Violence, aggression, war: if these continue to be shrugged off as 'the way of the world', if these are the methods we use (or allow our leaders to use) to combat the very same, how can we possibly hope for an end to the grievances that fuel such horrendous acts in the first place? While we must all do whatever we can to help the oppressed, and to give a voice to the poor and the downtrodden, the means we employ to do so must surely be in line with the end that we wish for. It is not through conflict, but through compassion that we will create a better world. It is not guns and bombs that we need, but understanding and kindness.

Even as I joined the great swell of humanity that denounced war on Iraq, and even as I appreciated the urgent message that these mass anti-war protests sent out, I could not help feeling that we, individually and collectively, need to do so much more in the name of peace than make the occasional political stand.

Albert Einstein wisely observed that: "Peace cannot be kept by force. It can only be achieved by understanding." Witnessing the turmoil prevalent in our world today, it is obvious that a superficial veneer of tolerance is insufficient to create a more peaceful world. What we really need is to foster a fundamental understanding and appreciation of the diversity in our world. This, by its very nature, is a continuous and organic process.

The Jain principle of *anekantvada* (multiplicity of viewpoints) can be particularly instructive in this process. Recognising that nobody has a monopoly on truth, and that each viewpoint is valid and must be respected as such, Jainism encourages positive encounters with 'the other'.



Reading is vital

There is a wealth of diversity in our world, and each one of us can learn something valuable from another person, another creature, another culture, another country...the list seems endless. Interaction between different individuals, communities and societies promotes understanding between them, and this in turn leads to consideration and kindness in their actions towards each other. We can thus create an environment in which people realise that the life of every human, indeed every living creature, is equally valid and valuable, and that none has the right to trample on the aspirations or well-being of another. When we achieve such an understanding, we will automatically secure justice - for if we live by the principle that all life is equal and inter-connected, we will not wish to harm each other.

Moreover, we will also actively want to promote the well being of our companions on this planet, human or otherwise.

Jain philosophy reveals that each one of us is potentially, as *Jain Spirit* adviser Shashikant Mehta puts it, a cosmic powerhouse. Each person's individual energy, channelled positively, can transform their own lives and be an asset to the world. If we wish to be better people, and to create a more harmonious world, we must recognise that we reap what we sow. The more seeds of goodness we plant in our lives, the better our world will be. While we need to address current conflicts, we must also be mindful that we do not sow the seeds of future despair and destruction in the process. We need a constant stream of non-violent thought and action to challenge the inequality and injustice in our world. This is why we must go beyond making the occasional urgent gesture under pressing circumstances. This is why we must carefully weave smaller actions of loving kindness into the very fabric of our lives. The peace process begins at the most local level - with each individual human being nurturing her/his innately compassionate soul.

At *Jain Spirit*, we firmly believe that Jainism provides us with the tools for ethical, non-violent solutions to the strife in our world. In this issue, we bring you a selection of articles to help you reflect on the connections between the soul and the material world, between the personal and the political, between the local and the global. We hope you will feel inspired to think globally and act locally - to unleash your cosmic power.

falguni

Falguni Patel
Guest Editor

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

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Madhvi Dalal is a dancer/choreographer, who performs contemporary South Asian classical dance. She will be performing throughout the UK later this year. For more details, please visit www.madhvi.net



Amar Salgia is an independent scholar in Los Angeles. He has recently published the second edition of "Pure Freedom: The Jain Way of Self Reliance", a first introduction to Jainism for non-Jains and non-Indians. He may be contacted at asalgia@yahoo.com



Reana Leena Shah is a high school student living in California, USA. She is a budding writer with an enthusiasm for applying Jain principles, and is becoming a regular contributor to our Youth section.



Anup Shah is a Senior Software Consultant, living in London. A keen environmentalist and observer of global affairs, he also created and maintains his own web site: www.globalissues.org



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BUILDING BRIDGES OF LIBERATION

Young Jains of America is connecting a modern, melting pot generation to eternal Jain values

The Young Jains of America (YJA) is a committee of the Federation of Jain Associations in North America (JAINA), whose emphasis is on Jain youth aged 14-29. YJA's mission is "to be recognised as a national and international umbrella Jain youth organisation for establishing a network to share Jain heritage and religion through young people." We are an organisation that was started with the goal to reinforce Jain ideals to the youth of North America and we are thriving in our tenth year. This year we have undertaken a highly proactive agenda and due to this diligence we have enjoyed a great deal of success.

In the past six months, YJA has hosted five regional conferences, sent motivated young people to assist in the earthquake relief efforts with the Veerayatan organisation in Bhuj, India, established strong community relations by restructuring our website and expanding our resources and role with other organisations. Furthermore, the next six months

should prove to be equally dynamic as we prepare to establish local YJA chapters in various locations around North America. We continue with charitable efforts in teaming up with 'Habitat for Humanity' in our second annual YJA H4H initiative, through which young American Jains help to build homes for the less fortunate. We are also currently engaged in a search for the ideal location to hold the 2004 YJA Convention.

One of our priorities for the last semester was to hold a major

conference in each region of North America in order to reach as many young people as possible and thus the *Regional Fest* was born. Over three hundred young Jains from all over the continent attended a conference in their area covering topics applicable in their daily lives. The conference themes included: Jainism and Science, Philosophy and Jainism, *Ahimsa* in Action, Diversity the Jain Way, and Destination: *Moksha*. *Regional Fest* allowed the attendees to learn in an intimate setting, while getting to know their fellow youth and expanding their horizons. Interactive seminars and

issues regarding Jainism. I am really glad I came." – Jai Shah (age 20)

"The YJA West Regional Conference was a truly amazing event. The people, the sessions and the atmosphere were all so enlightening. The conference discussions and panel session carried the theme." – Nikita Shah (age 18)

"Jainism was shown through the lens of a normal teenager in the US instead of out of a book, so we could relate to it better. I started to understand the daily values Jainism has and received a better understanding of it." – Pinita Shah (age 19)

"The YJA South Regional Conference was a great and fun-filled event that established a connection between the Houston and Dallas youth groups that will strengthen this region and improve YJA's mission." – Arpan Shah (age 16) In late December 2002, ten young American Jains embarked on a spiritually fulfilling journey with YJA to Bhuj, India. These young people spent two weeks with Veerayatan, an international community service organisation founded by Acharaya Shri Chandanaji, to help the impoverished. Some of the projects that they engaged in



discussion-based lectures proved to be effective study media. While the primary focus was indeed Jain education, each conference enjoyed various forms of entertainment to break the ice and allow Jain youth from each region to socialise and network. Enlivened by their experience, *Regional Fest* attendees had this to say: "This was my first YJA event and I found it to be inspirational, motivational and informative and I was able to meet other people from the Mid-west and learn their views on different

included creating video documentaries, building architectural layouts for educational institutions and teaching. These volunteers made a tangible difference in the lives of the less fortunate, and learned about the importance of community service. One passionate volunteer reflected: "I feel that the Veerayatan Project is an excellent opportunity to really make a positive difference through education and leadership. By impacting the lives of children today, we are building a better tomorrow."

To strengthen its communication capacity, we have also begun the renovation of our website, www.yja.org. In addition to posting regional events, community activities, the discussion board and other interactive features, we have added a comprehensive educational resource and reference page that includes directions on how to initiate college and university youth groups, we have a current events page, vegan and Jain recipes, a featured guest scholar column, and letters from young people who have questions, concerns or simply want to share stories. The advent of the "My YJA" section is intended to facilitate networking amongst the young Jain community from all around North America, the idea being that it will allow people to share their ideas, to support and get involved in YJA. Our objective is to make the website a place where interested and enthusiastic young Jains can come and learn more about their religion and who they are, as well as a place to find out what they can do to become an active member of their society.

Our work for the first half of the year has truly given us a sense of accomplishment; but we are not done yet. In the upcoming months, as we prepare for the JAINA convention this July, we are facilitating the infrastructure to start local YJA chapters. These chapters will be run by the youth of the given area and will be encouraged to organise and stimulate activities within their own localities. We firmly believe that young people learn well in an intimate setting where they are comfortable with the people they are working with and the induction of the chapter system will thus facilitate this learning process.

Additionally, due to the success of our efforts last year, YJA is once again sponsoring the second annual YJA H4H initiative: this involves teaming up with Habitat for Humanity and sending proactive youth to build homes for the underprivileged. The common sentiment shared by all volunteers in last year's event is best summed up by Neha Shah, age 17: "Altogether it was a wonderful experience. We came together for a great cause, to help better a community and we had a great time doing it. Most importantly, we brought home with us a sense of community and accomplishment."

The YJA Convention is the cornerstone of our organisation and as such it takes a year of solid work, a core group of volunteers and a supportive community to make it happen. YJA Convention 2004 is

upcoming convention.

In recent months, YJA has been making progress in fulfilling many of its goals and in bringing the teachings of Jainism – in thought, in word and in action – to hundreds of motivated young people across North America. This is largely due to the selfless devotion of time, money and resources provided by passionate and active members of the Jain community; without their help we would not have been able to come this far. As long as we have enthusiastic and talented people to drive us forward, this trend is set to continue. YJA is always looking for the next generation of young people to get involved and we are now accepting applications for YJAACC, which is an executive board comprised of five members that will supervise, assist and provide creative input to the host city convention committee for YJA Convention 2004. The end of this term is rapidly approaching; therefore, this coming May we will begin our new elections process for the 2003-2004 YJA Executive Board. For those who are interested, please visit www.yja.org/elections for more information. And of course, you can always e-mail board@yja.org to see how you can volunteer.

Deriving from the will of enterprising young people, YJA has been able to build a foundation for the first generation of Indian-Americans. We have started to build the bridge from the native spiritual heritage of our Indian homeland to the modern culture of our new American home. This bridge will reinforce who we are and who we are to become. As we cross this bridge, we draw upon the guidance and inspiration of our grandparents, parents and each other in attaining the peaks of spiritual fulfilment.

Chirag K. Shah, YJA Committee



rapidly approaching and we are now accepting bid packets from potential host cities for the next convention. Last year YJA held its fifth biennial convention in Mahwah, New Jersey. Nearly one thousand inquisitive young Jains attended this event which proved to be one of the most successful in YJA history. The newly formed Young Jains of America Advisory Convention Committee (YJAACC) will allow for our executive board to continue facilitating regular YJA activities, while this secondary group helps us to plan the

SINGAPORE RETREAT

DR. SONALI MEHTA recounts her experience of the Singapore Jain Religious Society's 4th *shibir* (workshop), a major four-day event on the theme of 'Jainism in Action', which took place from 31 January till 3 February 2003. The *shibir* was led by Sadhvi Shilapiji, an eminent Jain nun from Veerayatan, a charitable Jain organisation in India.

I witnessed 270 Singaporeans being intoxicated with 'Jainism in Action'. I and a few other international visitors were amongst them at the Desaru Golden Beach Resort, a beautiful scenic place along a stretch of idyllic sandy beaches in Johar, at the south eastern tip of Malaysia.

As the UK representative of the Jain school network SCVP (Shri Chandana Vidyapeeth), it was exciting for me to be given the opportunity to join the *shibir* by Sadhvi Shilapiji and to help her conduct the event. The *shibir* was packed with lectures and workshops relating to the application of Jain principles in our daily lives. The delegates were divided into groups according to the topics. Of course, some topics were relevant to several age groups: evidence of *anekantvada* in action!

The eagerly anticipated opening ceremony started with a keynote address and blessings from Sadhvi Shilapiji, followed by my own opening talk about the inspirational history of SCVP. The next morning started at 6:30am with an energising yoga session overlooking beautiful golden sands and the blue ocean. Filled with energy, we surfed through the morning lectures and afternoon workshops. Sadhvi Shilapiji was as charismatic as ever, and the Singapore Jain Society said it was the first time that they had 99% attendance for each session despite the many distractions at the resort!

The lectures and workshops provided a new awareness of Jainism

to the young people who had thus far left the practice of the religion to their elders. The last words shared by the young people were that they really wanted to, and did, live Jainism and



A blessing from Sadhvi Shilapiji for each delegate

were not just born into Jain families. At this *shibir* their faith in their inherited religion was re-affirmed. In between the serious work, the breaks were action-packed. Lunch was a grand affair with caterers from India who tickled our taste buds with an amazing variety of delicious Jain food, coupled with some local specialities from the hotel. In the late afternoon, everybody had time to enjoy swimming, shopping, golf, tennis, walks on the beach and watching the awesome colours of a beach sunset. The evenings ended with a cultural programme by the local Jains and a presentation of the day's workshop discussions by each age group.

Everything comes to an end and so did this wonderful *shibir*, with many friendships made and a passion to live an understanding and good Jain life



Singapore youngsters enthused by the shibir

instilled. Tears of love and parting, exchange of addresses and handshakes of friendship filled the last few hours at the departure lounge as delegates travelled back to their homes, spiritually uplifted.

I was inspired again by Shilapiji, who was at her most energetic and passionate in communicating with the young people of Singapore. They, in turn, responded to her clear and insightful explanations relating Jainism to daily life. I was also much impressed by the response of the Singapore Jain Society and community, and particularly by the excellent organisation of the *shibir*."

GOOD NEWS FOR THE WORLD'S FORESTS

An initiative known as the 'Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration' was officially launched in Rome in March 2003, by the World Conservation Union, the World Wildlife Fund and the UK Forestry Commission.

The partnership has been hailed as a 'meeting point' for Governments, native communities, organisations and individuals world-wide who are interested in restoration activities that will lead to sustainable development. There are an array of groups and individuals who will directly and indirectly benefit from this scheme, including the indigenous farmers of Mexico, foresters in Northern England, oil palm companies, the Sukuma cattle-herdsmen in Tanzania, also conservationists worldwide and governments who wish to fulfil their international policies concerning forests and sustainable development. The initiative will benefit people on a global scale, but it will have the most profound effect on the rural poor who rely upon the forests' wild resources, and the 1.8 billion who see the forest ecosystem as a source of food, medicine and fuel.



TALLEST EVER JINA STATUE UNVEILED

India's tallest ever statue of a *jina* was unveiled in a grand inauguration ceremony on 22 February 2003, in the Gujarati town of Ballabhipur, near the famous Jain pilgrimage site of Palitana. The 23 feet tall marble statue depicts the first Jain *Tirthankara*, Adinath Bhagwan (also known as Rishabdev), in a sitting position known as *padmasan mudra*. As the centre-piece of a major new Jain temple and pilgrimage destination called Ayodhyapuram, the statue was inaugurated with great celebration, drawing in tens of

thousands of Jains and other well-wishers in the weeks leading up to the unveiling ceremony. The inauguration ceremony was conducted by Acharya Shri Jin Sagar Ji and Acharya Shri Hem Chandra Sagar Ji, the two Jain monks who have been the spiritual force behind Ayodhyapuram.

In the weeks leading up to the inauguration ceremony, Ayodhyapuram welcomed hundreds of Jain monks and nuns from all over India, as well as thousands of lay people, who had the opportunity to interact with the monks

and nuns. During these weeks, Ayodhyapuram's brand new pilgrimage facilities were much admired and enjoyed by the thousands who visited: the site includes plentiful accommodation, prayer halls, dining hall and a magnificent main temple, at the centre of which sits the 23 feet tall Adinath Bhagwan. As you can see from the pictures here, the preparations (above) and celebrations (below) surrounding the inauguration of the statue were vibrant and colourful, attracting huge, enthusiastic crowds.



SCIENTIST RECEIVES \$1 MILLION TEMPLETON PRIZE

The Templeton Prize for Progress Toward Research or Discoveries about Spiritual Realities was awarded to Holmes Rolston III in March 2003. The prize forms part of an annual investment into spirituality by the Templeton Foundation, established to encourage the quest for knowledge at the boundary between scientific and religious perspectives. This award marks the 30th such prize to be awarded since the first was given to Mother Teresa in 1973.

Holmes Rolston III is Professor of Philosophy at Colorado State University.

Holmes Rolston once said "Our planetary crisis is one of

spiritual information: not so much sustainable development, certainly not escalating consumption, but using the earth with justice and charity. Science cannot take us there, religion perhaps can. After we learn altruism for each other, we need to become altruists to our fellow creatures. We must encounter nature with grace, with 'an earth ethic', because our ultimate environment is God – in whom we live, move and have our being." It is perhaps easy to forget in an age of information, where technology is often exalted as king, that the space between the religious and scientific perspective can and must be bridged.

AASTHA TV PLANS JAIN CHANNEL

Mr. Kirit Mehta and his wife Mrs. Neena Mehta, the owners of India's largest faith channel AASTHA, have ambitions to set up a 24-hour global Jain channel. The channel would broadcast major Jain festivals, interviews, pilgrimages, worship ceremonies, lectures, music concerts, educational and programmes for the children. This formula has been very successfully applied in the main channel, which has a global audience of millions and is widely credited for highly professional programming and quality broadcasting. The Mehtas are very proud of their Jain heritage and keen to use their professional expertise to promote a tradition that is very close to their hearts.

In an interview with *Hinduism Today* magazine, Mr. Kirit Mehta explained:

"The negative influence of the West on our youth is partly our fault. We have



Mr. Kirit Mehta, founder of the AASTHA channel

encouraged it. At the same time, Western countries and their people are being influenced by the Indian way of life and the 'Exotic East'. AASTHA tries to show both the East and the West from a positive point of view, so that people can judge for themselves what is good and what is bad. Young people today have more problems than older people. In our presentations, we show how religion and science go together and give them an understanding of the rituals. The new generation wants clear answers to their questions and logical solutions to their problems.

"We have a dream that every

house around the globe should be watching AASTHA. We are holding more than five thousand years of wisdom from hundreds and thousands of saints and sages, and we have not even begun to put a fraction of that forward. This channel will become a part of every Hindu household, just like water, electricity and gas."

Neena Mehta added: "I fully believe that if one's intentions are good, then good happens. Even our karmas are created based on our intentions. How AASTHA has come up is truly a miracle. That is why we continue to put our heart and soul into it. We have realised that due to faith – which is the meaning of AASTHA – much can be achieved. The whole world should have faith and the whole world should progress. Things may be difficult to achieve, but they are never impossible."

Jains anywhere in the world interested in investing in this unique vision to set up a Jain TV channel should contact Mr. Kirit Mehta, CMM Ltd, Mumbai, tel +(91 22) 249 64221/2/3/4 or email cmmltd@vsnl.com website: www.aathatv.com

JAIN APPOINTED TO SENIOR POSITION IN INDIAN CABINET

Mr. Dilip Gandhi has been appointed to the Indian Cabinet as Minister of State for Shipping and Transport. His key assistant in this post is Mr. Rajiv S. Jain who is an IAS Officer on special duty. Starting from very humble roots as a juice-seller in the small town of Ahmednagar in Maharashtra, he is now a major businessman and Member of Parliament. From a very young age, Mr. Gandhi stood firmly against the abuse of power. A policeman who was trying to collect protection bribes from local shops was jailed as a result of opposition by Mr. Gandhi. This trial attracted much support and publicity and led to a revolution in the local government. In 1980, he became president of the local youth wing of the BJP, becoming Municipal

Councillor in 1985. He rose to become Vice-President of the Municipal Corporation of Ahmednagar and brought about major reforms, which gave him significant grassroots popularity. He rose from MP to Minister in 3 years – one of the



Mr. Dilip Gandhi (left) talking to Mr. Naidoo at the felicitation ceremony hosted by the Jain community in New Delhi.

fastest rises in the government.

A special ceremony was organised in New Delhi by the entire Jain community to congratulate Mr. Gandhi on this major appointment. The eloquent keynote speech was given by Mr. Venkaiah Naidoo, President of the BJP, who spoke of the importance of serving the small man through public service. Mr. Sunderlal Patwa, a former senior Jain Minister, was also there to give advice and support. In his parting words, Mr. Gandhi told *Jain Spirit* that "Jains should actively support one another and not put down their own people. This will bring lasting unity and success for the community. We should focus our energies on raising ourselves and others at the same time."

NEW HOMES FOR EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS



JAINA's Dr. Dhiraj Shah presents a cheque for Rs.5 million towards helping earthquake victims to Governor Bhandari

On 2 February 2003, Gujarat earthquake victims were given new hope as 250 new homes in the town of

Vardhman Nagar were inaugurated at a special ceremony overseen by Gurudev Shri Chitrabhanu. These new houses, built to help rehabilitate the victims of the 2001 Gujarat earthquake, were completed with financial contributions from JAINA (Jain Associations in North America). The Governor of Gujarat Sundersinh Bhandari, together with JAINA representative Dr. Dhiraj Shah, officially handed over the keys to 250 low- or no-income families, at a ceremony attended by 7000 people, including many local dignitaries. JAINA, through its service arm World Community Service, continues its contribution to the town of Vardhman



Nagar by building several other facilities to be completed later this year: a school, a computer centre, a science centre, a library, a medical and dental centre, a community centre and a prayer hall.

PRESIDENT CONSULTS ACHARYA

The President of India, Dr. Kalam, met for discussions with the 83-year-old Jain sage Acharya Mahapragya at Terapanth Bhavan, Mumbai in February 2003. Acharya Mahapragya, leader of the Terapanth sect, was visiting Mumbai as part of a three-year long *ahimsa yatra* (non-violence pilgrimage) to promote peaceful coexistence and non-violence.

Dr. Kalam and Acharya Mahapragya had wide ranging discussions on topics including spirituality, science, environment, *ahimsa* and peace.

The two men spent some time discussing the emergence of intolerance and absolutism (*ekant*) in



India today. Indeed, the President was quoted as saying '...more and more people are becoming absolutist in their ideas...*Anekanta* is the most important aspect of Mahavira's philosophy. How can we popularise it?' The Acharya responded by highlighting that *ekant* was a product of negativity in thought,

something that it was possible to transcend, principally through the practice of meditation and dedication to a non-violent existence.

After the meeting, the President stated that he had found 'enlightenment and new energy' through his discussion with the Acharya. What is perhaps most significant is that Dr. Kalam returned to continue his discussions the following day, once the glare of media intrusion had died down.

For further information on Acharya Mahapragya, his teachings or the Terapanth sect, visit www.terapanth.com or www.ahimsayatra.com

ACHIEVEMENTS

Sidharth Savadia, of Perth, Australia, was awarded 2nd prize in the Lower Primary Division in the 2002 Tim Winton Award for young writers. His prize-winning story was entitled *The boy who went to another world*. The Tim Winton Award for Young Writers aims to encourage creative writing and is open to anyone aged between 5 and 17, who lives or attends school in the Perth metropolitan area.

Janki Shah, daughter of Neeta and Amu Shah, was awarded 1st place in the state of Western Australia, and 2nd place overall in an Australian national mathematics competition.

The Cricket World Cup was held in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Kenya in February and March 2003. **Rabindu Shah**, a 31-year-old Jain from Nairobi represented Kenya as their opening batsman.

Emma Salter was awarded a doctorate by Cardiff University, Wales in February 2003 for her thesis on Srimad Rajchandra's following.

Pradip Jain, a renowned Indian philatelist, has recently had a book published entitled *Indian Airmails: Development & Operations (1911-1942)*. Mr. Jain's book delves into the history of early aerial developments, which formed the backbone of modern airmail systems.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PEACE AND NON-VIOLENCE

The 5th International Conference on Peace Non-violent Action organized by ANUVIBHA was successfully held at Rajsamand and Mumbai from the 23rd to 28th February 2003. The conference on Peace and Non-violent Action for the Children of the World was held in furtherance of the United Nations resolution to dedicate the Decade 2001 to 2010 to promoting a Culture of Peace and Non-violence among the world's children. The conference was attended by 26 overseas delegates from twelve countries and 70 Indian delegates representing several prestigious organizations. The ambience was one of creative freedom, fraternity, and perceptible and pronounced spirituality. What came out loud and clear from the conference was a united voice upholding universal peace and non-



Chief Guest Dr. S. N. Subbarao lights the ceremonial lamp at the ANUVIBHA conference

violence everywhere and at all times. The conference unanimously resolved what has become known as the 2003 Rajsamand Declaration: a set of core

beliefs to be implemented in the coming months and years. Principal among these was the need for: the design of a unified global approach to children's education that reflects the importance of nature, environment and living creatures; the increased implementation of Mahatma Gandhi's practice of Civil Disobedience and Non-violent Resistance in the face of violent conflict, particularly where the lives of children are threatened; and the 'Science of Living' as propounded by Jain leaders Acharya Tulsi and Acharya Mahapragya to be more widely circulated so that our children are educated in the core tenets of non-violence. For further information on the detail of the 2003 Rajsamand Declaration please visit: <http://www.anuvibha.org>

BEAUTY WITHOUT CRUELTY

The week commencing 16 June 2003 sees the launch of the first ever National Cruelty Free Week, by the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection (BUAV).

The week aims to promote two of BUAV's key campaigns: to place a worldwide ban on animal testing for the production of cosmetics, and to raise public awareness about the issue. Despite animal testing being abolished in the UK, it is still a wide-spread issue in many other parts of the world. Unfortunately, the recent test ban brought in by the European Union will not come into effect until 2009, nor will the law be passed to ban the sale of animal tested products until 2013 at the earliest.

'Beauty without cruelty' is the only way forward, so why not encourage family members and friends to follow this philosophy, and challenge them to

give up animal-tested toiletries for seven days as part of the Cruelty Free Challenge. BUAV has also updated its popular *Little Book of Cruelty Free*, a



consumer guide providing information about non-animal tested products. The book also applauds ethical anti-animal testing companies, such as the Co-op, Anita Roddick's Body Shop International, Montagne Jeunesse and

Liz Earle.

Products such as these have also been approved by the Humane Cosmetics Standard (HCS), launched in 1998 and defined as "the world's only reliable and international kite mark for cosmetics and toiletries that aren't tested on animals". HCS simply states that companies who join in must no longer conduct or commission animal testing and must not purchase items from suppliers selling animal tested products after a fixed cut off date. HCS operates in several EU countries including the UK, Belgium, France, Sweden, Italy and Finland, as well as the USA and Canada. Its 'rabbit and stripes' logo is an effective way for consumers to select products that have met HCS's rigorous standards. For further information, visit www.buav.org

CULTURE HITS CAMPUS

In very few campuses outside India is Jainism taught as a subject. Sadly, very few young Jains today would even consider studying Jainism as a curriculum subject at university. However, campuses in the UK and North America have a large number of Jain students, with concentrations in excellent institutions such as Berkeley, Harvard, Duke, NYU, Manchester, Cambridge, The London School of Economics, Warwick, Nottingham and London Universities. As Jainism is an intellectual tradition, the active participation of Jains in Higher Education is not surprising, and it is heartening to see that some young people are keen to learn their identity by starting Jain societies at their universities. In the UK Manchester, De Montfort, Cambridge and Warwick are the first examples of such initiatives. In fact, at Warwick University, Bhavin M. Shah set up a student Jain Society which was nominated for Best New Society at the University.

The purpose of these student societies is to encourage young Jains to come together and learn about their roots. There is no intention to segregate

from Hindu or other organisations, but instead to also foster awareness of their own culture. Dr. Atul K. Shah, Editor of *Jain Spirit* was recently invited to lecture at both Warwick and Cambridge Universities and discovered that those students who attended had a keen interest in Jainism and raised a lot of questions. Many left with a very positive impression of Jainism as a dynamic tradition, as opposed to one which was dogmatic and frozen in time without any relevance to the modern world. It is very clear that most young people have a very partial knowledge of Jainism at best, and even that is rather stereotyped. For example, the question as to why Jains do not eat root vegetables is very common. In fact, at Manchester University, where there are over one hundred and fifty Jain students, the ignorance is so great that very few students make an effort to attend the events or go to the beautiful Jain centre in Manchester. The founding committee works very hard to inform students and to invite them to events. The embryonic Jain Student Network has been formed and students are now building up a presence on

campuses across the UK. There is evidence of a parallel development in North America, where the Young Jains of America is encouraging its members to initiate Jainism related activities at colleges.

There is a need for campuses to become aware of alternative cultures and philosophical heritages. Jainism's place is not just in the Departments of Religion, but as a living vibrant culture. It has much to offer as traditional disciplines like sociology, economics, psychology, philosophy, medicine, as well as more modern ones like business and finance. As a tradition informed by ecological and ethical principles, students in different disciplines could draw from their heritage and conduct research relevant to those subjects. For example, the area of Jain Business Ethics is wide open for research and this could potentially enrich our understanding and others' awareness about Jainism. The campuses provide us with a unique opportunity to educate and inform one and all. It is heartening to see young people seizing this opportunity.

NEW PLATFORM FOR PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION

On 1-2 March 2003 in Jalgaon, India, some 1200 trustees of Jain educational institutes came together at the first national conference of the embryonic Federation of Jain Educational Institutes (FJEI), to discuss the challenges and changes facing the education community in the 21st century. The conference was inaugurated by Shri L.M. Singhvi and hosted by Shri Bhavarlal Jain, with several eminent speakers from the Jain education community in India and from

all over the world. The conference unveiled a broader vision for education in the coming years and focused on the need to upgrade Jain educational institutions to enable them to be progressive and adaptable to a changing world. This first national conference also provided delegates with an unprecedented opportunity to network with their fellow Jain educationalists, to share experiences as well as to learn about FJEI's future plans. Although Jains only constitute 2% of India's

population, they run about 3000 of the country's educational institutions. FJEI will act as an apex body, which will mentor, guide and support all its members and provide a common platform where the strengths, knowledge, expertise and experiences of members are shared for mutual benefit. FJEI hopes to draw upon this synergy and become a strong national voice that will represent all member institutes, while also handling issues at state and national level.

Book Review

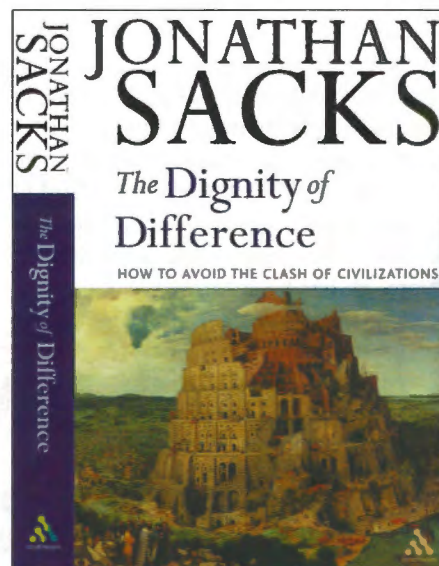
Diversity on a Human Scale

THE DIGNITY OF DIFFERENCE - HOW TO AVOID THE CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS by Jonathan Sacks
Published by Continuum
ISBN 0-8264-6397-5

Jonathan Sacks is the chief Rabbi of The United Hebrew Congregation in London. *The Dignity of Difference* is a book of Jewish reflections on contemporary issues of politics, economics, environment and ethics. In this book, Jonathan Sacks has been able to distil his thinking in lucid and accessible language, which I would recommend whole-heartedly to the readers of *Jain Spirit*.

There are many similarities between the Jewish view and the Jain view of truth. The Jain idea of *anekanta* means that it is impossible for the intellect and for the language to conceive, grasp or express truth in its entirety, therefore any human formulation of truth is a particular point of view. So, when we hold a particular point of view, we should also respect other people's points of view with humility. Without mentioning the idea of *anekanta*, Jonathan Sacks celebrates the diversity of cultures, views, opinions and religions. "Judaism is about the miracle of unity that creates diversity," says Jonathan Sacks. This is exactly the basis of *anekanta*. Sacks further writes: "We will need to understand that just as the natural environment depends on biodiversity so does the human environment depend on cultural diversity, because no one creed has a monopoly on spiritual truth; no one civilization encompasses all the spiritual, ethical and artistic expressions of all mankind." Sacks continues: "Truth on the ground is multiple,

partial. Fragments of it lie everywhere. Each person, culture and language has part of it; none has it all. ... Nothing has proved harder in the history of civilisation than to see God, or good, or human dignity in those whose language is not mine, whose skin is a different colour, whose faith is not my faith and whose truth is not my truth. There are surely many ways of arriving at this generosity of spirit, and each faith must find its own."



As we follow the ideas of Jonathan Sacks in the book we meet with his analysis of the free market and the globalising economy. Here Sacks advocates that the leaders of multinational corporations and big businesses must follow moral principals. Sacks believes that markets depend on virtues and he suggests three virtues: reverence, responsibility and restraint. However, in Sacks' opinion, "the sheer growth of international trade

brought about by globalisation is fundamentally benign." There appears to be a contradiction here. Sacks seems to want his cake and eat it. Economic globalisation leads to monoculture and destroys diversity. How can it be benign? As Albert Einstein said, "you cannot solve problems with the way of thinking that led to their creation in the first place."

The problems of environmental destruction, inequality and the gap between rich and poor are created by global capitalism. The fundamental principles of the market economy are based on materialism, profit and economic growth. These principles are not compatible with the ideals of reverence, responsibility and restraint. Sacks would like to see the market economy of global capitalism operating benignly, but he fails to see the essential contradiction in that view. The global market, in particular, has been responsible for developing the monoculture prevalent in our time. The world is dominated by the sameness of products; same kind of architecture, same kind of food, same kind of films, same kind of clothing, all around the world. So the Jain idea of *anekanta* would advocate a more locally based and human scale economy. Only then can the dignity of difference truly be achieved.

Towards the end of the book, Sacks presents a covenant of hope, which is perhaps the most radical and far-reaching concept in the book. In presenting the idea of covenant, Sacks is at his best. Our society at the moment is obsessed with contracts. Sacks wants us to move from contracts to covenants. The concept of covenant is very close to the Gandhian idea of trusteeship. ►

◀ “What we possess, we do not own – we merely hold it in trust for God,” says Sacks. Because we are not owners of our property, we are bound by the conditions of trusteeship, “covenant is a bond, not of interest or advantage, but of belonging.”

The Dignity of Difference is a useful starting point for a conversation between people of different faiths or none, as well as between those who are opposed to globalisation and those who see globalisation as a way of bringing

prosperity to the world. Jonathan Sacks is to be congratulated for presenting these ideas in a sensitive and thoughtful way. There is much food for thought in the book and I would agree with much of his analysis, even though I have questions about his assumptions and premises.

As a Jain, I believe in small scale, decentralised, diverse and autonomous communities, largely managing their own economy and politics, communicating globally on the level of art,

poetry, philosophy and spirituality. E.F. Schumacher’s idea of ‘small is beautiful’ is more conducive to a more spiritual, moral, ethical and ecological world order. Small governments, small businesses, small units of production and small scale communities bring people face to face in closer connection and create a sense of belonging. When organisations, be they political, economic or religious become too big, they lose a sense of community and a sense of belonging. **Satish Kumar**

UK JAIN SCHOOLS HOLD FIRST ANNUAL TEACHERS’ CONFERENCE

On 15-16 March 2003, the Shri Chandana Vidyapeeth Jain School, a non-sectarian Jain organisation devoted to promoting Jain teachings to both children and adults, hosted its first annual UK teachers’ conference in Leicester, England. The two-day event was attended by 44 teachers from the four UK schools in North and South London, Northampton and Manchester.

Keynote addresses focused on the curriculum, on teaching and learning methods and the penetration of the school within the UK Jain community. Prakashbhai Patalia, the conference organiser and a trustee of Veerayatan UK, which runs the schools, commented: “Our goal is that every Jain child should have access to Bhagwan Mahavir’s teachings. We teach in English and in a way that makes Jainism relevant to modern life. We also believe that learning religion is a life-long activity and so we have classes for all age groups.”

The first Vidyapeeth was founded in North London in 1997 by Jain nun Pujya Sadhvi Shilapiji. Today centres



exist in Kenya, Australia and Singapore. The Vidyapeeth plans to continue to open centres wherever there is a sizeable Jain population. The four UK centres have approximately 500 registered students, and this year had some 25 of its teachers pass through a University of London accredited course in Jainism.

The conference also reviewed the new workbooks and course material the school has produced to make teaching more enjoyable through activities such as Jain games, puzzles and quizzes. There was also a launch of an initiative to provide teacher resources and some

materials available through the Internet. The annual conference was punctuated with open forums and lively debates to allow delegates to participate. In addition, the Jain temple nearby also provided an opportunity for early morning *pooja*. “The conference has provided the first opportunity for a substantial number of teachers from our UK schools to meet and exchange ideas and experiences. It has been very valuable and we are committed to holding this conference every year,” added Prakashbhai.

Navinbhai Sanghrajka, Veerayatan’s senior trustee, gave the closing address where he thanked the teachers for their devotion and dedication, and recognised their achievement in light of their work, family and other pressures on their free time.

To learn more about becoming a teacher or enrolling at Shri Chandana Vidyapeeth, email: nilesh.doshi@btopenworld.com or visit www.veerayatan.org



JAIN SPIRIT PHOTO COMPETITION 2003

A big 'thank you' to everyone who entered this competition. The panel decided that our winner in the adult category is Derek Mephram's sole figure in a dawn landscape, which features as our Inside Cover. This is a lovely image with a real feeling of peacefulness, bringing to mind Lord Mahavir's solo quest for liberation in the forests of northern India. Congratulations also go to Jayni Gudka, whose 'Elephants are Kind' was chosen as the winner of the junior category (pictured left). In fact, it was a great effort by the entire Gudka family: sister Aimee also entered and we have used father Jayesh's photo of an anti-war demo to illustrate this issue's philosophy article. A special mention for Nishma Shah, the one person who submitted a black and white photograph, more of this please in the next competition. Two digital cameras for the winners have been kindly donated by Jagdeep Shah of Fotoview, UK.

AIN'T NO MOUNTAIN HIGH ENOUGH...

As we go to press, eighty participants are getting ready for the Three Peaks Challenge in June to raise money for *Jain Spirit* and two other UK-based charities: one for animals and the other for Cancer Relief. The task is to climb three small mountains within a total span of twelve hours. This adventure will help the advancement of the bold and innovative *Jain Spirit* magazine and its efforts to champion the global awareness of Jainism.

EDITORS TOUR INDIA

Patna, Sammet Shikhar, Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Shravana Belgola and Chennai were the destinations for *Jain Spirit* Editor, Dr. Atul K. Shah, during his annual editorial tour of India in February. Jains everywhere were very hospitable and complimentary of the magazine. Mr. Pradip Jain, our representative in Patna, organised the tour of Bihar and Sammet Shikhar, while in Delhi Mr. Rajendra P. Jain, our India consultant hosted his trip, introducing him to writers, artists, printers, distributors and Jain leaders. In Mumbai, Atul met prominent Jains and gave a lecture at Mumbai University to students of Jainism, many of whom became subscribers at the end of the lecture. Atul was ably assisted at Mumbai University by our writer and associate, Dhara Kothari. Also in Mumbai, he met Mrs. Indu Jain, Chairman, *Times*

of India and Mr. Kirit and Mrs. Neena Mehta, owners of the Aastha TV Channel.

Our new Photo Editor, James Maturin-Baird, also visited India with the aim of building a collection of Jain photographs and seeing our photo library in Mumbai, Dinodia.



Atul K. Shah meets Mrs. Indu Jain,
Chair of The Times of India

Shri Chitrabhanuji encouraged Atul to travel to southern India, where there is a high English readership. In Bangalore, he met Mr. Chen Raj Jain and Darshan Mutha of the Jain Group, who are active in promoting the teaching of Jain values in colleges and schools. In Chennai, he stayed with the Surana family, owners of Surana & Surana, the largest law firm in southern India. He gave a lecture at the Shantivijay Jain College for Women and visited Karuna Clubs in the area with Dr. Duli Chand Jain, the founder of this movement for compassionate education. As India has the largest population of Jains in the world, there is a sizeable market for *Jain Spirit* there. However, effort needs to be given to its marketing and promotion in different parts of India. This can only be done by local representatives who make it their mission to promote the magazine. Various people have agreed to help with the promotion of *Jain Spirit* in their local cities.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

JAINISM...THE ART OF LIVING Cincinnati, USA July 3-6

JAINA cordially invites you and your family to Jainism: "The Art of Living" on the 4th July (3-6) weekend. Over 5,000 Jains are expected at the 12th biennial JAINA Convention. Grand scale preparations for the convention are underway. Hundreds of families from North America have already registered. This year's convention will be held at the world-class 300,000 sq. ft. multi-level Cincinnati Convention Centre.

CONVENTION PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Thursday, July 3rd** – Welcome dinner and LIVE Raas Garba Gala Performances by Sandeep and Hema Munshi.
- **Friday, July 4th** – Opening ceremony and colourful parade and keynote speeches; LIVE entertainment programme performance by several Indian movie 'musicians' from Bombay, singer Dipalee Somaiya & Company.
- **Saturday, July 5th** – Cultural Programme, with performances by Jain Centres from across North America.
- **Sunday, July 6th** – Final keynote speeches and colourful closing ceremonies.
- Concurrent sessions on Friday, Saturday and Sunday (English, Hindi, Gujarati) from speakers, dignitaries, monks, nuns, highly acclaimed scholars, interfaith panel discussions and over forty break-out sessions.

Amongst the invited distinguished guest speakers are – His Excellency Indian Ambassador Lalit Mansingh, Acharya Shri Chandanaji, Shri Jinchandra Vijayji, Gurudev Shri Chitrabhanuji, Shri Amarendra Muni, Shri Manek Muni, Shri Roop Chandji Muni, Shadhvi Shubhamji, Balbhadraji, Samanji, Samaniji, Mr. Rakesh Zaveri from Bombay, Prof. Dr. John Cort, Dr. Sushma Singhvi from Jaipur, H.H.Devendra Keerthi Bhattarakji, Dr. Hukumchandji Bharill, Dr. James Weldon, Dr. Kumarpal Desai, Mr. Dulichand Jain, Dr. Sagarmalji Jain, Dr Atul Shah and many more!

For further information and registration please log on at www.jainaconvention.org or call 937-848-3228.
Email: information@jainaconvention.org



WALK THE PATH OF ADHYATMA

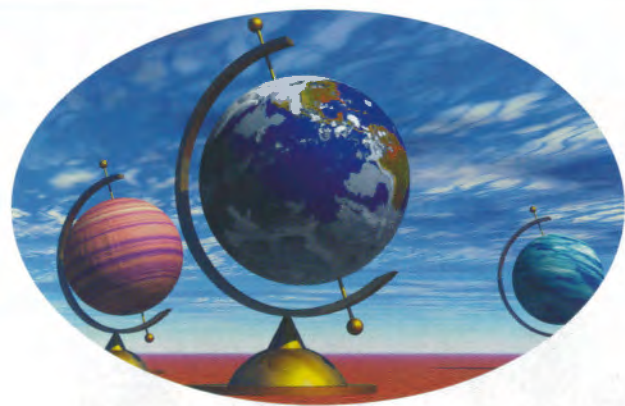
3rd Annual Shibir 2-3 July 2003 at Hilton Garden Inn, Sharonville, Ohio

'Walking the Path of *Adhyatma* to Get Rid of *Mithyatva*,' organised by the Jain Adhyatma Academy of North America (JAANA). A limited number of rooms at the very low price of \$55.00 per room per night plus taxes (2 double bed: up to 4 person can stay). This hotel is only 10 miles from the convention centre in Cincinnati (where JAINA will held their convention) and is located on Exit 15 & I-75. Please reserve your room for July 1 & 2 nights. If you prefer to stay through the JAINA convention, they will honour the same room rates. Please call General Manager Mr. Scott Wright at 513-772-2837 and ask to book as part of the Jain Adhyatma (JAANA) group. Invitees include Pandit Dr. Hukumchandji Bharill, Pandit Abhaykumar Shastri and Pandit Dhirajbhai Mehta from India. Other invitees are Prof. Parasmal Agrawal and our youngest scholar Mr. Prakash Jain.

VEG OUT IN TURKEY

Are you a vegetarian or vegan who loves to travel, but often finds being a problem when it comes to eating abroad? Then why not travel to Turkey this summer to take part in a **Vegetarian festival, 21 – 27 June 2003.**

The festival is held in the idyllic setting of the Club Natura Olwa in Bafa-Milas, at the Bafa Lake – a region of exquisite natural beauty, steeped in history and culture. This unique and exciting holiday places emphasis on socialising and leisure activities such as yoga and meditation, alongside workshops covering a diverse range of topics such as Turkish Vegetarian cooking. The break will immerse you in Turkish culture and allow you to see the positive benefits of vegetarianism. To find out more, please visit: www.an-group.org



NEWS IN BRIEF

ACHARYA SUSHIL KUMARJI PEACE AWARD

Toronto, Canada

The recipient of the inaugural International Acharya Sushil Kumarji Peace Award was Professor Polanyi, who also won the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1986. The awards ceremony and reception was held at Isabel Bader Theatre in Toronto on 17 January 2003. Professor Polanyi is a noted peace activist. In his acceptance speech, he said as long as much of humanity remains poor, voiceless and at the mercy of the rich, peace is unattainable. He added that change will come from the clamour of the poor. They must be heard in international forums, made effective through international agreements and through international law. He concluded that Jainism, with its central tenet of non-violence, may appear irrelevant to contemporary world politics, but that it could in fact guide the way to peace in many conflicts around the world.

DEMAND FOR JAIN REPRESENTATIVE AT AYODHYA EXCAVATION

Jodhpur, India

In March 2003 a Jain organisation, which has staked claim over the disputed land in Ayodhya – where the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is undertaking excavations on a court order – demanded that a Jain representative be allowed as observer while the excavation is on. “A team of four representatives of Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists and Jains should be formed and allowed to witness the excavation by the ASI to ascertain if a temple existed on the site where Babri Masjid was built,” Jain Samta Vahini (JSV) said in a statement in Jodhpur. The JSV demanded that it be made a party in the on-going legal battle to settle the issue because “historical records showed that the disputed structure stood over a Jain temple.”

PETA WINS RELIEF FOR MISERABLE CIRCUS ANIMALS

Mumbai, India

As part of a lawsuit filed by PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) against the Indian State of Maharashtra and the Empire Circus, Chief Justice Mr. C.K. Thakkar and Justice Mr. Chadrachur ruled that until the case is settled the animals banned from performing should be sent to a rescue centre. Additionally, the performances by the other animals are to stop because the circus does not have registration with the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI), which is required by law. The judges noted that since the animals were not allowed to perform they should not be forced to suffer. PETA represented by Advocate Mr. Pradeep Rajagopal, had filed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in the Bombay High Court in November 2002. By the order of the court, the animals can now be moved to Nahargarh, a rescue centre outside Jaipur where they will live a better quality of life, till the final judgment is made. For more information visit: www.petaindia.com/cent.html

CELEBRATING NIRVANA

Rajkot, India

Sri Sudhaben Sheth, a Jain from Rajkot in India, has written a new book to mark the centenary celebration of Shrimad Rajchandra's attainment of Nirvana. The title of the 200-page, Gujarati-language book is *Shrimad Rajchandra Nirvana Shatabdi Smaranika*. Sudhaben has written this book to inspire readers about Shrimad Rajchandra's teachings, and to help his followers understand those teachings better. The book is sent free of charge; if you would like a copy, please contact: Niranjanbhai and Sudhaben Sheth, 111 Silver Shine, Panchayat Chowk, University Road, Rajkot 360 005, India. Tel: 0281 575182; Fax: 0281 573262; Email: sahajatma@icenet.net

QUEEN AND SCHOLAR HONOURED BY INDIAN POST

India

The Indian Postal Department honoured two eminent Jain personalities by issuing special covers in the first quarter of this year. Firstly it recognised Veera Rani Abbakka, the Jain Queen of Karnataka. Veera Rani Abbakka Devi reigned over the region of Ullal of Dakshina Kannada. She was known for being the first Indian warrior queen, whose courage often surpassed that of her male counterparts. The infamous queen descended from the Chowla family of Jains, and fought the Portuguese on several occasions in order to restore independence to her coastal kingdom of Dakshina Kannada. An image of Rani Abbakka has been immortalised by the Indian Postal Department, who issued a special cover in Mangalore on the 15 January 2003, in celebration of the renowned Philatelic Exhibition Magnaplex 2003.

The second Jain personality to be honoured by *Jain Spirit* is the prominent Jain scholar Shri Bhanwarlal Nahta, a gifted linguist who studied scripts written in Bramhi, Kharoshthi, Pali, Sanskrit, Gujarati and Rajasthani, produced nearly 8000 essays and research papers and 81 big and small printed books. To mark Shri Bhanwarlal Nahta's first death anniversary, the Indian Postal Department issued a special multi-coloured cover in Kolkata on 11 February 2003.

HELP PRESERVE KANNADA JAIN HERITAGE

Bihar, India

An organisation in Bihar needs Kannada Jain volunteers to undertake the indexing of old Jain scriptures stored in the library. All volunteers' expenses will be taken care of for the duration of their stay in Bihar. Interested persons may contact Prof. C.Devakumar on: cdevakumar@yahoo.com

SIGN UP TO INDICORPS**USA**

A new organisation has come forward to offer opportunities for NRIs (Non-Resident Indians) and PIOs (Persons of Indian Origin) to volunteer their skills and time to participate in the development of India. INDICORPS, a new US-based non-profit organisation, offers programmes designed to leverage the enormous skills, success and fondness for India of the global Indian family in a drive for social and economic development. INDICORPS is a completely voluntary organisation that believes in a strong philosophy of participatory development and individual empowerment, and aims to encourage Indians around the world to provide their human capital for India's future. INDICORPS offers multiple ways to give to India – from a year-long fellowship programme targeted to young NRIs/PIOs around the world to a new Senior Corps programme designed to bring older applicants with significant experience back to India to utilize their skills for India's development. INDICORPS currently engages nine full-year fellows who have given up their time and are in India offering knowledge in fields ranging from watershed management to product marketing. To learn more about INDICORPS programmes and to follow its current progress through images and video, please look at the website www.indicorps.org. For further details, contact: Anand Shah, Indicorps anand@indicorps.org

CELEBRATING FAITH AND EXPERIENCE**London, UK**

Two new booklets celebrating the concept of helping others – or *Seva* – have been published by The Experience Corps in celebration of work done within Indian faith communities in the UK. The booklets were launched at a special recognition ceremony hosted by MP John Battle, who works with Prime Minister Tony Blair on faith matters, at the House of Commons on 5 March 2003. The Experience Corps, an organisation dedicated to encourage people aged 50 and over to share their time and skills for the good of their local community, is very aware of the unofficial giving that occurs across faith communities and has been working hard with those communities to recognise these efforts. The booklets, published in English, Gujarati, Punjabi and Hindi, aim to acknowledge the efforts of those who already help others as well as inspiring more people to donate their time.

**GRAND TEMPLE COMPLEX PROPOSED****Delhi, India**

With the blessings of Shri Arihant Parmatma Simandhar Swamiji, inauguration ceremonies were performed at Mahavideh Kshetram near Ghevramod Nangloi, New Delhi, lasting from 13-17 February 2003. A grand temple complex is proposed for the site, comprising of a temple of Shri Simandhar Swamiji, together with a centre for meditation and quarters for older saints. This project has been undertaken by Mumukshu Dhyandeep Parivar, under the spiritual guidance of Smt. Parnaben Jayantibhai Shah, a disciple of reverend Acharya Shrutbhaskar Vijay Dharmdurandhar Suriswarji Maharaj Saheb. For the past six years, this group has been scaling the path of spiritualism with the goal of self-realisation. Having great compassion for humanity, they are engaged in philanthropic activities such as supporting financially weak families and giving medical help to those in need. Now, it has taken up the task of building a new temple complex entitled Mahavideha Kshetram. The Hon. Labour Minister Shri Saheb Singh Verma, Councilor Shri Raj Kumarji Jain, Co-editor of *Punjab Kesari* daily Shri Prem Sharma and other prominent personalities attended the inauguration ceremonies.

**APPEAL FOR EDUCATION****Philadelphia, USA**

For the past two years, JAINA has been supporting the construction and maintenance of a school in Bihar, one of the poorest states in India. The school, in the town of Lachhwad, is run under the auspices of the Jain charitable organisation Veerayatan, and welcomes children from disadvantaged backgrounds. The school is now operational with a hundred and ten classrooms and fifty students, with three hundred more children to join this year. The families of most of these school children cannot afford school fees, uniforms or other school supplies. JAINA pilgrims, who visited the up-and-coming school in January 2003, have pledged computers and sewing machines, plus forty 3-year scholarships, worth US\$250 each. Half of the \$250 from each scholarship will go towards supporting the child and the other half to the school. The JAINA Pilgrimage Committee and the Tirthodhhar Committee are now appealing for further scholarship donations, with the aim of raising at least a hundred US\$250 scholarships for the children of Lachhwad. For less than twenty five cents per day, a child will be educated and someday will break out of the cycle of poverty. If you would like to help, please contact: Dilip V Shah at (+1 215) 561 0581 or Kirit Daftary at (+1 254) 776-4209.

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

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

E-mail: news@jainspirit.com

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR CORNER OF THE WORLD?

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

YOUR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

INSPIRING MANGO

Dipak Damani, Malaysia writes: I read your article *Tasting the Mango* in *Jain Spirit* with great delight. It was very nicely written and especially informative to me as I intend to hold a forum in Malaysia with the primary purpose of reacquainting the youth with the message of Jainism. As such, I hope you can share elements that have made the Young Jains Convention, as was illustrated in your article, successful so that I can implement those very elements in my programme for the youths.

A LEGACY TO BE PROUD OF

Pradip Jain, India writes: This issue [14] has come out very well, a superb production carrying interesting articles and photographs. 'A Family Legacy' by Dhara Kothari was very interesting and inspiring. The Jain community is indeed proud of MLBD legacy and their rich contribution. I have decided to give 25 of my friends free *Jain Spirit* subscriptions this year.

IT'S ALL IN THE NAME

Surya and Satish Shah, USA write: We are really impressed with the excellent articles published in *Jain Spirit*. There is always something new to learn. You must be working very hard to maintain the high quality of articles. We have one request to you. We have noticed that only first and last names of authors and other news makers are printed. It is really difficult to recognise some of the names - e.g. there is an obituary of one Mr. Somchand Shah in the March issue. Without his father's and grandfather's name, it is difficult to know who the person was.

KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK

Rajendra P. Dugar, India writes: We have gone through your path-breaking publication *Jain Spirit*, and thoroughly enjoyed the enlightening articles on Jainism which throw light on hitherto unknown intricacies of Jain philosophy. Kindly keep up the good work which you have so painstakingly compiled and offered to your readers.



END THIS SICKENING HORSE TRADE

Kat Macmillan, UK writes: Readers may already be aware that horses are exported live from Poland to Italy to be slaughtered for meat on arrival. When animal welfare group Viva! first went to Poland to start campaigning against the live export of horses for meat to the EU, nearly 100,000 animals were being transported every year. Two years down the line, the number has collapsed to 30,000 annually and Poland's chief veterinary officer has attributed the slump to Viva!'s high profile campaign. I'd like to appeal to readers to join Viva!'s campaign. We must end this sickening trade for good.

Two years ago Viva! filmed undercover to reveal the shocking conditions that the horses are transported in. Viva! has gained recent footage showing that these conditions have barely changed. The footage shows horses beaten with sticks, collapsing and dying, horses with broken legs and emaciated and blinded horses and donkeys. Some horses are so traumatised that their spirits are completely broken and they have no will to live. Even foals are not exempt from this trade. By the time horses reach Hungary, just half way through their journey to the Italian abattoirs, many are injured, dehydrated or dead. At the slaughterhouse, horses are driven or dragged from the lorry. Here, stunning methods are often ignored or done incompletely so that animals regain consciousness whilst their throats are being slit. Many are slaughtered in front of their companions.

Poles do not eat horses and are keen to see a ban on live horse exports. We have to keep up the pressure to stop this trade. Please support Viva! and help end this cruelty. Contact Viva! by email on: horses@viva.org.uk

MIKE TURNER

COMMISSIONED BY JAIN SPIRIT



QUOTES & QUIPS

The most terrifying thing is to accept oneself completely.

Carl Jung

With all your science, can you tell how it is, and whence it is, that light comes into the soul?

Thoreau

It is only shallow people who do not judge by appearances.

Oscar Wilde

I'm astounded by people who want to "know" the universe when it's hard enough to find your way around Chinatown.

Woody Allen

As sun and shade are ever interwoven, so doer and deed cling to each other.

The Panchatantra

A loving heart doesn't fail to help.

Ugandan proverb

In dwelling, live close to the ground.
In thinking, keep to the simple.
In conflict, be fair and generous.
In governing, don't try to control.
In work, do what you enjoy.
In family life, be completely present.

Tao Te Ching

How shall one know thy self? By discerning the self to be distinct from the body shall one be able to know thy self.

Samaya Sara 296

Let us live in joy, never hating those who hate us. Let us live in freedom, without hatred even among those who hate us.

The Dhammapada

Victory over one's self is greater than conquering thousands and thousands of enemies on the battlefield. A true conqueror is one who conquers his self.

Uttaradhyayana Sutra 9.34

My own self is knowledge, vision and conduct.

Samaya Sara 277

I am alone, pure, and free from attachment and full of infinite knowledge and perception. Firmly established in the self. I destroy all those modifications, which are alien to me.

Samaya Sara 73

It is very difficult to realize the soul. Only with sufferings, the soul is realized.

Moksa Pahuda 65

When the inflow of karmas through the three channels of mind, speech and body is completely stopped. The soul realizes its distinctness from body.

Uttaradhyayana Curni 1

Before trying to guide others, be your own guide first. It is hard to learn to guide oneself.

The Dhammapada

Just as a person burdened by load experiences relief when he unburdens the load, an aspirant who by reviewing his wrong deeds and confessing them before his spiritual guide experiences lightness.

Ogha Nirvyukti 806

When a wrong deed is committed consciously or otherwise, the aspirant should immediately desist from that and never repeat it.

Dasavaikalika Sutra 8.31

Know the soul to be different from the perishable body and steadily engage yourself in destroying the karmic influence.

Acharanga Sutra 1.4.3

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Sadhvi Shilapiji answers the questions of today

What is the Jain view on divorce?

According to Jain history, *Tirthankara* Bhagwan Rishabhdev introduced the institution of marriage in order to bring system and culture into the community. Marriage is thus thought to be highly sacred and pious, and the relationship between husband and wife is considered to be pure and elevated. By entering into marriage, a husband and wife agree to very special responsibilities toward each other in both their physical and spiritual development. The importance of this relationship is clearly demonstrated in various stories presented in the Jain scriptures. According to some accounts, even *Tirthankara* Mahavir became involved in helping to resolve the marital disputes of his disciples because of the hallowed importance he placed on the sanctity of marriage.



A Jina.

Thus, Jainism guides its followers to maintain and respect the institution of marriage. Indeed, of the twelve vows listed for Jain householders for the path of spiritual development, the fourth is a vow of 'celibacy'

which states that a man or woman should be entirely faithful to and respectful of his/her husband or wife. Any disloyalty toward the spouse transgresses the vow of celibacy in the context of householders.

If disputes arise between the marriage partners, the practice of Jainism would advise that the couple resolve the tension as amicably as possible. However, if a marital relationship degenerates to such a level that perpetual violence (either mental and/or physical) is present, divorce may be considered. The reason for this becomes clear when we view Jainism as a religion which emphasizes spiritual development. A husband and wife are expected to be mutually supportive as they travel together down the path of spirituality. If constant violence is pervasive in the relationship, barring the husband and/or wife from successfully travelling the spiritual path, then divorce can be considered in such an extreme situation.

What is the difference between Jainism and Buddhism?

Jainism and Buddhism are considered contemporary religions; both religions belong to the sramana tradition, which emphasizes individual efforts in attaining liberation without the support of any external agency. They also developed during the

same time period in roughly the same geographical location. Yet there are some fundamental philosophical differences in the beliefs and practices of the two religions.

One significant difference between Jainism and Buddhism lies in their view of the fate of the soul after liberation. Jainism believes that after liberation (i.e. when the soul is void of karma), the entity of the soul continues to exist and migrates to a place at the top of the universe known as siddhasila. It stays there permanently in its highest, purest form. According to Buddhist theory, by contrast, there is no

soul but a certain individuality or character of an individual which, after nirvana, passes into some kind of indescribable nothingness that cannot be speculated upon.



A Buddha.

Buddhism has also become very popular for advocating a "middle path" to salvation-propagating neither one extreme nor another. Jainism, by contrast, is considered by some to be a

very extreme religion. *Tirthankar* Mahavir was known to some as the "warrior ascetic" and indeed physical hardships (such as penance) were introduced for followers on the path to liberation.

In addition, some believe that there is a certain "adaptability" aspect to Buddhism that has allowed its belief and practices to be followed by millions worldwide. For example, when Buddhism entered foreign lands, it was able to adapt to the local indigenous religious practices. By contrast, some say, followers of Jainism preferred to concentrate on their own spiritual purification without such an emphasis on expanding and adapting the religion to outside communities and cultures..

What is the Jain view on terrorism?

Jainism believes that terrorism should be countered as non-violently as possible, using whatever means possible short of violence (diplomatic tactics, etc.). Yet, if the level of terrorism reaches a state such that a large population is affected, Jainism clearly states that violence can be used as a defensive measure to deal with terrorism. The violence that is used to put an end to aggression or terrorism may,

prima facie, seem terrible. Yet this is considered acceptable because the intention is to bring peace to a larger number of people. Jain philosophy maintains that a small act of violence to combat or avert a much greater violence is itself a form of non-violence.

To what extent do we have free will? If those who have achieved omniscience (kevalgnana) know what is going to happen to everyone and everything, does that mean that our lives are pre-destined, or can we still control the direction of our lives?

The issue of free will is complicated in almost all religions. Indeed, even in Jain circles, the question is well debated.

Jain theory holds that there exist six substances (*dravya*), which encompass all things in the universe. These include soul (*jiva*), matter (*pudgala*), space (*akash*), time (*kala*), motion (*dharmastikaya*) and non-motion (*adharmastikaya*). Each of these substances has modes (*paryaya*) that experience infinite changes.

The Jain view further holds that any truth has many dimensions and can be explained in many ways. One way is through absolute truth (*nischaya naya*), which asserts that the infinite modes of these six substances (*dravya*) are pre-destined and that no *dravya* can interfere in the functioning and roles of the other *dravya*. Since enlightened omniscient beings know all modes of all six *dravya* at all times, they are said to possess knowledge of the past, present and future.

However, according to the notion of partial truth (*vyavahara naya*), there is a role for free will or individual efforts (*purusharth*) to play in the events of life. This is explained in the *Sutra Krutang*, the second scripture of the Shvetambara tradition. This scripture presents the concept of the five factors (*samvayas*), which together constitute the occurrence of an event. These include time (*kala*), nature (*svabhava*), fate (*bhavitavyatava-niyati*), action (*karma*) and free will/effort (*purusharth*). Of all five factors, this theory places greatest importance on the latter.

Though the co-existence of absolute truth and partial truth may, *prima facie*, seem contradictory, they in fact interact in a complex and important way.

Absolute truth, is one which is comprehensible to those who have experienced soul-consciousness. On the other hand, *vyavahara naya* is a temporary truth, one that is only 'partially' true because of the limitations imposed by karma on human knowledge and understanding. Once a human being sheds her/his karma and enters into the realm of soul-consciousness, s/he too will experience *nischaya naya*, and her/his understanding will traverse from partial to complete.

Ultimately, this issue truly offers a beautiful opportunity for the exercise of *anekantvada* (multiplicity of viewpoints), as many theories have been presented in an effort to answer the age-old question of the role of free will in our lives. In light of the various debates on this issue, a person would be best advised to put forth her/his best effort to attain a result without becoming attached to the result of the effort.

Does Jainism believe in miracles?

Jainism does not believe in the stereotypical view of a miracle as something that has been given to us by a higher power or in the idea of a miracle as associated with magic or trickery. According to Jainism, a spiritual aspirant who is travelling down the path of purification may be able to attain certain spiritual powers, such as mind-reading or clairvoyance. The common man may view these powers as 'miracles', but they are no more than a manifestation of spiritual purity. However, attainment of these spiritual powers is not the aim or objective of any spiritual aspirant. They may come, instead, as a by-product of spiritual advancement. Additionally, it is categorically stated in Jainism that such powers should not be used to bring any type of worldly benefit.

Can women worship when they are menstruating?

Jainism is a religion of the purification of the soul, and all spiritual practices are directed toward attaining the purity of the soul, not the body. Menstruation is a bodily process that is natural for women, and it does not hinder a woman's spiritual progress.

In olden days, women were required to perform much physical work, and conditions surrounding menstruation were not entirely hygienic. There is no clear evidence in the main scriptures which address the issue of women and menstruation, yet in the later religious texts, there is mention of the prohibition of women performing religious rites during menstruation. Thus it seems that the inclusion of this issue was more influenced by societal pressures rather than spiritual ones. Today, with much more hygienic conditions, if a woman feels physically and mentally comfortable with performing religious rites during menstruation, she would not be hampering her spiritual growth should she choose to undertake such rituals. 🙏

Sadhvi Shilapiji is a Jain nun who has travelled extensively and has interacted with Jain youth worldwide. She is dedicated to the service of the disadvantaged through the Jain charitable organization, Veerayatan (www.veerayatan.org).

With thanks to the students of Shri Chandana Vidyapeeth, Manchester, for sharing their questions.

UNITY AND DIVERSITY

Amar Salgia points us towards constructive education on the sectarian divergences within Jainism

UNDERSTANDING THE JAIN TRADITION requires us to appreciate its various manifestations. In its own unique way, each legitimate sect of Jainism has preserved a certain philosophy as well as the Four-fold Order (*Chaturvidhi Sangha*), set forth by Lord Mahavir and comprising of male monks (*sadhus*), female nuns (*sadhvis*), male listeners or laymen (*shravakas*) and female listeners or laywomen (*shravikas*).

We live in times far removed from Asia's past. People of all ages can enjoy opportunities to survey and experience the complete landscape of the Jain tradition. Aided by examples, we will outline the principles by exploring practical insights for Jain teachers and educators.

THE NATURE OF JAINISM

Just what is this thing called 'Jainism'? There can be a variety of answers. As with anything else, every concept of Jainism derives from a unique perspective (*naya*). Whatever they may be, our definitions need to be informed by three basic realities: **Throughout its history, Jainism has been a diverse tradition.**

In Jainism there is no 'one true tradition' nor has there ever been. Lord Mahavir's message has been preserved for our times not by one sect alone but by *several* parallel traditions such as the Digambara, Shvetambara, Sthanakvasi, Terapanthi and ancient Yapaniya. This is simply a fact of history. When we think of 'Jainism' we cannot think of just one uniform but several ways of worship or practice. In keeping with the Jain approach to different viewpoints, we may regard each of these traditions – each by itself – as a treasured manifestation of the *Tirthankara's* path by which Jains strive to live.

Jain diversity has preserved a great unity.

Amazingly, all sects are basically identical in philosophy. All use the same basic liturgies and *mantras* in the Prakrit languages (such as the *Namokar Mantra*). After more than 2500 years since being codified, this doctrinal uniformity is a credit to Mahavir's genius. The sects do differ slightly on certain points of interpretation, which are minor from a lay perspective.

Each unique sect of Jainism has emphasised different aspects of Lord Mahavir's teachings in special ways. Why deny those differences of interpretation, sweep them under the rug or forget about them? Each interpretation helps us understand the Jain message more thoroughly. Each unique idea from each sect is a vital lesson in Jain philosophy and practice. Such an attitude toward the differences comes from the Jain spirit of *anekantvada*, which we shall explore further below.

The growth and tolerance of differing sects is *anekantvada* in action.

The diversity of emphasis found among the sects does not mean that Jains as a whole have not been following *anekantvada*. It is misleading to suggest that the very existence of different sects shows that Jains or Jain families who devote themselves to one sect are narrow-minded or



The royally adorned Shvetambar murti, with eyes open, represents the Jina as sovereign victor over all inner enemies and the five senses

divisive. Jains have never fought each other in any manner akin to the Catholics and Protestants, Sunnis and Shi'ites, or Shaivas and Vaishnavas.

Nothing should keep us from understanding the different manifestations of Jainism just as they are, or appreciating what wonders they each bear. Rather than making an issue of our sectarian diversity, speaking as if it were a burden or defeat, we should foster an admiration for each sect's distinct contributions.

JAIN EDUCATION IN PRACTICAL TERMS

Concealing or downplaying sectarian diversity is simply *distorting* Jainism. However, this raises an important question: how to deal with the traditional disagreements between the sects? The best approach is to state each perspective in detail and on equal and unbiased terms. Anyone who has not yet experienced the pure soul through the actual practice of vows, austerity and meditation should not be considered an 'authority' on Jainism. Especially in matters where sectarian divergences exist, there can be no authorities on what Jainism 'says' or 'doesn't say'. As educators we can see a need to discipline ourselves and remain careful never to insert personal or sectarian preferences. We will explore several cases of sectarian divergence to illustrate methods of accomplishing this.



The Digambara tradition represents a purely sky-clad Vitaraaga with eyes closed: an independent soul in meditation, free from attachment and aversion

EXAMPLE 1: "Was Tirthankara Malli male or female?"

Resist the temptation to answer definitively one way or another. Instead, consider the following suggested approach and its detailed reasoning for both sides of the issue, noting the key phrases in bold-italicised type:

First we must recognise that *we have no way of knowing with certainty what really happened*. All we know is that there are two parallel accounts. *According to the Digambara Jain tradition*, like each of the other Tirthankaras, Malli was male.

According to the Shvetambara Jain tradition, Malli was female, unlike the rest of the Tirthankaras who were male. This divergence between the two traditions relates to the nature of monkhood. *In the Digambara Jain perspective*, following the principle of non-possessiveness (*aparigraha*) means letting go of *everything* including clothing. However, monks and nuns must still co-exist with others in a sometimes dangerous society where nakedness is generally not acceptable. For women especially, this unfortunate reality makes psychological renunciation of possessions and attachments particularly difficult. Thus a woman cannot become a sky-clad ascetic from the Digambara perspective. This logically makes it difficult for a woman to attain omniscience (*kevaljnana*), following the example of the Tirthankaras. Hence, all of the 24 Tirthankaras are considered to be male. *In the Shvetambara Jain perspective*, following *aparigraha* does not necessarily require letting go of all possessions, but rather giving up one's *attachment* to them. From the Shvetambara point of view, this approach allows both monks and nuns to wear clothing. Since the clothing issue is non-existent in the Shvetambara perspective, nuns may be regarded as full ascetics and can thus attain *kevaljnana* following the example of the Tirthankaras. Such an approach has traditionally led the Shvetambaras to regard Malli as a female Tirthankara.

EXAMPLE 2: "Did young Vardhamana marry or did he not marry?"

Again we state each viewpoint in neutral and unbiased terms without pronouncing judgments. As before, note the special wording in bold-italics:

We need to understand that *we have no way of knowing with certainty what truly happened over 2500 years ago*. All we do know is that there are two parallel accounts of what happened. *According to the biography preserved by the Shvetambara Jain tradition*, when Vardhamana was a layperson he married and had a daughter. In order to become a Jain monk he had to renounce all his attachments including those to his family. Thus, Vardhamana placed his wife and daughter in the care of his brother's family and left his possessions to pursue a spiritual life. *According to the biography preserved by the Digambara Jain tradition*, Vardhamana did not marry and never fathered any children. Hence, when he became a Jain monk for spiritual reasons, his decision did not involve leaving behind a wife and child. Each of the two traditions consider their version to be the accurate recollection of events. And basically that is all the information we have.

EXAMPLE 3: Why are the murtis of the Digambaras and Shvetambaras different?

Taken together, the holy icons (*murtis*) of the Shvetambara and Digambara traditions can serve as a powerful lesson in Jain thought. Refer to the illustrations of a Digambara murti

◀ and a Shvetambara *murti* side-by-side. Narrations for each *murti*-tradition might run according to the following logic:

The Shvetambara Murti:

In the Shvetambara ritual tradition, the *Tirthankara murti* represents a king. Like any great king, a *Tirthankara* has conquered all enemies and gained freedom from them – not only for himself but for all who follow him by example. However, a *Tirthankara* is not an ordinary king of this world but a king of the *spirit*. The enemies he has vanquished are not external but internal: attachment (*raaga*), aversion (*dvesh*), passions (*kashayas*), the senses (*indriyas*) and the karmas. And so in the Shvetambara tradition, the *Tirthankara* is viewed as the greatest of Kings for having destroyed the most dangerous of enemies. Look at the Shvetambara *murti*. Notice the crown, earrings and other regal ornaments, and the diamond-like *shrivatsa* emblem on his chest. In rituals his body is adorned with silver armour. His eyes are open as if communicating a spiritual nature to those looking upon him. Each of these are signs of royalty and nobility, which do not come from birth but from achieving the most difficult thing imaginable.

The Digambara Murti:

In the Digambara ritual tradition, the *Tirthankara murti* represents a pure *Vitaraaga*: a soul free of all attachments and aversions to anything of this or any other world. The Digambara *murti* depicts a human being in the defenseless, pure and free condition. Despite his austerity and defenselessness, the *Tirthankara* is without fear, shame and sorrow, focusing instead upon his inherent spiritual nature. Despite penance and fasting he has the powerful body of a fighter – a conqueror (*Jina*) of the inner enemies. Look at the Digambara *murti*. Notice his freedom from possessions and his meditation with the eyes closed, adorned by nothing other than the peace and security of the pure soul. The *Tirthankara* is shown to exemplify perfect *aparigraha* with an entirely spiritual and individual goal. The message of the Digambara *murti* seems to say, “Here is a powerful person whose power is that of focusing on the soul apart from all else.”

What we have done through these narrations is point out the unique traits of each type of *murti* and explain how the thoughts we generate through the act of revering them do not conflict but rather mutually complement one another. There is, of course, another Jain perspective:

The Sthanakvasi and Terapanthi View:

“Within Jainism there are non-idolatrous (non *murtipujak*) traditions as well. In Jain philosophy, matter (*pudgala*) and the pure soul (*jiva*) are two different substances. From the Sthanakavasi and Terapanthi perspectives, statues, icons and temples are all material objects totally different from the soul. Thus they are not considered necessary or beneficial for spiritual life. Hence, for personal edification the Sthanakavasi and Terapanthi traditions choose religious discourse rather than temple worship.”

After using a visual aid to explain the respective messages of the *murtis*, we may offer for discussion the purpose of the juxtaposition:

“From the standpoint of Jain philosophy, are any of these perspectives right and the others wrong? Is one of these three approaches to the nature of the pure soul a good approach, and the others evil or backward? All of these differing ritualistic conclusions are equally valuable – but only when we understand each conclusion from the unique perspective that led to it. The perspectives are merely different views of the same infinitely faceted thing we call the pure soul. When we humble ourselves and break our sectarian egos, each sect-tradition provides us with a more complete picture of what Jainism teaches and what the *Tirthankaras* imparted to the world.”

“Concealing
sectarian
diversity is
simply
distorting
Jainism”

CONCLUSION

As we can see, humility and intelligence are needed to recognise that our minds are limited. According to Jainism, only an omniscient Kevali knows the complete truth. It is narrow-mindedness that criticises the Digambaras, Shvetambaras, Sthanakavasis, Terapanthis and other Jains for supposedly not following *anekantvada* due to their divergences and mutual independence.

To insist on erasing or hiding the traditional variations among the sects is to force one point of view and deny all others. There is no one true Jainism but several ‘Jainisms’. Each sect is a legitimate and complete derivation from the *Tirthankaras’* teachings. Each is a vital understanding of Jainism. Let us strive to appreciate them equally. 🙏

Amar's details are in the contents pages.

AHIMSA: ANCHORING AN ETHICAL WORLDVIEW

L.M. Singhvi discusses the importance of ahimsa, which underpins Jain philosophy and lifestyle

"There is nothing so small and subtle as the atom nor any element so vast as space. Similarly, there is no quality of soul more subtle than non-violence and no virtue of spirit greater than reverence for life."

The principal elements of Jain practice are study (*swadhyaya*), reflection (*dhyana*) and meditation, which are also ordained in the *Upanishads*. In addition to the duty of remembering the 24 *Tirthankaras* and paying obeisance to the Acharyas, Jains are also expected to practise equanimity (*samayika*), review of lapses (*pratikraman*), balance of body and mind (*kajotsarga*) and giving up or abstinence (*pratyakhya*). The teachings of Jainism are replete with an ethical worldview. The *Namaskar Mahamantra* is a prayerful invocation of reverence for the spiritual conquerors (*Arhats*); the enlightened monks (*Sidhas*), the preceptors (*Acharyas*), the teachers (*Upadhyayas*) and all those who live the creed of goodness in thoughts, words and deeds (*savva sahanam*).

From the second *Tirthankara*, Ajitanatha to the twenty-third *Tirthankara*, Parsvanath, the Sramana tradition taught four vows: non-violence (*ahimsa*), truthfulness (*satya*), non-stealing including non-exploitation (*asteya*) and non-acquisitiveness and minimal possessions (*aparigraha*). To these Mahavir added the vow of celibacy (*brahmacharya*), which was, however, implicit in the philosophy of restraint and renunciation.

The vow of *ahimsa* is the first and pivotal vow. The other vows may be viewed as aspects of *ahimsa*, which together form an integrated code of conduct in the individual's quest for equanimity and the three jewels (*ratna-traya*) of Right Faith, Right Knowledge and Right Conduct. The vows are undertaken at an austere and exacting level by monks and nuns, and are called *mahavratas*: the great vows. They are also undertaken at a more moderate and flexible level by householders and are called the *anuvratas*: 'atomic' or basic vows. Underlying the Jain code of conduct is the emphatic assertion of individual responsibility towards one and all. Indeed, the entire universe is the forum of one's own conscience. The code is profoundly moral and ecological in its secular thrust and its practical consequences.

Jain philosophy and ethics are virtually synonymous with the principle of *ahimsa*, which runs through the Jain tradition like a golden thread. *Ahimsa* enjoys singular centrality in the Jain faith. Jains believe that non-violence is the supreme

religion (*ahimsa parmo dharmah*). It postulates reverence for life and avoidance of injury. It means kindness and compassion. It means environmental protection and prevention of cruelty to animals, birds and insects. Mahavir threw new light on the perennial quest of the soul with the truth and discipline of *ahimsa*. He said: "There is nothing so small and subtle as the atom nor any element so vast as space. Similarly, there is no quality of soul more subtle than non-violence and no virtue of spirit greater than reverence for life."

Non-violence is a principle that Jains teach and practise not only towards human beings but towards all living beings and nature. It is an unequivocal teaching that is at once ancient and contemporary. The scriptures tell us: "All the *Arhats*, Venerable Ones of the past, present and future discourse, counsel, proclaim, propound and prescribe thus in unison: 'Do not injure, abuse, oppress, enslave, insult, torment, torture or kill any creature or living being.'"

In our strife-torn world of hatred and hostilities, aggression and aggrandisement, unscrupulous and unbridled exploitation and consumerism, the Jain perspective of non-violence is more relevant than ever. The teaching of *ahimsa* refers not only to wars and visible physical acts of violence, but also to violence in the hearts and minds of human beings, their lack of compassion for their fellow humans, animals and the natural world. Ancient Jain texts explain that violence (*himsa*) is the intention to harm, and that the absence of compassion makes actions violent. Without violent thought there could be no violent speech or actions. When violence enters our thoughts (*bhava himsa*), we remember *Tirthankara* Mahavir's words: "You are that which you intend to hit, injure, insult, torment, persecute, torture, enslave or kill."

Violence is manifested in many ways. Hatred and falsehood, recklessness in life, wasteful consumption, exploitation, oppression, deceit, pride, greed, anger, lack of consideration for others, curtailment of the legitimate freedom of others – these are all examples of violence. Intentional violence is different from unintentional violence. On the other hand, violence involved in the daily domestic routine of life such as cooking, eating, washing, bathing, worshipping and travelling are regarded as unavoidable and permissible. The same is the case with other chores and obligations of life. Defensive violence or

◀ violence by a citizen or a soldier in a battle to defend one's country are thought to be legitimate. For the ascetics, the rules of non-violence are less permissive. The basic tenet is to be mindful and vigilant, to avoid violence as far as possible and to minimise it. Violence and non-violence have therefore to be seen in the perspective of contextual relativity.

Although the term *ahimsa* is stated in the negative (*a*: non; *himsa*: violence), it is rooted in a host of positive actions, which have great relevance to contemporary environmental concerns. *Ahimsa* is an aspect of *daya* (compassion, empathy and charity), described by great Jain teachers as 'the beneficent mother of all beings' and 'the elixir for those who wander in suffering through the ocean of successive rebirths'.

Jiva-daya means caring for and sharing the gift of knowledge and material well being with all living beings, tending, protecting and serving them. It entails universal friendliness (*maitri*), universal forgiveness (*kshama*) and universal fearlessness (*abhaya*). One of the most beautiful observances in the Jain tradition is the Day of Universal Forgiveness. The message of that observance is encapsulated as follows:

*Khamemi savve jiva, savve jiva
khamanti me*

*Mitti me savva bhuyesu, vairammajjham
na kenayi*

This means: "I beg forgiveness of all living creatures as I forgive them all. I have friendship for one and all and have no ill feeling or animosity for anyone."

Jains, whether monks, nuns or laypeople, sincerely affirm that their heart is filled with forgiveness for all living beings, that they have sought and received the forgiveness of all beings, that they crave the friendship of all beings, that all beings give them their friendship and that there is not the slightest feeling of alienation or enmity in their heart for anyone or anything. They also pray that forgiveness and friendliness may reign throughout the world and that all living beings may cherish each other.

Vegetarianism is a way of life for a Jain. It has its origin in the concept of compassion for living beings, *jiva-daya*. All forms of cruelty to birds, animals and human beings are transgressions against *ahimsa*. Many centuries ago, Jains condemned the common practice of animal sacrifice to the gods as evil. It is generally forbidden to keep animals in captivity, to whip, mutilate or overload them or to deprive them of adequate food and drink. The injunction is modified in respect of domestic animals to the extent that they may be roped or even whipped occasionally but always mercifully with due consideration and without anger.

Except for allowing themselves a judicious use of one-

sensed life in the form of vegetables, Jains would not consciously take any life for food or sport. As a community, they are strict vegetarians, consuming neither meat nor fish or eggs. They confine themselves to vegetable and milk products. Mahavir proclaimed a profound truth for all times to come when he said: "One who neglects or disregards the existence of earth, air, fire, water and vegetation, disregards his own existence which is entwined with them."

Jain cosmology also recognises the fundamental natural phenomenon of symbiosis or mutual dependence, which forms the basis of the modern-day science of ecology. It is relevant to recall that the term 'ecology' was coined only in the latter half of the nineteenth century from the Greek word 'oikos' meaning 'home', a place to which one returns. Jain ecology is based on its profound philosophical and scientific understanding of biology, zoology and botany in the light of the ethics of non-violence.

The ancient Jain scriptural aphorism *parasparapagraho jivanam* (all life is bound together by mutual support and interdependence) is refreshingly contemporary in its perspective. It defines the scope of modern ecology while extending it further to a more spacious 'home'. It means that all aspects of nature belong together and are bound in physical as well as metaphysical relationships. Life is viewed as a gift of togetherness, accommodation and assistance in a universe teeming with interdependent constituents.

The concept of universal interdependence also underpins the Jain theory of knowledge, known as *anekantvada*, the doctrine of manifold aspects. *Anekantvada* describes the world as a multifaceted, ever-changing reality with infinite viewpoints depending on the time, place, nature and state of the one who

is the viewer and that which is viewed. This leads to the doctrine of relativity (*syadvada*), which states that truth is relative to different viewpoints (*nayas*). What is true from one point of view is open to question from another. Absolute truth cannot be grasped from any particular viewpoint alone because that whole truth is the sum total of all the different aspects and constituents that make up the universe.

According to Acharya Mahaprajna, a living legend of Jain scholarship, "*Anekanta* is the third eye". It is a philosophical and epistemological process with which "passions can be assuaged, conflicts can be resolved and embers of rebellion can be appeased, showing thus the path to world peace." *Anekanta* represents the many routes and



Vegetarianism is integral to the Jain lifestyle

perspectives in our pursuit of truth; it also represents the unity and the wholeness of truth in the diversities of its seemingly conflicting manifestations. *Anekanta* is thus the philosophy of connectivity and co-existence, of relativity and reciprocity. It is the path of understanding, meditation, mutuality and humanity; the language and approach of spirituality that synthesises logic and experience to build defences of peace and tolerance in the minds of men, women and children.

The discipline of non-violence, the recognition of universal interdependence and the logic of the doctrine of manifold aspects lead inexorably to the avoidance of dogmatic, intolerant, inflexible, aggressive, harmful and unilateral attitudes towards the world around. It inspires the personal quest of every Jain for *samyaktva*: equanimity towards animate beings (*jiva*) and inanimate substances and objects (*ajiva*). It encourages an attitude of give and take, of live and let live. It offers a pragmatic peace plan based not on the domination or conquest of nature, nations or other people but on the

Indeed, the Jain faith goes one radical step further and declares unequivocally that waste and pollution are acts of violence.

Accumulation of possessions and enjoyment for personal ends should be minimised. Giving charitable donations and one's time for community projects generously is part of a Jain householder's obligations. That explains why Jain temples and pilgrimage centres are well endowed and well managed. It is this sense of social obligation, born out of religious teachings, that has led Jains to found and maintain innumerable schools, colleges, hospitals, clinics, lodging houses, hostels, orphanages, relief and rehabilitation camps for the handicapped, old, sick and disadvantaged, as well as hospitals for ailing birds and animals. Wealthy individuals are advised to recognise that beyond a certain point their wealth is superfluous and that they should manage the surplus as trustees for social benefit.



Jain monks undertake austere vows



Following ahimsa can save endangered animals like these tigers

equanimity of mind devoted to the preservation of the balance of the universe.

By taking the basic vows, the Jain laity endeavour to live a life of moderation and restraint, and practise abstinence and austerity. They must not procreate indiscriminately lest they overburden the world and its resources. Regular periods of fasting for self-purification are encouraged. In their use of the earth's resources, Jains take their cue from "the bee [that] sucks honey in the blossoms of a tree without hurting the blossom and strengthens itself." Wants should be reduced, desires should be moderated and restrained, and consumption levels kept within reasonable limits. Using any resource beyond one's needs and misuse of any part of nature is considered a form of theft.

The five fundamental teachings of Jainism and the five-fold Jain code of conduct are deeply rooted in its living ethos in unbroken continuity across the centuries. They offer the world today a time-tested anchor of moral imperatives and a viable route plan for humanity's common pilgrimage of holistic environmental protection, peace and harmony in the universe. 🐾

Dr. L. M. Singhvi lives in New Delhi where he is an eminent jurist. The above article is extracted from his recent book 'Jain Temples in India and Around the World', published by Himalayan Books, 2002. The book is available from Jain Spirit at £30 plus p&p.

COMPLEXITY IS STRENGTH

Aidan Rankin reviews 'The Jains', a seminal book by Paul Dundas

THIS DEFINITIVE BRITISH STUDY OF JAINISM WAS first published in 1992. It has been reissued and updated ten years later as part of Routledge's Library of Religious Beliefs and Practices. For both author and publisher, the timing is excellent. In Britain, and in the Western world more generally, there is a growing body of interest in Jainism as an area of academic study and, more importantly perhaps, as a philosophy and a spiritual practice. There is a growing awareness that the study of Jainism has so far received insufficient attention from the scholastic and spiritually minded, despite its powerful underlying influences – well out of proportion to Jain numbers – on Eastern and, more recently, on Western thought.

In the case of the latter, particular attention has been paid to the concept of *ahimsa*, literally 'non-harming' or abstention from actions that harm any other life forms. This is fitting, since *ahimsa* is the first of the five Great Vows (*mahavratas*) of Jain ascetics and the first of the five Lesser Vows (*anuvratas*) undertaken by Jain lay people. *Ahimsa* has caught the imagination because it has become associated with the social and political ideal of non-violence, including non-violent resistance such as Gandhi's truth-struggle (*satyagraha*). *Ahimsa* certainly does encompass these concepts, but as Dundas shows, it represents far more. Throughout the book, he is adept at revealing the subtleties of Jain thought. There is a sense in which every Jain is an intellectual, if we understand 'intellectual' to mean one who searches for underlying truths. This search is intrinsic to Jainism, which from its beginnings showed a profound awareness of the complexities of the universe. In Jainism there are none of the spiritual quick fixes that so often appeal to Western spiritual seekers, schooled by consumerism even when they reject it. Dundas brings out for the reader the complexity that can make Jainism seem so elusive, but which is its source of strength.

As such, *The Jains* is a delight to read, arousing in the reader feelings of admiration and respect. But that does not mean that it is an easy book. Like its subject matter, it is complicated and, although he makes his work accessible to the non-specialist, Dundas does not baulk at discussing difficult ideas or putting several sides to a philosophical question. This approach very much reflects the Jain doctrine of *anekantvada*, or 'manypointedness'. *Anekantvada* is the ability to look at a given issue from different angles and to realise that there are different paths to the truth which can itself be seen and

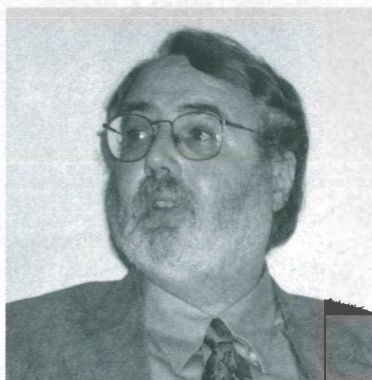
interpreted in different ways. That is not in any sense the same as the cultural and moral relativism popularised in the West over recent decades. In that type of relativism, any number of truths compete with each other like rival brand products and the idea that there are no absolutes becomes a rigorously enforced absolute itself.

Thus the paradox of modern (or 'postmodern') relativism in the West is that superficial tolerance gives way to rigid intolerance, a form of compulsory relativism. Jain manypointedness expresses a different, almost opposite paradox. *Anekantvada* as a position of philosophical tolerance stems from the awareness that ultimate truth exists. Truth can be perceived in different ways, much as a perfect crystal can be viewed through any one of its many facets. The philosophy of tolerance and variety rests on a belief in the infallibility of the *Tirthankaras*, or fordmakers,

the twenty-four teachers who achieved full enlightenment and liberation. Against this level of spiritual authority every mortal human being is fallible and should show enough humility to be tolerant and flexible. As Dundas explains: *The central Jain intellectual position is that manypointedness, that is to say a variety of approaches and standpoints, has to be incorporated into any... judgement and regarded as evolving from two factors: the claim of full omniscience for the fordmakers, the authoritative teachers who mediate a correct understanding of the nature of reality to the unenlightened, and the interpretation of that reality as being characterised by both permanence and change.*

This balance of permanence and change is central to Jain teaching. It challenges the linear thinking that has predominated in Western and more occasionally Eastern ways of looking at the world. For the past three hundred years or so, the idea of progress as an inexorable forward march has underpinned attitudes towards economic development and social change, and attitudes towards the environment and technology. The linear view of progress, linked closely to economic growth, has prevailed in the West and by extension in global economy. Yet in a paradox that a Jain can readily appreciate, this notion of progress is being challenged by progress itself. Many of the most recent insights of physics point us towards a more holistic view of the universe, in keeping with the Jain idea that all life is interconnected, which forms the basis of *ahimsa*.

The linear conception of the cosmos, the natural world



Paul Dundas

and human affairs is in turn giving way to a cyclical view: we now talk quite routinely about climatic or evolutionary cycles. This approach is familiar to Jains, who view eras of time in terms of the downward and upward motions of a wheel, *avarsapini* and *utsarpini* respectively. The Jain concept of karma also involves cycles of death and rebirth, from which the individual soul seeks liberation. Relativity, sub-atomic particles and the insights associated with DNA and genetics all make sense to Jain cosmology. They reveal a universe that is neither mechanistic nor chaotic, but composed of an infinite variety of complex patterns. The relevance of the Jains' ancient wisdom to our age of complexity is one of the most powerful themes explored by Dundas.

Such insights also impact on attitudes towards human society and humanity's relationship with the rest of nature. The reintegration of human beings and nature is the starting point for 'green' philosophy and so it is tempting, especially for some Westerners, to see in Jainism the basis of a green spirituality or an 'ecological religion'. But the truth, as Dundas observes, is far more complicated than that:

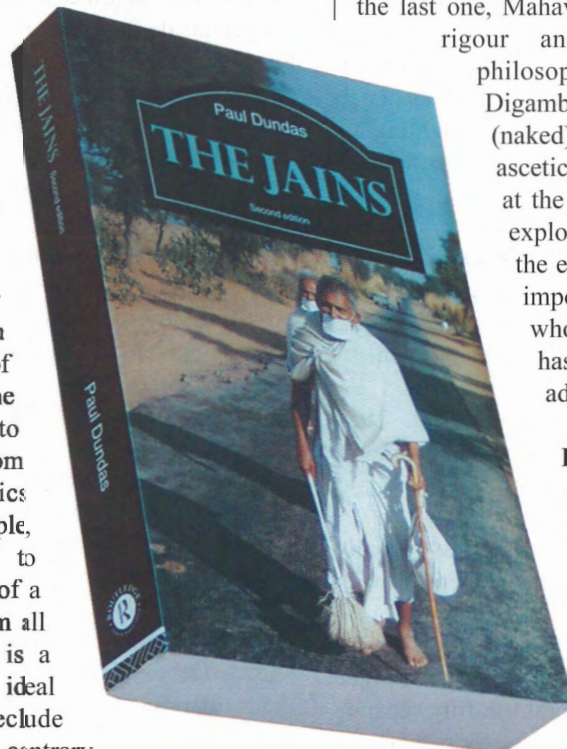
Environmentalism as a world-view is of course very much a component of modern Western, or westernised liberal discourse. And it is natural that the Jain community. ... would wish to align itself with this most obvious manifestation of contemporary ethical concern. ... [Yet] for traditional Jain ascetic practice, nature as the repository of an infinite number of differing and often unseen life forms is in fact a source of danger to be kept at bay rather than to be engaged with. ... Interaction with the natural world thus blocks spiritual progress. ... However, religions do not remain static and it may be that with 'Jain environmentalism' there can be seen the emergence of a westernised ethical discourse for a laity whose concerns throughout history have generally been more diverse and variable than those of the ascetic community.

Jain philosophy, in other words, draws no distinction between reverence for all forms of life and the renunciation of the world that is ultimately required to attain *moksha*, or deliverance from the karmic cycle. For ascetics especially, but also for lay people, *ahimsa* is linked intimately to renunciation, because it is part of a larger process of withdrawal from all human activity. But Jainism is a philosophy of balance and so the ideal of withdrawal does not preclude positive social action. On the contrary, *ahimsa* enjoins benevolence and care. This

helps us to understand the powerful Jain contribution to such areas as animal welfare, charity, science, medicine and law. The great achievements of Jains in these fields and others might indeed stem from the underlying ascetic ideal which gives them a sense of humility and, most importantly, a sense of proportion.

Respect for the individual is a crucial part of the Jain teaching. On the mundane level, *ahimsa* requires a profound awareness of human (and non-human) dignity. On the spiritual level, the *jiva* is for Jains at once a soul and a life-monad that passes through rebirth after rebirth. When it eventually attains deliverance, it retains its individuality, although it is divested of such karmic characteristics as gender and physical form. Jainism is a religion without a first cause, or supreme deity, although archetypal gods and goddesses abound. The absence of a supreme being has led some Westerners to view Jainism as 'atheistic'. This is incorrect for many reasons. One of them, which Dundas emphasises, is that the liberated souls (*jives*) achieve the status of the supreme self (*paramatman*), freed from karma and so akin to divinity. As Dundas explains: ... *the paramatman, often in fact referred to as 'God', [exists] in potential state within all beings. Jain devotional worship of the form-makers, who as a totality are frequently also designated as 'God', should be interpreted as being directed towards this and as an acknowledgement of the spiritual principle within each individual.*

The Jains provides a comprehensive and lucid account of Jain history, including the religion's ancient, pre-Vedic roots, the role of the twenty-four *Tirthankaras*, especially the last one, Mahavir, the 'Great Hero' of Jainism. With rigour and clarity, Dundas explains the philosophical differences between the Digambaras and Shvetambaras, the 'Sky Clad' (naked) male ascetics and the 'White Clad' ascetics of both sexes respectively. He looks at the influence of these two schools and he explores new developments in Jainism and the effects of Jain belief and practice. Most importantly, Dundas emerges as a scholar who personifies many-pointedness and who has become one of Jainism's strongest advocates.



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Revised edition of 'The Jains'

IF ONLY I COULD BE LIKE MY CELLS

Deepak Chopra highlights the invaluable spiritual lessons offered by our own bodies

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO LIVE A SPIRITUAL life? Who can teach me the core principles of spirituality? Strangely enough my own body can teach me everything I need to know. The cells of my body are already doing what I want to learn. My body does everything better, with more passion and commitment than me. The cells in my body have no problem fully participating in life. A hundred thousand billion of them signed on to the same silent agreement, which can be described through qualities that the most spiritual person would envy - but the most practical person would envy them at the same time. These shared qualities speak eloquently for what a cell agrees not to do as much as for what it does.

Higher Purpose: A cell agrees to work for the welfare of the whole body first and its individual welfare second. If necessary it will die to protect the body - the lifetime of any given cell is a fraction of our own lifetime. Skin cells perish by the thousands every hour, as do immune cells fighting off invading microbes. Selfishness is not an option, even when it comes down to a cell's survival.

Communion: A cell keeps in touch with every other cell. Messenger molecules race everywhere to notify the farthest outposts of any desire or intention, however slight. Withdrawing or refusing to communicate is not an option.

Awareness: Cells adapt from moment to moment. They remain flexible in order to respond to immediate situations. Getting caught up in rigid habits is not an option.

Acceptance: Cells recognise each other as equally important. Every function in the body is interdependent with every other. Going it alone is not an option.

Creativity: Although every cell has a set of unique functions (liver cells, for example, can perform fifty separate functions), these combine in creative ways. A person can

digest food never eaten before, think thoughts never thought before, dance in a way never seen before. Clinging to old behaviour is not an option.

Being: Cells obey the universal cycle of rest and activity. Although this cycle expresses itself in many ways such as fluctuating hormone levels, blood pressures and digestive rhythms, the most obvious expression is sleep. Why we need to sleep remains a medical mystery, yet complete dysfunction develops if we don't. In the silence of inactivity the future of the body is incubating. Being obsessively active is not an option.

Efficiency: Cells function with the least expenditure of energy. Typically a cell only stores three seconds of food and oxygen inside the cell wall. It trusts totally on being provided for. Excessive consumption of food, air or water is not an option, and neither is hoarding.

Bonding: Due to their common genetic inheritance, cells know that they are fundamentally the same. The fact that liver cells are different from heart cells, and muscle cells different from brain cells does not negate their common identity, which is unchanging. In the laboratory a muscle cell can be genetically transformed into a heart cell by going back to their common source. Cells remain tied to their source no matter how many times they divide. Being an outcast is not an option.

Giving: The primary activity of cells is giving, which maintains the integrity of all other cells. Total commitment to giving makes receiving automatic - it is the other half of a natural cycle. Hoarding is not an option.

Immortality: Cells reproduce in order to pass on their knowledge, experience and talents, withholding nothing from their offspring. This is a kind of practical immortality, submitting to death on the physical plane but defeating it on

the non-physical. The generation gap is not an option.

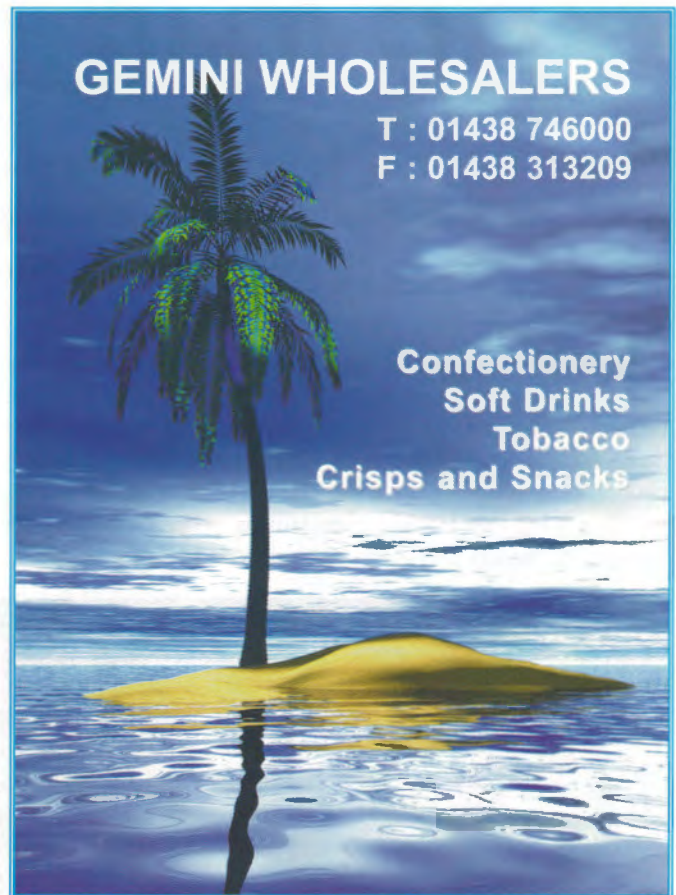
When I look at what my cells have agreed to, isn't it a spiritual pact in every sense of the word? Other labels work just as well for any of these qualities. The first, higher purpose, could be changed to surrender or selflessness. Awareness includes both alertness and adaptability. But my body is unconcerned with labels. To it, these qualities are woven into everyday existence. They are the result of life's inner intelligence evolving over billions of years as biology. If you examine the structure of a single cell, nothing like surrender, awareness or communion would be evident. These qualities aren't present in single-celled organisms like bacteria, yeasts, and amoebas. The mystery of life was patient and careful in allowing its full potential to emerge. Single-celled creatures continue to thrive - thousands live in your intestines, which could not digest food without them. Evolution moves forward, but it remembers where it has been and nothing is lost.

Even now the silent agreement that holds my body together feels like a secret, because to all appearances it doesn't exist. More than two hundred and fifty types of cells go about their daily business - the fifty functions that a liver cell performs are totally unique, not overlapping with the tasks of muscle, kidney, heart or brain cells - yet it would be catastrophic if even one function were compromised. As it divides into billions of progeny, the first fertilized cell in my mother's womb kept its link to the source. At the level of memory, I still am that first cell. If I possess a soul, anything I could possibly know about it was told to my body first.

The mystery of life has found a way to express itself through me. In fact that's my purpose for being here. Am I fulfilling that purpose? If you read over the list again and take note of everything marked 'not an option', you confront a stark fact: the very behaviour that would kill our bodies in a day hasn't been renounced by us as people. We are selfish and greedy. We refuse to cooperate. We behave as though there is no higher purpose more important than the demands of I, me and mine. In our fragmentation and confusion, we've been ignoring the very model of a perfect spiritual life inside ourselves.

As they evolved, cells learned what really works for survival. Your body can't afford to pay lip service to leading a spiritual life unless it wants to throw away eons of wisdom. Yet the vast majority of suffering in our personal lives comes about because we consciously choose to behave contrary to the soul bargain that keeps our bodies alive. 🙏

Deepak Chopra, MD is a pioneer of alternative medicine, a fellow of the American College of Physicians and founder of the The Chopra Centre for Well Being, California. The above article first appeared in Namaste, the official email newsletter of the Chopra community, and has been reprinted here with the kind permission of The Chopra Centre.



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BE THE CHANGE!

Rosey Simonds and David Woolcombe

believe that young people are energetic agents of transformation
— all we have to do is to trust and empower them

TODAY, AS OUR LEADERS PREPARE TO GO TO war, it is timely to remember that perhaps our most precious resource is not oil or real estate, but young people. In the past there was the idea that children should be 'seen and not heard' and even today people think of young people as a problem. Media stories abound about young people getting into trouble - vandalising property, beating up pensioners, having problems with drugs and relationships.

give them roles that they can play in society that encourage their altruistic instincts and enable them to become informed, caring and active citizens.

The question that always comes up is - HOW? How do you locate them? How do you nurture them to take action in constructive ways? What are the most constructive tasks that you can assign those young people who are eager to take action to improve their world? A lot of the answers to this are



Youngsters promote healthy living



A village girl participates in a Peace Child project

Unfortunately, these things happen. There are the mean, disruptive, disturbed and selfish young people, just as there are of any other age group. However, rather than view them as a problem, think positive! Having had the privilege of working with young people and empowering them to address global issues through Peace Child for the last twenty years, we believe that children and young people have a keen sense of what is fair, unsullied by the cynicism of adulthood. Many of them have an energy and an idealism for community and global improvement that adults can only wonder at. Apart from the two of us, our office is staffed entirely by young volunteers who give a year of their time to come and work with us.

Young people are the largest untapped resource available to the planet. It is surely the duty of those of us who work with young people to nurture their idealistic characteristics, and to

familiar and they remain valid and constructive today: raise funds for UNICEF through non-uniform days; start a school Amnesty group and get involved in a letter-writing circle; restore the school grounds and create habitats for hedgehogs. There is no end to things they can do.

However, many young people want to go further - and those are the ones that Peace Child has worked with since 1981. We first used the medium of drama to look at the major global challenges they faced and to support them to take action to address those challenges. For the first decade, we concentrated on the challenge of ending the Cold War. Peace Child arranged the first two-way US/Soviet youth exchange programmes, based on a musical which told the story of Russian and American children who become friends and, after numerous adventures, persuade their Presidents to become friends as well. Musical exchanges took place each summer

all over the former Soviet Union and the United States, as well as Israel, Central America, the former Yugoslavia, Azerbaijan, Ireland and Japan. Each production was different as it reflected the ideas of the particular cast members and dealt with different cultural divides: sometimes the greatest divides were within the same city.

Peace Child then went on to write books - all written, illustrated and edited by young people in a very similar format to the way we developed the musical. Following the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, Peace Child was asked to create a young people's version of Agenda 21 - the UN blueprint for the 21st century. This was all about sustainable development: how to enable and encourage young people to adjust their life-styles to be more sustainable within the constraints of a limited and fragile environment. Living lightly on the earth against a constant backdrop of consumerism is not easy for the average teenager in the western world. Fairness and rights are more easily understood. We have produced books on the environment and development, as well as on human and child rights.

However, although learning about the issues and becoming inspired was important, it was not enough. At the dawn of the new millennium Peace Child decided to canvass the opinions of its young members by organising the Millennium Young People's Congress (MYPC) in Hawaii where they identified their priorities for the 21st century. Education was at the top of their list, followed closely by gender equality, eradication of poverty, combating HIV/AIDS - all this was included in the eight Millennium Goals agreed by the heads of State at the UN Millennium Summit. These goals, which aim to halve the number of people who live in extreme poverty, are all supposed to be achieved by 2015! A short twelve years away! Many of the UN officials recognise that these goals are unlikely to be achieved unless we can inspire and motivate that 50% of the world's population that is under 25. For young people will be the greatest beneficiaries of the achievement of these goals and they will be at the greatest disadvantage if these goals are not achieved.

In light of this, the 'Be the Change!' programme was launched. As Mahatma Gandhi said: "You have to be the change you want to see in the world." That is why young volunteers in some of the poorest communities of the world, in countries such as Sierra Leone, Kenya and India have been gathering other like minded young people and thinking what they could do. Most of them cannot imagine how they could ever change, let alone be the force to change things. Yet, they gradually have discussed what the problems were and together devised endless ways that they could become sustainable and not just exist on hand-outs, regardless of their lack of education.

A bicycle courier service in Bangalore staffed by youth from a slum area, brick-making to keep pace with new building, a combatant carpentry training scheme for ex-child soldiers, a soap making enterprise, a learn one/teach one

programme - all these are ideas that have been proposed and carried out by young people. Peace Child assists them by helping to develop proposals, raise funds or write reports and evaluations.

We are also trying to link the schools of developing and developed countries. In this way both groups will broaden their perspectives of the world and gain a greater awareness of their ability to have an impact on the lives of others. This is the 'Adopt a Project!' programme. For instance, pupils in Michigan held an international food evening and raised money for a clean-up project in Nigeria or similarly, a Salsa party in Dundee helped pay for a self-help project for street children in Cusco, Peru.

Perhaps the key to all we do is getting young people to look at where they are now - not to fantasize about if they were someone else, in another situation, in another country - and see what they themselves can do. Sheku in Sierra Leone has succeeded in planting 30,000 trees in an area where the trees had been cut down because of the war. He could do this not because he had a degree in forestry, but because when he was nine, his Grandad showed him how to plant and take care of saplings. Now he is considered an expert and is being asked by the local authorities to work with them. Another boy, with no visible means of support, remembered that his grandparents kept bees and has now, with help, started a honey business.

In August 2003 in Morocco, 600 young activists will come together and share their experiences on what they are doing to help sustainable development and the development goals. We hope this will inspire many more young people to go out and do things in their communities. We hope that adults, governments and funders will see what a great resource we have at our disposal if we can help, advise and - above all - trust our young people. 🐼



Rosey Simonds and David Wollcombe, founders of Peace Child

David Wollcombe and Rosey Simonds are the backbone of Peace Child International, a UK-based NGO.

Visit www.peacechild.org and www.bethechange.info for further information and inspiration.

DANCING AT THE CROSSROADS

Dancer **Madhvi Dalal** elucidates the connections she sees between identity, spirituality and her art form

CROSSROADS. IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT, ONE always finds oneself at a mental crossroads. Always choosing which road to take and which path to follow. The mind constantly asks questions, and the same mind makes decisions by way of answering these questions. Hereby, one may be able to fathom and imagine the consequences it will have on the self.

However, seldom does one's soul ask these frequent questions. Perhaps it is because the immediate corollary of karma is not instantly apparent. Jainism teaches us to think about the soul and about karma. It teaches us to imagine the soul laden with karmic matter throughout its beginningless and perhaps endless existence, keeping the soul constantly vibrating. The soul has no hands to draw, nor body to hold the karmic matter. Our karmic bondage and the respective consequences of karma are not clearly evident to us immediately and that is why one is hardly ever aware when the soul is at a crossroads.

It is important to unify the soul and the mind, the spirit and the body, in order to be able to make correct and appropriate decisions. One must be constantly cognizant of the consequent actions and deeds (karma) that blemish the soul.

Occasionally, I do reflect on my soul. I do consider the importance karma has on my being in this life and many more to come. At the crossroads I try to follow the path that will free me from karmic bondage and consequently lead me to a higher stage of spiritual attainment. It is difficult to keep this frame of mind all the time, living as we do in a worldly environment. However, it is essential to be always aware of karma and to train the mind, the body and the speech organ to act or react in a virtuous way. It is important to acknowledge and recognise

when the soul is at a crossroads and hence choose an appropriate path.

I like the word 'crossroads'. It tells me a lot about human nature, spirit and moral fibre. It also reveals much about the questions we have concerning identity, ethnicity, culture, religion, tradition, upbringing, society and humanity. Often I stand at these crossroads, eyes wide shut,

contemplating my identity. I have brown skin, I speak Gujarati, I have an Indian surname. Does that make me Asian? However, I was born in Kenya, brought up there and I speak Swahili. Does that make me African? Then again, I now live in the UK, I work here, I speak English. Does that make me European? So, what am I? Who am I?

I know that many Indians of my generation, especially those living in the West, have similar questions about their identity. These arise because of the diverse backgrounds they have been brought up in. It is difficult to separate these varied cultures, customs and traditions. Yet we have to retain a particular identity for the society that we live in. We seem confused in our multi-ethnic world of conflicting

cultural issues and beliefs.

With this in mind, I decided to create a show which many individuals can relate to. Being a Bharatanatyam dancer and choreographer, I thought it apt to put on a performance that both the older and the younger generation could relate to. It is not aimed at answering any questions, but creating awareness within our multi-ethnic society. It clarifies and explains that the answer to a simple question like "Who are you?" can be very complicated and blurry for



many youths living in the West. This project, entitled *Crossroads*, is a contemporary dance beautifully choreographed to a fusion of Afro-Asian and European music, and this is its story:

Seren is an Indian girl who has been brought up in Africa and in her early teenage years she emigrated with her family to the West. The performance takes the audience through a journey of the life of a carefree soul, a free spirit and a playful heart.

As she blossoms into womanhood, her parents focus on finding her a 'suitable' husband. Out of respect for her parents, Seren does agree to meet a number of 'eligible' boys through the arranged system. Although the 'candidates' seem suitable, each, in one way or another, manages to enrage her free spirit...and pin down the carefree cloud! Her parents think that time is running out. She is getting older and the prospect of her finding a good Indian boy is wearing thin. Of course, fate plays a big role in one's life, but they want to help her decide how to plan her bright and stable future. After all, is this not the familiar road all well brought-up Indian girls from respectable families take?

Seren agrees that this is the road good Indian girls choose. But who is she? Indian... African... European? All she wants to do is to remain unbound by conventional ideas and have the sovereignty to make choices in her Life. What should she compromise with? Respect? Heart? Conscience?

As the winds change and leaves turn colour, an unexpected encounter brings Seren's life to a complete halt. For a moment, everything freezes around her. She has no sense of time, emotion, conscience or logic. This phase swiftly and instantaneously dissolves into an emotional roller coaster.

Seren meets Paul. Paul, a saxophonist, creates a rhapsody in Seren's life through his tender notes of hypnotic charm. She feels a direct spiritual connection with him. Is this real? Is this love? Can this be right? Is this allowed? Is she at a crossroads?

The performance illustrates the deep love Seren and Paul have for each other. Their ignorance to the difference in their colour and religion is the answer to their happiness. It shows how two souls meet and wholly bond through love and nothing else. Seren, still in her besotted and ecstatic state of mind, simply decides to share her exhilaration with her parents. Again her world freezes when they seem outraged at the idea of her marrying a 'white' man. They are very disappointed in her choice. They do not understand her. Where could they have gone wrong in her upbringing? How could she be so disrespectful? Is this what they have taught her? Did they sacrifice all they could to see this day? If she dares to continue

seeing this boy, she must leave home and forget her mum and dad.

Conversely, Seren doesn't understand this equation either. Shouldn't her happiness equal their happiness? According to her, Paul is everything they would be proud of. He would whole-heartedly support her emotionally and financially. Who else could be a more suitable boy? Opposing emotional outbursts engulf the air. Such aggravation, such conceit! Seren feels emotionally sick riding this roller coaster over again! Perhaps this is Life. Her parents order her to leave Paul and bury all memories and feelings she has for him. How can she do that? Why should she sacrifice her love for outdated beliefs? Or should she?

Perhaps this is the definition of culture and respect. Perhaps she will find an Indian Paul later in her life.

Seren tries to balance her innermost feelings. The voices from her heart and her mind are as loud as each other! The sound is so deafening! She has found herself at a crossroads again.

The performance deals with the choices Seren has to make and the roads she has to follow. Does she follow her heart and lose her parents, or does she follow her mind and lose her love?

The show depicts and emphasises love, arrogance, confusion, respect and aggravation, using expression, body language, melodies and rhythms. It is aimed especially at the younger generation living in a modern multi-ethnic environment, a generation that often finds itself at these crossroads. This modern-day *pièce d'art* of classical dance illustrates conflicting ideas of tradition and of the avant-garde, the Afro-Asian and the European, confusion and direction, heart and mind, love and respect and in particular: **identity!**

I feel that it is not adequate when one understands the complexity of identity and acknowledges that s/he is repeatedly at a *mental* crossroads. One must also make an effort to recognise when she/he is at a *spiritual* crossroads. One should try and choose the correct path which will eventually lead to the soul breaking free from the everlasting struggle to liberate itself from its worldly bondage. 🙏

Madhvi's details are in the contents pages.



THE GREAT MIGRATION BEGINS



Journeying into her Gujarati Jain family's history, **Mira Kamdar** discovers how her adventurous great-great-uncle led her grandmother's family to Burma's riches

NO MATTER HOW RICH THEY GOT OR HOW MANY decades they lived in town, the Kharas were always known to the people of Amreli as *gokhlanawalas*, which could be loosely translated as "hayseeds from Gokhlana." They never entirely shook their village origins. Why did they leave the village? It was serendipity, precipitated by a teenage boy in the family who, at an impressionable age, made a rash decision. Sometime right around 1900, no one alive knows exactly when, Jakalben Khara, Motiba's paternal grandmother, wanted to have her *kaambis*, or heavy silver ankle bracelets, repaired. In those days, Jakalben dressed in the distinctly regional clothing of village Kathiawar. She wore an open-backed blouse called a *kamkha*, tied

by a string at the back of the neck and the waist, tightly fitted in front with gathered pouches to contain the breasts, and nearly completely covered with embroidered motifs. She wore a gathered full-length skirt, or *chaniyo*, into which was tucked a *kapdu*, or half-sari, that was brought around the back and pulled up over the head and the right shoulder to drape in front before being drawn around and tucked into the left side of the skirt. The *kapdu* could be pulled down to completely cover the face in *laaj* in the presence of males or for going out in public where one might be seen by males. Finally, she was covered with jewellery. From her earlobes hung heavy gold earrings. More earrings adorned the outer edge of each ear, going all the

way up the side. She wore heavy chains of gold around her neck, multiple bangles of gold and coloured glass on each arm, heavy sculpted silver *kaambis* around her ankles, and silver rings on several toes. On the left side of her nose, she wore a nose ring. A married woman should be so ornamented. To be bereft of any of these ornaments was akin to being naked – or poor – in any case, not attired in a manner consistent with one's station in life.

Jakalben's *kaambis* needed to be repaired, so she sent her seventeen-year-old son, Motiba's uncle Premchand, to Amreli (the nearest town), to have them fixed by a jeweller known to the family. Premchandbhai left by bullock cart, hitching a ride with someone going into town. He was to deliver the broken *kaambis*, stay the night at a relative's house, and return with the repaired *kaambis* the next day. Not a difficult mission for a seventeen-year-old. But Premchandbhai didn't return the next day. In fact, it would be over a year before they heard from him again, and several years after that before he returned to Gokhlana.

On the way to Amreli, Premchandbhai Khara made an encounter of the sort that one is likely to make when travelling alone for the first time. He met a man who had recently returned from Burma. During the hours they travelled together, bouncing along the dirt track behind a team of plodding bullocks, this stranger told Premchandbhai the most amazing things. Burma was a land of unimaginable opportunity, a place of easy living where great riches were just waiting to be made. Young Premchandbhai drunk all this in: the exoticism, the temptation of wealth, the boundless opportunity. By the time they reached Amreli, he made a shocking and fateful decision. He would sell his mother's *kaambis*. So what if Jakalben had to walk about with naked ankles like the poorest of beggar women, this was the chance of a lifetime. He would sell the *kaambis* and use the money to get himself to Burma.

Premchandbhai had never been on a train before in his life. He had as yet had no contact with the world outside his village, a world of empire crisscrossed and connected by the steel rails of the British Indian Railway. But fearless in the way only a teenager can be, he sold Jakalben's *kaambis* and bought a train ticket for Calcutta, the nearest to Burma the railway could take him. When Premchandbhai Khara stepped onto the train, he stepped into the world of nineteenth-century British imperial India. It was a fateful step, one that would eventually take him and his entire family into the twentieth century and the wide world.

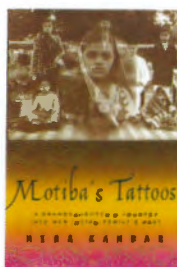
To young Premchandbhai, a village boy wholly innocent of the modern age, the three days between Amreli and Calcutta went by in a flash. Giddy with the sheer gumption of his grand adventure, he felt as if he was whizzing across the vast Indian subcontinent. One day he was sitting on a bullock cart on a dirt path in Gokhlana. A mere seventy-two hours later, he was standing on the banks of the mighty Houghly in the British imperial capital of Calcutta. There, with the last of his money, he bought a one-way, steerage-class ticket for steamship passage to Akyab, on the Arakan coast of Burma.

When he reached Akyab, he hadn't a single rupee left to his

name. He headed for the local Jain boarding house, where he was granted free room and board until such time as he could find a job and get himself on his feet. By the time Premchandbhai arrived in Akyab in 1900, Indians had been pouring into Burma in search of economic opportunity for fifty years. Each community – the Chettiar moneylenders from South India, the Gujarati traders, the Bengalis – took care of its own. At the Jain boarding house, Premchandbhai found home-style vegetarian cooking and people who spoke his language, who shared his religious beliefs, and who were full of advice on starting a new life in Burma.

Within a few days, he found a job. It was a modest one. He was to help out in the shop of a fellow Kathiawari who sold kitchen utensils imported from India. The shopkeeper was a Muslim and therefore a non-vegetarian, so Premchandbhai continued on at the Jain boarding house. Then, within the year, the shopkeeper died. This was a tragedy for his wife and children, but a stroke of good fortune for Premchandbhai. The Muslim merchant's wife had never been involved in the business and since she respected the requirements of *purda*, couldn't consider taking up work that would expose her to the public gaze. She begged Premchandbhai to take over the shop. He accepted. For the first time since leaving Gokhlana, he wrote home, informing his family – to everyone's astonishment – that he was alive and well and in possession of a profitable business in Burma. Couldn't they send over his brother Muljibhai? He could use the help, and there was money to be made. They sent Muljibhai, Motiba's father, my great-grandfather.

I heard this fantastic story of her family's start on the road to riches directly from Motiba. Khara family members have confirmed it, though there are some who are vague about the details or even totally unaware of how the dots between Gokhlana and Burma were ever connected. In any case, a different truth, if there is one, has long vanished. All that remains is memory, myth, and legend. And even if another, truer story could be discovered, it is by telling its very own rag-to-riches tale that the Khara family created an identity and gave the inchoate flow of its members' collective experience meaning and history. After all, the Rajput kings boast of a genealogy tracing their origin to the sun. If kings can be spawned by the sun, then merchants can be enriched by daring young men taking the bit of history in their teeth. Whether or not it is true, Motiba's version of the Khara family's ascent to riches is a great story.



Mira Kamdar is a Senior Fellow at the World Policy Institute. The above is extracted from her book 'Motiba's Tattoos' available from amazon.com

NETWORKING JAIN STUDENTS

Suraj Shah tells us about a new initiative to encourage university students to apply Jainism to modern life

SIX WEEKS INTO YOUR FIRST year at university and it is reading week: a time to reflect. You have never before been around such a large group of people of your age. In the first few weeks you experience a social life that you have never expected. You get caught up in the atmosphere. Then it hits you. The sense of purpose with which you started university has vanished. Those values which have been built into you over the years have gone into hiding. Nothing seems to make sense any more. Nothing feels right. What do you do? Who do you turn to? Where do you go?

Now, what if there were a group of students who shared the same values with which you were raised? What if these people thought and behaved in a way you felt most comfortable with? How could you continue to live a student life being so consciously aware of your thoughts and actions, be they emotional or physical? The Jain Student Network (JSN) in the UK was established in response to these very questions.

JSN is a countrywide initiative set up by Jain students in Britain, and is run under the umbrella of Young Jains UK. The vision for JSN is that each university area in the UK will have a group of students who wish to learn how to live a non-violent, soul-aware life. Each of these university areas will be a node of the national network of Jain students. The Jain Student Network at each node will hold regular sessions to share the Jain philosophy with each other and discuss methods of applying these thoughts to student (and wider) life.

Currently, through the drive of the JSN leaders, nodes exist at Warwick,



Suraj is inspired by his Granny

Manchester, Leicester, Cambridge, Aston, Bristol and London. Links are formed so that students in one node can meet like-minded students in another one through the events which bring these nodes together. Fun is maintained throughout. Last Halloween, a group of students created "Trick or Treat – Jain Style!" where they roamed the streets and handed out sweets to random people. It certainly brought contribution into play.



'Trick or Treat': Jain-style!

Strong links are formed with the local Jain communities too. JSN Manchester has been kindly offered the use of the Jain Samaj Manchester community hall. JSN Warwick was warmly welcomed by Jain Samaj Leicester to the local Jain temple.

It is vital to know who you are, and

through the understanding of this, the practice of Jain principles like *ahimsa* becomes more meaningful. This is regardless of what you are - a child, a student, a professional, a mother, a teacher - or where you live in the world. JSN wants to ensure that the understanding and exploration of Jainism continues whilst people are away from home and at university. The Jain Student Network is not limited to a particular area within the UK. It extends throughout the nation and by forming links with Jain societies at universities in the USA and other countries it will wrap itself around the world.

The leading students of JSN have been inspired by the activities they have taken part in via Young Jains UK. JSN only exists because a group of dedicated individuals got together, decided what they wanted, planned how they were to get it and made it happen. Action is the key! 🙏

Whilst studying at the University of Manchester, Suraj Shah is actively involved with Young Jains and has a vision to develop his soul and those of others by applying the principles of Jainism.

Young Jains is actively supporting the Jain Student Network and is offering sponsored membership to Young Jains UK. This means that qualifying students can become members of Young Jains for FREE. For more information on JSN and Young Jains Student Membership, see their website at <http://www.youngjains.org.uk/students/>

TEMPLES TAKE US HIGHER

Pooja A. Jain explains that by building temples, we lay the foundations for keeping Jainism alive

WE ARE CURRENTLY existing in the fifth era of the regressive half of the Jain time-cycle (*avarsapini*) and the state of our world also reflects this: war, poverty and illness surround us in our daily lives. There is a desperate need for some form of practical salvation. The presence of a temple is an ideal reply to the Jain society's outcry for a pure, positive influence on our lives.

The merits of building a Jain temple are numerous, especially in countries outside of India. Living in the West, I notice the distinct lack of knowledge about Jainism amongst my peers. Unfortunately, many Jain children themselves are unable to explain to non-Jains the basic concepts of our religion. It is our duty to work harder to counteract this decline in the understanding of our religion and to educate the youth. The building of a temple, I feel, is an essential step in achieving this.

A temple provides us with an organised infrastructure in which to practise Jainism. It is similar to going to school to acquire knowledge as opposed to studying at home. Our mind works differently in different environments and temples are an excellent place for spiritual development. At home, there are many worldly distractions (*sansarik*) such as watching television or playing on the computer. In contrast, in a temple it is easier to involve ourselves in the spiritual world and practise our rituals in a sacred environment filled with positive vibrations. It is an environment solely dedicated to spiritual progression. The chances of advancing religiously are a great deal higher in a temple than at home. The pure environment of the temple

encourages purity in our thoughts, which in turn influences our actions and invokes religious behaviour.



A new temple under construction in Gujarat, India

Praying in solitary meditation can be very effective but our mind can often wander. Temples allow people to meditate together in a religious environment, but it will not encourage them to talk. Instead, they gain support from seeing other people meditating hard as well. In the temple there is a greater variety of ways to worship and hence both our body and mind become involved, making religious practices more enjoyable.

Many of us, including myself, are inexperienced in conducting religious practices correctly. In a temple we have a chance to carry out rituals such as *pooja*, *aarti*, *samayika* and *pratikraman*, which are often difficult to do correctly at home. We have the opportunity to learn from other people and hence use our time more effectively. Children, seeing other

temple-goers, will feel encouraged to actively practise their religion, and will consciously feel proud of it as their confidence in their own Jain knowledge increases. In order for the youth to promote and support Jainism with sincerity and determination, it is imperative that they believe in its principles. To begin with, they need to learn about the fundamentals of Jainism. A temple is an ideal place for children to be informed about these values and then they will voluntarily choose to uphold them. This way these children will prove much more beneficial to the future position of Jainism in the world.

The temple is also a very useful means to bring the community together. It provides a common meeting point with a religious setting. It enhances us culturally, as we meet people of our religion and worship together. A temple very quickly becomes an integral part of the community and gives us an identity in a foreign country.

Seven years ago, when I joined the Jain school, Shri Chandana Vidyapeeth in North London, I immediately felt the benefit of the Jain community. I was learning about my own religion in the presence of other Jains. It was at the Jain school where I realised that building a temple will be an invaluable asset to our community: a meeting place for the younger and older generations alike, where we can all practise our religion together. Let us lay the foundations of our religion by building a temple and work to keep Jainism alive for future generations. 🙏

Pooja A. Jain is an A-level student and lives in London.

MOTHER TONGUE

Kajal Shah reflects on how her mother tongue enhances her understanding and appreciation of Jainism

EVERYONE ON THE BUS IS speaking Gujarati and, for the first time, I know exactly what each couple is arguing about. I can read all the road signs and the political slogans from the bus, which is going from Jamnagar to Palitana. The woman next to me unfolds a bundle and reveals hundreds of berries that she readily offers. She places a handful in my lap and as I worry about whether to wash them or leave them for later, she asks me where I'm off to. "Palitana," I reply, so she shoves another handful into my lap, saying: "It's very far, you'll have to eat." The realisation that I am at the 'place of my roots' has just dawned on me and I get a sudden surge of 'I know who I am'.

I'm the product of a migration that has played a fundamental role in our society. Both my grandfathers, members of the Oshwal Jain community, migrated to Kenya from Gujarat, India in the 1910s. As pioneers, they formed various associations and institutions to facilitate the assimilation of the new Gujarati Jain migrants, while conserving their culture, traditions and religion. The Gujarati language signified a crucial bond with their cultural heritage and played a vital role in the conservation of Jain ethics within this migrant community. However, the situation has changed with further migration when a large proportion of these people have moved to Britain in the past 30 years. The level of integration with the wider British society, combined with the diminishing importance of Gujarati for the second and third generations, have seen a rapid decline in the use of the language.

In a typical Oshwal Jain family in London the first generation tends to communicate principally in Gujarati



with minimal use of English. With close access to the Jain community, food and culture, they regularly attend social and religious events and maintain the links with their heritage. Following the rites and rituals is easier as they understand the complexities of the language in which these are conducted.

With the second generation, the situation is more complex. Cynthia Salvadori in her book *Through Open Doors* observes: "One of the most striking things about the Jain community in Kenya is how little the younger people know about Jainism." This made me wonder: is there a link between losing one's religion and losing one's inherited language and culture? Once children of migrant communities start going to school, English becomes the dominant language because it is also the language of their peers and playmates. This can easily lead to the rejection of Gujarati, or any other minority mother tongue for that matter, and give rise to a confusion of identity: are the young Jains living outside India

becoming strangers in their own culture? Will they ever be absorbed totally into the dominant culture of the UK, or whichever country they live in? We all recognise that English is gaining territory over Gujarati. In my peer group of migrant Gujarati Jains most of us can only express ourselves fluently in English. This is understandable when we live in a society where we are a minority.

And yet, this situation makes me anxious. After all, Gujarati has always been the key to my roots, a link to my community. It's my bond to being Jain. Jainism is fundamentally a set of universal principles, so the vehicle of delivery would then, in theory, be irrelevant. However, when roles in society and deep-rooted senses of identity are linked with the use of language, as is the case of Oshwal Jains, it plays a pivotal role in the practice and relevance of Jainism. It has utmost importance on my behaviour in social and religious contexts. It enriches my cultural experiences – such as visiting Jain pilgrimage sites in Gujarat, which I referred to at the beginning of this article. I find myself in an awkward position as I witness the declining numbers of young people at Jain lectures in Gujarati and the confusion on the faces of the elders during the English sessions. What was once a deep-rooted sense of belonging has now developed into a generation chasm. I feel we need to preserve Gujarati as the vehicle for the re-emergence, growth and development of Jainism amongst the Oshwal Jain community. After all, it's the glue that has bound us to it for over five centuries. 🙏

Kajal Shah is a young Jain living in London.

LESSONS FOR THE REAL WORLD

Reana Shah advocates a more open and relevant approach in Jain religious classes

FOR THE PAST EIGHT months, I have had the privilege of attending the youth group of a church in my town. I was invited by a friend and went because I am a firm believer in the Jain principle of multiplicity of viewpoints (*anekantvada*). I am glad I did go because I discovered a unique openness in the church's youth programme that our Jain religious class (*pathshala*) programme could benefit from by implementing its methods.

On the first day when I attended the Sunday morning youth service, I expected the sermon to be parallel to an unfamiliar Bible story. Instead, the youth pastor had an open discussion with some high school students about the provocative clothing depicted in today's media. He discussed with us the effects of dressing this way, such as the negative image we portray to others around us. I was very moved by his lecture because he provided logical reasons for his decent argument.

A few months later, I attended the annual Jain Centre winter camp. In our discussions throughout the weekend I realised that my age group is faced with many controversial issues: drinking, dirty dancing or dating behind their parents back being the most serious ones. In conversing with friends, we concluded that *pathshala* students needed to be better educated on making the right

decisions through healthy discussions about right and wrong. Lessons on morality are not offered in schools, and should therefore be addressed in a religious atmosphere where everyone shares similar cultural and religious values.



Attending church activities has given me a valuable insight into how controversial issues can be viewed in a religious perspective. The high school students at the church I have interacted with are placed in the same atmosphere as Jain students, but have an easier time making ethical decisions. I believe that with a few changes, our Jain *pathshala* classes can also address the practical issues of morality, and eventually produce young Jains who are ready to make the right choices when they find themselves in tough situations.

A major benefit of my church experience was meeting a couple of college interns there. They attended a nearby college and were present at

high school activities. They have offered their wisdom, as they have gone through similar issues and have seen the consequences of different choices their peers have made. We participated in helpful discussions regarding everyday high school issues,

including parties and dating. The advice of young adults, I think, has been very helpful because they made us feel comfortable by talking about things that might be bothering us. If *pathshala* teachers could adjust the curriculum to include the lessons they have learned from the mistakes they had made in their youth, openness with the students would undoubtedly come about. In *pathshala* classes today the principles and legalistic points of Jainism

tend to be the focus. While I do not disagree that these are important, I do believe that students would also benefit from discussions about putting Jainism into practice in their everyday lives. After all, *being* a good Jain is just as important as performing Jain rituals. Being and doing are essential components of any religion; one cannot function without the other. Learning about making ethical Jain decisions in everyday situations is, I feel, essential and should therefore be added to the Jain *pathshala* curriculum. 🙏

Reana's details are in the contents pages.

THE TALE OF BHARAT AND BAHUBALI

Recounted by **Sudha Seshadri** and illustrated by **Aneesh Datey**

ONCE UPON A time, long long ago, the gods descended on earth and built a beautiful city called Ayodhya. The city had two walls, one of mud and the other of stone. In the centre was the palace of Nabhi and his wife Marudevi, the parents of Rshabha, the first Jain *Tirthankara*.

Rshabha married two princesses, called Sumangla and Sunanda. Queen Sumangla gave

birth to a hundred sons, of whom the eldest was named Bharat, and a daughter Brahmi. The younger queen Sunanda had one son called Bahubali and a daughter named Sundari.

As they grew older Rshabha taught Bharat leadership, governance and dance. Another son, Rshabhasena, learned music, yet another mastered painting, sculpture and architecture. Bahubali studied medicine and the art of warfare. Of the two sisters, Brahmi learnt the art of writing and Sundari the science of mathematics. According to legends they were among the first to receive formal education on earth.

One day, Indra, the king of the heavens, decided to remind Rshabha that he had to teach his people the Jain way of life. So Rshabha renounced the life of a king and became an ascetic. Rshabha crowned his eldest son Bharat king and appointed Bahubali as the next in command. On the day of the coronation Rshabha sought permission of his parents and other elders to renounce the world. He sat in a palanquin and was taken in a procession to a park outside the city, where he took off his royal garments and jewels. He then sat under the branches of a banyan tree and plucked out his hair in five handfuls. The hair was received by Indra, in a gem-studded casket and cast into the



The King of Magadha Tirtha bows to Bharat.

Ocean of Milk. All the gods showered their blessings on Rshabha.

Rshabha fasted and meditated for a whole year. By doing so, he gained omniscience: knowledge about everything there is to know. The air resounded with divine music, Indra and all the gods in heaven rejoiced. Indra danced in joy. Rshabha was now going to give his first sermon, to preach the Jain doctrine to all living creatures from the earth, heavens and netherworld. His words would, with the light of his knowledge, dispel ignorance and darkness from the earth. The gods built a special assembly hall (*samavasarana*) for Rshabha. Sparkling with gems, the hall had three enclosures, with four paths leading towards the centre from the east, the west, the north and the south. In the middle was a lion throne upon which Rshabha sat. Above him was a three-tiered parasol and behind his head was seen the radiance of a halo. Near his throne was an asoka tree. Celestial beings

surrounded his throne, beating kettle drums, waving fly-whisks as well as flags, and showering him with fragrant flowers. In a voice that resounded like thunder he taught the people the timeless Jain philosophy, which is taught by every *Tirthankara* who is born on earth to lead mankind towards salvation.

On the very day that Rshabha gained omniscience, two wonderful things happened. A son was born to Bharat and a celestial wheel appeared in Bharat's armoury. This wheel was an omen that he was destined to be a world conqueror. Bharat waited until after the rainy season to begin his



Bahubali holds Bharat aloft

conquest of the world. He set out with a large army, following the magical wheel which led the way. So great was his army and so superior his prowess that kings everywhere bowed down to his challenge and accepted his supremacy. Bharat conquered all the continents and mountainous regions. He returned victorious to Ayodhya. Much to his surprise, the wheel stopped at the gates and refused to enter the city. He soon realised that his conquest of the world was incomplete because his brothers had not accepted his supremacy. He sent messages to his brothers to accept subjugation. All the brothers except Bahubali gave up their lands to Bharat, and went away to join their father's religious order.

Bahubali, on the other hand, took up Bharat's challenge and went to war. The two armies prepared for the great battle and met on the battlefield. Just then, the advisors of both camps spoke to Bharat and Bahubali, saying that it would be pointless to wage war in which there would be bloodshed and loss of innocent lives. Their elders felt that the matter could be settled by holding a series of duels between the two brave warriors. Both brothers readily agreed to the suggestion and the war between the armies was averted. It was decided to hold three duels: a staring contest, a fight in water and a wrestling match.

Bahubali, with his training in warfare, easily won the first two duels. In the wrestling match, too, he easily overpowered Bharat and held him high over his head. Bharat called out to the magic wheel for assistance. But to his dismay, the wheel circled around Bahubali and then stood by his side. Bahubali, at that very moment, became upset that he was about to kill his own brother. Filled with remorse, he gently put Bharat down and begged his forgiveness.

Bahubali then fled to the forest and stood still with his hands by his side and eyes closed. He remained in this position for a long, long time, but did not gain omniscience like his

father Rshabha. True knowledge eluded him. Worried about his brother's plight, Bharat consulted Rshabha. The first *Tirthankara* through his inner vision told Bharat that it was pride which was standing in the way of Bahubali's omniscience. Learning this, Bharat went to the forest to see Bahubali, accompanied by his two sisters. When they

reached Bahubali they found that their brother had stood so still that ant-hills had grown around his legs, creepers had entwined his body and birds had nested in his beard.

The two sisters went up to Bahubali and whispered that he should dismount from the elephant. At first, Bahubali was puzzled by what his sisters had said to him. However, he soon realised that they were asking him to let go of his pride and resentment. As soon as he understood this message, the heavy burden of resentment and pride vanished and he gained not only omniscience but also liberation from the cycle of birth and death. He was liberated from the Ocean of Rebirths even before his father Rshabha, the first *Tirthankara*.

Bharat continued to rule the kingdom wisely and was witness to Rshabha's liberation. One day, he saw a grey hair on his head. He considered this a sign from the gods. He crowned his son and renounced the life of a king for that of an ascetic. Through meditation and fasting, he too gained

omniscience and was ultimately liberated from the cycle of life and death. 🙏



Bahubali deep in meditation

Sudha Seshadri is a freelance editor and writer living in Mumbai, India. This story is extracted from the writings of Dr. Saryu Doshi, a renowned Jain scholar. Aneesh Datey is an artist living in Mumbai, India.

FORGIVENESS, LIGHT AND LIBERATION

Padmanabh Jaini continues his survey of key Jain festivals

Paryusana-Parva/Dasa-Laksana-Parva (August)

Paryusana, which means 'passing the rainy season', is dedicated to the cultivation of certain religious practices of a relatively long duration. Jain monks and nuns, unlike their counterparts in other religions, do not have permanent abodes in the form of monasteries and nunneries; they are obliged by law to stay only a few days or weeks at a time in any one place. During the four months of the rainy season (*caturmasa*), however, they are required to choose a fixed place of residence and spend their time within the boundary of that village or town. The presence of nuns and monks (who must always live separately and in groups of a minimum of three persons) during the rainy season thus affords great opportunities for the lay devotees to undertake a variety of religious practices. The elders in the Jain community plan for this occasion a year in advance by inviting a particular group of monks or nuns to come to their town. Since Jain mendicants must travel by foot, they set out on their journey early enough that they may arrive before the onset of the rainy season, which officially begins on the fourteenth day of the waxing moon of *Asadha* (June/July). On that day, laypeople visit the mendicant teachers and resolve to lead temporarily a life of restraint. This may include dietary restrictions (such as not eating certain kinds of foods or not eating at night time), sitting in meditation in a regular manner every day or the study of a particular scripture.

Participation in these religious observances becomes more intense during the week-long celebration of the *Paryusana-parva*. For the Shvetambaras, this begins on the twelfth day of the waning moon of *Sravana* (August) and ends on the fourth day of the waxing moon of *Bhadrapada*. The Digambaras celebrate the same festival a week later, for ten days.

During these eight or ten days many members, young or old, of the Jain community observe some form of restraint regarding food. Some may eat only once a day or fast completely on the first and last days, others refrain from eating and drinking (except for boiled water) for the entire week. These latter spend most of their time in temples or monasteries in the company of monks. All participants attempt in these various ways to emulate the life of a mendicant for however short a time, detaching themselves from worldly affairs and leading a meditative life. Each day monks and nuns give sermons, placing special emphasis on

the life and teachings of Mahavir. For a second time the Shvetambaras celebrate the birth of Mahavir by reading the *Kalpasutra* in public, thus rededicating themselves to his ideals.

The Digambaras refer to the festival of *Paryusana-parva* also by the name of *Dasa-laksana-parva*, the Festival of Ten Virtues: forgiveness, humility, honesty, purity, truthfulness, self-restraint, asceticism, study, detachment and celibacy. They dedicate each day of the festival to one of the virtues.

The celebration of *Paryusana-parva* comes to a climax on the last day, when Jains of all sects perform the annual ceremony of confession, *samvatsari-pratikraman*. This is the holiest day of the year for the Jains, who take leave from work or school on this occasion to participate in the activities. On the evening of this day, when almost all participants have fasted, Jains assemble in their local temples and in the presence of their mendicant teachers they confess their transgressions by uttering the words *Michchami Dukadam* (may all my transgressions be forgiven). They then exchange pleas for forgiveness with their relatives and friends. Finally they extend their friendship and goodwill to all beings in the following words:

"I ask pardon of all living creatures;

May all of them pardon me.

May I have a friendly relationship with all beings,

And unfriendly with none."

Vira-Nirvana (November)

The festival of *Vira-Nirvana*, the anniversary of the death of Mahavir, occurs on the fifteenth day of the waning moon of *Asvina*. In the year 527 BC on this night Mahavir, at the age of 72, entered Nirvana, the state of immortality, the freedom forever from the cycle of birth and death, in a place called Pavapuri, near modern Patna. Towards dawn, his chief apostle (*ganadhara*) Indrabhuti Gautama, a monk of long-standing, is said to have attained enlightenment (*kevalajnana*), the supreme goal of a Jain mendicant. Tradition has it that Mahavir's eighteen contemporary kings celebrated both these auspicious events by lighting rows of lamps. This act of 'illumination' is claimed by the Jains as the true origin of Diwali, the Hindu Festival of Lights, which falls on the same day. The Hindus, of course, have a different legend associated with Diwali and their festival probably antedates Mahavir's Nirvana.

Devout Jain laypeople observe *Vira-Nirvana* by undertaking a twenty-four-hour fast, spending this time in meditation. It is considered highly meritorious to keep vigil throughout this holy night, especially at the actual site of Mahavir's Nirvana. Those who cannot make the pilgrimage perform a memorial worship in their local temple by lighting lamps in front of an image of Mahavir. This solemn service takes place early in the morning of the next day, the first day of the waxing moon of *Karttika*, prior to the breaking of the day-long fast. The ceremony concludes with a public recitation of an ancient hymn addressed to all 'liberated beings' (*siddhas*), including Mahavir:

"Praise to the holy, the blessed ones, who provide the path across, ... those who are endowed with unobstructed knowledge and insight ... the Jinas, who have crossed over, who help others cross, the liberated and the liberators, the omniscient, the all-seeing, those who have reached the destiny of the *siddha*, from which there is no return and which is bliss immutable, inviolable, imperishable and undisturbed; praise to the Jinas who have overcome fear. I worship all the *siddhas*, those who have been and those who in future will be."

**Karttika-Purnima/
Ratha-Yatra** (December)
The festival of *Karttika-purnima*, occurs within a fortnight of Diwali on the full moon day of *Karttika*. This marks the end of the

rainy season. On the following day the monks and nuns, who have stayed in retreat for four months, must resume their wanderings. At the same time, laypeople are released from the various vows which they had undertaken for the duration of the season. The festival of *Karttika-purnima* provides them with an opportunity to thank the monks and nuns for their sermons and counsel.

Laypeople celebrate this day by putting an image of the Jina into an immense, beautifully decorated wooden vehicle (*ratha*) and pull it by hand through the streets of the city. The procession, known as *Ratha-yatra*, is headed by monks and nuns, and begins at the local temple, winding its way through the city to a park within the city limits. Here a prominent monk gives a sermon and lay leaders call for generous donations in support of the various social and religious projects (such as building temples, libraries or hospitals) that



Lay people celebrate *Karttika-purnima* with a special street procession known as *Ratha-yatra*

have been inspired by the presence of the mendicants. The procession then returns to the temple and the people go home in a festive mood.

Bahubali-Mastaka-Abhiseka
(Every Twelve Years, February)

Finally, we may mention a special ceremony. Although not part of the annual cycle, it is the most famous and by far the most spectacular of all Jain festivals. This is called *Mastaka-abhiseka* (head-anointing) and is held every twelfth year at Shravana Belgola, in Karnataka in honour of the Jain saint and hero, Bahubali. The 1981 performance of this very popular ceremony was especially dramatic, since it fell on the thousandth anniversary of the consecration of Bahubali's statue, which was installed by the Jain general, Camudaraya.



Bahubali-mastaka-abhiseka is celebrated with a dramatic and colourful ceremony

Hundreds of thousands of Jains from all over India came to the small town of Shravana Belgola, in order to anoint and to meditate before this monumental statue of Bahubali, which is fifty-seven feet tall and was carved out of granite on a hilltop just outside of the town. The statue depicts Bahubali, the first man to attain Nirvana in our present time cycle, standing erect, completely naked, immersed in deep meditation. Bahubali is believed to have held this posture, oblivious to the vines and snakes gathering around him, for twelve months in a heroic effort to root out the last vestiges

of impurity. In order to honour his achievement and to gain great merit for themselves, the faithful come to Shravana Belgola every twelve years and erect a temporary scaffolding behind the statue with a platform at the top. From this platform they anoint Bahubali with various ointments consisting of yellow and red powder, sandalwood paste, milk and clear water, with the colours of these materials symbolically representing the stages of purification of Bahubali's soul as it progresses towards enlightenment. 🙏

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THE AHIMSA OF ECOTOURISM

Hitesh Mehta tells us that his career has been greatly influenced by ethics

IMAGINE yourself in a far-flung and pristine tropical locale. A place as beautiful as the Serengeti, or the Amazon rainforest, or the Western Ghats of Kerala, or a Fijian Island. Imagine yourself lying on a locally hand-woven hammock, sipping organic shade-grown coffee. How about pesticide-free pineapple juice? Better still, mango lassi made from organic mangoes and milk from cows that are free ranging, no hormones, no antibiotics and fed on grass grown *without* any pesticides!

Imagine yourself staying in an ecolodge, which has been built with environmentally friendly materials, constructed using local skills and without damaging any existing vegetation, designed with low-impact, light-on-the-land principles and where part of your money goes not only towards the conservation of the neighbouring protected areas but also helps benefit local communities. Imagine yourself going on hikes with local guides who give you heart-to-heart talks about local plant and animal species, food, cultural taboos and ancient ways of living. Imagine feeling mentally, spiritually and physically satisfied...just imagine...

What you are imagining is the exciting, beautiful world of ecotourism: welcome to the fastest growing niche market of the tourism world! A market that is low-impact, that practises non-violence principles and which, as a sector of the tourism industry, has helped to alleviate poverty in several rural parts of the world. It is the one sector of the tourism industry that has the greatest respect for both faunal and floral species as well as the welfare of the local people. To put it simply, ecotourism is the 'Jainism' of the leisure industry.

So, I hear you ask, what is ecotourism? The globally respected ecotourism organisation, The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) defines ecotourism as "responsible



Ecotourism planning seeks to involve local people

travel to natural areas, which conserves the environment and sustains the well-being of local people." One of the main components of ecotourism is interpretation, which is the use of preferably local guides who impart their knowledge of local plants, culture and animals to the tourist. Ecotourism has exploded within the past five years and will continue to grow exponentially in the next fifteen years. It is also influencing other forms of tourism. Also,

ecolodges are springing up in all corners of the earth – from the ice fields in Northern Canada to the deserts of Southern Africa.

I have been planning ecotourism destinations and designing ecolodges for the past seven years. The firm I work for in Florida, EDSA, is the largest ecotourism planning office in the world. Our projects are located in all corners of the globe: China, India, the Caribbean, Kenya, Galapagos, Egypt, Canada, Fiji, the list goes on. My upbringing as a Jain has heavily influenced the way I plan and design ecotourism destinations. I employ the principle of *ahimsa* in all my designs. In my projects, sensitive lands are designated for total protection where no development can take place. Jain values and principles are evident – there is respect for animals, plants and the soul of the place. The approach right from the outset is that of low-impact development.

My spiritual upbringing has greatly shaped the way I carry out research and analysis or plan destinations. So much so that my recent book *International Ecolodge Guidelines* is the only planning book in the world that addresses various metaphysical ways of reading the landscape, such as Feng Shui, Vaastu Shastra, Native American and Aboriginal methods. This book is now regarded as the most comprehensive one on ecolodges and is currently used as a required text by many professors around the world.

The influence of Jainism on my work makes a positive

difference both to myself and to the actual environment and people who live and use (or are affected by) the areas where I design. It is important to invest careful thought into the planning and design of any development. There is a tendency for people to take their built environment and urban spaces for granted, not realising just how their environment actually affects them. It is this realisation that makes ecotourism planning progressive in its approach to design. All the planning and design principles employed in ecotourism are sustainable in nature. In my experience, an ecotourism planner is distinguished by the fact that s/he is not driven by the ego; s/he is sensitive to both environmental and social issues and has a holistic approach to design. This is significantly different to that of the mass tourism planner.

I am a strong believer in using local knowledge at the beginning of the planning process. In most cases, I find that indigenous people are the best stewards of the land and the most non-violent. They live in harmony with their surroundings, leading a sustainable life and treading lightly on the land. Incorporating their wisdom right at the beginning of the planning process helps ensure a win-win situation. Community empowerment through planning is the right thing to do and will guarantee a sustainable project because the local people will embrace it. Respect for other human beings and their ways of living is an important Jain value; it is also integral to ecotourism.

Our office is currently working on the master planning of the first ecotourism destination in India. Located in the Western Ghats of Kerala, this 'mind, body and soul' destination will be the first hill station in India that prioritises local architecture and landscaping. Right from the beginning, we organised community meetings and gave local people the opportunity to design and plan their dreams. Their feedback has been invaluable and has greatly enhanced the final master plan.

There is much to learn from ecotourism planning. The synergy between Jainism and the holistic approach of ecotourism to planning is the way of the future. In the words of the famed

sustainable design architect, Bill McDonough (*Time* magazine, 'Hero' of the year 2000): "As we consider having 'designs' on the earth, and as we continue to design our place upon it, the concept of the ecolodge illuminates our path to the most important work ahead. To become indigenous again means engaging the best of human technology with local natural circumstance and culture in ways that honour all these elements. Ecolodges are a leading strategy for such engagement. One can hope all buildings will one day be designed like this."

Ecotourism has helped me understand Jainism better. There are many consultants around, all claiming their expertise in 'ecotourism'. 'Greenwashing' in the industry is rampant and people are out to make a quick

buck. Just as in ecotourism, I see much hypocrisy within today's Jain communities. I grew up in Nairobi, where over 90% of the people who claim they are Jains wear leather slippers and shoes, use medicine and cosmetic products that have been tested on animals, develop houses and buildings that are harmful to the environment. I would safely say that this is probably the case with 'Jains' everywhere. We have a world of pseudo-Jains! However, it is better to have those Jains than to have no Jains at all.

I stopped calling myself a Jain a long time ago because I felt that I was breaking a few rules: I played cricket at the highest level with a leather ball; I have unusually flat and wide feet and no non-leather hiking and sports shoes are available that fit me. Even though I eat mainly organic vegetarian food at home, use only products that are biodegradable and not tested on animals, and

recycle and reuse, and am a vegetarian, I feel that it would be hypocritical to call myself a Jain. However, I am grateful for the 'Jain' conditioning I have had and I credit the Jain influences in my work. I am thankful that I was born a Jain. 🙏

Hitesh's details are in the contents pages.



Wolong Giant Panda Reserve, China



Plan for hill retreat in Kerala, India

WORKING THE JAIN JIGSAW

Rupesh Shah believes that becoming a Jain means constant puzzle-solving in the workplace

"I'm starting a new business."

"What? But, Mum, what about your accounting?"

"Accounting, b'ccounting. I've had enough of working for that company. Something doesn't sit right anymore." Denuka spun the bottle of chilli sauce on its side and watched its centre stay still on the kitchen table.

"Don't play with food. It's *paap*," her son retorted.

"I'm playing with the bottle," she said, giving it another more leisurely twist this time and noticing the sauce inside roll up the sides and slurp back down again. "Have you ever looked at your hand and considered how great it was – how it had been designed so fabulously that pens slot in neatly between thumb and forefinger and rest on your middle finger as if that was why the middle finger could bend like that?"

"Yeah, they are kind of special. But, Mum..."

"Well, I've been wondering about how good my hands really are."

"Huh?"

"Well, when it comes to handling chopsticks I can't say that they feel well designed."

"Maybe that's chopsticks."

"I doubt a billion Chinese people would agree."

"I'm sure there are many things you can do with your hands. Wait a sec, let's go back to your job."

"I told you – I'm quitting. Starting out on my own."

"But how can you?"

It seems to me that there is a bit of a puzzle at the heart of being a lay Jain in the 21st century. This puzzle or irony comes from an apparent contradiction, or at least something of a tease between the 'messages' I hear regarding the religious 'rules' that help define how to become a Jain and the

'messages' I hear concerning the social and cultural 'rules' of being a member of the Jain community.

As a member of the overwhelmingly well-to-do Jain community, I often hear very clear communication regarding the importance of success when defining my life-existence as an Oshwal Jain. Rather than being specific statements, e-mails or letters by individuals, these messages present themselves to me as a pattern of images, icons and stories, which are presented as the cultural symbols of a 'good life' – the educational success of people, the tales of well-paid jobs secured, fables of grand houses, financially successful businesses and money donated to charity.¹

These messages all seem to convey something about the importance and value of material success and improvement in our physical world in defining my existence as a young Jain. To be sure, many of these messages are amplified through the loudspeaker of our consumerist, patriarchal, 'economic-growth-at-all-costs', separative civilisation.²

Yet, at the same time as I receive such messages, I also hear another very different group of messages related to the religious aspect of my becoming a Jain. These concern the need to pursue a life defined by non-violence (*ahimsa*). I hear stories about the need to strive towards the release from the karmic cycle through an attitude of detached compassion for the sensations of the material world.

So, from one part of the forest of daily noise I perceive the wild call to strive for material success and wellbeing in this physical world. At the same time, I also hear a polite request from other parts of the forest, which suggests that I should really focus on my soul – the 'more-than-physical-me', if you like. This other set of messages seem to contradict, or at least put in doubt, the value, validity and soundness of the first set.

1. I am making reference to a broad realm of messages, which include direct verbal cues, as well as communication that comes from the histories, visions, pictures and worldviews of a more aggregated level of the 'conscious mind'.

2. I have used the term 'separative' very intentionally here. By it I am seeking to make reference to a culture which seems to me to **attempt** (but ultimately fails) to separate things rather than understand their unity; so for example it seems to focus on a separation between man and nature, between male and female, facts and values, West from East, 'self' from 'other' or between good and evil.

Working a tease

If I listen carefully, these contradictory injunctions can make themselves known to me in all manners of my different relations with the world at work. For example, how is my presence at work connected to the social conditions in the Nicaraguan, Chinese or Moroccan factory where the clothes that I wear to work are produced, to the treatment of unknown numbers of women workers or the wages that are barely liveable? In what ways can I be responsible for where and how I invest the money I have earned? What meaning can I decipher if my savings bank invests in oil mining, when all I need is a safe place to put my hard-earned money for a more secure future? Or what if the company whose shares I buy also employs child labour?

the act of digging large holes in the ground or perpetuating conditions for civil war. And what about the accountant who keeps their books or the banker who finances the deal?

Becoming a Jain

The teasing can go on and on for all manner of questions about how we enact Jainism in our daily lives. One theme that runs through these various examples is the evocation of the interrelated issues of business, consumption and work. In a couple of text boxes throughout this article I've placed a spectrum of suggestions for the kind of actions with which you could experiment to deal with the tension of **enacting** Jainism in your working life.

It seems to me that our foremothers and forefathers in



This teasing can go further. What about the actual time and energy I invest in my working life? If I busy myself with becoming a good professional researcher and make regular donations to charities, how does the nature of my work matter there? In the last year, as part of my work, I travelled by plane to India, Nigeria and Germany and made countless trips across the UK. How can I understand the relationship between the souls (*jiva*) that I harmed in making such journeys and the furtherance of my career as an educator? How does the very work of that organisation matter? We assume that owning a slaughterhouse is out of the question, because of the principle of engaging in businesses or professions that minimise harm to other life. But what does it mean when 'dealing in gems', which has been constructed as a suitable profession for Jains, is seemingly separated from

Indian villages may not have had to deal with the same kind of complexity that seems to crop up in my daily life choices. I am not claiming that there was some previously innocent period when lay Jains felt no contradictions between the religious values and the life choices they had to make. In fact, I think this slightly puzzling nature is inherent in the art of **becoming a Jain**.

The notion of liberation from the karmic cycle (*moksha*) suggests an end point in the puzzling. However, getting to this point seems to be about **becoming more fully a Jain**. This seems to involve developing some understanding of the changing nature of the world around us and a sense that Jainism is not a thing that I can achieve in separate parts of my life or once-and-for-all, but instead something I must work at continuously.

Some of the things in the box entitled 'Doing work differently' are akin to a suggestion to dig deeper into your pocket for a donation to charity, without having to change the 'colour of the money' you offer: they are about doing business differently. But I am also hoping to encourage some wonderment about how we make our time, money and power; how we use these and what we do with our dreams about them.

I am wondering about how to make the values and aspirations of becoming a better Jain come into more intimate contact with the 'self' in everyday working life – the big ways that we chose to **be** and **exist** as well as the little things we **do**. I have found that as I spend more time poking around at my values at the things that give meaning to my life, like individual freedom to speak or the need to re-enchant the more-than-human world, the more I can begin to notice where my actions might differ from these values and the more I can then experiment at becoming better at this. So if you are not quite ready to transform your supermarket into organic, your clothes shop into one that works only through ethical labour and fair trade, or your career in accounts into a venture in community building, perhaps you could start by trying to **bring an**

inquiring attitude to something you do at work.

Maybe you shouldn't try to do anything about this 'something' in the first instance. Perhaps it would help to give it a name – to label it as something worthy of attention, just like we label things as 'the weather', 'her look' or 'the sound of birdsong'. You could then first move to find out when this something is happening (or not happening) and merely to become more aware of this occurrence. As you discover more about this, begin to question the situations, the contexts, the historical reasons. You might then make comparisons or ask what stories are *not* being told. Work with this, play with it and have fun developing different types of self-awareness in the midst of your daily work. And apparently from there it's just two small steps to a jigsaw-free nirvana. 🙏

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

Doing work differently

- Make one work/business trip that you would normally make by car by bus or train instead. See how easy or difficult doing this is. Offset your carbon emission from airplane travel:

www.carbonneutral.com

What other things could you offset?

- Try to install a 'water hippo' in the toilets at your business/organisation.

- Find out about the options for ethical and environmental investment, savings and pensions options. See for example...

www.triodos.co.uk; www.caa.org.au/EIT

- Try to find out about one of the products that you sell in your business – how is it made, by whom, how much do they earn, what are the working conditions? If you can't find this out then perhaps you can ask why doing something like this is so difficult yet it is so easy to find the exact share price-earnings ratio or cricket score at the click of a button.

www.fairlabor.org, www.labourbehindthelabel.org

- Start encouraging a fair-trade and ecological buying policy within your company. Start with the coffee and tea, and dream about what you buy at the core of your business or work.

- Explore the Natural Step framework for bringing ecological sustainability into your organisation

www.naturalstep.org

Doing different work

- Explore the possibilities of 'industrial ecology' or a co-operative ownership structure.

- Investigate using Timebanks or Lets Schemes – these are complementary currency systems that might allow us to bring our economic wellbeing into closer harmony with the health of our local community.

www.timebanks.co.uk; www.gmlets.u-net.com

- Become a social entrepreneur and a custodian of the future as well as a business person - invest your money in alternative energy, recycling or social business that seeks to make a return on investment for the next 200 years as well as in the next quarter.

- Ask your 'junior' at work to appraise you, or better still, conduct a mutual appraisal.

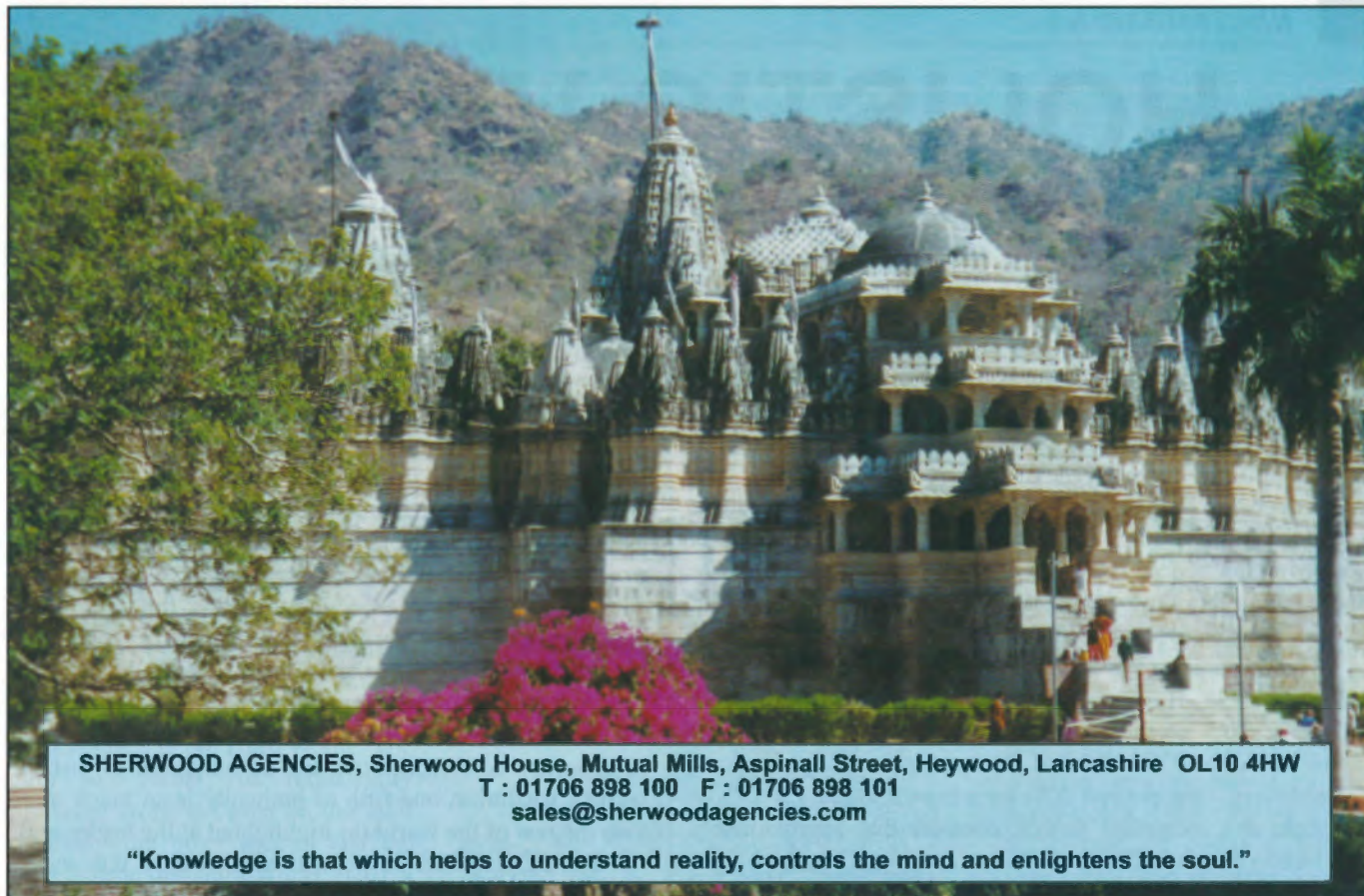
- Recognise that knowledge, expertise and experience can and do exist at all levels and are not merely held by experts, academics and the people at the top.

- Try to notice how small is sometimes very beautiful. See a paper of mine at

www.newacademy.ac.uk/Research/New_Partnership/Paper.pdf

- Learn to appreciate and experiment with different 'ways of knowing' – not just the numerical or verbal in your working life. If you have to do a business plan, try drawing one with colours and stick-figures or tell a story.

- Try to give up attempts to control all situations and people. Learn to have fun with uncertainty.



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FAITH, HOPE AND BEYOND CHARITY



Daleep Mukarji discusses the interfaith dimensions of international development



SINCE THE SECOND WORLD WAR THERE HAVE been efforts to help the newly independent countries and their people who are poor and marginalised. The development decades, the programmes of the international agencies (the UN, the World Bank, the IMF and others) and the efforts of specialised international non-governmental organisations (e.g. Oxfam, Christian Aid and Save the Children) have all attempted to contribute to the reduction of poverty and the relief of human suffering, and to respond to natural and man-made disasters. Some good has been achieved. Children have been immunised, lives have been saved, mortality rates improved, life expectancy has increased and local people's movements to take responsibility for social change have empowered the people to help themselves. There has been a paradigm shift from helping the poor – with love and individual charity – to asking why they are poor and also challenging some of the root causes of poverty and exclusion through policy research, advocacy and campaigning for justice. There is a sense of hope that we can build a better world where all will have their basic needs satisfied: education, water, health care, dignity and a chance to influence their future – irrespective of caste, colour, creed or ethnicity.

Sadly, in spite of much improvement, the gap between the poor and the rich, between the countries and within the countries has widened. 1.3 billion people today live in abject poverty – less than 60 pence per person per day for all their needs. 125 million children will never go to school. Over 50% of people do not have access to safe drinking water and every eight seconds a child dies from poverty and preventable conditions. This is a scandal. What makes it worse is that this severe poverty exists in a world of plenty. Yet the rich nations and rich people (the powerful elite in most societies) have cornered resources, influence and decisions. They control the major governments, institutes and the large multinational corporations all of which seem to take advantage of the weak and vulnerable. The world's three richest people have more income and wealth than 600 million poor people put together.

Twenty percent of the rich people in the world use about eighty percent of the world's resources.

What can be done about this? In 2000, the international community agreed to the International Development Targets, known as the millennium development goals, to halve the number of people who live in poverty, to ensure universal primary education and gender equality and to bring down infant and maternal mortality rates. This can be done, but it needs a movement of grassroots support for global social justice that holds politicians and key decision-makers accountable. In this process people of faith, faith-based initiatives and interfaith cooperation have a major role to play.

People of faith bring the values of love, sharing, fairness, justice and dignity into the overall debate about development. In many parts of the third world, faith communities are key civil society networks and possibly the only way to reach and influence local communities for change.

Yet religion can be both a force for good and a force for prejudice, discrimination and the oppression of others. Certain conservative elements in many faiths do not want to see change: they feel their traditions and customs would be threatened and, often, the power of their leaders diminished.

I am convinced that people of faith have a positive contribution to make to the worldwide movement for international development and social justice. This requires dialogue, respect, tolerance, goodwill and a willingness to listen to each other. Working together we can contribute to communal harmony, poverty eradication and peace. Many wars and much civil strife and exploitation of others are based on religious, ethnic and historical conflicts, which need time for healing, reconciliation and rebuilding of trust. This needs peace with justice and the rejection of anything that dehumanises, denies rights and despises people simply because they are *different*.

The world is truly a global village: multi-cultural, multi-faith and multi-ethnic. We have become more interdependent and interconnected than ever before. It is a time for the people of faith to stand up, speak out, take sides, work together with

each other and with the wider community and advocate for a world where all human beings can live in a better, more inclusive and just community.

Let me suggest specific areas where faith communities can contribute to international development:

(i) Development must be holistic – recognising that people have to grow physically, emotionally, socially and spiritually. Programmes of development must understand the well being of the body, mind and spirit of individuals and of communities.

(ii) Tolerance is a key virtue that can nurture understanding, respect and harmony. Differences must not be seen as threatening, but as an opportunity to build bridges and to cross barriers. This is true throughout the world – at local, national and international levels.

(iii) Respect for religions and the religious rights of all people, especially minorities and marginalised people, must be an integral part of the defence of human rights.

(iv) People of faith can contribute to the non-violent mechanisms of conflict resolution, peace with justice and reconciliation amongst warring groups. In many parts of the world today conflicts, civil strife and actual wars kill and maim, and create internally displaced people and many refugees. Socio-economic development cannot take place fully in the context of conflict, violence and wars.

(v) We need to equip, educate, mobilise and organise local people and civil society organisations so that people take responsibility for their own development and hold their leaders and governments accountable. This needs democratic space for the people's participation in decisions that affect their future. Interfaith cooperation at this level encourages the building of a people's movement for social change that can benefit everyone.

(vi) Ethical and moral perspectives in public life, economic investments, the behaviour of industry and powerful leaders are other areas where people of faith can

provide leadership. The exploitation of others and of the environment should be condemned. Essentially, it is about the balance and use of power in our various situations – faith leaders need to share humility, love, justice and goodwill in the dealings of relationships and power.

(vii) Leaders of faith communities, both separately and together, must stand up for the poor and the marginalised, speak out against injustice and get involved in social policy that can promote international development. This could mean getting involved in issues of debt relief for third world countries, the trade justice movement, the banning of land mines, the regulation of corporations, saving the environment or the exposure of child labour that exploits or harms children.

These are a few issues that are vital for international development and we need all leaders and people of different faiths to take social and public issues more seriously. There are efforts to make people come together more formally and to explore avenues of cooperation and dialogue. These efforts need to be encouraged and inspired by Mahatma Gandhi:

“Whenever you are in doubt, apply the following test: recall the face of the poorest and weakest person you may have seen and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to them.”

All the great faith traditions have a common commitment – to love your neighbour, help others, protect the environment, respect each other and live in peace and harmony. These teachings need to bring the best out of religions and of each other so that we can build a movement of concerned people who are committed to the welfare and well being of our fellow human beings. For many, this is a matter of life and death. We need urgent action so that it can make a difference. 🙏

Daleep Mukarji is Director of Christian Aid, a UK-based international development NGO.



We can better life for these street kids

OUR RESPONSE TO TERRORISM

Kim Skoog focuses on formulating a possible Jain response to terrorist acts

HOW IS A TRADITION LIKE JAINISM TO COPE with an unjust and vicious social phenomenon such as terrorism? What is the proper role of Jain philosophy or theology in helping one to be faithful both to the ultimate goal of liberation and to the inherent themes of compassion and non-violence that are the very basis of the Jain tradition?

Emphasis on the principle of *ahimsa* in the Jain tradition is well known. However, lay Jains realise that it is impossible to live a life totally in accordance with the principle of non-violence. Historically, the Jain community cannot be always identified as simply pacifist. There were a number of famous Jain generals and soldiers, none of whom was condemned by Jain leaders or followers. However, there does not seem to be a clear stance on how the lay Jain followers are expected to respond to war and terrorism.

According to the few Jain texts that make reference to war, one may engage only in a defensive campaign, where one is to acquire only a less dangerous variety of karmic matter generated from opposing/hindering-based violence (*virodhi-himsa*). However, the intent is not to encourage such activity but acknowledge its inevitability in a layperson's life, and is considered best if avoided. The Jain texts, in general, regard acts of slaying – even in the spirit of self defence – to be demeritorious, as such acts inevitably lead to the accumulation of *papa* or bad karmic matter.

Though Jain lay-followers have engaged in warfare, there has never been any doubt that they were still responsible for their acts, i.e. take rebirth in hell. The way to 'optimum violence', whether engaging in war or responding to terrorism, is by observing the following: (i) not kill for the sake of oneself; (ii) do not act with passion or emotion; and (iii) renounce the act or disassociate yourself from it as much as possible. These directives are based on the Jain explanation of karmic bondage. The more intense passions (*kasayas*) one undergoes, the more intense the vibrations (*yoga*) are in the mind that bring about the influx (*asrava*) of karmas that bind to the soul (*bandha*).

According to Jainism, it is not only *what* actions we do, but also *how* we do them that ultimately determines the nature of karmas we incur. Accordingly, acting too selfishly,

boastfully or out of self-defence in the course of warfare further stirs one's emotions so as to intensify this influx of karma as well as attract a firmer-binding kind of karma that is harder to remove.

In addition to optimising one's violent activities done during the war or response to terrorism, one must also strive to shed the accumulated *papa* through good activities leading to the removal of karmic matter through austerities (*nirjara*) and repelling or stopping the inward flow of karma (*samvara*). Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to think that all of this 'debt' could be removed in one's lifetime. While

good deeds and austerities help remove some of the bad karma associated with one's soul due to the violence and may, therefore, decrease one's length in hell, one cannot avoid altogether the rebirth in hell that awaits one as a result of killing in war or terrorist actions.

The Jain view of life stresses care and amity in the interaction with all living beings. Jainism, in principle,

naturally espouses to non-violence and therefore to some form of pacifism. Yet, as with all traditions, it has to wrestle with the difficulty of what to do with injustice and violence toward others as found in acts such as terrorism. Do we stick firmly to our non-violent principles and simply sit back and watch others suffer unjustly without lending a helping hand to them?

The Jain tradition, as is apparent from the following analysis by a contemporary Jain teacher Muni Shri Nyayavijayaji, has chosen to tip the scales in favour of the need to act with compassion when it comes to the preservation of social order and the lives of the innocent. In his work, *Jain Darsana*, he attempts to give convincing justification for why one *must* help those in need, for not to do so is in itself an act of violence:

"One commits violence by not contributing to the efforts of stopping violence or by simply remaining indifferent to violence, just as one commits violence by indulging in positive violent activity. If one who knows swimming does not rescue a drowning man and simply watches him drowning, it is an act of violence. Violence of such type is a result of callous carelessness of the form: 'What concern have I? Why should I invite trouble? I cannot

*"Non-violence
is a spiritual
power"*



Ahimsa in its proactive role

afford to give food, etc., to others.” Hard-heartedness is opposed to religion and religious practice. Universal love is the foundation of religion. To remain indifferent to other’s happiness, comforts and benefits for the sake of one’s own is also a case of violence.”

In the above passage, Nyayavijayaji is bringing to our attention the fact that acts of omission (avoiding the stoppage of violence) are just as deadly and impious as acts of commission (to do violence). One can be viewed as complicit in the violence itself if one does nothing to stop it. Continuing with the same passage, we see this contemporary exponent of Jainism integrate the Gandhian tactic of passive resistance (*satyagraha*) as a means to stop violence:

“Non-violence is a spiritual power. Noble bravery or heroism demands self-sacrifice. To sacrifice one’s self-interests and even one’s life – if need be – while resisting violence and supporting and fostering non-violence is the bravery of high order. In spite of having his courage and strength to fight, the person who controls his passion and excitement on the passion-rousing and exciting occasions and does not yield to violence is the true practitioner of non-violence...[Bodily strength] is needed to save the innocent people from cruel attacks of tyrants, rioters and the wicked enemies through brave counterattack and confrontation. For the internal non-violence of the form of keeping the mind calm and unagitated, this strength is as much needed as for the external non-violence of the form of protecting the people.”

In this moving passage we see expressed the kind of intense self-sacrifice that could explain why a Jain lay-person would forgo or jeopardise his own immediate spiritual advancement so as to protect and serve those in distress. It is hard to envision a nobler act of courage and compassion, reflecting the same kind of unswerving love that leads a *Bodhisattva* to postpone his final liberation till all other sentient beings are brought to salvation. Truly this is the fullest expression of the Jain ideal of *ahimsa*, where one respects and cares for other living beings so much that one is willing to delay one’s own spiritual liberation in an effort to protect others from harm.

Jain thinkers did not articulate a Just War theory as is

found within the western tradition. However, many of the elements found in these western accounts are implicitly contained within Jain thought in terms of general directives about war. As noted above, when war is to be engaged in, Jain soldiers are never to be the aggressors, they are to respond reactively in self-defence, to protect innocent life, the Jain teachings and the Jain way of life. Jain tradition also prohibits violence against non-combatants, because one’s primary goal in life is to avoid doing harm to all living beings; only those viewed as evil and destructive (combatants) could be the recipients of violence. Jainism distinguishes between intentional, premeditated violence and unintentional, accidental violence; thereby recognising that some unintentional violence may occur in the process of carrying out one’s daily activities, presumably including warfare if necessitated to do so.

Looking at the overarching Jain directive to avoid violence if at all possible, one could presume that the Jains would support the western principle of proportionality as they advocate the least possible violence to ward off a terrorist threat. Going one point further, perhaps the *real* distinctive Jain contribution to the philosophical dialogue over warfare and prevention against terrorism is the emphasis on the ‘internal’ dimension of war. Under such circumstances where a Jain must engage in war, he is required to remain calm and detached. This emphasis on a cool head will lead to more care in the military activity, a heightened sensitivity to when and where violence is warranted and when and where it can be avoided, and a general reduction in the psychological and spiritual damage that the violence of war inflicts on the combatant.

It goes without saying that ‘ideally’ any member of the Jain community would prefer to resolve any conflict, including terrorism, in a peaceful non-violent fashion and by embracing a pacifist approach to the problem. 🙏

Dr. Kim Skoog is Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of Guam. A fuller version of this paper will appear in Tara Sethia (ed.), ‘Ahimsa and Anekanta for Contemporary Life’ (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, forthcoming).



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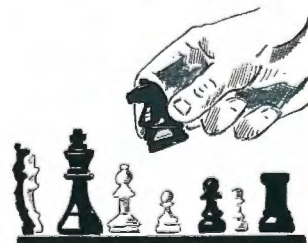
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A DECLARATION OF DEPENDENCE

Satish Kumar offers us a timely world-view, based on the Sanskrit dictum 'So Hum': "You are, therefore I am."

"We are here to awaken from the illusion of our separateness."—

Thich Nhat Hanh

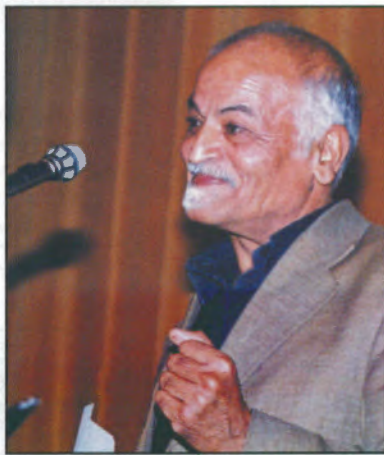
THE AMERICAN DECLARATION of Independence in 1776 may have been right in its time and context. At times of slavery, colonialism and imperialism, it is right and proper that the colonised stand up for their dignity and claim freedom from oppression.

But now the age of Ecology is dawning and a new consciousness is being born. In the wake of multiple environmental crises, we are rediscovering the ancient wisdom that we depend on each other and we depend on the ways of nature. We depend on the Earth.

The Industrial Revolution, scientific discoveries and technological inventions have created the illusion that we, the human race, are the rulers; that we can take nature's laws into our own hands, and do what we like with them. We are the masters of creation; we are in charge of the natural world – its forests, rivers mountains, fishes, fossils, animals, birds, oil, gas, coal. We have dominion over the land, the oceans and the sky. We can split the atom, engineer genes and walk upon the moon. We can ever diminish the wild, enslave the animals, dam the rivers and deplete the energy reserves accumulated over millennia. There are no limits to our power.

This is human arrogance at its worst. As a result we have turned the abundant bounty of natural gifts into scarcity. Time is infinite, yet we have turned it into a limited commodity. We have reduced the Earth, our planet, our home, to a battlefield where we are competing and fighting for materials, markets and power.

Now we are at a crossroads. We can continue to follow the same path. We can continue to live in the illusion of perpetual economic growth. We can stick to our technological addiction. We can pursue genetics, robotics, nano-



and nuclear technology. We can take the road to ruin. We can drive to the abyss. Or we can turn towards ecology: the path of values, ethics and aesthetics, the path of love and reverence for nature, the path of participatory science. We can relinquish the knowledge which enables us to lord it over the Earth. Like the Chinese in the middle ages, who discovered gunpowder but decided to use it only for fireworks, we can be wise and say enough is enough.

For survival and for the good life we need humility. We come from the soil and will return to the soil. We are part of nature, neither above it nor separate from it.

Nature is the source of all life: the source of joy and celebration, the source of arts and imagination, the source of poetry and inspiration, the source of skills and inventions. Earth gives us experience of time and space, it gives us seasons and change. Earth grants us a sense of place, from which we derive our identity and belonging. Earth is the source of music, dance and delight. It is the source of beauty, wisdom and insight. For our existence and experience, for our happiness and health, for our nutrition and nourishment, we depend on the Earth. We depend on the love of the beloved, the beauty of the beautiful and the goodness of the good. Embracing vulnerability and humility, let us declare our utter dependence on the Earth, and on each other: You are, therefore I am. 🙏

*Satish Kumar is an ecological activist and educator, and Editor of Resurgence. The above is an extract from his new book **YOU ARE, THEREFORE I AM – A Declaration of Dependence**, published by Green Books (ISBN 1-903998-18-2).*

www.ayurvedic.org

The web site Jiva Ayurveda promotes the traditional Indian medical science of Ayurveda by blending ancient wisdom with modern concepts. It does so with a view to sustaining healthy practices. Founded in 1995, it has pioneered an online Ayurvedic clinic that offers holistic treatment to patients around the world. The web site provides free consultation for patients, whilst also giving advice on foods to eat and not to eat, together with brief explanations.

www.kamat.com

Interested in art, sculpture and the history of Jainism? You can further your interest in all three of these subjects by visiting Kamat's Potpourri site — www.kamat.com. Kamat's Potpourri site explores different arts and sculptures in Indian history dating back 5000 years. Topics covered include Indian women and Lord Mahavir. The site also keeps you up-to-date with the most recent news and forthcoming festivals, together with an explanation of what some of these mean.

The web site also includes sections on the essential principles and philosophy of Jainism: through this, it seeks to further our understanding of the meanings behind the artwork. Kamat's Potpourri is a very large website - perhaps the largest in this subject area on the web, and readers are encouraged to dive into the site for a complete experience. Photographs and interviews help bring Jainism, art and sculpture to life.

www.jainworld.com

Jainworld.com has been running in English for more than seven years, being put together by people from all walks of life. It provides a valuable entry point to the exciting world of Jainism. Jainworld's objective is not to add to the selection of websites already in operation, but to combine Jain aspirations globally. Not only does this web site educate us in the history and science behind Jainism (in several languages), but also provides insight into how to practise the religion. For example, the section on Jain food gives both young and old the chance to practise Jainism within everyday actions such as cooking there are plenty of mouth-watering Jain recipes for all, ranging from Gujarati to Punjabi.

This web site combines the aspirations of Jains around the globe and is being positioned to link various aspects of our lives: joining the dots between the religious, social, philosophical and cultural.



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