1. Background and Benefits

The Siddhachakra Yantra is the most auspicious and most versatile mystical diagram in the Jain religion (See the schematic diagram given here). ‘Siddha’ means liberated soul and ‘chakra’ means freedom from karmic bondages. ‘Yantra’ means a mystical diagram. When one worships the Siddhachakra Yantra, one’s soul becomes liberated from karmic bondages.

The rationale behind performing this puja (worship) is usually either marital felicity or physical health alongside the karmic benefits of performing any Jain puja. Both of these efficacies are chartered by the King Shripal and Queen Mayanasundari story. According to the Jain tradition, they lived at the time of the 20th Tirthankar Munisuvrat Swami, who lived approximately 1.1 million years ago. As the story goes, King Shripal was suffering from leprosy and married Mayanasundari who took him, together with 700 lepers, to a monk named Munichandra for the cure. He instructed them for the cure on how to perform the Siddhachakra Mahapuja (with a particular type of fasting ‘oil’ for a long period) which worked!

The Yantra depicts the whole Jain Dharma, the principal nine elements (Nav Pad) and the protective deities. The main section is in the form of an auspicious pitcher (kalash). It has two main components: the first is the core, Nav Pad, which consists of circles 1 and 3, and this represents the standard (stand-alone) Siddhachakra, which is commonly used in Puja. The second main component is the protective rings of deities. The focus on these protectors makes the worldly benefits of the Siddhachakra more understandable and attractive.

In Nav Pad, (1) Arihant means the one who has conquered the inner enemies such as Anger, Greed, Ego and Deceit, (2) Siddha ‘liberated soul’, (3) Acharya ‘spiritual master’, (4) Upadhya ‘spiritual teacher’, (5) Sadhu ‘monk’. The next four are (6) Darshan ‘Right Faith’, (7) Gyan ‘Right Knowledge’, (8) Charitra ‘Right Conduct’, and (9) Tapa ‘Right Austerities’.

The earliest known text relating the story is in the Prakrit to have been written by Ratnasekharsuri in 1372 AD. The version that most people know was written in Gujarati by monks Vinayvijay and Yashovijay in 1682 AD; the ‘Shripal Rajano Ras’. Ratnasekharsuri is also credited with being the author of the oldest current Siddhachakra Puja.

2. Key Stanzas and Mantras in Puja

This Puja is a very complex and it takes at least half a day to complete. Also it requires a lot of items (samagari) which are used in Puja. A figure of Siddhachakra is normally drawn and one starts from circle 1 and moves outward. The opening stanza means:

‘By performing this puja one gets victory in the world, gets kingdom of ‘seven sections’ as well as one gets fame and fortune. Also in the next life one progresses to be a deva and chakravati (king of kings). Therefore Siddhachakra’s ruler, please bestow on me special powers (siddhi).’

The Key Mantras are

‘Ohm hrim araham namah’ (used at the beginning of the puja) and
‘Ohm a-si-aa-oo-sa-dah-gya-chha-tebhayoh namah’ (recited by all at the end of the puja).

The first mantra pays respect to the Arihant. The second mantra is a composite representing the Nav Pada: the set of the first five letters after ‘ohm’ represents arihant, siddha, acharya, upadhya, sadhu, and the next four letters are for darshan, gyan, charitra, tapa.

* Further details will be published on our website http://www.yjf.org.uk.
A very brief history of our collaboration with Jain Samaj Europe

There has been a long collaboration between Jain Samaj Europe and YJF. This collaboration can be dated back to a letter (drafted in Leeds) to Shrenikbhai on 12th May 1979 for the proposal of the Temple at the Centre, and the Four Noble Truths (see figure below) propounded first time by K.V. Mardia on 3rd August 1979 at Wesley Hall, Leicester to an Interfaith gathering. This also included editorship of the ‘Jain News’ (Issues 8-11) in 1981 and with ‘Vision of the Jain’ Journal in the Editorial Issue 10. The YJF was formed out of the Leeds Jain group in April 1987, and though a small community, it shares a common vision with the Centre in promoting a consistent understanding and modern interpretation of Jain values. To this end the first edition of ‘The Scientific Foundation of Jainism’ was launched at the Centre on 6th April 1990. The Centre kindly made a generous donation at the Leeds Pratistha ceremony in October 2001. We are delighted that our relationship continues in this auspicious SiddhaChakra Puja marking both the 20th anniversary of the Pratishtha Mahotasva Leicester and the 7th anniversary of the Leeds Derasar.

Description of Snatra Puja (Birth Ceremony), Sattar Bhedi Puja (Flag-hoisting Ceremony) and Shanti Kalash (Peace Pitcher) appears in our leaflet of 15th October 2006. The ceremony concludes with ‘Micchammi Dukkadam’ (asking forgiveness for any transgression) from the Yorkshire Jain Foundation and the Hindu Charitable Trust.

Programme

07.00  Arrival of the ‘Puja’ team from Leicester
07.30  Snatra Puja starts
09.30  Snatra Puja complete
09.30  Coach arrives from Leicester
10.00-1.30 Siddhachakra Maha Puja (Dhvaja Badali 12.39pm)
         Aarti (108 lamps)
         Mangal Divo
         Shanti Kalash
         Micchammi Dukkadam
1.30-2.30 Swami Vatsalya (lunch)