

Vasudhā Calling

A newsletter for enabling sustainable living

Date: 15.8.2026

Volume : 2 Issue : 05



Comprehensive Platform for Knowledge Sharing on Sustainable Living





SPECIAL ARTICLE

Reviving Punjab's Living Heritage: Organic Cotton, Handloom and TRINJAN

Rupsi Garg

Namaskar to everybody. Thank you for inviting me to share my journey. I belong to a village called Tipla in Patiala district. I have been working with Kheti Virasat Mission for the last nine years. The organisation has been working in Punjab since 2005 to promote organic and natural farming. Punjab and Haryana were among the regions selected for the Green Revolution in the 1960s and 1970s. Hybrid seeds, irrigation and heavy machinery helped India address the food crisis at that time. But over the years, their negative effects on the environment and human health became increasingly visible. Kheti Virasat Mission was founded in response to these concerns. We began promoting poison-free farming so that people could have food that is safe for both human health and the environment.



My own journey towards this work was gradual. I studied Development Studies at Azim Premji University in Bengaluru from 2016 to 2018. During that period, I came across Mahatma Gandhi's *Gram Swaraj*. As I read about Indian villages, farmers, artisans and traditional skills, something began to change within me.

Around the same time, I encountered the charkha. A friend had brought back a box charkha after attending a workshop. I asked her to teach me. She said, "You will have to practise yourself." So I started spinning.

Initially, the yarn broke frequently. But after 15 to 20 days, I became comfortable with it. Something unexpected happened. My thoughts became more organised. Spinning became a reflective practice for me. I began feeling that I should return to Punjab and work for its farmers, natural resources and traditional practices.

I joined Kheti Virasat Mission as an intern in 2017. During my internship, I visited farmers practising organic farming. I also visited an organic kitchen-garden project where women cultivated vegetables in their own yards. These experiences convinced me to return to the organisation after completing my studies. I therefore chose not to take up campus placement. After completing my postgraduate studies in June 2018, I returned to Punjab.

From Cotton to Fabric

When I returned, organic cotton cultivation was already taking place. Spinning was also happening. But fabric weaving was not. We asked the women, "Why are you spinning but not weaving? Why don't you do the spinning and weaving yourselves?"

They explained that cotton had once been abundant in their area. Jaito Mandi in Faridkot district is part of the Malwa region, which was traditionally known for cotton production. Punjab has four major cultural regions—Malwa, Majha, Doaba and Puadth.

We began understanding the entire cotton value chain. It starts with cultivation. After harvesting, cotton is ginned to separate the seeds from the fibre. The fibre is then carded and prepared into *puni*. It is spun on the charkha to produce yarn. The yarn is then dyed, prepared and woven.

We realised that this entire chain could create a local and decentralised rural economy. Instead of sending raw cotton away, we could create value within the community.

The Cultural Meaning of TRINJAN

This is where the idea of **TRINJAN** became important.



TRINJAN is a traditional Punjabi practice in which women came together to spin, weave, embroider and engage in other creative activities. Traditionally, these activities were not mainly for commercial purposes. Women made textiles for their households. When a daughter was married, these handmade items were often given to her as part of her marriage possessions.

These objects carried memories. A daughter might say, “This was made by my grandmother.” The designs, colours and emotions became part of the family’s heritage.

Unfortunately, much of this culture gradually disappeared over the last two or three decades. We therefore wanted to reconnect these lost links.

For us, TRINJAN is not merely a livelihood activity. It is also a cultural and social activity. When we first produced fabric and showed it to people, many immediately connected with it emotionally. There was a feeling of nostalgia and a sense of reconnecting with their roots.

There is also an environmental dimension. Cotton is one of the crops associated with high pesticide use. If cotton cultivation becomes organic and poison-free, we can reduce the pesticide load on the environment. Natural fibres also provide an alternative to the growing use of synthetic fibres.

Reviving Traditional Skills

As part of this work, we travelled across Punjab and identified traditional artisans involved in cotton processing and handloom weaving. In one village, we found an artisan who was still practising manual carding using a traditional tool called *tara*.

Before mechanised processing, such artisans travelled from house to house. Families gave them their cotton. They carded it and prepared it for spinning. This was an entire local system of production and consumption.

We realised that we were not simply trying to revive an old tool. We were trying to understand and revive a complete system.

The Weaving School

When we started this work in 2017–18, farmers told us, “We can grow cotton, provided there is an assured market.” We therefore started with around 10 to 15 farmers. We procured their

cotton, processed it and made fabric. We took the fabric to the market and received encouraging responses.

But we soon faced another challenge. Traditional weavers were ageing. Their children were not entering the profession. If there were no weavers, the organic cotton value chain could not be completed.

Our objective was larger. We wanted cotton to become part of a complete rural economy that could generate livelihoods and involve many different people.

This led to the idea of establishing a weaving school.



We began with 10 women. They were first-generation weavers. Some had never even seen a handloom. We brought old handlooms from nearby cities and installed them in the village. A master weaver who had continued the profession throughout her life agreed to teach them.

The group gradually grew to around 30 women. Today, they work with two-shaft and four-shaft weaving techniques. We are also making traditional Punjabi products such as *khes*.

The income is important, but something else is equally important. The women tell us that when they come to the weaving school, they have an opportunity to talk to one another. The weaving school has therefore become both a training and production centre.

Two Generations Learning Together

Something beautiful is now happening. The next generation is also becoming involved. The children of these women, many of whom are between 16 and 20 years old, sometimes come to the weaving school after their classes.

In this way, two generations are learning weaving together.

We also organise TRINJAN festivals during the month of Sawan. These festivals bring together women, artisans, traditional skills, food and cultural activities. They help bring an old tradition back into community life.

Beyond Economic Empowerment

For me, this work is not simply about creating income. It is also about physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being.

When someone works on a handloom, both hands and feet are engaged in coordinated movement. The mind must remain attentive. When a design has checks or stripes, the weaver must carefully count the threads and maintain the pattern.

When a person becomes emotionally and spiritually connected to the work, it becomes more than a livelihood. It becomes a relationship with the craft. The women develop their own design and colour sense. Their creativity finds an opportunity for expression.

For me personally, spinning is also a form of meditation. I try to spin every day whenever I get time. Spinning requires balance. One hand holds the *puni* and the other rotates the wheel. Both hands have to work together. At the same time, there has to be inner peace.

When we spin, card or weave, we are not merely producing something. We are creating something. These activities give us a space to listen to ourselves.

Bringing Young People Back to the Land

Punjab is a state where many young people want to migrate abroad, particularly to countries such as Canada. At the same time, there is increasingly less connection with farming and the land on which they have grown up.



I believe that if initiatives such as TRINJAN can grow from small rural experiments into larger opportunities, they can contribute to Punjab's rural economy. They can also show young people that meaningful livelihoods are possible without leaving their villages.

Our work is therefore not simply about organic cotton. It is about reconnecting farmers, artisans, women, young people and consumers.

Punjab was once a major cotton-growing region. Our effort is to reconnect cotton cultivation with rural artisans, handloom weaving and local livelihoods. The objective is not simply to revive a crop. **It is to revive an ecosystem.**

The charkha becomes more than a spinning tool. The handloom becomes more than a production device. Cotton becomes more than a crop. Together, they become instruments for rebuilding our relationships—with nature, with our communities, with traditional knowledge and with ourselves.

The larger question is not merely how much fabric we can produce. It is how we can create a rural economy that respects nature, values human creativity, strengthens communities and enables traditional wisdom to move from one generation to the next.



For me, that is what TRINJAN represents.

Thread by thread, we are trying to weave a stronger social fabric—where compassion forms the warp and dedication becomes the enduring weft.



Transcript of Rupsi Garg's speech in a webinar organized by VK-NARDEP on 9 August 2026



Towards Immortality

Raghunandan Trikannad

These are trying times. Our children have to handle the ever-growing information, competition infused in them through the ambitions of parents, peers and their own, at the cost of childhood. Youth have a nameless anxiety draining their energy. Uncertainty hovers around everybody with mounting international tensions and wars, as well as nature's fury. Earlier we seldom heard of suicides, but now they are part of daily columns in newspapers or headlines in media. External situations may or may not change. But we can definitely change our reactions to them. The science of Yoga, has the definite paths for transforming our reactions, into healthy responses. Swami Vivekananda has always been a beacon of light to those in darkness of misery and ignorance.

Thousands of years back, there was a clarion call, a message of hope, and an assurance by a Rṣi in Śvetaśvatāropaniṣad who addressed the mankind as a whole, as 'Listen Oh ye children of Immortality!'¹ It was listened to, understood and lived by many seekers of Truth in our great country, and that is how, Bhārat survived many invasions, oppressions, and persecutions. It is still heard by some, though in whispers. But many get lost in the external as well as the internal noise! Swami Vivekananda lived the essence of this Maṅtra, and quoted this Maṅtra in his transactions, contemplations, and discourses. For Swamiji, none was a stranger, none was lowly or sinner. There was no screen of good and bad, lofty and profane, spiritual and material in him. It is a Sūtra to transform life, full of harmony, of sanity, peace and love.

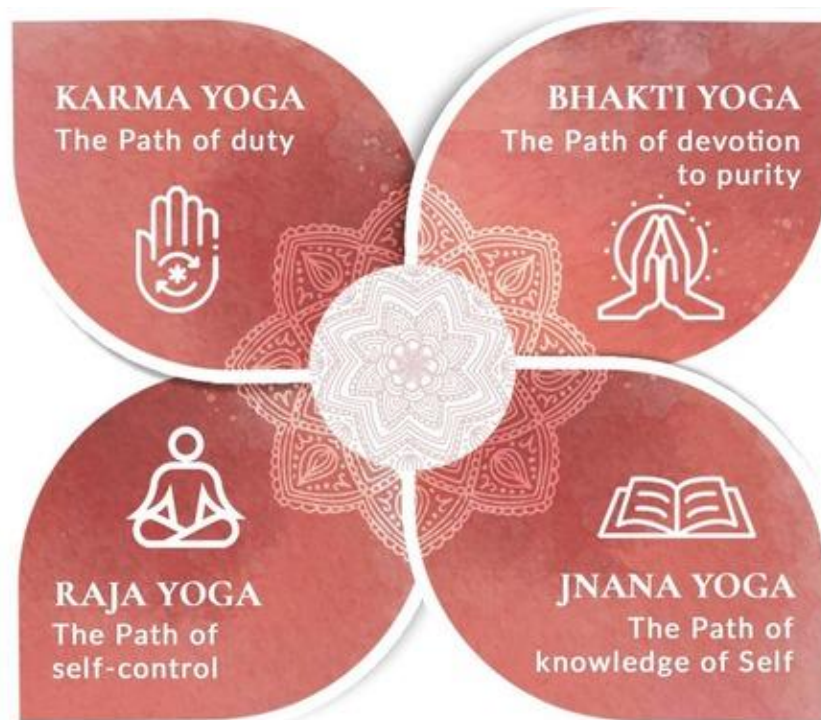
Swamiji assures us of the potential Divinity existing in each one of us—the Eternal Reality amidst the ever-changing world. His often-repeated expression was "You are the children of immortality; how can you be afraid and weak. You are not sinners; it is a sin to call yourselves sinners!" He not only discoursed but has the credit of reviving ancient practical methods of realising this Truth. In his discourses he related the paths to our daily life and behaviour, and scientific developments. The methods involve our faculties which we know and use in life.

Synonym of life is activity that goes on from birth to death. Most of it is either for survival or making survival more comfortable for the self and family. This activity gets motivated by



¹ शृण्वन्तु विश्वे अमृतस्य पुत्रा आये धामानि दिव्यानि तस्थुः ॥ २.५ ॥ वेदाहमेतं पुरुषं महान्तं आदित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात् । तमेव विदित्वाऽति मृत्युमेति नान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनेषु ॥ ३.८ ॥ श्वेतश्वतारोपनिषद् ॥

a fruit, a purpose, without which there can be no work! During the work, mind continues to think or dream about the result so intensely, that work at hand gets distracted. Swamiji pointed out that instead, if one totally invests the energy into action, it becomes efficient. At the same time, one has to understand that every action need not be successful, and every wish need not be fulfilled in life. Such attitude helps in keeping calm during failures. Efficient work can also be taken as duty. Work related to something larger, not only family, but community or society, becomes service. Here Swamiji, reminds us that we should be grateful for getting an opportunity to serve, since it is our prime responsibility. If work is offered to the divine in every being, it becomes worship. The intension of work is more important than the work itself. Swamiji gives intricate details in his discourses on Karma Yoga.



Basic emotions have dominated life on its long march of evolution. They continue to influence our life. Fear, anger, greed, lust, and jealousy govern us. When we are overpowered by them, we seek solace by visiting places of worship or pilgrimage. This in itself is laudable, but proceed further says Swamiji. We visit such places, for bargaining for our success or wants and ambitions. Instead, go there for thanks-giving, for counting our blessings. Such attitude helps us to be content with what we have. When we empathise with the less fortunate, our heart expands, as it accommodates them in it. A compassionate heart initiates a sense of oneness which is the feeling of love. Our normal feeling of love, depends on our personal relationships. When it is directed towards the God—as Master, Friend, Parent, Beloved, or Peaceful Companion, it helps in developing devotion. When devotion matures, one cares only for the loved one, and is happy only in beloved's happiness. This state was called by Swamiji as “Love for Love's sake. Loving and seeking nothing in return is Bhakti.” These stages appear difficult, but the relationships are part of our daily experience. All we have to do is to direct our attention and attitudes towards God. The highest form of Bhakti he said, is to feel and see God in entire creation.

All of us are endowed with intellect, which doubts, questions, analyses, and understands, for taking decisions. We use this faculty for acquiring knowledge throughout our life. The knowledge so gained is mostly, about the external world of senses. All innovations, inventions have blossomed out of senses, mind, intellect, and ego, together called Antahkaraṇa—inner instrument. And yet unfortunately, our education, pays very little attention to this faculty. In contrast, Upaniṣads, and all our spiritual literature point out and suggests ways of nurturing

Antaḥkaraṇa. The Upaniṣads begin with a doubt or question, followed by discussion with the enlightened sages. Swami Vivekananda has spoken extensively on the path of Jñāna Yoga. He stressed that Vedānta is not only for the recluses in hermitages, but is relevant to everyone in the society. Everybody need not be interested in studying them and nor is it necessary! But this faculty, also has the power to discriminate—Viveka, between what is eternal and temporal, between what is conducive to our growth and what is distractive and destructive. Viveka, has the power to prevent most of our self-created problems.

But there is a catch, this Viveka, doubts, analyses, discriminates, and takes decision on the inherent tendencies—Vāsanās, past experiences, notions, likes and dislikes. It is a coloured and biased understanding, with the resultant behaviour. This is where the path of Rāja Yoga, also called as Aṣṭāṅga Yoga becomes relevant. Swamiji has written on the Yoga Sūtras, giving small and practical hints for us to practise. The main gain in this path is awareness of activity of body, breath, senses, and mind in all its functions. Practice of this path purifies the mind of the blinding and binding tendencies of Antaḥkaraṇa. These four practical methods can be practised individually, or collectively. One need not leave home and hearth for realising the Divinity in us and the world around us.

These ideas in essence, are expressed in the short aphorismic statement of Swami Vivekananda: “Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest the divinity by controlling nature external and internal. Do it by one or more, or all these and be free.” By freedom, he means freedom from pride, the ‘holier than thou’ attitude, one of the last and obstinate vices which afflicts spiritual practitioners and preachers. This he mentions by stating the potential divinity in each one of us. Some have realised, some are in the middle of the journey, and some others are yet to start. But everyone will embark on this journey. The “gift” of modern times is the impatience to reach, to be successful in all our endeavours in limited time. In a conversation Swamiji cautions: “How amazing it is! One learns hardly anything though one has studied books for many years. How can a man realise God by practising Sādhana for two or three days? Is it so easy to realise God?”²

Every realised Person, takes everyone under the canopy of Love. Every feeling, every thought, every word and act, displays his enlightenment. For recognising such persons, we need to be receptive, and humble, and most of all, simple!



Shri.T.Raghunandan, a Chemical Engineer by training who also worked for Vivekananda Kendra in the formative years, managed a 10+2 Senior Secondary School in Rajasthan for thirty-one years with his wife Vasantha and has now settled down in Kerala for sadhana.

² “Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna by ‘M’



Fingerprints – “Divine Secret of Finger Lines”



The lines on human fingers start forming in the womb from the fourth month. At that time, when the child is far away from the outside world, even then the language of his identity is being written on the body. These lines are formed on the instructions of our DNA, but the surprising thing is that they are neither like those of the parents nor do they match those of the ancestors. They appear on the skin automatically, as if by the effect of some invisible radio wave, pointing towards some supernatural system.

The lines of every person are completely different in the whole world, and till date, no such person has been born whose fingerprints completely match those of someone else. This is proof that there is a unique 'artist' who creates a new masterpiece every time. When even the world's largest computer cannot create such a creation, it would not be wrong to say that this design is beyond human intelligence. The question arises: **“Is there anyone who can create like me?”** This question itself becomes a salute to the art of that invisible artisan.

Even if an accident happens, the skin burns or the lines get erased, the same lines come back with time—not a single cell here and there, not a single design changed! This shows that the lines are not merely imprinted on the skin, but exist at a deeper level of existence—a kind of soulful image. There is no other part of the human body that can be recreated exactly as it is, but fingerprints are an exception. They seem to offer a glimpse of some divine plan.

Till date, science has not been able to completely solve this mystery. It is sometimes described in terms such as 'biological memory' or 'cellular intelligence', but from a spiritual point of view, it can be seen as the identity of the soul. The curves, branches and circles in these lines—all these are codes written in a special language that only their creator understands.

Fingerprints are not only a means of identification; they can also be seen as carrying a deeper story of the laws of the universe and our deeds. No technology, no artificial intelligence and no laboratory has yet been able to create such lines that are truly unique. Many traditions consider these lines as the 'language of God', and this is one reason why palmistry continues to be regarded by many as relevant and mysterious.

If our identity is decided before birth, then it is also possible that our life is unfolding according to some 'divine script'. When science reaches the limits of what it can explain, spirituality comes to the fore and says: **"There is someone who is running all this. He is watching, understanding and creating."** If nature can be so subtle and perfect, then there must be some supreme consciousness behind it. Every fingerprint can therefore be seen as a 'divine password', known only to the One who has created us.

So, in the end, the question arises: **Is there anyone who can match that artist?** The answer is clear: **"No. There is only one—who creates a new signature line on everybody, every time. He is the Creator."**

Conclusion

Man is not just a puppet of flesh and marrow; he is the expression of an infinite consciousness. The lines on our fingers are a reminder that existence gives a unique identity to every person—a signature that forms a part of the infinite creation of the universe. This uniqueness is not limited to the body alone; it extends to the soul as well.

The One who creates us is conscious, alive and full of love. So, every line and every design becomes a call to attention: **"Wake up and look—you are not ordinary."**



Article based on LinkedIn post published by Dr. Jyoti Shah on 21 June 2025



Food Is Not What You Eat; Food Is What You Digest

N. Krishnamoorti



Sri Ramakrishna once narrated the story of Hanuman Singh, a wrestler and devoted worshipper at Dakshineswar. When a stronger-looking wrestler challenged him, the newcomer spent days eating heavily and exercising intensely. Hanuman Singh, by contrast, followed his simple routine of prayer, bathing and one meal a day. Everyone expected him to lose.

But Hanuman Singh understood something deeper: strength does not come merely from what we consume, but from what the body can assimilate. He had observed that his opponent was eating beyond his digestive capacity. On the day of the contest, Hanuman Singh defeated him.

The story points beyond physical digestion. Eating is influenced by cooking, chewing, relaxation, attention and the state of the mind. Food consumed hurriedly, mechanically or excessively may not provide the nourishment we imagine.

This reveals several layers of meaning. Excess consumption often arises not from physical hunger but from psychological craving, acquisitiveness and the desire for satisfaction. Traditional Indian thought also views food as something that becomes progressively refined—from gross waste to bodily tissues and, ultimately, to the subtle dimensions of mind and life-energy. Hence, what we eat affects not only the body but also the mind and quality of life.

The larger lesson extends beyond food. Whether we consume food, clothes, entertainment or material possessions, enjoyment requires attention and time. When we learn to experience deeply rather than consume rapidly, the craving for more can diminish.

True abundance, therefore, may not lie in consuming more, but in digesting, experiencing and appreciating more deeply. Sustainable living begins when consumption serves fulfilment rather than becoming a substitute for it.



Shri.N.Krishnamoorti – a senior worker of Vivekananda Kendra, he is a respected thinker, philosopher, orator and prolific author of more than a hundred books in English, Tamil and Hindi.



BEST PRACTICE

Vanathukkul Tiruppur: From Industrial Growth to Ecological Renewal³

A. Madhan Kumar

Tiruppur is widely known for its industrial dynamism, but another transformation is taking place alongside its economic growth. **Vanathukkul Tiruppur**, an environmental movement led by VETRY, demonstrates how a city can pursue prosperity while rebuilding its ecological foundations.

What began as a tree-planting initiative has grown into a large people-led movement. Between 2015 and 2024, more than **22 lakh trees** were planted across Tiruppur, with the initiative continuing to set annual plantation targets. The movement brings together entrepreneurs, farmers, volunteers, young people, environmentalists and community organisations.



Its significance lies not merely in the number of trees planted, but in the effort to **grow and sustain them**. Nursery development, species selection, land identification, planting, watering, maintenance and monitoring form part of a structured process.

The wider ecological impact is equally important. The initiative connects trees with soil, water, biodiversity, agriculture and human wellbeing. Reported assessments include an **88.4% tree survival rate and 65 butterfly species**, illustrating the possibility of measurable ecological recovery.

The real lesson from Tiruppur is therefore bigger than tree planting: **economic development and ecological restoration do not have to be opposing goals**. The next generation can build businesses that are clean, green and socially responsible—making Tiruppur a model for sustainable development.



Dr. A Madhan Kumar, Ph.D, in Managerial Psychology, is an advocate for sustainable consumption and production and practitioner, interested in building a sustainable lifestyle for the benefit of posterity. Email: squirrelgreen123@gmail.com / <https://www.linkedin.com/in/madhankumaralamandha/>

³ Source : <https://www.vetry.in/>



The Woman Who Saw a Wetland Where Others Saw Wasteland⁴

N. Karthikeyan



When many people looked at wetlands as empty land waiting for development, **Dr. Jayshree Vencatesan** saw something very different. She saw a living ecosystem. She saw water, birds, plants, soil and people connected to one another. That simple way of looking at nature shaped a remarkable journey in wetland conservation and helped bring the importance of Chennai's Pallikaranai Marsh into public attention.

Her connection with nature began early. She grew up in Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh, close to the Godavari River. Her father had a deep respect for nature and encouraged her to see animals, trees, rivers and lakes as part of the larger community of life. Later, she pursued higher studies and completed a PhD in biodiversity and biotechnology, with research connected to biodiversity in the Kolli Hills of Tamil Nadu.

There were opportunities for her to build a career outside India. But she chose to work in conservation in her own country. In 2000, she co-founded the Chennai-based Care Earth Trust with ecologist R. J. Ranjit Daniels. The organisation focused on biodiversity conservation, ecological restoration and research.

Her defining battle began when she encountered the Pallikaranai Marsh. At the age of 35, she saw a wetland that had already suffered from garbage dumping, encroachment and rapid urban development. For many people, it appeared to be an inconvenient piece of land. Jayshree saw an ecosystem that was essential to Chennai.

She and her team began documenting the marsh. They studied its plants, birds, animals, water and ecological functions. They also worked with government agencies and other institutions to build evidence for its protection. Care Earth's work helped demonstrate that Pallikaranai was not wasteland. It was a vital urban wetland and a natural water-holding area for Chennai.

The scale of the challenge was enormous. Research showed how dramatically the marsh had shrunk under the pressure of urbanisation. Yet, Jayshree did not give up. She continued to work, study, write, explain and engage with decision-makers.

Her message was simple: destroying wetlands may create space for buildings today, but it creates greater risks tomorrow.

⁴ Based on a Facebook posting

https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid04CvCLDdFwwiMAe3gDccuQHGPgAMhoYXbMRatd15AtHiN1dCGqtrBk4gyYr8w2qE8l&id=100064051898394&post_id=100064051898394_pfbid04CvCLDdFwwiMAe3gDccuQHGPgAMhoYXbMRatd15AtHiN1dCGqtrBk4gyYr8w2qE8l&sfn=wiwspw&mibextid=6aamW6&_rdr

Wetlands act like natural sponges. They hold excess rainwater and help reduce flooding. They also support biodiversity and maintain important ecological processes. Jayshree repeatedly highlighted these functions. The devastating Chennai floods of 2015 made this message impossible to ignore. The destruction and fragmentation of wetlands had made the city more vulnerable to flooding.

Her work contributed to growing recognition of Pallikaranai's ecological importance. A portion of the marsh was declared a Reserve Forest in 2007, and the wetland later received international recognition as a Ramsar Site. Today, the remaining marsh continues to be an important ecological space within a rapidly growing city.

Jayshree's work has not been limited to Pallikaranai. She and Care Earth have worked on wetland conservation and restoration across Tamil Nadu. The organisation's work includes biodiversity research, ecological restoration, capacity building and advocacy. Jayshree continues to serve as its Managing Trustee.

Her contribution was recognised internationally in 2025, when she became the first Indian recipient of the Ramsar Award for Wetland Wise Use. The Ramsar Secretariat also recognised her as one of 12 women changemakers in the world of wetlands.

The recognition is particularly meaningful because her work represents what "wise use" of nature really means. It does not mean keeping people away from nature. It means understanding ecological limits and using natural resources without destroying the systems that support life.

Jayshree has also made women's leadership an important part of her work. She leads an all-women research team and mentors young conservationists. She has argued that women need better technical skills and greater representation in decision-making positions related to wetland management.

Her journey teaches us that environmental conservation is often a long struggle. There may be no immediate results. There may be opposition. There may be years of research and repeated efforts before change becomes visible.

But she has remained persistent.

As she says, "Change isn't about quick wins. It's about persistence, often measured in decades, to ensure a lasting impact."

For Jayshree, conservation is therefore not simply about saving a marsh. It is about changing the way society looks at nature.

A wetland is not empty land.

A river is not a drain.

A forest is not merely timber.

And nature is not an obstacle to development.

Her life reminds us that sometimes the first step towards protecting nature is simply to look at it differently. Where others see wasteland, we may need to learn to see a living world.



Shri N. Karthikeyan is a development economist who focuses on natural resource management, climate change, social protection, sovereign debt sustainability, microfinance, and sustainable lifestyles." E.mail id: karthinaga@zohomail.in

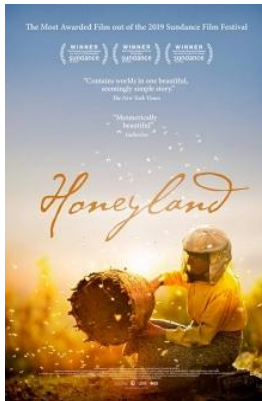


RESEARCH REVIEW

Honeyland

N. Karthikeyan

What if a person took only what she needed from nature and left the rest for nature to regenerate? *Honeyland*, the 2019 documentary from North Macedonia, answers this question through the quiet life of Hatidze Muratova, a traditional beekeeper living with her elderly mother in a remote, off-grid village.



A Rule of Coexistence

Hatidze makes a living by collecting honey from wild bees. Despite her difficult life, she shares a deep relationship with the land. Her golden rule when harvesting honeycomb is simple: **“Half for me, half for the bees.”** She leaves enough honey for the colony to survive, recognizing that nature is a living system rather than an endless warehouse. Her bond with the bees is built on coexistence rather than domination; she talks to them, sings to them, and treats them with care.

The Conflict: Two Ways of Seeing Nature

Hatidze's tranquil existence shifts when a large family moves nearby. The father, Hussein, learns beekeeping from Hatidze but views the bees purely as a commercial opportunity to support his large family. Driven by financial pressures, Hussein ignores Hatidze's rule and takes too much honey from his hives.

The consequences are swift and severe: his starving bees become aggressive and attack Hatidze's colonies, destroying her livelihood.

This conflict isn't just between two neighbours - it represents two opposing worldviews:

- **Nature as a Partner:** Taking only what is needed while allowing ecosystems to regenerate.
- **Nature as a Commodity:** Prioritizing immediate economic gain over natural limits.

Traditional Wisdom and Modern Consumption

Hatidze's knowledge is practical and local, passed down through generations. While the film portrays her simple life, it avoids romanticizing poverty. Instead, it distinguishes between voluntary simplicity and deprivation, advocating for a society where human needs are met without destroying essential ecological systems.

Without delivering preachy lectures on climate change, *Honeyland* uses stunning landscapes and daily life to convey a fundamental truth: sustainability relies on respecting limits.

A Principle for Daily Life

The principle of "take half, leave half" extends far beyond beekeeping:

- Take water, but allow aquifers to recover.
- Harvest from the soil, but nourish it in return.
- Use energy, but do not consume it as if it were unlimited.

Ultimately, *Honeyland* challenges our definition of progress and asks a crucial question: Are we taking more than our fair share?



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TESTIMONIALS

- In the month of July 7,500 visitors visited the Vasudha exhibition.



Vasudha Block: It is excellant place. young Generation should come here and see this.
Suggestion: Vasudha Block should be open in all the cities and towns of Bharat Bharat.
Angshu Roy — Siliguri, WB. 9451215427

Great efforts to inspire people to embrace a sustainable culture and work towards the betterment of humanity and all forms of nature. Thank you.

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Selfie point

