

THE E-TERNALS.COM PROJECT
FOR THE PROTECTION AND PUBLISHING
OF THE CULTURAL HERITAGE

PRESERVING INDIA'S HERITAGE

India has one of the world's richest and most continuous of cultures. Since millennia it has been one of the main contributors of achievements in fields as diverse as medicine, mathematics, the sciences, technology, philosophy, theology, literature, linguistics, not to forget the graphic arts, music, dance and innumerable other disciplines.

Unfortunately, much of India's staggering heritage is in serious physical danger. For instance, one of the main forms of Indian heritage tradition is the palm-leaf book. Much of India's written heritage has been passed on in the form of specially treated palm leaves, with writing in ink or engraving. The amount of books on all kinds of subjects which India has produced using this medium is absolutely amazing. According to a conservative estimate by the Oriental Department of the German National Library (Berlin), there are approximately 1 million such palm-leaf books. The production of the entire rest of the world together is only circa 10 million books. If we add all the other Indian materials (printed books, paper manuscripts, inscriptions, birch-bark texts, etc.), the Indian share of the world's written heritage as of today comes up to roughly 20%. It comes as a shock that this awesome heritage is materially, physically falling apart at an absolutely alarming rate. Paper, palm leaves and birch bark are organic materials with a natural life span. German scientists have determined that most Indian palm-leaf books will naturally decay within the next 50 to 100 years. In about 150 years, there will be practically none left whatsoever. This is a rapid, gradual, unstoppable process. Every day, a part of it disappears forever. The process is accelerated by floods, fires, wars, inadvertent loss. Already an immense amount has been lost. For every Indian, in fact for every human being, this must be a truly shocking discovery. This is why we at e-ternals.com have devoted ourselves to fighting this disaster in progress.

You may ask yourself – how can this be done? If it has not happened before, how can it happen now?

It is the digital revolution that has turned the tables on the destructive powers of time.

It has enabled modern man for the first time in history to produce perfectly identical copies, and to pass them on very affordably and efficiently.

Using state-of-the-art optoelectronic equipment and computers, we produce ultra-sharp digital colour facsimiles (pictures) of the Indian palm-leaf books, paper manuscripts, books, newspapers, letters, birch-bark texts, drawings, paintings, sculptures, reliefs, paintings and inscriptions and many other heritage objects. We then store these high-resolution pictures on extremely long-lasting digital media, adhering strictly to international norms. These digital media will be readable in the future by the generations to come, and they can be copied to whatever digital media the future will bring. In this way we rescue our heritage from destruction.

We then make copies of the pictures available extremely cheaply to everybody, not just to scientists and scholars, but also to the public. For many of the things that we preserve this is in fact the first time ever that they are published, the first time that they are available to anybody other than a handful of scholars. A CD-ROM containing hundreds of pages only costs a few dollars to produce and is very long-lasting. The picture quality is absolutely amazing. It is possible to magnify the material many times, showing every fiber of the palm leaves or the paper, and readers can print colour pictures of the originals on their own printers. We publish academic versions (with academic analyses) as well as multimedia versions for the culturally interested public.

Thanks to digital technology, we can also record Indian songs, recitals, recitations, dance and many other forms of artistic expression and make them available in the same affordable and attractive way.

And we do this not only in India, but everywhere in the world where we find Indian originals: by digitizing and publishing Indian materials which were taken out of India, we bring them back to the motherland.

Best of all, we actually generate a constant flow of money back to the owners of the originals, so that they can preserve the originals and hire scholars and scientists to study them. This is a welcome source of funds for libraries, museums, archives, for everybody else who takes care of the originals. We provide resources for scholars and scientists whom we commission to work on this fascinating material, much of it never published before, some of it even newly discovered.

Whether you are a public authority, a charity, a foundation, a corporation or an influential individual – please step in with whatever resources you wish to contribute. To preserve the heritage of India.

We can include you in our catalogues and promotional materials. Our Internet pages have special PR spaces where we profile our sponsors. We also organize exhibitions of original art and e-ternals.com digitization products, both in India and abroad.

The digital heritage pictures that we produce can also be made available to you for use in your own existing advertising.

We can also work together with you to produce TV footage showing our work and your sponsorship.

Our digital heritage CD-ROMs and our posters and printed materials make a wonderful gift. Imagine a multimedia edition of the Jehangir miniature paintings, or of the oldest Indian palm leaf with writing on it, from over 2000 years ago. Or the letters of Mahatma Gandhi, the Constitution, the first newspaper editions, or a beautiful picture of a birch-bark text from Kashmir from time immemorial. Maybe your company archives have hidden treasures! The possibilities are unlimited. Our materials can be used as prizes in newspaper and television competitions, or as corporate give-aways with your logo and company advertising included.

Doesn't it sound good to be an official sponsor of India's heritage?