



The 13th Annual Diversity Conference
Building Community through Diversity
CHAMPIONING ACCESS AND EQUITY



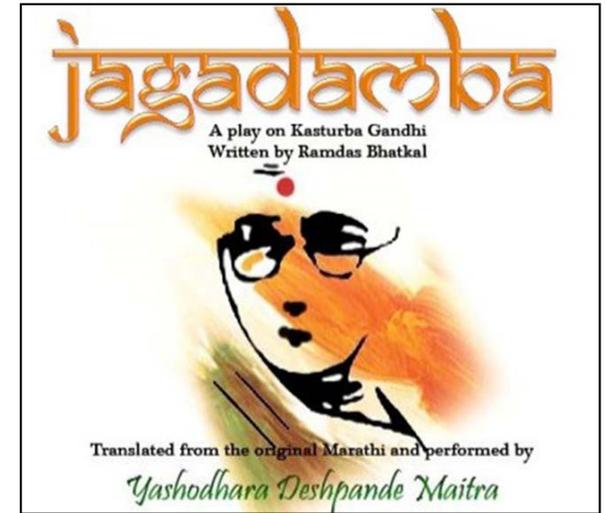
'Jagadamba' is the story of
Kasturba Gandhi,
a simple woman, with no formal education, raised with traditional Hindu values, Married to an extraordinary man, who is thrown into circumstances far beyond her expectation, and who becomes a source of inspiration and comfort to him.

Although the play looks at Mahatma Gandhi and history through Kasturba's eyes, it is essentially her story – the story of a woman, a wife, a mother, and ultimately that of a human being.

Einstein said that future generations would scarce believe that such a man lived on this planet. Present day readers

would scarce

believe that such a man had such a woman in his life.



A One– Woman, Two-Act Play



Kasturba Gandhi

'JAGADAMBA'

The Setting

Act I: January 1915. A cabin on the ship taking Gandhi and Kasturba back to India.

Act II: August 1942 to February 1944. The Aga Khan Palace in Pune, India, where Gandhi and his fellow freedom-fighters are being held in detention by the British.

Cast of Characters (Mentioned in the Performance)

The Gandhi Family:

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi: (aka 'Bapu' (father))

Kasturba Gandhi: (aka 'Ba' (mother))

Their sons: Harilal (aka 'Chhota' (Younger) Gandhi); Gulab, his wife

Manilal; Sushila, his wife

Ramdas and Devdas

Their nephews: Chhagan and Magan

General Jan Smuts: Boer leader in South Africa

Professor G. K. Gokhale: Indian leader, Gandhi's mentor

Pyarelal: Gandhi's secretary and very close associate

Indian Fighters for Freedom (from British rule) also interned with Gandhi:

Sarojini Naidu (a poet, also known as the 'Nightingale of India')

Sushila (Pyarelal's sister)

Miraben (an Englishwoman, born Madeleine Slade, daughter of British Rear-Admiral, Sir Edmund Slade – devotee of Gandhi)

Mahadeo: Gandhi's secretary, like a son to 'Ba' and 'Bapu'

About the Artist



Yashodhara Deshpande Maitra (Yashu), taught Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics to hearing-impaired students at the National Technical Institute of the Deaf at the Rochester Institute of Technology for twenty years. She then embarked on a second career as a professional translator, and has translated works of fiction, non-fiction, biographies, and now the play 'Jagadamba'.

On her most recent trip to India, Yashu visited the Aga Khan Palace in Pune where Kasturba was imprisoned, and was spellbound. Yashu has presented 'Jagadamba' in staged readings to audiences in India, as well as here in the United States.

'Jagadamba' marks her debut on the stage.

'The story of Kasturba Gandhi has touched me deeply. I feel humbled and blessed to have the opportunity to present her story. The story of a simple woman, who faces circumstances and challenges way beyond anyone's expectations. A story of love, sacrifice, non-violence and understanding. A story, I feel, that transcends barriers of nationality, age and religion'.

Glossary

Bahu: Daughter-in-law

Brahmacharya: Celibacy

Charkha: Spinning wheel

Coolie: (literally, porter) Derogatory way of referring to Indians

Gora sahibs: The white rulers, the British

Gujarati: A language of the Indo-European family, spoken in Western India

Harijans: (Children of God) name given by Gandhi to India's untouchables

Hindi: An Indo-European language, the *lingua franca* of Northern India

Honewali: Future (often used to refer to fiancée, or future wife)

Ijjat: Honor

Jagadamba: Mother of the Universe

Kala: Black

Khadi: Homespun cotton cloth

Lagan: Marriage

Marathi: An Indo-European language of Western and South-Western India

Mohan or Mohaniya: Kasturba's nickname for Gandhi

Muddum: Manner of referring to a white woman (Madam)

Muhurat: Auspicious time or day

Parsi: People of Persian origin, practicing the Zoroastrian faith, who settled along the West Coast of India in the 9th century to escape persecution in their homeland. During British rule, they adopted Western ways and habits to a significant extent, including a style of wearing the traditional Indian female garment, the *sari*

Puja: Religious worship

Sagai: Engagement

Sansaar: Married life

Satyagraha: Civil disobedience, non-violent non-cooperation

Shlokas: Verses

Vilayati: Of English/British origin

Vrata: Vow