



**Dharma Association of North America
(DANAM)**

5th DANAM Conference 2007

AGENDA

**16-18 November 2007
San Diego, CA**

DHARMA SUSTAINS DIVERSITY

5th DANAM Conference 2007

Sponsored by

Dharma Association of North America (DANAM)

CONFERENCE THEME:

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN CONSTRUCTIVE DHARMA

16-18 November 2007

Room Manchester-D
Manchester Grand Hyatt Hotel
1 Market Place
San Diego, CA 92101
Tel: 619-239-5678

Held in conjunction with the 2007 AAR Annual Meeting

5th DANAM CONFERENCE CO-CHAIRS:

Adarsh Deepak, Ph. D., *President, Taksha Institute & President, DANAM*
Rita D. Sherma, Ph. D., *Visiting Associate Professor, Binghamton University;*
Academic Programs Director, DANAM; Director, ITBB

PURPOSE of the CONFERENCE

To provide a Forum where scholars of Dharma Traditions and interested members of Dharma communities can engage in the examination of, and constructive approaches to, contemporary issues in the study of Dharma Traditions. While there are multiple scholarly arenas for presentation of new textual, sociological, anthropological, and historic approaches to the study of Indian cultural and religious traditions, there are few dedicated venues for discourse on, and the presentation of, constructive new approaches to pedagogy, epistemology, theology, or philosophy in these systems. It is hoped that this meeting can explore the possibility that the academic study of these traditions is now mature enough to include and move beyond the limitations of phenomenological methodologies in order to engage the conceptual depth and intellectual applicability of these traditions in an inclusive forum.

DANAM Summary

DANAM (Dharma Association of North America) is an independent, non-political, donation-based, non-profit organization of Virginia, with a focus on constructive presentation of Dharma traditions in the North American context. Its mission and objectives are described at its web site at www.danam-web.org, which lists distinguished scholars as Patron and Board of Distinguished Visiting Scholars (BDVS) drawn from various disciplines. DANAM is a sponsor of the peer-reviewed *Journal of Vaishnava Studies*, now in its fifteenth year, and the peer-reviewed *Contemporary Issues in Constructive Dharma* volumes, now in their fourth year.

Proceedings of DANAM Conference Sessions

The proceedings of the DANAM Conference sessions are available at Deepak Heritage Books (DHB), www.deepakheritage.com, unless otherwise stated. They are listed as follows: *Contemporary Issues in Constructive Dharma Volume I* (Eds. Rita D. Sherma and Adarsh Deepak, 2003). *Contemporary Issues in Constructive Dharma Volume II: Epistemology and Hermeneutics* (Eds. Rita D. Sherma and Adarsh Deepak, 2004). *Asceticism Identity and Pedagogy in Dharma Traditions* (Eds. Graham M. Schweig, Jeffrey D. Long, Ramdas Lamb and Adarsh Deepak, 2006). *Dying Death and Afterlife in Dharma Traditions and Western Religions* (Eds. Adarsh Deepak and Rita D. Sherma, 2006). Three volumes of the proceedings of the DANAM06 Conference will be published in 2007.

AGENDA

**5th DANAM Conference 2007 (DANAM07)
Grand Hyatt - Manchester D**

16-18 NOVEMBER 2007

THE TWO MAJOR TOPICAL THEMES

Rita D. Sherma, Ph.D., DANAM Academic Programs Director;
Visiting Associate Professor, Binghamton University; Director, ITBB

Theme 1: Emotion, Imagination and Transcendence: The Many Faces of Rasa Theory

One of our two major themes for the DANAM-AAR 2007 meeting is “Emotion, Imagination, and Transformation: The Many Faces of Rasa Theory.” DANAM 2007 will present panels on the varied applications and implications of the *theory of rasa*. From aesthetics to alliteration, from dance to devotion, the broad reach of theories of rasa has imbued Indic culture, religion, and philosophy with a certain appreciation of the interrelatedness of these diverse fields and, thereby, of human experience in toto.

The theory of rasa refers, in general, to the pure fulfillment that a work of art can induce, which can then become a potent emotional release, a delight arising from the total appreciation of the intrinsic essence of the aesthetic opus. Rasa has been described in many ways including that of taste, relish, mood, sentiment, or flavor. It often points to a state of enhanced emotional perception activated by deep immersion in a work of music, literature, or art.

Rasa presents itself to the mind as apprehension of an emotion such as love, fear, wonder, or serenity, in which the awareness is absorbed, to the exclusion of all else including the time-bound physical self. Within the framework, the mind is able to appreciate, and be moved by, the representation of events both pleasurable and painful, due to the convergence of cognition, emotion, and perception in a state of heightened awareness. Such an experience is understood as capable of triggering profound changes in one’s perception and conception of the self and of the world. Thus, rasa is not merely an aesthetic theory; it has ontological significance. As such, it has been deployed by philosophy and theology as a potent catalyst for the transformation of awareness, and as the tenor of that very transformation.

Bharata, the early exponent of the theory of rasa, averred that what stirred the emotions was very different from that which simply offered information (such as a simple narrative of factual events) or utility (such as a beautiful ornament). The arts that evinced rasa, that aroused the senses, were the higher arts. Indeed, all art should seek to elicit rasa. As Bharata noted, a subject's inherent nature comprised all emotions and they alone were what art should investigate, elucidate, and evoke. Two sets of feelings jointly comprised the world of the emotions. He termed intrinsic and permanent, or foundational emotions, as *sthayi-bhavas*; and concomitant and fleeting sentiments as *sanchari-bhavas*.

Rasa theory links aesthetics, semantic theory, and theology; its theory of *sthayi-bhava*, or permanent moods, also connects rasa theory to psychology. The rasa theory panels will present papers on all aspects and examinations of the theory of rasa: performative, artistic, musical, literary, psychological, philosophical, theological, and devotional.

The three Paper Sessions on *Rasa Theory* will include a double panel on *Rasa and Vaishnava Traditions*; as well as *Theorizing Rasa: Culture and Gender*, and *Tantra and Rasa: Embodied Divinity and Aesthetic Self-Realization*

Theme 2: Reflections on the Relationships Between Dharma, Karma, And Moksha

Dharma has been variously formulated in different Hindu texts and traditions; the two major categories are, of course, *sadharana* and *varnashrama* dharma. Dharma, in relationship to moksha, has been variously conceived in Hindu thought: as indispensable, facilitative, or irrelevant. More recently, in postmodernist interpretations, *jati* and gender based components of *varnashrama* dharma have been perceived, at times, as impediments on the path to realization.

Many contemporary movements based in Hindu thought have moved towards highlighting certain aspects of dharma that point to a deeper world engagement (such as *seva*, *lokasamgraha* etc.). Some of the questions that arise in light of such reconsideration are: Can *varnashrama* dharma still be considered essential to liberation? If so, what would be the justification? If dharma— *varnashrama* and *sadharana*— is still to be viewed as facilitative for liberation, in what way is it facilitative and why? What are the most important aspects of dharma (*sadharana* and/or *varnashrama*) for such facilitation? Are there particular elements of dharma that need to be especially accentuated at the present time (such as, for example, ahimsa towards the earth?).

Secondly, it has also been averred that *sadharana* dharma has, as its foundation, *ahimsa* in all its aspects. It may—for this and other reasons—be in occasional conflict with elements of *varnashrama* dharma, depending on the circumstances and occupations of individuals. The *Gita*, of course, famously takes up this point. But with the emergence of an interrelated complex of contemporary concerns, it can be argued that issues such as women's roles, controversies over *jati*-s and *varna*-s, environmental impacts of certain behaviors and attitudes, a transnational diaspora, and globalization, may impact future conceptions of dharma. In this vein, it can be argued that the relationship between the *sadharana*, and *varnashrama* dharma need to be examined and reconsidered.

Third, how should the effects of action from present and past actions (*karma-phala*) be understood in the light of contemporary knowledge (in a deterministic way? a pragmatic way? as opportunities for development? etc.)? How do they weigh on the quest for liberation? The effects of karma are often categorized according to three types: (a) *sanchita-karma*, the unresolved aggregate of all past karma; (b) *prarabdha-karma*, the *karma-phala* related to past actions that one will experience in this life, and (c) *prarabdha-karma*, the actions that individuals are currently undertaking that will bear *karma-phala* in future. It is worth considering whether the rationale for prescriptive actions (*tirtha*, *tapas*, *puja*, *mantra*, and so forth) traditionally given to eliminate or diminish undesired effects of these above forms of causality evince internal conceptual consistency within given systems of Hindu philosophy or theology.

DANAM 2007 will present four Paper Sessions that reexamine and re-envision the network of relationships between *Dharma, Karma, and Moksha*. The Sessions include *Dharma, Karma, and Moksha and the Jaina Tradition*; *The Ethics of Dharma*; *Beyond Dominant Perspectives: Reflections on Dharma, Karma, and Moksha*, and *The Dharma of Moksha-Seekers: Asceticism and Social Engagement*

AGENDA

LOCATION OF ALL ACADEMIC SESSIONS **Grand Hyatt-Manchester D**

16 November 2007

8:30am OPENS - DANAM07 CONFERENCE REGISTRATION DESK. To receive the complimentary Conference Package, including the Abstract Digest, please register ahead with contact information, online at:

http://www.danam-web.org/registration_1.html

Participation at DANAM sessions at the AAR Annual Meetings is complimentary; there is NO FEE involved. However, please register on-line. Your registration will help us utilize our resources more efficiently to ensure conference sessions run smoothly. The first 108 registrants will receive the Conference package. This information is strictly meant for planning purposes and to facilitate communications.

AM16-8
9:00am – 11:45am

16 November 2007
Grand Hyatt-Manchester D

Dharma Association of North America (DANAM) – Session DKM1

Theme: **Dharma, Karma, and Moksha and the Jaina Tradition (DKM1)**

Convener: **Anne Vallely**, University of Ottawa

Anne Vallely, University of Ottawa, *Presiding*

The panel will engage with the discussion of *sadharana*-dharma and *varnashrama*-dharma as they are understood within Jaina Tradition, since it unambiguously identifies itself as a *sadharana* tradition – its absolutist ethical principles apply to all souls (human and nonhuman) equally. *Varnashrama* dharma, therefore, gets little attention in Jaina discourse other than to repudiate it, and thereby to rhetorically highlight the distinctiveness of the Jaina tradition.

In practice, however, *varnashrama* plays a significant role in the way in which Jaina-s organize themselves and live their religious lives. The juxtaposition of the two – the rhetorical ideal/ lived tradition – will constitute the foundation for the panelists' presentations. All the participants for this proposed panel will be engaged in an intensive study of Jainism in India over the course of the summer 2007, during which time they will have been exposed to both the informal, lived tradition of Jaina-s as well as its reified representation. The papers in this panel will each explore how central religious ideas are conceptualized, discussed, practiced and also reified in the self-presentation of Jaina Tradition as an separate, independent entity, in a world of faiths.

Panelists: **8 Panelists (TBA)**

(For updates, continue to check at: www.danam-web.org/events.htm)

AM16-52
1:00pm – 3:30pm

16 November 2007
Grand Hyatt-Manchester D

Dharma Association of North America (DANAM) – Session DKM2

Theme: **The Ethics of Dharma** (DKM2)

Convener: **Purushottama Bilimoria**, Deakin University (Melbourne, Australia)

Rita D. Sherma, Binghamton University, and ITBB, *Presiding*

Purushottama Bilimoria, Deakin University (Melbourne, Australia)

Is Dharma Rational? And Karma intelligible? Is Moksha (a) Way Out? Critique of Mohanty, Matilal, Daya Krishna.

Joseph Prabhu, Cal. State University, Los Angeles

Dharma through Thick and Thin.

Shyam Ranganathan, York University

How to Generalize and How not to Generalize about “Dharma”, “Karma” and “Moksa”

Christopher Key Chapple, Loyola Marymount University

Dharma, Karma, and Moksha in Jaina Tradition

Guy Petterson, University of Melbourne, Australia

Salvation through Deeds?: Madeleine Biardeau's “Anthropology of Desire”

(For updates, see: www.danam-web.org/events.htm)

AM16-102
4:00pm – 6:30pm

16 November 2007
Grand Hyatt-Manchester D

Dharma Association of North America (DANAM) – Session DKM3

Theme: **Beyond Dominant Perspectives: Reflections on Dharma, Karma, and Moksha** (DKM3)

Convener: **Ramdas Lamb**, University of Hawaii, & **Adarsh Deepak**, DANAM and Taksha Institute

Jeffrey D. Long, Elizabethtown College, *Presiding*

Koenraad Elst, Author, Antwerp, Belgium

The Non-Retributive Karma Doctrine

Henry John Walker, Bates College

Dharma and Duty in the Gita

Veena R. Howard, University of Oregon, Lone College

A Search for Dharma in Secular world of Diaspora: Is sadharana dharma the only alternative?

Shiv Raj Pal, Toronto, Canada

Sukshma-Shareer, the Prime Body of the Atma, and its Relationship to Dharma, Karma and Moksha

Sudhir K. Anand, Author, Los Angeles

The Arya Samaj View of Moksha

Trichur S. Rukmani, Concordia University, Canada, *Respondent*

(For updates, see: www.danam-web.org/events.htm)

AM16-134

16 November 2007

7:30pm – 10:00pm

Grand Hyatt-Manchester D

Dharma Association of North America (DANAM) – Session RT1

Theme: **Bhakti Rasa Through Music and Song (Bhajans) (RT1)**

Convener: **Ramdas Lamb**, University of Hawaii at Manoa,

Ramdas Lamb, University of Hawaii, and **Rita D. Sherma**, Binghamton University, *Presiding*

Presenters:

Rita D. Sherma, Binghamton University and ITBB

Introductory Remarks

Local Bhajan Group, San Diego

Dr. Jeffrey Stephen Lidke, Berry College, (on *Tabla*)

Dr. Indira Pal, & **Dr. Shiv Raj Pal** (on *Harmonium*), Toronto, Canada

(For updates, see: www.danam-web.org/events.htm)

AM17-22

17 November 2007

9:00am-11:55am

Grand Hyatt-Manchester D

Dharma Association of North America (DANAM) – Session RT2

Theme: **Rasa and Vaishnava Traditions (RT2) – I**

Conveners: **Graham M. Schweig**, Christopher Newport University, & **Lance Nelson**, University of San Diego

Ramdas Lamb, University of Hawaii at Manoa, *Presiding*

Presenters:

Graham M. Schweig, Christopher Newport University

The Conception and Meaning of Rasa in Bhakti: The Caitanya Vaishnava School

Krisztina Danka, Eotvos Lorand University of Budapest, Hungary

Rasa - Aesthetics & Metaphysics Interwoven: Literary Works As Revelations in the Bengali Vaishnava Tradition

Lance Nelson, University of San Diego

Bhakti-rasa for the Advaitin Renouncer: Madhusudana Sarasvati's Theory of Devotional Sentiment

Gerald T. Carney, Hampden-Sydney College

Rasa as Foundation and Bridge

Theme: **Rasa and Vaishnava Traditions (RT2) – II**

Graham M Schweig, Christopher Newport University, *Presiding*

David Buchta, University of Pennsylvania

Bhayanaka as Bhakti-Rasa in Gaudiya Vaishnavism

Neelima Shukla-Bhatt, Wellesley College

Usefulness of the Concept of Bhakti-rasa in Studying Bhakti Forms

Deepak Shimkhada, Claremont College

Paintings: Expressions of Rasa in the 1648 Bhagavata Purana

Ithamar Theodor, University of Haifa

The Infiltration of Rasa into Vaisnavism

(For updates, see: www.danam-web.org/events.htm)

AM17-52

17 November 2007

1:00pm-3:30pm

Grand Hyatt-Manchester D

Dharma Association of North America (DANAM) – Session RT3

Theme - **Theorizing Rasa: Culture and Gender (RT3)**

Convener: **Adarsh Deepak**, DANAM and Taksha Institute

Rita D. Sherma, Binghamton University and ITBB, *Presiding*

Susan Schwartz, Muhlenberg College

Rasa/Rakta: Transformations in Red

Alfred Collins, Anchorage, Alaska

The Savor of What Is: Rasa as Culture Theory

Recipient: Graham Schweig, Ph.D. Assoc. Prof. Religion, Christopher Newport University
Bhagavad Gita: The Beloved Lord's Secret Love Song

(For updates, see: www.danam-web.org/events.htm)

AM17-125
7:00pm-9:00pm

17 November 2007
Grand Hyatt-Manchester E (note room change)

Dharma Association of North America (DANAM) – Session DR
Event - **DANAM Reception & Showings of Nava-Rasa Through Dance (DR)**
Conveners: “Friends of DANAM”, Aesthetes, and Rasika-s

DANAM Reception immediately follows the DANAM Awards Ceremony. Come join us for informal meetings and discussions with colleagues and friends over light refreshments and beverages (wine and cheese), and viewing video shows (10-min long) of the Nava Rasa-s (Nine Emotional Sentiments-s) through Dance in both Kathak and Bharatnatyam styles.

(For updates, see: www.danam-web.org/events.htm)

AM18-12
9:00am – 11:45am

18 November 2007
Grand Hyatt-Manchester D

Dharma Association of North America (DANAM) – Session DKM4
Theme-**The Dharma of Moksha-Seekers: Asceticism and Social Engagement (DKM4)**
Convener: **Ramdas Lamb**, University of Hawaii at Manoa
Swami Tyagananda, Vedanta Society, *Presiding*

Presenters:

Tulasi Srinivas, Wheaton College

The Truant Ascetic: Transcendence and Escape in the Transnational Sathya Sai Movement

Antoinette E. Denapoli, Emory University

God Depends on His Devotees: Social Engagement and Reciprocity between Ascetics and Householders in Rajasthan.

Pravrajika Vrajaprana, Vedanta Society

Bridging the Gap between the Sacred and the Secular: Seva as Ascetic Practice

Graham M. Schweig, Christopher Newport University
Sri Krishna Chaitanya as Ascetic, Ecstatic, and Teacher

Ramdas Lamb, University of Hawaii

Ramanandi Sadhus and the Proliferation of Ram Bhakti in North India

Swami Tyagananda, Vedanta Society, *Respondent*

(For updates, see: www.danam-web.org/events.htm)

AM18-52
1:00pm-3:30pm

18 November 2007
Grand Hyatt-Manchester D

Dharma Association of North America (DANAM) – Session RT5

Theme-**Tantra and Rasa: Embodied Divinity and Aesthetic Self-Realization (RT5)**

Convener: **David Peter Lawrence**, University of North Dakota

E.H. ‘Rick’ Jarow, Vassar College, *Presiding*

Presenters:

David Peter Lawrence, University of North Dakota

Suggestion, Universalization and the Disclosure of Sakti: Revisiting Abhinavagupta on the Relations of Aesthetics and Monistic Saivism

Kerry Martin Skora, Hiram College

Abhinavagupta’s Aesthetics of Touch: Synaesthetic Awareness and Lucid Dream-Play

Loriliai Biernacki, University of Colorado

The Ethics of Delight

Sthaneshwar Timalisina, San Diego State University

Aesthetic and Mystical: Reading Tripura Literature Through the Lens of Rasa

Jeffrey Stephen Lidke, Berry College

A Tantric Semiotics of the Body as Rasa in Classical Indian Dance

David Mellins, Columbia University, *Respondent*

(For updates, continue to check at: www.danam-web.org/events.htm)

AM18-101
4:00pm-6:30pm

18 November 2007
Grand Hyatt-Manchester D

Dharma Association of North America (DANAM) – Session BR

Theme: **Rethinking Practice and Embodiment in Frederick M. Smith’s “The Self Possessed: Deity and Spirit Possession in South Asian Literature” (BOOK REVIEW)**

Convener: **Stuart Ray Sarbacker**, Northwestern University

Christopher Key Chapple, Loyola Marymount University, *Presiding*

Panelists:

David Gitomer, DePaul University

Kathleen M. Erndl, Florida State University

John Nemec, University of Virginia

Ronald M. Davidson, Fairfield University

Gerald J. Larson, Emeriti, University of California, Santa Barbara & Indiana University

Lloyd Pflueger, Truman State University

Frederick M. Smith, University of Iowa, *Respondent*

For Latest Updates of the Agenda, please continue to check the web site at:
www.danam-web.org/events.htm

Contacts For Further Information

For Conference Administration & Logistics:

Ms. Diana McQuestion, Conference Manager: Diana@stcnet.com

Tel: 757-766-5831 (till 14 Nov 07); At the Conference, 757-897-3745 cell (15-18 Nov 07)

For Conference Program:

Dr. Adarsh Deepak, President, DANAM: a.deepak@stcnet.com, 757-272-3066 cell

CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION

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Rita D. Sherma, Binghamton University, **Chair**

Arindam Chakrabarti, University of Hawaii at Manoa

Christopher K. Chapple, Loyola Mount University

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Publisher of *Journal for Vaishnava Studies (JVS)*,
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General Co-Chairs:

Dr. Adarsh Deepak, *President, DANAM and Taksha Institute*

Dr. Rajinder Gandhi, *Chairman, DANAM*

TRAVEL INFORMATION

The following information web sites are for the convenience of the attendees of
DANAM07 Conference and/or 2007AAR Annual Meeting.

From AAR web site:
<http://www.aarweb.org/>