



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

**21<sup>st</sup> Annual  
DANAM Conference 2023**

**17-18 November 2023  
San Antonio, Texas**

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**DHARMA SUSTAINS DIVERSITY**

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**21<sup>st</sup> Annual**  
**DANAM Conference 2023**

*Sponsored by*

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

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**17-18 November 2023**

**Held in conjunction with the  
2023 American Academy of Religion (AAR) Annual Meeting  
San Antonio, Texas**

21<sup>st</sup> Annual DANAM CONFERENCE CO-CHAIRS:

**Ravi Deepak**

President, DANAM

**Rita D. Sherma, Ph.D.**

Vice President, DANAM

Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA

## *PURPOSE of the CONFERENCE*

To provide a Dedicated Forum where scholars of Dharma Studies (Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and other dharmic traditions and lineages) can engage in the examination of, and constructive approaches to lived experience and contemporary concerns in the global expressions of these traditions. While there are multiple scholarly arenas for presentation of new sociological, anthropological, and historic approaches to the study of cultural and religious traditions that originated in South Asia, there are few dedicated venues for discourse on, and constructive approaches to philosophy, theology, ethics, epistemology, hermeneutics, pedagogy, praxis, theory, and constructive studies in these systems of thought and practice. It is hoped that these meetings can explore the conceptual complexity of, and critical transdisciplinary research on these traditions in an inclusive forum.

## *DANAM Summary*

DANAM (Dharma Academy 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](http://www.danam-web.org), which lists the advisory committee of reputable scholars under Board of Distinguished Scholars (BDVS) drawn from various disciplines. DANAM holds its Annual Meeting in conjunction with the yearly conference of the American Academy of Religion. DANAM was a sponsor during 2001-2011 of the peer-reviewed *Journal of Vaishnava Studies*, and since 2003 is the sponsor of the peer-reviewed *Contemporary Issues in Constructive Dharma* edited volumes.

## *Proceedings of DANAM Conference Sessions*

The proceedings of earlier DANAM Conference sessions are available at Deepak Heritage Books (DHB), [www.deepakheritage.com](http://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, Jeffery 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). *Authority and Its Challenges in Hindu Texts, Translations, and Transnational Communities* (Ed. Deepak Sarma). *Yoga and Ecology: Dharma for the Earth* (Ed. Christopher K. Chapple).

## AGENDA

### 21<sup>st</sup> Annual DANAM Conference

17-18 November 2023

#### Friday, 17 Nov 2023

**8:00 a.m.** DANAM CONFERENCE REGISTRATION DESK opens.

Participation at DANAM sessions at the AAR Annual Meetings is *complimentary*; with **NO FEE** involved.

To help us monitor attendance and keep our member database updated we would be pleased to receive a preregistration notice from you by email. Your DANAM registration will help us communicate with members more efficiently and utilize our resources more effectively to ensure conference sessions run smoothly. This information is strictly meant for planning purposes and to facilitate communications.



**For Latest Updates of the Agenda, please continue to check the web site at:**  
[www.danam-web.org/events.htm](http://www.danam-web.org/events.htm)

## SESSION SCHEDULE

### FRIDAY, 17 NOVEMBER

#### Marriott Riverwalk, Alamo Ballroom, Salon C

#### SESSION 1: 9:00 – 10:45 am (M17-104)

##### **Food and Interreligious Dialogue: Jewish, Hindu, and Jain Perspectives**

This panel provides an inter-religious dialogue between Hindu and Jain traditions, and between these and the Jewish tradition. Specific topics include food security, non-violence, speciesism, hospitality, and ritual as shaping the dynamic interactions between people, food, and lands.

**Convener/Presider: Yudit Kornberg Greenberg, Rollins College**

##### **Panelists:**

- **Dr. Melanie Barbato, University of Munster/Germany, and the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies/UK, *Rethinking Food Security Through the Jewish, Jain, and Hindu Traditions***
- **Dr. Cogen Bohanec, Arihanta Institute, *A Survey of Nonviolence, Food, and Animals in Hindu Literature***
- **Dr. Yudit Kornberg Greenberg, Rollins College, *Food, Hospitality, and Ritual in the Jewish Tradition***
- **Dr. Christopher Jain Miller, Arihanta Institute, *Jain Veganism in Dialogue with Jain Speciesism: Clarifying Jain Intra-religious Dialogue as a Basis for Inter-religious Dialogue***

##### **Respondent:**

- **Dr. Alan Brill, Seton Hall University**

#### SESSION 2: 11:00 am – 1:00 pm (M17-108)

##### **Engaged Jainism**

For millennia, it has been widely recognized that the Jain tradition has been distinctive in its central focus on nonviolence (ahimsa) towards all beings (jivas). With the analogous nonviolent movement of Mahatma Gandhi in the 20<sup>th</sup> century there has been increasing awareness as to the social applications of principled nonviolence towards justice issues both within and outside of the Jain community, and most recently, amongst scholars of Jain Studies. This session welcomes papers that seek to explore applications of Jain philosophy and tradition towards the imperative issues of our day: environmental conservations, animal advocacy and protection (such as the vegan and animal rights movements), decoloniality, anti-racism, economic sustainability and poverty, and issues relating to gender and sexuality, to name a few.

**Convener: Cogen Bohanec, Arihanta Institute**  
**President: Corinna Lhoir, Universitat Hamburg**

**Panelists:**

- **Cogen Bohanec, Arihanta Institute, *An Argument for Socially Engaged Jainism***
- **Jonathan Dickstein, Arihanta Institute, *Rejecting Species: Jainism and Sentient Rights***
- **Venu Mehta, Claremont School of Theology, *Revisiting Gandhian Model of Swaraj and Jain Ethics of Aparigraha towards Economic Sustainability, Dignity of Life, and Non-Violence***
- **Shivani Bothra, California State University Long Beach, *Rethinking Ahimsa: Revolutionary Ideas of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Acarya Bhikshu***
- **Christopher Jain Miller, Arihanta Institute, *Engaged Jain Epistemology: Integrating Climate Science into the Science of the Jain Tradition***

**SESSION 3: 2:00 – 6:00 pm (M17-201)**

**Roundtable- The Dharma of the Scholar-Practitioner: Pedagogy, History, Philosophy, and Controversies**

This panel will be addressing the entire range of issues that are involved in the work of scholar-practitioners of the Dharma traditions. These include navigating the expectations of the academy and of one's spiritual community in one's scholarship and public presentations, presenting traditions in the classroom in ways that meet the standards of the academy and are true to one's sensibility as a practitioner, and addressing difficult issues and controversies with both rigor and sensitivity

**Convener: Jeffery D. Long, Elizabethtown College**  
**President: Loriliai Biernacki, University of Colorado, Boulder**

**Panelists:**

- **Rita D. Sherma, Graduate Theological Union, *Epistemic Justice and the Danger of Epistemicide Across the Global South***
- **Shyam Ranganathan, York University, Toronto, *The Practitioner Scholar***
- **Reid Locklin, University of Toronto, *On Being a Catholic Vedantin***
- **Jeffery D. Long, Elizabethtown College, *On the Ramakrishna Tradition of Vedanta***
- **Ithamar Theodor, Zefat Academic College, *The Dharma of the Scholar-Practitioner: Pedagogy, History, Philosophy, and Controversies***

- **Veena Howard, California State University, Fresno, *Dharma: A Principle for Creating Community Partnerships and Innovative Research***
- **Pankaj Jain, FLAME University, *From Emic/Etic to Ethic***

**Respondent:** Nirinjan Kaur Khalsa, Loyola Marymount University

## **SATURDAY, 18 NOVEMBER**

### **MARRIOTT RIVERWALK, ALAMO BALLROOM, SALON C**

#### **SESSION 4: 9:00am – 11 :00am (M18-107)**

#### **Dharma, Post-humanism, and AI**

The category of post humanism has recently emerged as a way to talk about contemporary experience that is seeking a way past/through the impasses of postmodern thought and culture. Do the Dharma traditions have resources to partner with critical post-humanism (as diverse schools of thought and praxis) to negotiate the limits and opportunities of AI and the digital, cyborg, scientific world in which we live ? What are those resources ? What might different dharma traditions offer, with the light they bring, to unveil or expose the possibilities and limits of AI ? Issues of panpsychism, technology, rebirth, nuclear power and weaponry, and climate change might also be addressed in this panel.

**Convener/Presider:** Jonathan Edelman, University of Florida

#### **Panelists:**

- **Loriliai Biernacki, University of Colorado, Boulder, *Mind, Mental Causation, and Yogic Siddhi***
- **Jeffery D. Long, Elizabethtown College, *On Jivas, Artificial Life Forms, and Inanimate Objects: Commander Data, Marie Kondo, and the Dharma Traditions***
- **Jonathan Edelman, University of Florida, *The Absence of Intelligence in AI Systems***
- **Debashish Banerji, California Institute of Integral Studies, *Posthumanism, Dharma, and Yoga: Setting New Goals of Becoming***

**Respondent:** Anand Vaidya, San Jose State University

**SESSION 5: 11:30am- 1:00pm (M18-108)**

**DANAM Annual Book Review Panel: *Contemplative Studies in Jainism: Meditation, Prayer, and Veneration*, Rita Sherma, Purushottama Bilimoria, and Cogen Bohanec, editors, Routledge Press, 2023.**

**Convener: Cogen Bohanec, Arihanta Institute**

**Presider: Christopher Jain Miller, Arihanta Institute**

**Reviewers:**

- **Veena Howard, California State University, Fresno**
- **Ramdas Lamb, University of Hawai'i at Manoa**
- **Stephanie Corigliano, Cal Poly, Humboldt**
- **Laura Dunn, Santa Clara University**

**Respondent: Cogen Bohanec, Arihanta Institute**

DANAM 2022 Adjourns



## ***CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION***

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James Madaio, Czech Academy of Sciences

#### **Buddhist Philosophy and Praxis**

Karma Lekshe Tsomo, University of San Diego

#### **Dharma and Peace Studies**

Veena Howard, California State University, Fresno

#### ***Journal of Dharma Studies* Book Reviews Editor**

David P. Lawrence, University of North Dakota

#### **Dharma and Interreligious Dialogue**

Yudit K. Greenberg, Rollins College

#### **Jain Studies**

Cogen Bohanec, Arihanta Institute

#### **Yoga Studies**

Christopher Jain Miller, Arihanta Institute

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Kusumita P. Pedersen, St Francis College

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Bart Abbott, Graduate Theological Union

### ***ACADEMIC ADVISORY BOARD***

The Academic Advisory Board of **DANAM** includes Professors **Rita D. Sherma**, PhD (Chair, DANAM Vice President; Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley); **Christopher K. Chapple**, PhD (Loyola Marymount Univ., Los Angeles); **Jeffery D. Long**, PhD (Elizabethtown College, PA); **Ramdas Lamb** PhD (Univ. of Hawai'i, Manoa); **Ravi M. Gupta** (Utah State Univ.); **Anantanand Rambachan**, PhD (St. Olaf College, MN); **Graham M. Schweig**, PhD (Christopher Newport Univ., VA); **Kusumita P. Pedersen**, PhD (St. Francis College, NYC, *Emerita*); **Karma Lekshe Tsomo**, PhD (Univ. of San Diego, CA).

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University of Hawai'i, Manoa

***CONFERENCE COORDINATION COMMITTEE*****Susan Lamb, Conference Manager****Pat Deepak****Jyoti Gandhi****Sudha Natarajan****Ravi Deepak****Contacts For Further Information**

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**DANAM website: [danamweb.org](http://danamweb.org)**