



SOAS Centre for Jaina Studies

21st Jaina Studies Workshop

Jainism and Money

Book of Abstracts

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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

Two Uses of Anekāntavāda

It is often claimed that *anekāntavāda* is rooted in *ahimsā*. This paper will present evidence to show that this is not the case. Instead it will present the thesis that, whatever its exact origins, the *anekāntavāda* was primarily used for two purposes: 1) to solve the “paradox of causality”, and 2) to classify non-Jaina systems of thought. Chronologically, the doctrine is first presented as a solution to the paradox of causality. Only later do we find its use to classify non-Jaina philosophies.

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Jain Philanthropic Support of Higher Education in North America

This paper will give the history, context, and results to date of the creation of endowed professorships and chairs for the study of Jainism at several universities in North America, including the Bhagwan Parshawanth Presidential Chair at the University of California at Irvine, with a donation of \$1.5 million; the Bhagwan Adinath Professorship at the University of North Texas, Dallas, with a donation of \$500K; the Bhagwan Mahavir Post-Doctoral Fellowship in Jain studies at Rice University in Houston, Texas with a yearly donation of \$40K; the Mohini Jain Presidential Chair at the University of California at Davis, with a donation of \$1.5 million; the Shrimad Rajchandra Chair at the University of California at Riverside, with a donation of \$1.00 Million; the Bhagwan Mallinath endowed Professorship at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles with a donation of \$800K as well as support given to California State Universities at San Diego, Fullerton, and Northridge. Other academic support will also be discussed such as the establishment of the Ahimsa Center at California Polytechnic University Pomona and various conferences and study abroad opportunities. Various markers for success will be examined, including publications and classes created.

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A Successful Investment: Jain Merchants and the Transmission of Long Medieval Narratives

In India, Jain *bhaṇḍārs* are known to have kept important literary treasuries composed since the beginning of the medieval period. In the process of transmission, monks and merchants played a key-role. Indeed, while monks brought books to the notice of their audience during their sermons and actively promoted them, pious merchants were also important actors, since they invested much money in the copying of manuscripts as well as in the production of rich illustrations. While numerous copies of the preserved works are canonical works or short stories illustrating various religious practices, several others are very long narrative works composed between the 8th and the 12th centuries which were destined to the aesthetic pleasure of the audience and at the same time to its education. Among these literary treasuries, beside the celebrated Biographies of the Jinas composed in the 11th century, two of the most famous texts are Haribhadra’s Story of King Samarāditya in Prakrit dating from c. 700 and Siddharṣi’s *Upamitibhavaprapañcākathā* written in 905.

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Jains and the Pearling Economy, 19th and 20th Centuries

Jains were among the greatest pearl merchants in the world in modern times. They were especially influential in Bombay, the globe's pearling capital till WWII, and from there they spread as far as Kobe and Paris. Accepting to handle pearls is perplexing, as the principle of non-violence, *ahimsa*, would seem to conflict with dealing in a product that involved killing a living creature. While Gujarati Jains refrained from commerce in cowrie shells, live bullocks, meat and fish, they not only traded in pearls, but also in ivory and silk, both of which also entailed killing animate beings. And yet, Jains seem to have refrained from trading in shell, from which mother-of-pearl was extracted, perhaps by analogy with the ban on cowrie shells. In terms of *aparigraha*, the renunciation of worldly goods, some Jains frowned upon possessing or wearing pearls, but this did not extend to commerce. Attempts to find evidence for debates about this issue within the Jaina community have not borne fruit to date.

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Selling and Buying: Karmic Fruits of Transaction

The paper discusses the putative karmic implications of handling money and types of business activity outlined in Jaina scriptures, with a focus on the theory of the *kriyās* exposed in *Viyāhapannatti* 5.6, and revisits the questions raised by classical sociology as to the role of cultural factors in economic history.

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Jainism and Money: Precept and Practice

Ānanda, the paradigmatic Jain layman who is the subject of the first section of the Śvetāmbara canonical text the *Upāsakadaśāḥ*, is characterised by his extreme wealth or rather by his possession of money in the form of gold pieces: 120 million of them to be exact. Ānanda's possession of such a large amount of money makes his eventual renunciation all the more impressive. In Jainism there is a symbiosis between wealth and renunciation. This paper seeks to explore this symbiosis in the light of theoretical approaches to the sociology of money. The forms of money are protean; they range from Ānanda's tangible money in the shape of coins with a positive intrinsic value to today's largely invisible money, which depends on a negative concept, debt, for its value. The paper will attempt to survey the interface between Jain ethical values and money in its various forms

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Money, Piety, and Masculinity in Jain Maharashtra

Jain laymen have long participated in donation and temple patronage as a sine qua non marker of masculine piety. The model of the great patron of Jainism is reflected in religious narratives and prescriptive texts that instruct Jain laymen on their duties.

Jain masculinity's close link to financial success and temple building programs provides a fruitful space for examining scholarly assumptions about masculinity, money, and religion. This talk will center on how Jain men in Maharashtra navigate shifts in capitalist masculinity under neo-liberalism.

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The Gold of Gods: Stories of Temple Financing from Jain Prabandhas

Since they are intended to recall to their audience the pious actions of illustrious religious and lay members of the Jain community from a more or less remote past, the medieval Prabandhas logically devote an important space to the activity of temple building as it is probably one of the most expensive donations that could be made to the community. Thus, biographies of prominent Śvetāmbara laymen such as Vastupāla and Tejaḥpāla include lists of religious edifices erected at their behest. If the generosity of the donors is commonly praised and emphasized by the precise mention of the amounts of money they spent or of the costly materials they paid for to enhance the beauty of the monument, it is noteworthy that, in several narratives, the funds do not derive from their personal income but are provided through the intercession of a deity. Although such a motif could first be taken as minimizing the role of human patrons, we intend to figure out its significance by replacing it in the broader context of Jain ritual practices.

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Disentangling Poetry from Profit in Jain Monks' Literary Works

This paper looks at three instances in medieval Jain literature that demonstrate how Śvetāmbara monks attempted to uncouple the production of poetry by court poets from the monetary reward of their patron. It focuses on the three Jain authors - Bālacandra (thirteenth century), Hemacandra (1089-1172), and Rāmacandra (1093-1174) - who reject the idea that the poet writes poetry for the purposes of earning money and securing his patron's benevolence. In his *Vasantavilāsa* ("Vastupāla's Adventures", 1.13), Bālacandra states that Vālmīki did not get anything from Rāma for praising him in his epic, and hence one should not suppose that other poets produce poetry in order to receive a generous donation (*bhūridānaiḥ*). In a similar manner, Hemacandra criticizes Mammaṭa in his *Kāvyaṅuśāsana* (comm. to 1.3) for including wealth (*artha* glossed as *dhana*) among the goals of poetry and states that poetry does not guarantee money, which can be rather made through *śāstra* such as Cāṇakya's *Arthaśāstra*. Finally, Rāmacandra is particularly interesting in this context, as he pays special attention to the importance of independence and self-reliance in all of his surviving plays. The final verse of each play features an injunction to be independent or praises independence as the highest value. In a hymn of praise that is ascribed to him, the *Śrīnemijīnastava* (vv. 2, 14), Rāmacandra criticizes poets who compose works filled with laudatory lies about the king for a penny. This paper argues that these Jain monks used their criticism to set themselves apart from the other non-Jain poets, who engaged in what they implied was the foul practice of writing poetry for personal enrichment. While these monks, as well as Jains more generally, valorized wealth and riches for the purposes of spreading the Jain dharma, building temples, and

worshipping the Jina, they denounced the reduction of the poetic skill to the fiscal benefits it can produce.

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Aparigraha: Understanding the Nature and Limits of Money

Business success has hitherto prioritised profit maximisation at any cost, leading to social and environmental irresponsibility. At the same time the discipline of finance is resisting ethical dialogue, making it ever more technocratic and incapable of questioning its fundamental assumptions and paradigms. Little is known about the global Jain community, one of the world's oldest living cultures, and its living ethic and philosophy of a personal and humane approach to finance which has given them sustained long-term success in business. This auto-ethnographic essay examines the core Jain principle of *aparigraha* or non-possession, to see how ancient wisdom traditions can throw light on new economic and moral principles. The philosophy is explained, and connected to the lived practices of Jain businesses and communities, to show how a culture of sustained success is inculcated. A new ethical way of maintaining respect and accountability to society and the environment is elucidated, one which need not compromise on economic viability or sustainability. It is an organic approach, where trust is developed and replenished, such that finance may flow to good uses and a peaceful planet and society results. New insights toward reforming business theory, culture and education are offered.

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Enacting Contemporary Jain Religiosity through Philanthropy in the Diaspora

The roots of philanthropy amongst Jains can be linked to religious values and duties with regard to alms giving. Classically, *dān* is a disinterested gift, a gift without expectation of return, debt or reciprocity. In a hierarchical order of different types of gifts, a gift to a worthy recipient is the highest form of *dān* a lay person can make, to the only really worthy recipients, renunciators seeking liberation. While Jain ascetics renounce all worldly possessions and focus their life mission to work toward their own internal purification, the Jain nun who established Veerayatan, a Jain socio-spiritual organisation, has reinterpreted this ascetic path. She argues that compassion in action practiced through *sevā* is the key message of the Jain tradition. In reinterpreting the ascetic path as *sevā* and creating an institutional organisation through which to fulfil this worldly mission, the nun has allowed for the possibility of private voluntary philanthropy to Veerayatan. I draw on in-depth qualitative interviews with 24 diasporic Jains who have engaged in philanthropic giving to Veerayatan over an extended period of time to examine whether classical understandings of *dān* and the ethic of *sevā* or "Western" understandings of giving shape the motivations and sustainability of philanthropic donations to Veerayatan. As a Sociologist, I do not engage with the debate on the Jaina theory of giving but focus on transformations in practices of giving among a small group of Jains in the diaspora, and what such giving means to them. *Dān* to temples and institutions is not new, but in this case I argue that Veerayatan, the organisation run by Jain nuns, has become a worthy vessel for receiving *dān*, rather than the individual nuns that are part of the organisation. However, classical understandings of *dān* merge with "Western" ideas of giving, as is evident in displays

of attachment to and concern for impact of the gifts. Overall, my respondents view philanthropy to Veeryatan as a way to enact Jain religiosity and be Jain in the modern world. Additionally, some regard such philanthropy as an important avenue to transmit Jain religiosity and norms of compassion among Jain children in the diaspora. This case study highlights that the practice of the Jain tradition, like any other living religious tradition, is not stable, transhistorical, or universal, and points to the ways in which it is being transformed.

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