



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

7th DANAM Conference 2009

AGENDA

**6 – 7 Nov 2009
Montreal, Canada**

CONFERENCE THEME:

Dimensions of Dharma: Practice and Engagement

DHARMA SUSTAINS DIVERSITY

7th DANAM Conference 2009

Sponsored by

Dharma Association of North America (DANAM)

CONFERENCE THEME:

Dimensions of Dharma: Practice and Engagement

6 Nov – 7 Nov 2009

Fairmont Queen Elizabeth Hotel
Montreal, Canada

Held in conjunction with the 2009 AAR Annual Meeting

7th DANAM CONFERENCE CO-CHAIRS:

Adarsh Deepak, Ph.D., *Chairman, Taksha Institute, and President, DANAM*
Rita D. Sherma, Ph.D., *Director, ITBB, University of AZ Affiliate Ctr. for
Interdisciplinary Studies, Visiting Associate Professor, Binghamton University;
Vice President and Academic Programs Director, DANAM;*

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 seventeenth year, and the peer-reviewed *Contemporary Issues in Constructive Dharma* volumes, now in their sixth 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, 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 Sherma, 2009). *Yoga and Ecology: Dharma for the Earth* (Ed. Christopher K. Chapple, 2009). Two volumes of the proceedings of the DANAM06 and DANAM07 Conferences will be published in 2009/2010.

AGENDA

**7th DANAM Conference 2009 (DANAM09)
Fairmont The Queen Elizabeth Hotel, Montreal, Canada
Meeting Hall: Chaudière**

6 Nov (8:30 am) – 7 Nov (12:30 pm) 2009

CONFERENCE THEME:

Dimensions of Dharma: Practice and Engagement

THE MAJOR TOPICAL THEMES & SESSIONS

Friday, 6 Nov 2009: 8:30 am – 6:30 pm

- I. Re-conceiving Dharma Traditions and the Contemporary Analysis of Power**
- II. Spirit Possession and Magic**
- III. Traditional Indian Thinking on Culture Looks at Contemporary Indian and World Media Cultures**
- IV. Hindu Dharma and Darwinism**

Saturday, 7 Nov 2009: 9:00 am – 12:30 pm

- VI. Asceticism in Dharma Traditions I: Ascetics and Their Practices**
- VII. Asceticism in Dharma Traditions II: Laity and Their Practices**

LOCATION OF ALL ACADEMIC SESSIONS

Fairmont Queen Elizabeth - Chaudière

Friday, 6 Nov 2009

8:30am - DANAM09 CONFERENCE REGISTRATION DESK OPENS. 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 online. 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.

SCHEDULE

Friday, 6 November 2009

9:00 – 9:15 am: Opening Session

Welcome and Administrative Remarks

SESSION 1

M6-100 9:15 am – 11:00 am

Theme: **Re-conceiving Dharma Traditions and the Contemporary Analysis of Power**

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

Presider: **Christopher K. Chapple**, Loyola Mount University, CA

Respondent: **Rita D. Sherma**, ITBB & Taksha Institute

Panelists:

Al Collins: ‘Foucault among the Demons: Power and the Self in Indian Social Thought and Western Postmodernism’

David Lawrence: ‘Truth and Power in Sanskrit Philosophical Discourse’

Jeffery D. Long: ‘Reductionism as Ekanta: Anekanta-vada and the Analysis of Power’

Sthaneshwar Timalisina: ‘Linguistic and Cosmic Powers: The Concept of Sakti in Indian Philosophy’

SESSION 2

M6-108 11:00 am – 1:00 pm

Theme: **Spirit Possession and Magic**

Convener: **Ramdas Lamb**, University of Hawai’i at Manoa

Presider: **Ian Whicher**, University of Manitoba, Canada

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

Panelists:

Patton Burchett: ‘My Miracle Trumps Your Magic: Bhakta—Tantrika Encounters in Early Modern Hagiographical Literature’

Ramdas Lamb: ‘Shamans, Spirits, and Healing in Central India’

Deepak Shikhada: ‘A Ban Jhankri in the City: Curing New Diseases Using Old Shamanic Techniques’

Kundan Singh: ‘Curing People of Snake Bites and Spirit Possession through the Use of Chants: An Ethnographic Dialogue with a Shaman in an Indian Village’

SESSION 3

M6-206 2:00 pm – 3:45 pm

Theme: **Traditional Indian Thinking on Culture Looks at Contemporary Indian and World Media Cultures**

Convener: **Al Collins**, Anchorage, Alaska

Presider: **Jeffery D. Long**, Elizabethtown College, PA

Respondent: **Rajiv Malhotra**, The Infinity Foundation

Panelists:

Al Collins: Traditional Indian thinking on culture looks at contemporary Indian and world media cultures

Pankaj Jain: ‘Virtue Ethics of Boot Polish and Dosti vis-à-vis Slumdog Millionaire’

Sunthar Vasuvalingam: ‘Love, devotion, and service: Retelling the Rāmāyana in Gowarikar’s Homeland (Swades)’

Purushottama Bilimoria: ‘Desi Performative Arts in Australia: Shivaram to Creative Indian-Australian Dance Movements’

SESSION 4

M6-302 **4:00 pm – 6:00 pm**

Theme: ***Hindu Dharma and Darwinism***

Convener: **Thomas B. Ellis**, Appalachian State University, NC

Presider: **Purushottama Bilimoria**, Deakin University and Melbourne University,
Australia

Respondent: **Gerry Larson**, Emeritus, University of California, Santa Barbara, and Indiana
University

Panelists:

Mackenzie Brown: ‘Hindu Perspectives on Darwin and Evolution’

Sthaneshwar Timalina: ‘Cognitive and Emotional Aspects of Samadhi’

L. Biernacki: ‘Evolution, Emergence Theory, and Abhinavagupta’s Tantric Non-Dualism’

Jonathan Edelman: ‘A Tale of Two Swamis – Mapping the Modes of Interaction between
Darwin and Hinduism in the 20th Century’

Tom Ellis: ‘The Evolutionary Psychology of Puja’

Saturday, November 7, 2009

SESSION 6

M7-7 **9:00 am – 10:30 am**

Theme: ***Asceticism in Dharma Traditions I: Ascetics and Their Practices***

Convener: **Antoinette DeNapoli**, Emory University, GA

Presider: **Kusumita Pedersen**, St. Francis College, NY

Respondent: **June McDaniel**, College of Charleston, SC

Panelists:

Antoinette DeNapoli: ‘My bhakti is my Power: Gender, Power, and the Performance of
Devotional Asceticism by Female Sadhus in Rajasthan’

Perundevi Srinivasan: ‘The Goddess as an Ascetic: The Articulation of Tapas in Tamil
Puranic and Folk Narratives’

Ramdas Lamb: ‘Ramnami Renunciants and the Ascetic Challenge’

Bill Harman: ‘Fierce Devotion: Sri Lanka's Tamil Tigers and the Militant Ascetic Tradition
of India’

SESSION 7

M7-123 **10:30 am – 12:30 pm**

Theme: ***Asceticism in Dharma Traditions II: Laity and Their Practices***

Convener: **Antoinette DeNapoli**, Emory University, GA

Presider: **Phyllis Herman**, California State Northridge

Respondent: **Jeffery D. Long**, Elizabethtown College, PA

Panelists:

Robert Menzies: ‘Fecund Celibacy: Pativrata as Domestic Ascetic in Vrat Katha’

Jerry Carney: ‘Engagement and Detachment: the Dynamic of Hindu Dharma for the
Contemporary Non-renunciant (lay) Public’

Koenraad Elst: ‘Yoga for the layman: modern fad or return to the roots?’

12:30 pm **ADJOURN**

For Latest Updates of the Agenda, please continue to check this web site.

Contacts For Further Information

For Conference Administration & Logistics:

Ms. Diana McQuestion, Conference Manager: d.mcquestion@taksha.org; Tel: 757-897-3745

For Conference Program:

Dr. Adarsh Deepak, President, DANAM: a.deepak@taksha.org; Tel: 757-272-3066 cell

CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION

STEERING COMMITTEE

CHAIR: Jeffery D. Long, Chair, Steering Committee, Dharma Association of North America

Associate Professor and Chair, Religious Studies, Elizabethtown College

Co-Director, Asian Studies Minor, Elizabethtown College

Rita D. Sherma, ITBB, AZ and Binghamton University, NY

Arindam Chakrabarti, University of Hawaii at Manoa, HI

Christopher K. Chapple, Loyola Marymount University, CA

Ramdas Lamb, University of Hawaii at Manoa, HI

Kusumita Pedersen, St. Francis College, NY

Anne Vallely, University of Ottawa, Canada

Sthaneshwar Timalsina, State University of San Diego, CA

David Gray, Santa Clara University, CA

BOARD OF DISTINGUISHED VISITING SCHOLARS

The Academic Advisory Board of DANAM includes **Professors Rita D. Sherma**, *Chair*, (Institute for Theology Beyond Boundaries, University of AZ, Binghamton University, NY), **Arindam Chakrabarti**, (University of Hawaii at Manoa), **Arvind Sharma** (McGill University), **Shrinivas Tilak** (Montreal, Canada), **Subhash Kak** (Oklahoma State University), **Kusumita Pedersen** (St. Francis College, NYC), **Anantanand Rambachan** (St. Olaf College, MN), **T. S. Rukmani** (Concordia University, Canada), **Graham M. Schweig** (Christopher Newport University, VA), **Ian Whicher** (University of Manitoba, Canada), **Vesna Wallace** (University of Oxford, UK), **Christopher K. Chapple** (Loyola Mount University, CA), **Rita M. Gross** (Emeritus, University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire), **Chakravarthi Ram-Prasad**, (Lancaster University, UK).

DANAM PRESIDENT

Adarsh Deepak, Ph.D.

Chairman, Taksha Institute

Publisher of *Journal for Vaishnava Studies (JVS)*

and DANAM academic volumes in Dharma Studies.

**DANAM VICE-PRESIDENT and
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS DIRECTOR**

Rita Dasgupta Sherma, Ph.D.

Chair, DANAM Board of Distinguished Visiting Scholars (BDVS);
Visiting Associate Professor, DP-AAS, Binghamton University, NY;
Director, Institute for Theology Beyond Boundaries (ITBB), Univ. of Arizona
Founding Director, Center for Convergence Spirituality, Casa Grande, AZ

CONFERENCE COORDINATION COMMITTEE

Diana McQuestion, Conference Manager

Meera Rao

Jyoti Gandhi

Pat Deepak

Anjalee Sinha

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

General Co-Chairs:

Dr. Rajinder Gandhi, M.D., Chairman, DANAM

Adarsh Deepak, Ph.D., President, DANAM, & Chairman, Taksha Institute

TRAVEL INFORMATION

**The following information web sites are for the convenience of the attendees of DANAM09
Conference and/or 2009AAR Annual Meeting.**

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