

BEYOND VIOLENCE:
JAINISM, PLURALITY, AND WORLD RELIGIONS
A Virtual International Conference
February 18-19, 2022

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE AND ABSTRACTS

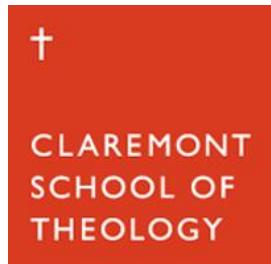
ORGANIZERS
Claremont School of Theology (CST)

Jain Studies Program, Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs, Florida International University (FIU)

SPONSORS
International School for Jain Studies (ISJS)

JAINA Academic Liaison Committee, Federation of Jain Associations in North America (JAINA)

Presenters and Attendees register for the conference here:
Conference Registration



Conference Schedule

Day 1: Friday, February 18

8:30 am PT – 8:40 am PT	<p>Welcome, Information About Conference, & Prayer</p> <p>Venu Mehta Bhagwan Chandraprabhu Postdoctoral Fellow in Jain Studies; and Assistant Professor of Comparative Religions, Claremont School of Theology</p> <p>Sushama Parekh Principal Engineer at Moog, Inc., Adjunct Professor, Claremont School of Theology; and Member of the Jain Center of Southern California</p>
8:40 am PT – 9:50 am PT	<p>Opening Remarks</p> <p>President Dr. Jeffrey Kuan President; and Professor of Hebrew Bible and Asian-American Hermeneutics, Claremont School of Theology</p> <p>Dr. Iqbal Akhtar Undergraduate Director of Religious Studies and Associate Professor of Islamic Studies; Research Director, Western Indian Ocean Studies; and Director, Jain Studies Program, Florida International University</p>
9:50 am PT – 10:10 am PT	<p>Keynote Address</p> <p>Dr. Abhay Firodia Chairman, Force Motors Limited, India Chairman, Amar Prerana Trust, and International School of Jain Studies (ISJS), Pune</p> <p>“Bifocal View of Jain Values”</p>
Session 1	<p style="text-align: center;">“Jain Tradition: Pluralism, Epistemology and Ahimsa Practices”</p>
10:10 am PT – 10:25 am PT	<p>Samani Dr. Rohini Pragya Associate Professor Jain Vishva Bharati Institute</p> <p>Samani Satya Pragya (Co-Presentation) “Ahimsā Praśikāṣṇa (Training in Non-Violence) - Karma Against Karma”</p>
10:25 am PT – 10:40 am PT	<p>Dr. Christopher Key Chapple Doshi Professor of Indic and Comparative Theology, and Director, Master of Arts in Yoga Studies at Loyola Marymount University</p> <p>“Haribhadra Virahanka’s Embrace of Pluralism in the Yogabindu”</p>
10:40 am PT – 10:55 am PT	<p>Dr. Wm. Andrew Schwartz Assistant Professor of Process Studies and Comparative Theology, Claremont School of Theology</p> <p>“Nonviolent Metaphysics: Aparigraha as Ahimsā in Process Philosophy”</p>
10:55 am PT – 11:10 am PT	<p>Dr. Andrew Bridges Bhagwan Shantinath Lectureship, Cal State Fullerton</p> <p>“Ahimsā and Anekāntavāda as a Philosophical and Ethical Groundwork for Peace Oriented Critical Thinking”</p>

11:10 am PT – 11:30 am PT	<i>Q&A</i>
11:30 am PT – 12:00 pm PT	<i>Break</i>
Session 2	<i>“Perspectives in the Jain Tradition”</i>
12:00 pm PT – 12:15 pm PT	Aditi Jain Research Scholar/Professor, Department of History, Delhi University “The Sacred and the Material: Making of a Jain Pilgrimage and Redefining the Identity of Benares (c. 1600-1700)”
12:15 pm PT – 12:30 pm PT	Eruke Ohwofasa PhD Student, Claremont School of Theology at Willamette, Salem “Nakedness and Nonviolence: The ‘Unfinished Business’ of Women and Moksha in the Digambara Jain Tradition”
12:30 pm PT – 12:45 pm PT	Dr. Nitin Shah Professor of Anesthesiology & Critical Care, Loma Linda University Health, Loma Linda, CA “Compassion in Action in areas of Health and Nutrition”
12:45 pm PT – 01:00 pm PT	JungEun Park Ph.D. Student, Claremont School of Theology “Practicing Ahimsa with Our Fellow Creatures”
01:00 pm PT – 01:20 pm PT	<i>Q&A</i>

Conference Schedule **Day 2: Saturday, February 19**

8:30 am PT – 8:35 am PT	<i>Welcome</i> Venu Mehta
8:35 am PT – 9:20 am PT	<i>Keynote Address</i> Dr. Jeffery D. Long Carl W. Zeigler Professor of Religious Studies, Elizabethtown College “Seeking Harmony in Diversity: A Jain-Inspired Approach to Worldview Pluralism”
9:20 am PT – 09:40 am PT	<i>Keynote Address</i> Atmarpit Vidhiji Shrimad Rajchandra Mission Dharampur (SRMD), India “Compassion: The Heart of Religion”
9:40 am PT – 09:50 am PT	<i>Q&A</i>
9:50 am PT – 10:00 am PT	<i>Break</i>
Session 3	<i>“World Religions: Ethics, Philosophy, and Practices”</i>
10:00 am PT – 10:15 am PT	Dr. Pannaloka Wadinagala Professor/Senior Lecturer, Department of Buddhist Thought, Postgraduate Institute of Pali and Buddhist Studies, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka “Cognition and Non-violence (ahimsā): An Early Buddhist Analysis”
10:15 am PT – 10:30 am PT	Marley Wilson-Geroski Graduate Student, Florida International University “Kristallnacht: A Psychological Perspective of Fear and Aggression”
10:30 am PT – 10:45 am PT	John Canales Independent Researcher; 2021 Graduate of Claremont School of Theology “Our- Sacred Biology: A Reconciliation of Science and Faith”

10:45 am PT – 11:00 am PT	Maya Garin Fiorella Researcher/Graduate Student, Florida International University “Metamorphosis of Jewish Thought: Post-Holocaust effect on a Traditional Concept of Suffering”
11:00 am PT – 11:20 am PT	<i>Q&A</i>
11:20 am PT – 11:45 am PT	<i>Break</i>
Session 4	<i>“World Religions and Jain Tradition”</i>
11:45 am PT – 12:00 pm PT	Dr. Tshepo Mvulane Moloi Postdoctoral Research Fellow Ali Mazrui Centre for Higher Education Studies (AMCHES) and Research Associate for African Centre for Epistemology and Philosophy of Science (ACEPS) “Jainism Religion and Es’kia Mphahlele’s African Humanism Philosophy”
12:00 pm PT – 12:15 pm PT	Yifan Zhang Student, Renmin University of China “Jainism and The Baha’i Faith: Non-Violence and Plurality across the Time and Space”
12:15 pm PT – 12:30 pm PT	Olivia Vita Student, Claremont School of Theology; and Program Coordinator at the Workers' Rights Institute at Georgetown Law School, “On the compatibility of Jain dharma with Marxist theory: A unique response to the global climate crisis”
12:30 pm PT – 12:45 pm PT	Kimberly Griggs Graduate Student, Claremont School of Theology “Jain Cosmology, Principles, and Animal Stories: Giving Rise to the Necessity for a Jīva-care Chaplaincy”
12:45 pm PT – 01:00 pm PT	Robert M. McDonald PhD Student (Comparative Theology and Philosophy), Claremont School of Theology “Anekāntavāda and Ahimsā—What Roman Catholicism Can Learn from Jainism Regarding Pluralism and Nonviolence”
01:00 pm PT – 01:20 pm PT	<i>Q&A</i>
01:20 pm PT – 01:40 pm PT	<i>Valedictory and Vote of Thanks</i> Dr. Philip Clayton Ingraham Professor of Theology Claremont School of Theology Dr. Andrew Dreitcer Acting Vice President for Academic Affairs Acting Dean of Faculty Director of the Hybrid D.Min. Claremont School of Theology

ABSTRACTS

Dr. Andrew Bridges

Bhagwan Shantinath Lectureship, Cal State Fullerton

“Ahimsā and Anekāntavāda as a Philosophical and Ethical Groundwork for Peace Oriented Critical Thinking”

This paper begins with a brief reflection on how Socratic Dialogue is often utilized as a guide, method, or template for Critical Thinking in academic courses and textbooks (most notably in critical thinking textbooks such as Thinking Socratically and Think with Socrates) but that these guides, methods and templates can benefit from more thorough philosophical and ethical groundwork. The paper then explores how the field of Critical Thinking would benefit from the utilization of the Jain concepts of Ahimsā and Anekāntavāda as a philosophical and ethical groundwork. With respect to Ahimsā, the ethical dimensions explored involve non-harm as it relates to the physical, verbal, and mental. With respect to Anekāntavāda the metaphysical and epistemological dimensions explored involve its compatibility with pluralism and its dialogical engagement with multiple perspectives. It is suggested that Ahimsā and Anekāntavāda have significant relevance for the field of Critical Thinking and that when utilized as a philosophical and ethical groundwork for Critical Thinking the field and practice of Critical Thinking becomes peace oriented and may lead to greater promotion of peace and reduction of harm both in society and for life-forms in general. The paper concludes with a brief reflection on the interrelatedness of Critical Thinking and democracy in the shared context of secular democracy and religious diversity.

John Canales

Independent Researcher; 2021 Graduate of Claremont School of Theology

“Our- Sacred Biology: A Reconciliation of Science and Faith”

This paper will show that it is no accident of history that every major world religion mandates that we must love and care for each other, to see ourselves lovingly in each other as in the universal admonition: ‘Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.’ This, of course, is oft referred to as the ‘Golden Rule.’ Now, over the last twenty years, scientists and researchers from the fields of anthropology, neuroscience, and psychology have largely come to the following conclusion: during the first twenty-four months of an infant’s early nurturing the human brain establishes a lifelong fundamental need for us to see ourselves lovingly in each other. Without a love-based, selfless caregiver to attend—moment by moment, round the clock—to the newborn, helpless infant, critical brain functions such as concept formation and homeostasis balancing - cannot occur. Indeed, new science research hypothesizes that our human organizing principle is likely lifespan empathic engagement with others. This paper will demonstrate that the necessary round the clock provision of selfless loving care is not only a subjective human imperative provided universally by parenting caregivers, it is also radically driven by an objective, mandatory, love-based biological requirement. This is why, I will argue, each of the founding progenitors of the major world religions often encountered a welcoming, eager audience for their new ‘revolutionary,’ spiritual philosophies and directives: it is because their spiritual insights tapped into our own innate, love-driven organizing principle of loving and caring for each other.

Dr. Christopher Key Chapple

Doshi Professor of Indic and Comparative Theology, and Director, Master of Arts in Yoga Studies at Loyola Marymount University

“Haribhadra Virahanka’s Embrace of Pluralism in the Yogabindu”

In the Yogabindu, a 6th century Sanskrit text, Haribhadra identifies several aspects of religion that are held in common: a desire for freedom from karmic bondage, the performance of ritual, the honoring of elders, and the recitation of mantra. The text delineates a fivefold Yoga practice that can be seen as a spiritual pathway independent of a fixed theology. The Buddhist bodhisattva is praised as an exemplar of correct religious behavior. The Brahma Vihara (friendliness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity) are lauded for their universality. However, while celebrating select aspects of practice and ethics held in common, Haribhadra Virahanka also contrasts Jaina realist philosophy with the denial of self in Buddhism and the teaching of oneness in Vedanta, emphasizing the integrity and distinctness of each individual soul or live force (Jiva) shaped and defined by karmic defilements. This presentation will draw from a new translation of the text.

Maya Garin Fiorella

Researcher/Graduate Student, Florida International University

“Metamorphosis of Jewish Thought: Post-Holocaust effect on a Traditional Concept of Suffering”

The Holocaust is an unparalleled phenomenon that is considered one of, if not the most horrific event in human history. The philosophical questions that arise from this heinous event, whether preexisting or new, are plentiful. As for the theological questions that arise from the Shoah, the dilemma is anchored within Judaism. The problem of theodicy and suffering within Judaism is an age-old tale, but how do the Jewish people conceptualize it after the events of the Holocaust? My research aims to uncover the philosophical metamorphosis of the Jewish concept of suffering. More specifically, I will attempt to answer the following questions: How did the Jewish people give meaning to the experience of suffering after the Holocaust? How has modernity and post-Holocaust modernity complicated the classic Rabbinic understandings of human suffering? The Holocaust as a reverberating experience for the Jewish people has dramatically affected how they view their relationship with God, the covenant, and the role of suffering in the human experience. Due to the enormity of Rabbinic responses, I will highlight one of the classic understandings of suffering in this work; *yissurin shel ahavah* or the afflictions of love.

Kimberly Griggs

Graduate Student, Claremont School of Theology

“Jain Cosmology, Principles, and Animal Stories: Giving Rise to the Necessity for a Jīva-care Chaplaincy”

This paper offers a brief overview of how the field of spiritual care and chaplaincy could be influenced and expanded by Jain cosmology, values, and stories about animals. Through the discussion of jīvas, or souls, in Jain cosmology; the Jain principles of ahimsa, anekantavada, and jīva-daya; and a deeper analysis of two famous Jain stories that involve animals, I argue that Jainism necessitates a soul-care, or jīva-care, chaplaincy approach that expands beyond human-centered spiritual care. It is a liberative spiritual care approach that serves all living realities and is grounded in nonviolence, compassion, solidarity, mutuality, and agency.

Aditi Jain

Research Scholar/Professor, Department of History, Delhi University

“The Sacred and the Material: Making of a Jain Pilgrimage and Redefining the Identity of Benares (c. 1600-1700)”

The paper explores the myriad ways in which religion and urbanity interact, as they develop and expand within a city space. It studies the interdependence between commercial relevance and the making of a pilgrimage city through spatial and social perspectives. I have chosen to examine Benares as a micro-historical space in this context. The colonial and nationalist writings in the nineteenth and twentieth century have allocated a homogenous religious identity to cities of ‘significance’, like Benares. It has been treated as a sacred city (with the Shaivite cult predominating) that is revered and visited by thousands of devotees every year. However, Jain sources uphold a contrasting narrative—that of a dynamic and composite Benares. By using inscriptional records, a fourteenth century narrative by the Swetambara Jain monk Jinprabha Suri and a sixteenth century autobiography by the Srimal Jain merchant Banarasidas, an attempt is made to enquire into the Jain religious and commercial participation in the city. The merchants played a crucial role in developing Benares into a ‘material’ and ‘sacred’ space. This paper aims to locate such spaces of negotiations, conflicts, inclusions and exclusions, and appropriation by a minority community in the early modern period to study its’ role in shaping the city’s identity. Through this I broadly argue that spaces cannot be static and monolithic entities and are subject to constant mutation and change.

Robert M. McDonald

PhD Student (Comparative Theology and Philosophy), Claremont School of Theology

“Anekāntavāda and Ahimsā—What Roman Catholicism Can Learn from Jainism Regarding Pluralism and Nonviolence”

When we consider the extent of environmental injustice in our world today—ecological violence, we could say—it is apparent that we are in desperate need of turning toward those resources and traditions of non-violence which exist within our communities. In a specific way, our religious and spiritual traditions provide us with ample resources to improve not only the lives of our human communities, but also the lives of our fellow creature and the state of our common home. Writing from a Roman Catholic perspective, this paper argues that the modern Catholic Church, which already possesses a strong tradition of compassion and nonviolence, could stand to learn from the Jain tradition regarding the teachings of anekāntavāda and ahimsā. In a particular way, the Church could learn to engage more fruitfully with other religious traditions and lifeways by adopting more fully—and revising—the teachings of the Second Vatican Council regarding the truth of other traditions, adopting a more deeply pluralist epistemic position; what is more, this then can lead to fruitful dialogue vis-à-vis ahimsā. Attention will be focused on our fellow creatures and our common home regarding the prospects for a Roman Catholic defense of ethical vegetarianism.

Dr. Tshepo Mvulane Moloi

Postdoctoral Research Fellow Ali Mazrui Centre for Higher Education Studies (AMCHES) and Research Associate for African Centre for Epistemology and Philosophy of Science (ACEPS)

“Jainism Religion and Es’kia Mphahlele’s African Humanism Philosophy”

This proposed paper seeks to contribute to the theme of ‘Beyond Violence,’ by opting to explore for possible parallels, between the religion of Jainism (categorized as part of Eastern Philosophy) and South African educationalist, Es’kia Mphahlele’s ‘African Humanism’ (categorized as part of African Philosophy). In order to undertake, the latter

epistemic task, this paper will employ Johann Mouton's (2012:175) Non-Empirical Method, of 'Conceptual analyses.' The latter is 'The analysis of the meaning of words or concepts through clarification and elaboration of the different dimensions of meaning' (Mouton, 2012:175). Sources that will be utilized for guidance purposes, regarding Jainism will include The Rider Encyclopedia of Eastern Philosophy and Religion (1999) and The Religions of India: A Concise Guide to Nine Major Faiths (2010). As regards Es'kia Mphahlele's 'African Humanism,' the following sources will be consulted: The Fabric of African Culture and Religious Beliefs (1971), African Thought and Belief (1975) and Healers, Toothpullers, Eradicators, Placators, Comforters and Morality (1989). Ultimately, the objective of this paper is to ascertain from any existing parallels to be found between the religion of Jainism and African philosophical thoughts from Es'kia Mphahlele's 'African Humanism,' for insights that may help to overcome violence.

Eruke Ohwofasa

PhD Student, Claremont School of Theology at Willamette, Salem

"Nakedness and Nonviolence: The 'Unfinished Business' of Women and Moksha in the Digambara Jain Tradition"

The 'unfinished business' referenced in the title speaks to the methods of ecofeminism that examine the systems within a given tradition to identify what is harmful. In turn, helpful tools mined from the tradition work to construct a safer ideology for those most vulnerable. In this essay I will engage ecofeminist methodologies to bridge the dissonance between the concept of ahimsa—the principle of nonviolence toward all life in Jain philosophy—and the practice of women's exclusion from liberation within the Digambara sect of Jainism.

JungEun Park

PhD Student, Claremont School of Theology

"Practicing Ahimsa with Our Fellow Creatures"

Among venerable Jain ethical principles, the principle of Ahimsa is deeply tied to practicing vegetarianism, in fact, by refraining from violence from all living forms and non-human animals. Based on the Jain Cosmological viewpoint, this paper will investigate the relationship between humans and non-human animals. The Jain worldview will be an asset to have an egalitarian, non-anthropocentric perspective on both creatures, although it has differentiated boundaries regarding different levels of sense-perception and the Samsaric process of life. Another value of the principle of Ahimsa is its sharing idea with the doctrine of Anekantavada (non-absolutism, manifoldness) because each principle teaches the common attitude of respecting life in the way of respecting different views and opinions. Whiteheadian metaphysics, the process of becoming and multiplicity will support this interchangeable value. This communal idea advocates the harmonious co-existence of human and non-human animals within a symbiotic ecosystem without harming non-human animals and critiques the maltreatment of our fellow living creatures.

While dealing with primal texts of Jainism, deeper religious and spiritual quest of acquiring soul-freedom from the practicing Ahimsa will be addressed as a closing remark: As an active practice of love, freedom, and respect, can the principle of Ahimsa be pursuing freedom from violence and the destruction of Karma? In terms of treating each entity as a divine soul, I possibly answer the question.

Samani Dr. Rohini Pragya

Associate Professor

Jain Vishva Bharti institute

Samani Satya Pragya (Co-Presentation)**“Ahimsā Praśikṣaṇa (Training in Non-Violence) - Karma Against Karma”**

The term ‘karma’ very specific in Jain religion eventually took its standing in major South Asian religions. Major Eastern traditions, both Vedic and non-Vedic, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, though largely differ in their philosophical axioms agree with the basic understanding of the meaning of karma. Today ‘karma’ has become a part of pop culture and globally people have assimilated this notion in their own context. The technical meaning of the term karma according to Jainism is a material energy. For Jains karma is like a dust on the soul or conscious energy that hinders its abilities. Almost every aspect of life is seen and understood with the lens of karma.

The concept of ‘Training in Non-Violence’ as proposed by Ācārya Mahāprajñā, I argue showcase that karma concept has its own limitation and as humans we need to undertake our ‘karma’ (action) for the actualization of our vision of new human and new world order. Karma cannot explain all human realities and conditions in totality. The prevailing misconception about the pervasiveness of karma doctrine is shaken by his emphasis on transformation of system aspect that is purely a human enterprise.

Dr. Wm. Andrew Schwartz

Assistant Professor of Process Studies and Comparative Theology, Claremont School of Theology, USA

“Nonviolent Metaphysics: Aparigraha as Ahimsā in Process Philosophy”

The Jain path of purification is outlined by five “great vows” (mahāvratas) designed for the purpose of eliminating karmas. Two of the most prominent of these great vows are ahimsā (non-violence) and aparigraha (non-possession). Both aparigraha and ahimsā are considered core features of the Jain path to liberation. Process philosophy argues that the world is a communion of subjects, rather than a collection of objects. What's the difference? Objects are owned, while subjects are known. Subjects are the center of values felt--the center of experience--and have intrinsic value (value for oneself). Objects, by contrast, don't have experiences and are the source of values given—datum for the experience of some subject—and have instrumental value (value as use for some subject). The panexperiential framework of process philosophy extends subjectivity to all living things by arguing that drops of experience are the final real things that make up reality. All entities have experiences and are therefore experiencing subjects.

Mechanistic worldviews confuse subjects and objects when describing the world as like a machine. When we treat subjects as objects, there is a tendency to view them as having instrumental value—like a resource for me to use as I please. When we attempt to possess subjects as I'd they were objects with instrumental value, we do harm to that life form. Therefore, through an exercise in comparative philosophy I will integrate the nonviolent metaphysics of process philosophy with the fundamental ethics of Jainism, reframing aparigraha as ahimsā, thereby expediting the Jain path of liberation.

Dr. Nitin Shah

Professor of Anesthesiology & Critical Care, Loma Linda University Health, Loma Linda, CA

“Compassion in Action in areas of Health and Nutrition”

All World Religions give significant importance to the practice of Compassion including Jain. Jain religion preaches practice of Ahimsa (non-Violence) & recommends Anekantvad (plurality) & Aparigraha (non-possessiveness) philosophies to carry out compassionate activities to help humanity. I have been very fortunate to grow up learning about ways to help others from my

grandfather. Working with thousands of volunteers we have been able to organize over 400 Humanitarian missions in 16 countries over 30 years. We also were able to start a hot meals drive to assist the needy. This started during COVID-19 Pandemic but we soon realized the need and have continued since May, 2020. I will describe these two aspects that impact Health and Nutrition in this paper.

1. Free Medical/Surgical Missions – Explore the need in an area of a country, arrange volunteers with specific expertise needed, organize the mission, travel to the place & carry out the needed services over 3-7 days. We go to a few countries annually e.g. India, USA, Jamaica, Albania, Zambia, Ghana etc.

2. Weekly Hot Meals Drive – This involves volunteers from multiple religions coming together to serve needy. We offered groceries to needy during Pandemic and quickly realized that freshly cooked hot meals are also in demand amongst homeless, people residing in shelters etc. hence we started weekly hot meals drive every Sunday. We cook 1500 to 2000 meals and serve to over 25 different organizations. We have served around 152,000 meals so far & plan to continue in 2022.

Olivia Vita

Student, Claremont School of Theology; and Program Coordinator at the Workers' Rights Institute at Georgetown Law School,

“On the compatibility of Jain dharma with Marxist theory: A unique response to the global climate crisis”

Marxist theory and Jain dharma are naturally compatible through their recognition and understanding of interdependence. To illustrate this point, the core ideas behind both are explored and discussed in service of repositioning, connecting, and strengthening environmentalist and humanitarian movements. The core ideas discussed are materialism, dialectics, alienation, accumulation, ahimsa, anekantevad, and aparigraha. The repositioning suggested includes the merging of environmental and humanitarian movements, further exploration of the spiritual dimension of Marxism, and continued contextualization of environmentalism as inherently decolonial and anti-capitalist in nature.

Dr. Pannaloka Wadinagala

Professor/Senior Lecturer, Department of Buddhist Thought, Postgraduate Institute of Pali and Buddhist Studies, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

“Cognition and Non-violence (ahimsā): An Early Buddhist Analysis”

According to Buddhist ontology, to produce any form of life, it requires mutual collaborative functioning of several factors. To apply this understanding to the practical level, both individual level and social level require a supportive structure to sustain. The conceptual world habituated by sense experience, leads the person to think individually and neglect the relevance of the other. In Buddhist tradition, this process is known as ‘mental proliferation’ (papañca) which causes the individual to perceive the reality coloured with desire (tañhā), conceit (māna) and views (ditthi). The entire Buddhist education is aimed at removal of this distorted perception and awakening the person to the reality of life experience as a process conditioned by many factors. This insight is called enlightenment. Keeping this Buddhist understanding as the theoretical basis, the present study aims at observing how violence comes into expression and then will address the Buddhist ethical to transform from ego-centered thinking to that of other-regardless, which paves the way for a life embracing plurality. In examining the causal genesis of violence, the perceptual process of the individual ending with the self-centered thinking will be analyzed. Further, the three unwholesome psychological roots, greed, hatred and ignorance will also be read in support of portraying psychological basis of violence. The meditation technique ‘establishing mindfulness’ will be analyzed as the remedy to overcome ego-centered thinking and transforming into a person of other-regardness. The research is carried out based on Pali literature and secondary

readings on Buddhist teachings. The conclusion to be drawn through the research would be that cognitive transformation from self-centered thinking to other-regard thinking will lead to the arising of non-violence (ahimsā).

Yifan Zhang

Student, Renmin University of China

“Jainism and The Baha’i Faith: Non-Violence and Plurality across the Time and Space”

For the past two years, the Covid-19 Pandemic had reshaped the world's frame, during which the extremities trend of thought swept across the continents, made populism and ultra-nationalism proliferate. However, it left tremendous aspects of Anthropocene for the whole world to reflect on, yet the (post)Pandemic era is indeed a transitional period for the globe. Jainism, an old Shramanic tradition derived from India, is a stronghold of non-violence and plurality among the world's religious traditions. The Jain teachings of 'Ahimsa' and 'Anekantawada' are natural solutions for the dead knot of the whole world at the moment; the Jain viewpoints rationally and dialectically opened a door for humankind across time and space. In comparison, in the sphere of the world religions, the Baha'i Faith is comparably a new thing. However, the Baha'i and Jain teachings share some similarities. The Bahais firmly believe that 'The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens;' its vision is to create a relatively united world where violence is minimized, the discrimination and unequal distribution of resources will be eliminated. Moreover, the Baha'i faith conveys the essential information of 'there is only one religion, the religion of God,' wherein the plurality can be observed. This paper intends to conduct a comparative study of Jainism and Bahá'í Faith, trying to find the relevant similarities of them in the matter of non-violence and plurality across the time and space.