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October 24, 2021

Jai Jinendra!

I am so very sorry that I could not be with you all today. I had an unavoidable conflict. I have asked that a short statement from me be read to you.

We live in a time of tremendous violence. There is not only the violence of various wars and armed conflicts, but there is the violence of discrimination and inequality, and the violence of our everyday interactions with each other, which, because of increasing political and social divisions, and economic disparity, are increasingly less civil, kind, and compassionate. There is the violence of what we are doing to the planet, which is responding by delivering a climate catastrophe. And every year—every single year—we kill for food alone almost 80 billion land animals and an estimated one trillion sea animals. Think about that for a second: *every year we kill for food more animals than the total number of humans who have ever lived on the earth.* And most people don't even think about this breathtaking violence as they eat their meat, chicken or fish, drink their milk, or enjoy their ice cream. These foods, which give us such pleasure, are produced through the unspeakable suffering and massive slaughter of beings who are, for the most part, like us: they are sentient or subjectively aware. They do not want to suffer; they do not want to die.

If there was ever a time to appreciate the importance of Ahimsa, or nonviolence, the central doctrine of Jain dharma, it is now. Indeed, if we do not recognize the importance of Ahimsa—and do so soon—our future may be more frightening than anything we can imagine.

And for this reason, I am delighted that Dr. Siddhartha Dalal, in honor of his beloved wife, Alka, has chosen to create this post-doctoral fellowship in Jainism at Rutgers. Those who have recently been awarded their PhD in Jainism will spend several years at Rutgers, one of the finest public research universities in the United States, and one of the top universities in the world, in order to develop their teaching and research abilities. And an important part of the fellowship will be to build bridges between the Jain program at Rutgers and the Jain community in New Jersey and the region.

I want to thank Siddhartha for his gift, and I want to acknowledge the memory of his beloved wife, Alka Dalal.

I want to thank Dr. Sulekh Jain and Dr. Jasvant Modi for their help in shaping the post-doctoral program in a way that was acceptable to Dr. Dalal and to Rutgers.



I want to thank Dr. Tao Jiang, Chair of the Department of Religion at Rutgers. Tao's enthusiasm for adding a Jain component to the curriculum was central to the success of this endeavor, and he worked with his Department to ensure that the program was something about which they could all be excited.

I want to thank Jim Masschaele, Executive Vice Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences at Rutgers. Without Jim, this could not have happened. A program like this requires support of various sorts, including but not limited to financial support, from the University. Jim has bent over backward to accommodate the program.

Finally, I want to thank Lytisha Williams, Associate Vice President for Development for the School of Arts and Sciences at Rutgers. To say that she worked very hard to make this happen would be a hyperbolic understatement. Lytisha, or "Tee" (as we call her at Rutgers), was invested in this project from the outset. This was not just a donation for Rutgers; this was a program that Tee embraced and believed in. She skillfully worked through every wrinkle until everyone was pleased with the final product.

This is just the beginning of the relationship between Rutgers and Jainism. That relationship will grow in the coming years. This program is the seed from which Ahimsa will grow at Rutgers. New Jersey has the largest Jain community outside of India. It is time that Jainism has a place at the State University of New Jersey.

And now that time has come.

Om Arham.

Gary L. Francione

Board of Governors Professor of Law and Katzenbach Scholar of Law and Philosophy, Rutgers University



Office of the Chancellor
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Fall 2021

Dr. Jasvant Modi and Dr. Meera Modi
1100 W Sunset Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90012-1217

Dear Drs. Modi:

During FY21, UC Riverside grew in physical capacity and capability, enrollment, and eminence. In any year, our growth would have been reason to celebrate. But considering the challenges we had to overcome during a pandemic, these achievements are even more exciting.

Our results were only possible because of generous supporters like you who believe in our mission to transform the lives of the diverse people of California, the nation, and the world through the discovery, communication, translation, application, and preservation of knowledge.

For the third consecutive year, U.S. News and World Report named UCR the #1 university for social mobility. In overall rankings, we moved up a spot to #33 and to #26 on the list of most innovative universities. A record 14 UCR faculty members received National Science Foundation CAREER awards to conduct further research on a diverse range of topics from star formation in the first galaxies to the impact of micropollutants in antibiotic resistance.

Some members of our faculty can now utilize high-tech spaces in Plant Research 1, a 30,000-square foot building designed with 16 greenhouse modules on the top floor that allow for different climate zone ranges. Students have more space to learn and collaborate in the recently opened Student Success Center, a 62,000-square foot building with a mix of classrooms, lecture halls, and meeting spaces. Meanwhile, medical students have already begun learning in the new School of Medicine Center for Medical Simulation.

On behalf of the entire UCR community, thank you for investing in UCR. Your generosity enables greater access to education, research expansion, and the resulting discoveries that yield new learning and solutions today and in the years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kim A. Wilcox".

Kim A. Wilcox
Chancellor



Department of Religious Studies
900 University Avenue
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Riverside, CA 92521

September 15, 2021

Dear Dr. Jasvant Modi and Dr. Meera Modi, Mr. Mahesh J. Wadher and Mrs. Usha Wadher, Mr. Vijay Chheda and Mrs. Madhu Chheda,

I am pleased to provide you with an update on the Shrimad Rajchandra Endowed Chair in Jain Studies. I joined the faculty at UC Riverside in October 2018 and was appointed at that time by the faculty and administration as the Shrimad Rajchandra Chair. The chair was officially inaugurated on October 23, 2019. The proceeds of this esteemed endowed chair have been used for my research activities, the organization of events, and support of student engagement in Jain studies.

In the past academic year, my co-authored book *Insistent Life: Principles for Bioethics in the Jain Tradition* was published by UC Press (August 2021). I have now started working on a new book project on Jain philosophy through the *Tattvārthasūtra* and its commentaries. I have signed a contract for the book with Bloomsbury Academic, where it will be published in the Bloomsbury Introductions to World Philosophies series. I have also been collaborating with Dr. Kristi Wiley, Dr. Jeffery D. Long, and Dr. Steven Vose to produce a new edition of *The A to Z of Jainism*, a popular dictionary of Jainism. In addition to working on these two book projects, I have been working on a paper on pluralism and plurality as they relate to Jainism (with a focus on the Jain approaches to the Vedas and Vedic sacrifice), a paper on Jainism and Fritz Jahr's formulation of bioethics, as well as two papers on the Jain understanding causation.

I virtually presented my work on pluralism and plurality at the Department of Religious Studies Colloquium at UC Riverside (October 2020) and at the Czech Academy of Sciences (April 2021), and I virtually presented my paper on Jainism and Fritz Jahr at the First Annual Peace and Religion Symposium, "Ahimsa, Environmental Ethics, and Jain Concepts of Life," organized by the California State University, Fullerton (November 2020). Several of my presentations included research insights from my work on medicine, asceticism, and bioethics in the Jain tradition at the following events/institutions: (1) First UC Riverside Jain Studies Symposium 2020, "Illness, Medicine, and Healing in the Jain Tradition," University of California, Riverside (December 2020);

(2) Ahimsa Center, California Polytechnic University (March 2021); (3) Conference on Medicine and Religion, “True to Tradition? Religion, the Secular, and the Future of Medicine (March 2021); (4) Department of Asian Studies, University of Ljubljana (May 2021); and (5) International Workshop, “Intermittent Fasting: Where Science Meets Practice,” Benson-Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine (Massachusetts General Hospital) and Osher Center for Integrative Medicine (Harvard Medical School and Brigham and Women's Hospital) (June 2021). Another set of my virtual presentations at the following events/institutions included my work on Jain metaphysics and philosophy of mind: (1) International Summer School for Jain Studies (July 2021); (2) 18th Annual Conference of the European Association for the Study of Religions (September 2021); and (3) Gyan Sagar Memorial Lecture, Gyan Sagar Science Foundation (September 2021). I presented the Jain studies activities at UC Riverside at the First Jain Academic Convention, “Jain Studies in North America and Community Sponsorship: Present and Future,” at UC Riverside and at the 21st Biennial JAINA Convention (panel: Jain Academic Education: Past, Present, and Future).

Throughout the year, I continued to incorporate Jain studies content into my courses: (1) Introduction to Asian Religions (cca. 200 students); (2) Religions of India (cca. 45 students); and (3) Jainism: An Indian Religion of Nonviolence (cca. 20 students). Students in the Jainism course were particularly excited to attend a virtual tour of the Jain Center of Southern California, guided by Dr. Nitin Shah and Sushama Parekh. In order to promote the undergraduate study of Jainism, I established The Shrimad Rajchandra Undergraduate Essay Prize, awarded to the best undergraduate essay in Jain studies, in 2019. The prize was awarded to Jonathan Sargent in 2021. Nicole Lewallen, our graduate student whose research is focused on Jainism, attended the virtual International Summer School in Jain Studies after completing her first year at UC Riverside. We have also recruited another Jain studies student, Alba Rodríguez Juan, who is interested in working on Jain yoga and will be joining us this academic year. She has been offered the Jain Studies Graduate Fellowship, which has been generously sponsored by the Wadher Family Foundation.

In the past academic year, I also organized three virtual Jain studies events at UC Riverside. On November 7, the First Jain Academic Convention, “Jain Studies in North America and Community Sponsorship: Present and Future,” brought together scholars with Jain-funded academic

positions and other Jain studies scholars from North America to discuss teaching and research experiences, translation projects, collaborations, and future plans. Dr. Eva De Clercq (Ghent University) delivered the Second Annual Shrimad Rajchandra Lecture on December 5, presenting an overview of the Jain Mahābhāratas. The Jain Studies Symposium 2020, “Illness, Medicine, and Healing in the Jain Tradition,” took place on December 12–13. The keynote lecture on the alchemical processes in an extensive circa 9th-century medical work, the Kalyāṇakāraka, was given by Dr. Dagmar Wujastyk (University of Alberta). I wrote a report on the last event which was published in *Jaina Studies: Newsletter of the Centre of Jaina Studies* (SOAS, University of London).

Doing research, teaching, and organizing events throughout the pandemic has certainly been challenging, but we continue to make progress in developing Jain studies at UC Riverside. I wish to thank you again for providing the endowment supporting the Shrimad Rajchandra Chair at the Department of Religious Studies and for your continuous support.

Sincerely,

Ana Bajzelj

Ana Bajzelj

Associate Professor of Religious Studies