

Interfaith Dialogue In Jain Yoga Texts

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By Cogen Bohanec, MA, PhD

Assistant Professor in Sanskrit & Jain Studies, Arihanta Institute

Often Jains take Anekānta-vāda (“non-exclusivity”) as having implications for interfaith goodwill and acceptance, as a sort of philosophy of social-ahimsā (social “non-violence”), which can be taken as consistent with religious pluralism and interfaith amity. For example, several texts on yoga by Haribhadrāsūri engage in a sort of interfaith dialogue in a way that affords significant value to other non-Jain yoga traditions. This presentation will demonstrate a conceptual framework (of pragmatism and fallibilism) employed by Jain thinkers in Jain yoga texts that allows for significant valuation of other yoga traditions and thereby fosters a potential for interfaith harmony, while being faithful to central teachings of the Jain tradition. Jain thinkers often will subordinate theory to practice and admit the fallibility of human knowledge in such a way that is consistent with a reading of Anekānta-vāda as more than just a system of logic, but as a mandate for social-ahimsā between religions. This is consistently expressed in Jain Yoga texts as a core expression of the Jain tradition’s approach to yoga.

Author: BOHANEK, Cogen (Arihanta Institute / Claremont School of Theology)

Presenter: BOHANEK, Cogen (Arihanta Institute / Claremont School of Theology)

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