

UCDAVIS
Religious Studies

Thursday, January 25
6:00pm – 7:00pm
Andrews Conference Room

The Mohini Jain Presidential Chair in Jain Studies Inaugural Lecture Series

THE VIRTUE OF GIVING: Traditional Indian Stories of Charity in Times of Disaster

Professor Phyllis Granoff
Yale University

This paper examines traditional Indian understandings of the causes and remedies of disasters, specifically drought and famine. The focus is on medieval stories from Jainism and Buddhism. Jain stories in particular stress the role of generous donors in alleviating human suffering. The paper concludes with a discussion of an unusual text, an eye-witness account written by a Jain monk about one of the most devastating famines in pre-modern India, the famine that caused widespread destruction in the Deccan and Gujarat in 1630 C.E.

Phyllis Granoff is the Lex Hixon Professor of World Religions at Yale University. She received her PhD from Harvard University in two departments: the Department of Sanskrit and Indian Studies and the Department of Fine Arts. After teaching many years at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, she moved to Yale in 2004. Her publications include articles and books on Indian philosophy, Indian art, medieval Sanskrit and Prakrit literature, and translations of modern literature. She has long nurtured a great love for Jain literature and thought, a major focus of much of her research. For many years she served as the editor of the Journal of Indian Philosophy.

For further information, please contact Archana Venkatesan, avenkatesan@ucdavis.edu.

