

Proust Questionnaire



Name: Maanas Jain

Age: 33

Hometown: London

Current City: London

Current Employer: Three Crowns LLP

Education: Oxford University, City Law School

How did you get involved in international arbitration? Like many in our field, more by accident than design. I began my career as a self-employed barrister in London handling a mix of commercial and civil litigation cases. While this experience provided an invaluable education in the nuts and bolts of disputes work, I was increasingly drawn to the more international side of practice. This development in my own interests coincided fortuitously with the establishment of Three Crowns in 2014. The chance to work on some of the most interesting international disputes in the market with seasoned advocates at the top of their game was too good to turn down. The rest, as they say, is history.

What is your favourite virtue? A good sense of humour.

What are your favourite qualities in another person? Loyalty, humility, tenacity.

What is your chief characteristic? Above all, I like to think I am curious – about people, ideas and problems.

What is your main fault? A tendency to over-analyse, rather than act on instinct (albeit I suspect an ability to do the latter may come with experience).

What is your favourite occupation? As an English graduate, I have always admired the vocation of writing immensely. The job, particularly of a fiction writer, is more often one of sustained effort than of divine inspiration (which is perhaps not too dissimilar to the day job after all).

What is your idea of happiness? A long convivial lunch with family and friends (preferably in warmer climes than we are used to this side of the Atlantic).

What is your idea of misery? Taking the central line in London at the height of summer. I would be surprised if there are hotter places on the sun.

If not yourself, who would you be? Someone with at least a hint of musical ability.

Where would you like to live? London is where I grew up and where my family are based, so it's hard to think of a life elsewhere. However, if pushed, the energy and vibrancy of New York is hard to beat (it also happens to be where I got engaged so that helps).

Who is your favourite prose author? There are too many to choose from. Virginia Woolf, Vladimir Nabakov, and Phillip Roth would certainly be near the top of the list.

Who is your favourite hero/heroine in fiction? Swede Levov in Phillip Roth's "American Pastoral" – not a conventional hero, but someone nevertheless heroic in his own way. An ostensibly infallible father coming to terms with the grim realities of modern life as stoically as possible.

Who is your hero in real life? Without a doubt my parents. They came to the UK in the early 1990s with modest means and forged successful careers in the medical profession through sheer determination and hard work. I would certainly not be where I am today without them.

What historical person do you most dislike? Cyril Radcliffe (the man charged with drawing the boundaries between India and Pakistan at the time of partition in 1947, despite having never visited the subcontinent).

What is your favourite name? This one is easy: Mila and Rafi (the names of my two children).

What do you hate the most? Rudeness and discourtesy.

What is your natural talent? My closest friends would probably say my tendency towards prolixity.

What is your favourite arbitration-related decision? The recent landmark decision of the UK Supreme Court in *Halliburton v Chubb* (in which I was fortunate to appear as counsel for one of the interveners, the ICC Court). The decision was important in confirming that English law remains firmly in step with internationally accepted best practices on independence and impartiality of arbitrators.

Who is your favourite arbitrator? I think it is impolitic to provide specific names. That said, the arbitrators I most admire are proactive in case management, robust in their decision making, and as keen to drive efficiencies in the process as users of the system.

Who is your mentor? I have been lucky to have a number throughout my career to date. At Three Crowns, Constantine Partasides QC in particular has been a constant source of wisdom, support and guidance from day one.

What is your motto? Take your work seriously but not yourself.

What do you hope to contribute to Young ICCA as co-chair? My proposed approach would be one of evolution not revolution. I do, however, have a number of ideas to further Young ICCA's founding aspiration to open the doors of international arbitration. These include:

- (1) **Developing a scholarship programme aimed at individuals from underrepresented backgrounds who could not otherwise afford LL.M level study.** This would be designed to sit alongside Young ICCA's existing merit-based scholarship offerings.
- (2) **Establishing a monthly Young ICCA podcast series.** Such a series would complement the well-established Young ICCA Blog, and include a structured discussion of a different topical issue or case each month with a revolving cast of Young ICCA members appearing alongside more established practitioners. This format would provide a dynamic and interactive means of engaging Young ICCA members and the wider arbitral community.
- (3) **Establishing a dedicated Young ICCA innovation group,** to forge closer links between the legal community and the burgeoning ecosystem of legal technology start-ups. This is with a view to ensuring that the next generation of arbitration lawyers have a say in shaping future legal innovations that are now more important than ever as we reckon with the impact of Covid-19.