

JAINISM

AN ANCIENT ETHNIC RELIGION

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MAIN TOPICS

- Description
- Beginnings
- Diffusion of Jainism
- Globalization
- Analysis
- Final Conclusions

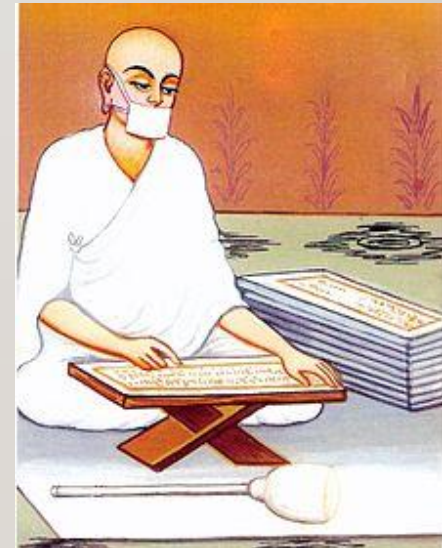
MAJOR BELIEFS



- Highest possible value is non-violence
- Traditions summed into three words
 - “Ahimsa paramo dharma” → Non-violence is the supreme path
- One must avoid harming others mentally, physically, and verbally
- Moksha is the state reached when one has fully detached from the world, otherwise one remains in the cycle of life and death: Samsara

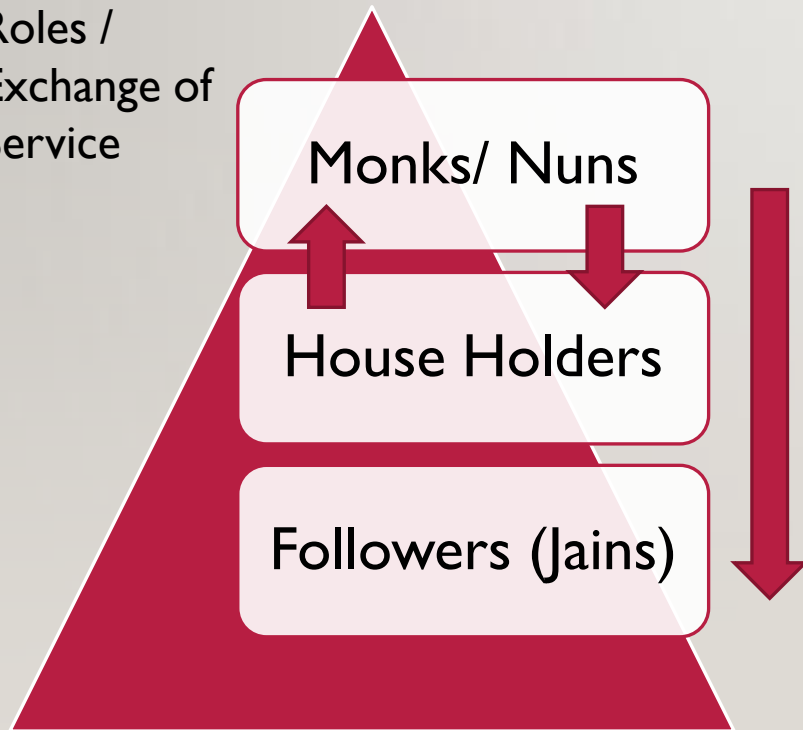
HOLY TEXT

- Agama
 - Contains the teachings of the Jina Mahavira consisting of 3 main branches
 - Purva (the ancient) concerned with Jaina philosophy
 - Anga (the limbs) concerned with conduct and karma
 - Angabahya (ancillary limbs) includes commentaries on the previous topics
- Jainism does not only focus on these teachings only , but also has many notable texts compiled by many followers



MAJOR LEADERS AND FIGURES

Roles /
Exchange of
Service



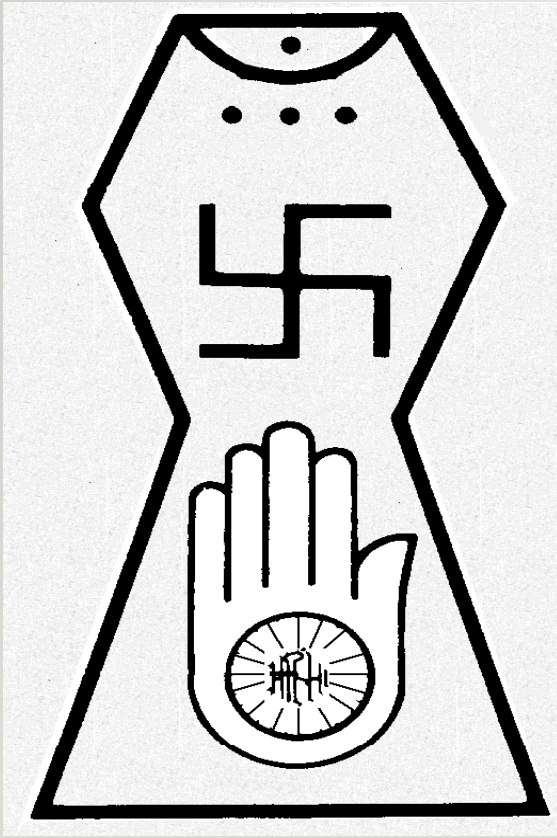
- All three of these groups are seen as equal but have different roles in the Jainist society
 - House Holders support the monks and nuns
 - In return, Monks and Nuns share their knowledge about Jainism with the house holders and followers

MAJOR LEADERS AND FIGURES

- Jinas, Tirthankars
 - “Conquerors” → fully detached from worldly concerns
 - First Jinas
 - 24 prophets who taught the path of non-violence
 - Mahavira – final Jaina of current period
- In future years another 24 Jinas will appear, degenerate, another 24 will appear, and so on



SYMBOLS AND ICONOGRAPHY



- Outline - universe (Lok)
- Raised hand and “ahimsa” - non-violence, stop to think before acting
- Four arms - heavenly beings, human beings, animal beings, hellish beings
- Three dots - right faith, right knowledge, right conduct
- Curved arc and dot - Moksha

CUSTOMS



- Vegetarian or Vegan
 - Avoid eating and therefore harming living creatures
- Monks and Nuns cannot make their own food as this may be seen as harming living beings
- Fasting is common as it promotes self discipline

TRADITIONS

- Pilgrimage
 - Allows Jains to take on lifestyle of monks and nuns
 - May visit any number of temples or locations associated with the lives of Jinas
- Digambra Monks (Male) do not wear clothing as it is seen as an attachment to the world
- Shwetambra monks and nuns wear white cloths and cover their mouths to avoid swallowing and harming insects



CEREMONIES

- Fasts
 - Occasional Fasts for contemplation and penance
 - Ritual of Sallekhana includes fasting until death when one's body begins to interfere with spiritual progress.
- Devotional Worship
 - Reading holy texts
- Meditation
 - Achieving a peaceful state of mind

EXAMPLE OF WORSHIP CENTER

- <https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=Palitana+Jain+Temple+In&&view=detail&mid=CD77C82BDD4CB5I8CD79CD77C82BDD4CB5I8CD79&rvsmid=CD77C82BDD4CB5I8CD79CD77C82BDD4CB5I8CD79&fsscr=0&FORM=VDFSrv>
- <http://jsocf.org/>

EXAMPLE OF WORSHIP SERVICE

- Sermons/Services are a western idea
- Jains take part in individual practices
- Independent worship
 - Scripture may be studied
 - Meditation to achieve the right state of mind
- Monks or Nuns may speak to a group if present at the time of individuals worshiping

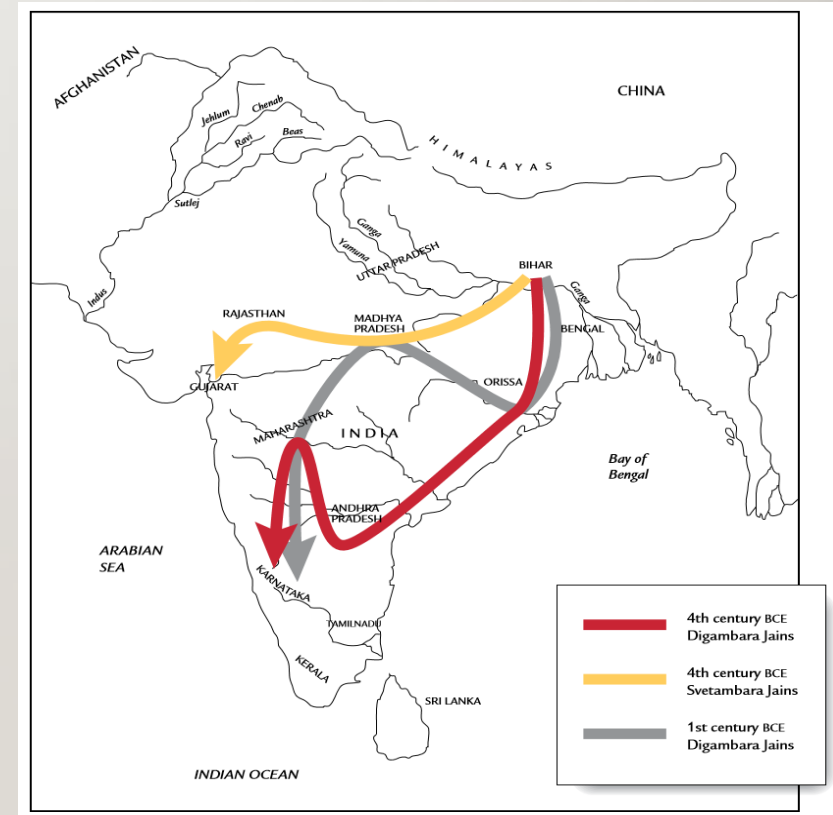
BEGINNINGS

- Native to India
- Mahavira, the last of the *Jinas*, is considered the founder of present Jainism
- Historians believe Jainism began 2,500 years ago but its exact beginning is not known because it is an eternal religion



DIFFUSION

- Jainism was spread from northern India to south western India after a 12 year famine in 4th century BCE
- This diffusion also caused the split into two sects due to differences between those who remained in the north vs those who relocated



GLOBALIZATION

- Jainism is not a universalizing religion as it does not have an evangelical aspect
- Jainism will most likely remain in India but temples do exist in the US
 - 120,000 Jains in the US (although anyone who follows non-violence is seen as a fellow Jain)
 - 80 Jain temples in the US and Canada



ANALYSIS

- Trends:
 - Jainism is an ethnic religion due its non evangelical nature similar to other non evangelical religions
 - Hinduism and Buddhism have some similarity with Jainism as Jainism came before them
- Why of where: Jainism exists in India due to their non violent culture which is also demonstrated in Hinduism and Buddhism (it appeals to those of the area)
- Prediction: Jainism will most likely remain an ethnic religion but has the potential to spread due to the religion being taught in some colleges.

CONCLUSIONS

- I learned that Jainism shares similar aspects and views with many religions
 - Jainism further accentuates the importance of avoiding harm to others and oneself
- AHA: Jainism began before any other religion in India and is thus not a branch of Hinduism or Buddhism (common misbelief).
- Main take away: It is important to learn about other world religions besides your own as it opens your eyes to other cultures and helps you gain an understanding of views held by those of different nationalities.

QUESTIONS?
