Jainism

Jainism, traditionally known as the "In the past," see Jain Dharma and Jainism (disambiguation).

Jainism, one of the oldest religions in the world, is a faith originating in ancient India. A Jain is a follower of Jinas, or spiritual victors. The Jains follow the teachings of the 24 Tirthankaras (builders) who are known as Tirthankaras. The 24th Tirthankar, Lord Mahavira, lived in ca. 6th century BC. One of the main characteristics of Jain belief is the emphasis on the immediate consequences of one's physical and mental behavior.

Jains are a small but influential religious minority with at least 8.2 million followers in modern India and more in growing immigrant communities in the United States, Western Europe, the Far East including Australia and elsewhere. Jains continue to sustain the ancient Shramana (hermit) or ascetic tradition.

Jains have significantly influenced the religious, ethical, political and economic spheres in India for over two millennia. Jainism stresses spiritual independence and equality of all life with particular emphasis on non-violence. Self-control (a control or realization of the soul's true nature.

As per ancient and contemporary usage, as well as dictionary definitions, a follower of Jain Dharma, or Jainism, is called a Jain.

Jains have an ancient tradition of scholarship. The Jain community has the highest degree of literacy among all the religious communities in India, and the Jain libraries are India's oldest.

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History

Further information: Timeline of Jainism

Sources of history

Parshvanatha was the twenty-third Tirthankar (ford builder) in Jainism and is the earliest Jain leader that can be reliably dated. According to scholars he probably flourished in 9th Century BC.

Kalinga (Modern Orissa) was home to many Jains in the past. Rishabh, the first Tirthankar, was revered and worshipped in the ancient city Pithunda, which was destroyed by Mahapadma Nanda when he conquered Kalinga and brought the statue of Rishabhanatha to his capital in Magadha. Rishabhanatha is revered as the 'Kalinga Jina'. Ashoka's invasion and his Buddhist policy also subjugated Jains greatly in Kalinga. However, in the 1st century BC Emperor Kharavela conquered Magadha and brought Rishabhanatha's statue back and installed it in Udaygiri, near his capital, Shishupalgarh. The Khandagiri and Udaygiri caves near Bhubaneswar are the only stone monuments dedicated to Jainism surviving in Orissa. Many of the earlier buildings were made of wood, and were destroyed.

Deciphering of the Brahmi script, India's oldest script, believed to have been created by the first Tirthankara, Rishabhanatha, by James Prinsep in 1858 enabled the reading of ancient inscriptions in India and established the.
Svetambaras are further divided into sub-sects, such as Sthanakavasi, several Shvetambara beliefs. Texts. The Yapaniya sect, believed to have originated from the Ardhaphalaka, follows Digambara nudity, along with clothes and monks, with cloth wrapped around the left arm, are identified as 'ardhaphalaka' and mentioned in some Excavations at Mathura revealed many Jain statues from the same holy books. There are minor differences in the enumeration and validity of each sect's interpretations of the same holy books. It is generally believed that the Jain Sangha divided into two major sects, Digambar and Svetambar, about 200 years after Mahavira’s nirvana. Some historians believe there was no clear division until the 5th century. The best available information indicates that the chief Jain monk, Acharya Bhadrabahu, foresaw famine and led about 12,000 Digambar followers to southern India. Twelve years later, they returned to find the Svetambar sect and in 453, the Valabhi council edited and compiled traditional Svetambar scriptures. Differences between the two sects are minor and relatively obscure. Didation of Schisms within Jainism along with the timelines.

In Sanskrit, ambar refers to a covering like a garment. 'Dig', an older form of 'disha', refers to the cardinal directions. Digambar therefore means those whose garment is only the four directions, or 'sky-clad'. 'Svet' means white and Svetambars are those who wear white coverings.

- Digambar Jain monks do not wear clothes because they believe clothes are like other possessions, increasing dependency and desire for material things, and desire for anything ultimately leads to sorrow. Svetambar Jain monks wear white seamless clothes for practical reasons and believe there is nothing in Jain scripture that condemns wearing clothes. Sadhvis (nuns) of both sects wear white. These differing views arise from different interpretations of the same holy books. There are minor differences in the enumeration and validity of each sect's literature.
- Digambar believes that women cannot attain moksha in the same birth, whereas Svetambar believe that women may attain liberation and that Mallinath, a Tirthankar, was female.
- Digambar believes that Mahavir was not married, whereas Svetambar believe the princely Mahavir was married and had a daughter.
- They also differ on the origin of Mata Trishala, Mahavira’s mother.
- In the first Jain prayer, the Namokara Mantra, Sthanakavasis and Digambars believe that only the first five lines are formally part of the Namokara Mantra, whereas Svetambaras believe all nine form the mantra. Other differences are minor and not based on major points of doctrine. Excavations at Mathura revealed many Jain statues from the Kushana period. Tirthankaras, represented without clothes and monks, with cloth wrapped around the left arm, are identified as 'ardhaphalaka' and mentioned in some texts. The Yapaniya sect, believed to have originated from the Ardhaphalaka, follows Digambara nudity, along with several Svetambara beliefs.

Geographical spread and influence

Jainism has been a major cultural, philosophical, social and political force since the dawn of civilization in Asia, and its ancient influence has been noted in other religions, including Buddhism and Hinduism. Jainism is among the smallest of the major world religions, but in India its influence is much more than these numbers would suggest. Jainism is rapidly expanding in the West as non-Indians follow this religion. There are 10 to 12 million followers. Jainism is presently a strong faith in the United States and several Jain temples have been established there. Jain archaeological findings are often from Maurya, Sunga, Kushan, Gupta, Kalachuris, Rashtrakut, Chalukya, Chandel and Rajput and later periods. Several western and Indian scholars have contributed to the reconstruction of Jain history. They include western historians like Böhler, Jacob, and Indian scholars like Irawatham Mahadevan, who has worked on Tamil Brahmi inscriptions. 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Beliefs

Tirthankaras

Jains do not have a single founder and the truth is said to have been revealed at different times by a Tirthankara (a teacher who makes a ford) i.e., shows the way). A tirthankar is considered omniscient, a role model, not a god. There have been 24 tirthankars in what the Jains call the 'present age'. Historical records about only the last two Tirthankars remain: Parshvanath and Mahavir (the 23rd and 24th).

The 24 tirthankaras in chronological order are - Adinath (or Rishabhnath), Ajitnath, Sambhavanath, Abhinandanvanath, Sumatinath, Padmaprabh, Suparshvanath, Chandraprabhu, Pushpadantanath (or Suvishnath), Sheetalanath, Shreyansanath, Vasupuja, Vimalanath, Anantanath, Dharmnath, Shantinath, Kunthunath, Aranath, Mallinath, Munisuvratanath, Neminath, Arishthanemi, Parshvanath and Mahavir (or Vardhamana).

Beliefs

Jains believe that every human is responsible for his/her actions and all living beings have an eternal soul. Jains believe all souls are equal because they all possess the potential of being liberated and attaining Moksha. Tirthankaras are role models only because they have attained Moksha. Jains insist that we live, think and act respectfully and honor the spiritual nature of all life. Jains view God as the unchanging traits of the pure soul of each living being, chiefly described as Infinite Knowledge, Perception, Consciousness, and Happiness (Ananta Jñāna, Ananta Darśana, Ananta Ānanda, and Ananta Sukha). Jains do not believe in an omnipotent supreme being, creator or manager (karta), but rather in an eternal universe governed by natural laws.

Jains hold that this temporal world is full of miseries and sorrow and hence in order to attain lasting bliss one must transcend the cycle of transmigration. Otherwise, one will remain eternally caught up in the never-ending cycle of transmigration. The only way to break out of this cycle is to practice detachment through rational perception, rational knowledge and rational conduct.

Jain scriptures were written over a long period of time, but the most cited is the Tattvartha Sutra, or Book of Reality written by the monk-scholar, Umasvati (aka Umasvâmi) almost 1800 years ago. The primary figures are Tirthankaras. There are two main sects called Svetambar and Digambar, and both believe in ahimsa (or ahinca), asceticism, karma, sanskdr, and jiva.

Differences between the two main sects are mainly conduct related. Doctrinally, Jainism is uniform with great emphasis placed on rational perception, rational knowledge and rational conduct. (["samyagdarśanajñānacāritrā", Tattvārthasūtra, 1.1] )

Compassion for all life, human and non-human, is central to Jainism. Human life is valued as a unique, rare opportunity to reach enlightenment. To kill any monster, no matter what crime they committed, is considered unimaginably abhorrent. It is the only religion that requires monks and laity, from all its sects and traditions, to be vegetarian. Some Indian regions have been strongly influenced by Jains and often the majority of the local non-Jain population has also become vegetarian.

History suggests that various strains of Hinduism became vegetarian due to strong Jain influence[10]. Jains run animal shelters all over India. For example, Delhi has a bird hospital run by Jains. Every city and town in Bundelkhand has animal shelters all run by Jains where all manner of animals are sheltered, even though the shelter is generally known as a Gaushala.

Jainism's stance on nonviolence goes far beyond vegetarianism. Jains refuse food obtained with unnecessary cruelty. Many practice a lifestyle similar to Veganism due to the violence of modern dairy farms, and others exclude all vegetables from their diets in order to preserve the lives of the plants from which they eat.[11] Potatoes, garlic and onions in particular are avoided by Jains.[12] Devout Jains do not eat, drink, or travel after sunset and prefer to drink water that is first boiled and then cooled to room temperature[citation needed]. Many Jains abstain from eating green vegetables and root vegetables one day each week. The particular day is determined by the lunar calendar and is Ashtami (eighth day of the lunar month) and New Moon and followed by the second Ashtami and Full Moon night.

Anekantavada, a foundation of Jain philosophy, literally means "The Multiplicity of Reality", or equivalently, "Non-one-endedness". Anekantavada consists of tools for overcoming inherent biases in any one perspective on any topic or in reality in general. Another tool is The Doctrine of Postulation, Syādvāda. Anekantavada is defined as a multiplicity of viewpoints, for it stresses looking at things from others' perspectives.

Jains are usually very welcoming and friendly toward other faiths and often help with interfaith functions. Several non-Jain temples in India are administered by Jains. A palpable presence in Indian culture. Jains have contributed to Indian philosophy, art, architecture, science, and to Mohandas Gandhi's politics, which led to the mainly non-violent movement for Indian independence[1].

Creation and cosmology

Svetambaras are further divided into sub-sects, such as Sthanakavasis, Terapanthus and Derevanas. Some are murtipujak (revering statues) while non-murtipujak Jains refuse statues or images. Most simply call themselves Jains and follow general traditions rather than specific sectarian practices. In 1974, a committee with representatives from every sect compiled a new text called the Samanata Sutram.
According to Jain beliefs, the universe was never created, nor will it ever cease to exist. Therefore, history of the universe is shaswat (infinite). It has no beginning or end, but time is cyclical in nature with progressive and regressive spirituality phases.

In other words Jains divide time into Utsarpins (Progressive Time Cycle) and Avsarpinis (Regressive Time Cycle). An Utsarpini and a Avsarpini constitute one Time Cycle (Kalchakra). Every Utsarpini and Avsarpini is divided into six unequal periods known as Aras. During the Utsarpini half cycle, humanity develops from its worst to its best: ethics, progress, happiness, strength, health, and religion each start the cycle at their worst, before eventually completing the cycle at their best and starting the process again. During the Avsarpini half-cycle, these notions deteriorate from the best to the worst. Jains believe we are currently in the fifth Ara of the Avsarpini phase, with approximately 19,000 years until the next Ara. After this Avsarpini phase, the Utsarpini phase will begin, continuing the infinite repetition of the Kalchakra.

Jains also believe that at the upswing of each time cycle, people will lose religion again. All things people want will be given by wish-granting trees (Kalpavriksha), and people will be born in sets of twins (Yugalka) with one boy and one girl who stay together all their lives. This can be seen as a symbol of an integrated human with male and female characteristics balanced.

Jain philosophy is based upon eternal, universal truths, according to its followers. During the first and last two Aras, these truths lapse among humanity and then reappear through the teachings of enlightened humans, who have reached enlightenment or total knowledge (Kevala Jnana), during the third and fourth Aras. Traditionally, in our universe and in our time, Lord Rishabh (ऋषभ) is regarded as the first to realize the truth. Lord Vardhamana (Mahavira, महावीर) was the last Tirthankara to attain enlightenment (599-527 BCE), who was himself preceded by twenty-three other Tirthankaras, thus making a total of twenty-four Tirthankaras.

It is important to note that the above description stands true "in our universe and in our time" for Jains believe there have been infinite sets of 24 Tirthankaras, one for each half of the time cycle, and this will continue in the future. Hence, Jainism does not trace its origins to Rishabh Deva, the first, or Mahavira, the twenty-fourth, Tirthankara.

According to Jainism, the Universe consists of Infinite amount of Jiva (life force or souls), and the design is similar to a form of man standing with his arms bent while resting his hands at his waist. The narrow waist part comprises various 'Kheta' which act as place of 'vicharan' (roaming) for humans, animals and plants. Currently we are in the Bharat Kshetra of 'Jambu Dweep' (dweep meaning Island).

The Deva Loka (Heavens) are situated at the symbolic chest part of the Creation, where all the Devas (demi gods) reside. Similarly beneath the waist part are the Narka Loka (Hell). There are such Seven Narka Lokas, each for a varying degree suffering a jiva has to go through to face the consequences of its papa' karma (sins). From the first to the seventh Narka, the degree of suffering increases and the amount of Light reaching into it decreases (no light at all in the seventh Narka).

The sidhha kshetra or moksha is situated at the symbolic forehead of the creation, where all the jivas having attained nirvana reside in a state of complete peace and eternal happiness. Outside the symbolic figure of this creation nothing but akola or aakaasha (sky) exists.
Jains practice **Samayika**, which is a Sanskrit word meaning equanimity and derived from samaya (the soul). The goal of Samayika is to attain equanimity. Samayika is begun by achieving a balance in time. If this current moment is defined as a moving line between the past and the future, Samayika happens by being fully aware, alert and conscious in that moving time line when one experiences Atma, one's true nature, common to all life forms. Samayika is especially significant during **Parvushana**, a special period during the monsoon, and is practiced during the ritual known as Samvatsari Pratikramana.

Jains believe that **Devas** (demi-gods or celestial beings) cannot help jiva to obtain liberation, which must be achieved by individuals through their own efforts. In fact, Devas themselves cannot achieve liberation until they reincarnate as humans and undertake the difficult act of removing karma. Their efforts to attain the exalted state of **Siddha**, the permanent liberation of jiva from all involvement in worldly existence, must be their own.

The strict Jain ethical code for both laity and monks/nuns is:

1. **Ahimsa** (Non-violence)
2. **Satya** (truth)
3. ‘**Achaurya Or Asteya**’ (non-stealing)
4. **Brahmacharya** (purity of mind and body)
5. **Aparigraha** (non-attachment to temporal possessions)

For laypersons, ‘brahmacharya’ means confining sexual experiences to marriage. For monks/nuns, it means complete celibacy.

Nonviolence includes the concepts of vegetarianism. Jains are expected to be non-violent in thought, word, and deed, both toward humans and toward all other living beings, including their own selves. Jain monks and nuns walk barefoot and sweep the ground in front of them to avoid killing any insects. Even though all life is considered sacred by the Jains, human life is deemed the highest form of life. For this reason, it is considered vital never to harm or upset any person.

While performing holy deeds, Svetambara Jains wear cloths, **muhapatti**, over their mouths and noses to avoid saliva falling on texts or revered images. Some wear the muhapatti to avoid accidentally inhaling germs. Many healthy concepts are entwined within the Jain religion. For example, Jains do not drink unboiled water because it contains billions of micro-organisms. In ancient times, a person might get ill by drinking unboiled water, which would prevent one from remaining in equanimity, as illness may precede or engender intolerance.

True spirituality, according to enlightened Jains, starts when a follower attains Samyak darshana, or true perception. Samyak drashti souls are on the correct path to moksha, striving to remain in the nature of the soul. This is characterized by being in the state of knowing and observing only the worldly affairs, without raag (attachment) and dwesh (being repelled); being in a state of pure knowledge and bliss. Attachment to worldly life collects new karmas, and traps one in a cycle of birth, death, and suffering. The worldly life is recognized by its dualistic nature (for example, the dualities of love and hate, suffering and pleasure, etc.), for the perception of one state cannot exist without the contrasting perception of the other.

Jain Dharma shares some beliefs with Hinduism. Both revere the same Devas and Devi (heavenly beings), and the theory of Karma and reincarnation. However, the Jain version of the Ramayana and Mahabharata is different from Hindu beliefs, for example. Generally, Hindus believe that Rama was a reincarnation of God, whereas Jains believe he attained moksha (liberation) because they do not believe in God the creator. (Note: some Hindus, such as Yogis, accept many aspects of Jain Dharma.)

Along with the Five Vows, Jains avoid harboring ill will toward others and practice forgiveness. They believe that atma (soul) can lead one to becoming Parmatma (liberated soul) and this must come from one's inner self. Jains refrain from all violence (Ahimsa) and recommend that sinful activities should be eradicated.

**Mahatma Gandhi** was deeply influenced (particularly through the guidance of Shrimad Rajchandra) by Jain tenets such as peaceful, protective living and honesty, and made them an integral part of his own philosophy. **Jainism has a distinct ideal underlying Tirthankara worship. The physical form is not worshiped, but the Gunas (virtues, qualities) which are praised. Tirthankaras are only role-models, and sects such as the Shhanakavasi stringently reject the worship of statues.**

### Jain fasting

**Main article: Fasting in Jainism**

Fasting is common among Jains and a part of Jain festivals. Most Jains fast at special times, during festivals, and on holy days during the most prominent festival, lasting eight days in Svetambara Jain tradition and ten days in Digambar Jain tradition during the monsoon. The monsoon is a time of fasting. However, a Jain may fast at any time, especially if he or she feels some error has been committed. Variations in fasts encourage Jains to do whatever they can to maintain self control.

Some Jains revere a special practice, where a person who is aware that he or she may die soon, and feels he has completed all his duties, ceases to eat or drink until death. This form of dying is called santhara. It is considered to be extremely spiritual and creditable. This has recently led to a controversy in India, where in Rajasthan, a lawyer petitioned the High Court of Rajasthan to declare Sallekhana illegal. Jains see Sallekhana as spiritual detachment. It is a declaration that a person has finished with living in this world and now chooses to leave.

### Jain worship and rituals

**Main article: Jain rituals and festivals**

Every day most Jains bow and say their universal prayer, the Namokara Mantra, aka the **Navkar Mantra**. Jains have a great deal of reverence for holy days and festivals. All times of the year, the full moon and particularly the **Navratri**, are held in special esteem by all sects. Special prayers, fasting and other rituals are often observed on holy days. Many Jains observe the **Navratri** festival, a time when the days are dedicated to the worship of the nine deities. Several days are spent with the worship of the mother, and the last day is spent with the worship of the father. A special festival, the **Navkar Mantra**, is observed during this period. The practice of fasting is an important part of Jain worship and rituals.
Sadhu (monk) and Sadhvi (nun) They practice the five Mahavratas, three
There are two categories of ascetics in Jainism.
Trainee ascetics are known as Ailaka and Ksullaka in the Digambar tradition.
In India there are thousands of Jain Monks, of which categories have been defined like Acarya, Upadhyaya and Muni.

Jain monks and nuns (Sadhu or Muni Maharaj)

Railway

There are thousands of Jain Monks, of which categories have been defined like Acarya, Upadhyaya and Muni.

Jain contributions to Indian culture
While Jains represent less than 1% of the Indian population, their contributions to culture and society in India are considerable.

Jain rituals include:
- Pancakalyanaka Pratisththa
- Pratikramana
- Samayika
- Guru-Vandana, Chaitya Vandana, and other sutras to honor ascetics.

Jain symbolism
The holiest symbol is a simple svastika. Another important symbol incorporates a wheel on the palm of a hand, symbolizing ahimsa.

Other major Jain symbols include:
- 24 Lanchhanas (symbols) of the Tirthankaras
- Tiratna and Shrivatsa symbols
- A Tirthankar's or Chakravarti's mother dreams
- Dharmacakra and Siddha-chakra
- Eight auspicious symbols (The Asta Mangalas). Their names are (in series of pictures)
  1. Svastika -Signifies peace and well-being
  2. Shrivatsa -A mark manifested on the centre of the Jina's chest, signifying the Jina's pure soul.
  3. Nandyavartya -Large svastika with nine corners
  4. Vardhamanaka -A shallow earthen dish used for lamps. This symbol is suggestive of increase of wealth, fame and merit due to the grace of the Jina.
  5. Bhadrasana -Throne. It is considered auspicious because it is sanctified by the feet of the blessed Jina.
  6. Kalasha -Pot filled with pure water signifying wisdom and completeness
  7. Minayugala -A fish couple. It signifies Cupid's banners coming to worship the Jina
  after defeating of the God of Love
  8. Darpana -The mirror reflects one's true self because of its clarity

Jain symbols. Worshippers use rice grains to create a fylfot around the temple altar.

Jain contributions to Indian culture
While Jains represent less than 1% of the Indian population, their contributions to culture and society in India are considerable.

Jains have yielded great influence on the culture and language of Karnataka and Southern India. Jainism has influenced Gujarati most significantly. The earliest known Gujarati text, Bharat-Bahubali Ras, was written by a Jain monk. Some of the most important people in Gujarati's Jain history were Acharya Hemacandra, Suri and his pupil, the Calukya ruler Kumarapala.

Jains are both among the wealthiest of Indians and the most philanthropic. They run numerous schools, colleges and hospitals and are some of the most important patrons of the Somapuras, the traditional temple architects in Gujarat. Jains have greatly influenced Gujarati cuisine. Gujarati is predominantly vegetarian (as is Jainism; see Jain vegetarianism), and its food has a mild aroma as onions and garlic are omitted.

Jains encourage their monks to do research and obtain higher education. Jain monks and nuns, particularly in Rajasthan, have published numerous research monographs. This is unique among Indian religious groups and parallels Christian clergy. The 2001 census states that Jains are India's most literate community and that India's oldest libraries at Patan and Jaisalmer are preserved by Jain institutions.

Jain literature
Jains have contributed to India's classical and popular literature. For example, almost all early Kannada literature and Tamil literature was authored by Jains.

- Some of the oldest known books in Hindi and Gujarati were written by Jain scholars. The first autobiography in Hindi, [Artha-Kathana] was written by a Jain, Banarasisada, an ardent follower of Acarya Kundakunda who lived in Agra.
- Several Tamil classics are written by Jains or with Jain beliefs and values as the core subject.
- Practically all the known texts in the Apabhramsha language are Jain works.

The oldest Jain literature is in Shauraseni and Ardha-Magadhi Prakrit (Paprmahs, Agama-Tulya, Siddhanta texts, etc). Many classical texts are in Sanskrit (Tatvartha Sutra, Prasnas, Kosh, Sarvakacara, mathematics, Nighantus etc). "Abhidhitha Rajendra Kosta" written by Acharya Rajendrasuri, is only one available Jain encyclopedia or Jain dictionary to understand the Jain Prakrit, Sanskrit, and Ardha-Magadhi and other Jain languages, words, their use and references with in oldest Jain literature. Later Jain literature was written in Apabhramsh (Kahas, rasas, and grammars), Hindi (Chhadadhala, Mokshamama Prakashaks, and others), Tamil (Jivacainamans, Kunt, and others), and Kannada (Vaddaradhan and various other texts). Jain versions of Ramayana and Mahabharata are found in Sanskrit, Prakrit, Apabhramsha and Kannada.

Jain monks and nuns (Sadhu or Muni Maharaj)

Main article: Jain Monks and Nuns

In India there are thousands of Jain Monks, of which categories have been defined like Acarya, Upadhyaya and Muni. Trainee ascetics are known as Ailaka and Ksullaka in the Digambar tradition.

There are two categories of ascetics in Jainism.
Sadhu (monk) and Sadhvi (nun) They practice the five Mahavratas, three Guptis and five Samitis:

5 Mahavratas
अिहंसा (Ahimsa): Non-violence in thought, word and deed
सत्य (Satya): Truth which is (hita) beneficial, (mita) succinct and (priya) pleasing
अचौर्य (Acaurya): Not accepting anything that has not been given to them by the owner
ब्रह्मचार्य (Brahmacarya): Absolute purity of mind and body
अपरिग्रह (Aparigraha): Non-attachment to non-self objects

3 Guptis
मनागुप्ति (Managupti): Control of the mind
वचनागुप्ति (Vacanagupti): Control of speech
कायागुप्ति (Kayagupti): Control of body

5 Samitis
ईर्यासिमिति (Irya Samiti): Carefulness while walking
भाषासिमिति (Bhasha Samiti): Carefulness while communicating
एषाणसिमिति (Eshana Samiti): Carefulness while eating
आदानिनेशपनसिमिति (Adana Nikshepana Samiti): Carefulness while handling their fly-whisks, water gourds, etc.
प्रतिश्थापनसिमिति (Pratishthapana Samiti): Carefulness while disposing of bodily waste matter

Male Digambara monks do not wear any clothes. They are completely nude as they practise non-attachment to the body and hence, wear no clothes.
Shvetambara monks and nuns all wear white clothes.
Shvetambaras believe that monks and nuns may wear simply un-stitched white clothes as long as they are not attached to them. Whereas Digambaras believe the male Digambara ascetics cannot wear any clothes since clothes signify attachment to a non-self object (the body).

Jain monks and nuns travel on foot. They do not use any mechanical means of transport.

Holy days
- **Paryushan Parva**, 10/8 (Digambar/Shvetambar) day fasts, and for observe, 10/8 important principles.
- **Mahavir Janam Kalyanak**, Lord Mahavir's birth, is also popularly known as 'Mahavir Jayanti' but the term 'jayanti' is considered inappropriate for a Tirthankar, as this term is used for mortals.
- **Kshamavani**, The day for asking everyone's forgiveness.

Jainism and other religions

Jainism, while having no creator God, is not atheistic. The notion of god is replaced by the notion of "the own nature of things" (vastu-svabhav-dharmah).

Jains are not a part of the Vedic Religion (Hinduism). Ancient India had two philosophical streams of thought: The Shramana philosophical schools, represented by Jainism and Buddhism; and the Brahmanic/VEDIC/PURANA schools represented by Vaishnavism, Valmikism, and other movements. Both streams are subset of the Dharmic family of faith and have existed side by side for many thousands of years, influencing each other.

The Hindu scholar, Lokmanya Tilak credited Jainism with influencing Hinduism and thus leading to the cessation of animal sacrifice in Vedic rituals. Bal Gangadhar Tilak has described Jainism as the originator of Ahimsa and wrote in a letter printed in Bombay Samachar, Mumbai: 10 Dec, 1904: "In ancient times, innumerable animals were butchered in sacrifices. Evidence in support of this is found in various poetic compositions such as the Meghaduta. But the credit for the disappearance of this terrible massacre from the Brahminical religion goes to Jainism."

Swami Vivekananda also credited Jainsim as influencing force behind the Indian culture.

"What could have saved Indian society from the ponderous burden of omnifarious ritualistic ceremonialism, with its animal and other sacrifices, which all but crushed the very life of it, except the Jain revolution which took its strong stand exclusively on chaste morals and philosophical truths?...

Jains were the first great ascetics, and they did some great work. "Don't injure any and do good to all that you can and that is all the morality and ethics, and that is all the work there is, and the rest is all nonsense... Throw it away." And then they went to work and elaborated this one principle all through, and it is a most wonderful ideal: how all that we call ethics they simply bring out from one great principle of non-injury and doing good."

Even though Jainism is of Indian origin, it shared some principles with the Hellenic tradition, specially with Stoic and Pythagorean philosophies of Europe.

- Relationship between Jainism and Hinduism - To quote from the Encyclopaedia Britannica Article on Hinduism, [2] "...With Jainism which always remained an Indian religion, Hinduism has so much in common, especially in social institutions and ritual life, that nowadays Hindus tend to consider it a Hindu sect. Many Jains also are inclined to fraternization..."
Constitutional status of Jainism in India

Main article: Legal Status of Jainism as a Distinct Religion

In 2005, the Supreme Court of India declined to issue a writ of Mandamus towards granting Jains the status of a religious minority throughout India. The Court noted that Jains have been declared a minority in 5 states already, and left it to the rest of the States to decide on the minority status of Jain religion.[4]


See also
- Jain community
- Jain flag
- Jain Meditation
- Jains in India
- List of Jain temples
- List of Jains

Notes
2. ^ 2001 India Census http://www.censusindia.net/religiondata/index.html
3. ^ The term Jainist which is found on some Internet websites is not used in either literature or common parlance.
4. ^ Census of India 2001
9. ^ Basic Faith Group Information
14. ^ J. L. Jaini, (1916) Jaina Law, Bhadrabahu Samhita, (Text with translation ) Arrah, Central jaina publishing House. * As to Jains as being Hindu dissenters, and, therefore governable by Hindu law, we are not told this date of secession [...]. Jainism certainly has a longer history than is consistent with its being a creed of dissenters from Hinduism." P.12-13
15. ^ P.S. Jaini, (1979), The Jaina Path to Purification, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, p. 169 "Jainas themselves have no memory of a time when they fell within the Vedic fold. Any theory that attempts to link the two traditions, moreover fails to appreciate rather distinctive and very non-vedic character of Jaina cosmology, soul theory, karmic doctrine and atheism-
17. ^ "There is no evidence to show that Jainism and Buddhism ever subscribed to vedic sacrifices, vedic deities or caste. They are parallel or native religions of India and have contributed to much to the growth of even classical Hinduism of the present times." Page 18
18. ^ Harry Oldmeadow (2007) Light from the East: Eastern Wisdom for the Modern West, World Wisdom, Inc ISBN 1933362255 "What is historically known is that there was a tradition along with vedic Hinduism known as sramana dharma. Essentially, the sramana tradition included it this fold, the Jain and Buddhist traditions, which disagreed with the eternity of the Vedas, the needs for ritual sacrifices and the supremacy of the Brahmins". Page 141

External links
- Iain and Indology group
- Jain community
- Jain Meditation
- Jains in India
- Jain and Indology group
- Jain-class group
- Jain Perceptions blog
- BBC page on Jainism
- Independent Religion - From the Encyclopedia Britannica Article on Jainism: "Along with Hinduism and Buddhism, it is one of the three most ancient Indian religious traditions still in existence. ...While often employing concepts shared with Hinduism and Buddhism, the result of a common cultural and linguistic background, the Jain tradition must be regarded as an independent phenomenon. It is an integral part of South Asian religious belief and practice, but it is not a Hindu sect or Buddhist heresy, as earlier scholars believed."
- The author Koenraad Elst in his book, Who is a Hindu?. summarises on the similarities between Jains and the mainstream Hindu society.

Languages used in Jain literature

Jain literature exists in Prakrit, Sanskrit, Apabhramsha, Rajasthani, Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, Kutch, Kannada, Tulu, Telugu, Tamil, and Dundhari (Old Marwari), English, German, French, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese and Russian.
Further reading


Indian philosophy

Religion-related topics

Ancient religions

- Prehistoric
- Near East
- Egypt
- Semitic
- Mesopotamian

- Indo-European
- Celtic
- Germanic
- Greek
- Hellenism (Gnosticism, Neoplatonism)
- Roman
- Slavic
- Vedic

Aspects

- Beliefs: Ritual (liturgy, sacrifice)
- Mythology
- Mysticism
- Spirituality
- Supernatural
- Delities: God
- Prashad
- Denomination
- Conversion
- Apostasy / Dissaffiliation
- Symbols
- Truth

Religious studies

- Anthropology: Development
- Origin: History
- Comparion: Psychology
- Sociology
- Philosophy
- Theology: Theories

Politics

- Demographics
- Proselytism
- Growth
- State religion
- National church
- Theocracy
- Religious freedom
- Education
- Right-wing
- Left-wing
- Minorities
- Schism
- Violence (war, persecution, terrorism)
- Fundamentalism
- Fanaticism
- Neo-Fascism

Secularism and non-religion

- Criticism of religion
- Religion and science
- Atheism
- Nontheism
- Irreligion
- Separation of church and state
- Deconstruction
- Secular theology

Lists

- Topics (basic topics)
- Denities
- Denomination
- New religious movements
- Cults
- Founders:
- Scholars
- Mass gatherings

Religion portal

List of religions and spiritual traditions

Results from FactBites:

- Jainism (Encyclopedia: Jainism) (1168 words)
- Jainism (pronounced in English as /dʒənɪm/) traditionally known as Jain Dharma (IAST: जैन धर्म), is a religion and philosophy originating in the prehistory of South Asia.
Jainism is an ancient religion from India that teaches that the way to liberation and bliss is to live a life of harmlessness and renunciation.

Jainism is one of the oldest religions known today and its origins lie in the country of India.

Jainism (pronounced in English as /ˈdʒeɪnɪzm/), traditionally known as Jain Dharma (जैन धर्म), is a religion and philosophy originating in ancient India.

Jainism stresses spiritual independence and equality of all life with a particular emphasis on non-violence.

Though Jainism is slowly declining in India, it is rapidly expanding in the West as non-Indians convert to the religion.