

Asian Philosophies: Buddhism & Jainism

Final Jain Analysis

Due Friday, March 13, by 5pm; upload on Canvas as .doc or .pdf under “Home” or “Assignments”

In this class we have examined the moral frameworks of Kantian deontology and Jeremy Bentham’s view of Consequentialism in relation to Asian philosophies. See the slides below:

- Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) is considered a founder of modern western philosophy. Based on his belief on rational persons endowed with reason, Kant stated that there were 3 “perfect duties” for which there was never any legitimate exceptions:

1. Do not lie
2. Do not break promises (contracts)
3. Do not kill innocent rational persons

From this, Kant developed the several universal moral rules, including the Second Formulation of the Categorical Imperative:

“Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end.” (Kant, *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*, 1785)

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- Jeremy Bentham’s (1748-1832) consequentialism based on his (atheist) Enlightenment claims:
 - We can develop laws based on observation of human nature
 - Humanity serves 2 masters: pleasure and pain
 - If pleasure is good, it is good irrespective of whose it is
 - Thus, the principle of UTILITY says that an action should aim toward consequences that produce the greatest pleasure and minimal pain, all beings (who can feel pain/pleasure) considered

Contrary to Kant’s emphasis on rationalism, Bentham emphasizes any being’s ability to feel pain, stating, “The question is not can they reason, nor, can they talk, but, can they suffer?” (Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, 1789)

Essay Question: Which of the above moral frameworks do you feel most closely parallels that of Jainism? Please justify your answer utilizing three distinct concepts within the Jain worldview philosophy, and/or ethics as your support (see non-exhaustive list below). You do not need to include any additional research about Kant or Bentham beyond what is provided above.

Jain Concepts: this is not an exhaustive list, but should get you started thinking

Loka
6 substances with their qualities and modes

- 1 sentient
- 5 non-sentient

Cyclical time
Rebirth
Karma as material

Birth states
4-fold community
“3 Jewels”
1-5 vows (“great” or “small”)
Living beings and their sense-capacity
Various supporting practices and restraints
Guna-sthāna ladder

Jinas or *tīrthaṅkaras*
anekāntavāda (and/or the doctrines of relativity)
Rules for mendicants and householders
Digambara/Śvetāmbara
śramaṇic roots
pūjā practices

Papers will be assessed (with percentage and points) with the following rubric (60pts total; approx. 5-6 double-spaced pages):

- **INTRODUCTION (1 page max; 10%, 6pts)**
 - include your answer to the essay question
 - introduce the western moral theory/theorist you chose as well as Jainism as a tradition

- **ANALYSIS (approx. approx. 4-4.5 pages; 50%, 30pts)**

The analysis has 4 parts:

 - Parts 1-3: Conceptual parallels; Identify 3 distinct Jain concepts (each with its own section), with definitions and, where applicable, contextualized with other terms or ideas, along with your interpretation and analysis
 - Part 4: In what ways does Jainism diverge or exceed your chosen moral theory? You can include/interweave this as it applies to each concept, or add it as its own section at the end
 - Students may utilize any or all of the following sources: Jaini, Harvey, Appleton, or Jain Texts A, B, C, D, or E

 - The goal is to present a focused snapshot of Jain thought in relation to this essay question, rather than merely “throwing” multiple concepts at the essay question in a haphazard way. Students will not be able to account for Jainism as a whole; rather, the aim is to construct a response to the essay question that puts three primary concepts (defined and in relation context and other terms) into conversation with your chosen moral theory

- **ORGANIZATION (20%; 12pts)**
 - The body of the essay should follow from the introduction.
 - Please divide key concepts into distinct paragraphs that introduce the reader to each new idea.
 - Break long paragraphs into 2+ ideas/paragraphs wherever possible

- **CONCLUSION (approx. 1/3 page max; 5%; 3pts)**

A brief conclusion should recap the basic assertion of the introduction

- **FORMATTING and CITATIONS (15%; 9pts)**
 - 5-6 double-spaced pages, not including Works Cited
 - Please number pages
 - Run spell and grammar check
 - Please use in-text citations (see *Bedford Handbook* under “Resources” on digital syllabus) to signal when you use a: (a) direct quote, or (b) paraphrase an author’s unique idea. Due to the well-known nature of terms such as “*ahimsā*,” “*jīva*,” etc., you do not have to cite a source for these terms at every mention or definition. However, if/when you use a direct quote to define a term, or if you paraphrase a unique idea about a term, you must cite so a reader can find the source of that insight or content.
 - Please provide a Works Cited list (see *Bedford Handbook* under “Resources” on digital syllabus)

- Students should practice *italicizing* Pāli or Sanskrit terms; you do not need to use diacritics (the symbols above letters in Indo-Aryan languages, such as *nīrvaṇa*, *saṃsāra*, etc.), though you are welcome to.

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