

BOOK REVIEW

JAIN DARSHAN: PHILOSOPHY AND CODE OF CONDUCT

Author: Sanjeev Doshi

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Reviewer: Joanna Flynn¹

In his book, Sanjeev Doshi describes the foundations of the Jain tradition in an accessible and interesting way. At the very beginning, he briefly defines concepts of religion and philosophy and gives a rough timeline of Indian Vedic and *śramaṇic* traditions. After that, the author delves into the basic notions of Jainism such as the classification of *dravyas*, types of *karmas*, nine elements leading to liberation (*mokṣa*), and the doctrines of *naya*, *syādvāda* and *anekāntavāda*. Further, Doshi also discusses the code of conduct of laymen as well as mendicants explaining important concepts such as *ahiṃsā*, *satya*, *asteya*, *aparigraha*, and *brahmacarya*. He also enumerates ethical guidelines, duties, virtues, and contemplations regarding the householders and monks. After that, the author emphasizes the significance of *samyak darśana-jñāna-cāritra*, all three constituting the three jewels – *ratnatraya* in Jain philosophy. He discusses their meaning and importance as the path towards liberation. The author also highlights those features of Jainism that stand out from other Indian traditions (e.g. *karma* theory, *syādvāda*). In the last part, he reflects on certain ideas or principles – he calls them “aberrations”, which have been changed or diluted by different Jain authors over the centuries. Doshi concludes with the section on the points to ponder, encouraging the reader to pause and think about various aspects of the Jain philosophical thought discussed earlier in the book.

The vast amount and richness of Jain scriptures can be overwhelming for the reader, especially for beginners who want to learn and find out more about Jain tradition and philosophy. The *Jain Darshan* by Sanjeev Doshi, written in a clear and easily accessible language, can definitely serve as a good starting point and introduction to Jainism. It gives a concise overview of Jain concepts and prompts the inquisitive reader to further delve into the topic of fundamental principles of Jain philosophy and beyond.

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